

Who is funding the 'Watches'

by Peter Rush

The 1990s have seen the rapid emergence of the so-called non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, as contenders for power with the very governments of countries. Proliferating in areas such as the environmental and "human rights" fields, the NGOs generally present themselves as impartial organizations. They generally align themselves against governments that they accuse of being corrupt, "authoritarian," or at best simply not concerned about the environment or human rights. Now it is even being increasingly suggested in certain circles of power that the NGOs should be viewed as the "popular will," replacing the electoral will of voters.

The reality is quite the opposite. The leading NGOs are nothing but lobbyists for the Anglo-American establishment, funded by that establishment, and pushing that establishment's political and social agenda. The leaderships of the NGOs are self-appointed individuals in charge of strictly private associations and institutions which represent no one but themselves, and their financial backers. One of the major avenues of establishment backing for the NGOs is the thousands of tax-exempt foundations in the United States, which collectively dispose of billions of dollars annually to thousands of NGOs.

A good case study is the group of allied organizations known collectively as Human Rights Watch (HRW), whose parent organization is called the Fund for Free Expression (FFE). Under the FFE/HRW umbrella are Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Africa Watch, Middle East Watch, and Helsinki Watch, all putatively dedicated to exposing and fighting against "human rights" abuses everywhere in the world.

A lot closer to the truth was the characterization issued by Thailand's former foreign minister Thanat Khoman at a human rights meeting on March 30, in which he stated that Asia Watch and Amnesty International, another prominent human rights NGO, are "actually fronts for the CIA . . . who have abused and misused their fundamental rights to service their own selfish purposes. They . . . use human rights as a means to make unfounded charges to extract and extort economic or political concessions." In Ibero-America, Americas Watch has focused on defending terrorist insurgencies, such as Peru's barbarous Shining Path, and attacking government efforts to combat them.

The FFE and Helsinki Watch were founded in 1975 by Random House president and board chairman, millionaire Robert L. Bernstein, ostensibly for the benign purpose of monitoring human rights abuses in the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc in the wake of the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). It was with the establishment in 1981 of the second of the "Watches," Americas Watch, that the leftist, pro-terrorist intent of Bernstein's operation became evident. Asia Watch followed, and then, in 1988, Africa Watch and Middle East Watch.

The FFE publishes no annual report of its operations or funding, and does not provide information to the public on its sources of funds, but it has sufficient resources to maintain two offices with sizeable staffs, and publishes numerous books and voluminous reports every year. What can be traced is the flow of money from leading foundations, which reveals how this particular NGO grew from obscurity to major influence during the decade of the 1980s.

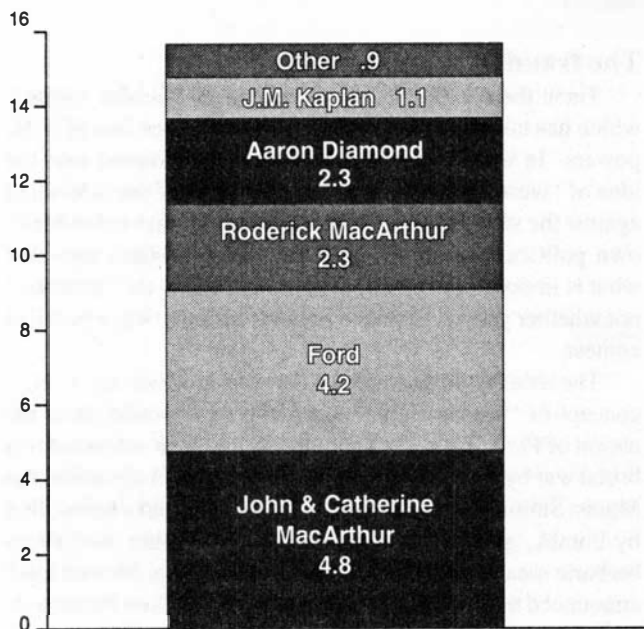
From 1978 to 1991, the last year for which figures are available, the major foundations gave the FFE groups nearly \$16 million. As shown in **Figure 1**, most of this was donated since 1985. The enormous increase in 1988 is due to a single \$3.5 million grant from the John T. and Catherine A. MacArthur Foundation to fund Africa and Middle East Watch. Otherwise, a steady rise since 1980 can be seen, to a level of \$2 to \$3 million annually, by the end of the 1980s. This enormous growth mirrors the rapidly expanding influence of the group in the United States.

Figure 2 shows the contributions by foundation. As can be seen, well over 90% of the total contributions from foundations since 1978 have come from just five foundations, whose pedigrees are all from the leftist scion of the Anglo-American establishment. The J.M. Kaplan Fund, identified as long ago as a March 6, 1967 *Newsweek* article as a CIA front, has been the most steady funder, donating at least \$25 million a year from 1978 to 1982, growing to \$50 million in 1983, \$75 million in 1984, \$130 million in 1985, and \$200 million a year in 1990 and 1991.

