POLICY LINKS

Government & Morality

Deborah Dobbs
Gamecock Staff Writer

America's policy on human rights is meant to be an attachment of government to moral principles, where it cannot disregard the rights of the individuals, Jan De Weydenthal, a visiting professor from William and Mary College, says.

De Weydenthal said there should be a "mutual agreement of criticism," where all nations should be able to criticize others of violations of human rights. "When you point the finger and say, look, there is something that is basically wrong, you have, to a certain extent, the fulfillment of human rights," De Weydenthal said.

President Carter's action on human rights could have many causes: to get in office, to reverse the image of the U.S., or out of sheer conviction of President Carter, USC professor, Paul Kattenburg said.

"OFTEN THE media cloud the fact that not all of the human rights policy is a function of Carter, because during the past eight years Congress has passed amendments concerning human rights," professor Morris Blachman said.

Blachman said "the human rights policy is mostly concerned with our world image."

Blachman said that during the Nixon and Ford administrations human rights were not dealt with and the justification used was that the U.S. couldn't change the situation in other nations.

HOWEVER, BLACHMAN said changes can be seen since the announcement of America's human rights policy.

Argentina is the scene of one such change. There have been advertisements in the newspapers there exhorting the government to deal fairly with prisoners, to come up with people who have disappeared, and to let people out of jail who are not charged, Blachman said.

Professor Robert Wirsing said the question the Carter administration will have to deal with is whom to punish.

The professors discussed the human rights issue at a panel discussion Wednesday night in Gambrell Hall as a part of International Week. All are in the department of Government and International Studies.

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