The Ford Foundation, notorious since the 1950s as a funder of New Age, environmentalist, and other leftist causes, has been the second largest contributor, donating over \$4 billion. The John T. and Catherine A. MacArthur Foundation, in addition to its \$3.5 million grant in 1988, funded the U.S. State Department's project on "civil-military relations" which produced the infamous book *The Military and Democracy*, known in Ibero-America as the "Bush Manual" for dismantling the region's militaries. The Roderick MacArthur Foundation has also given over \$2 billion, contributing more than half a million a year from 1989-91, and smaller amounts nearly every year since it was founded in 1982. And the Aaron Diamond Foundation, whose director, Aaron Diamond's widow Irene, is on the board of the Fund for Free Expression, has also donated over \$2 million. Bernstein is a board member on Diamond's foundation.

FIGURE 1
**Foundation support for human right groups
 (1978-91)**

(millions \$)



Drawing a bead on Peru

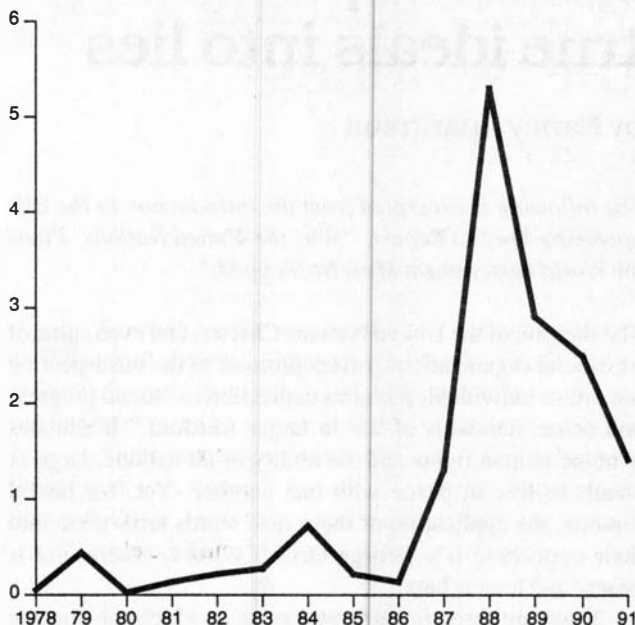
The full horror of the real agenda of these establishment foundations is revealed in Peru, as they have disseminated information to governments and the public which whitewashes the atrocities of terrorists and fabricates evidence against armies and police forces in their efforts to combat terrorism.

As long ago as 1984, Americas Watch Executive Director Juan Méndez gave an interview to the newspaper published by Shining Path, in which he attacked the Peruvian military for carrying out a “dirty war” against Shining Path—which was already far advanced in its spree of assassinations and bombings of electricity towers. In 1986, Americas Watch backed the minority report of leftists in Peru’s Senate that attacked the Army for its suppression of a bloody Shining Path prison uprising.

Since President Alberto Fujimori came to power in 1990, Americas Watch has accelerated its attacks. On Sept. 12, 1991, Human Rights Watch’s Washington Director Holly Burkhalter testified to the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee in favor of cutting all military aid to Peru until all emergency zones under military control be eliminated, anti-Shining Path civil defense patrols be dismantled, leading military officers be prosecuted, and the military reformed. This, in the midst of a life and death military struggle against Shining Path! In an article published four days later, she called the Peruvian Army “almost comparably abusive” as the Maoist terrorists. The U.S. Congress voted to maintain

FIGURE 2
**Foundation funding for the Fund for Free
 Expression and the human rights ‘Watches’**

(millions \$)



a partial freeze on funds desperately needed by the Peruvian Army in its anti-subversive fight.

Americas Watch went into its highest gear following Fujimori’s closing of Congress and revamping of the court structure on April 5, 1992. Ignoring the fact that judges were being intimidated into freeing Shining Path members, and Congress had either been bought or terrorized into preventing any effective counter-terrorist fight, Americas Watch has demanded that every step taken—steps which are responsible for capturing Shining Path’s entire top command and substantially weakening the group so far—be reversed and the Army effectively forced to stop fighting. Americas Watch has used the testimony of open Shining Path supporters to fabricate or exaggerate alleged incidents of “human rights” violations, and has published books and papers demanding that the world community “isolate” Peru until it complies with Americas Watch demands.

And on May 19 of this year, Burkhalter again testified, this time before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, urging that the United States cut off all aid to any countries not meeting Human Rights Watch’s standard for “human rights.” Lying that “human rights in Peru continue to deteriorate,” she pushed for the U.S. Congress to put into law that human rights NGOs be authorized to formally present petitions to the State Department charging violations against countries—charges that have to date been uniformly biased, exaggerated, and based on hearsay, lies and statements by criminals and terrorists.