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UN TREATIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

As part of President Carter's campaign for human rights, he went to the United Nations headquarters last month and signed two treaties. News reports described the Carter signing ceremony as "deliberately low key."

It was so low key, in fact, that hardly any newspapers printed the texts of the treaties that he signed. Even UN Ambassador Andrew Young signed the documents in uncharacteristically low-ley style.

Mr. Carter then promised to seek Senate ratification "at the earliest possible date." The fate of the treaties is uncertain. They represent a reversal of a 29-year-old U.S. position.

In the euphoria of high hopes for the United Nations during the first few years after World War II, a document called the ''Universal Declaration of Human Rights" was proclaimed by the General Assembly. The United States supported this document only after President Harry Truman, over the strenuous objection of the Soviet Union, insisted that it include / an article recognizing the right to own private property.

As a result of his insistence, Article 17 proclaimed: "Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property."

The right to own propertv is the unique cornerstone of our American Constitution and free economic system. The Founding Fathers proclaimed in the Fifth Amendment: "... nor sha11 any person be deprived of 1 i fe, 1 fberty, or property without due process of law, nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation."

The Fourteenth Amendment reinforced this, stating: " nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law."

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From 1948 on, the United Nations tried to codify the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into two treaties: the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Communist and pro-Communist governments, however, adamantly insisted on the deletion of Article 17 because they refused to recognize the right to own private property.

The Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford Administrations consistently took the position that the United States would not sign the two treaties unless they recognized property rights as human rights.

By 1966, enough,small nations had joined the UN so that U.S. views were no longer respected, and the United Nations· adopted the two treaties omitting all recognition of property rights. The United States continued to refuse to sign them.

Last month, President Carter went to the United Nations accomodated the Soviet position, and signed the two UN treaties which do not recognize private property rights.

It is claimed that Carter's signing of the treaties "fulfills a U.S. pledge"and eliminates "a source of embarrassment" for those who favor a forceful rights campaign. There never was any pledge, and it is unlikely that any Americans ever found our failure to.r.a.tify any UN treaties "embarrassing."

The new treaties will now be submitted to the U.S. Senate for ratification. They should be decisively rejected. Senate approval would only compromise our own constitutional right to own private property -- without doing anything whatsoever for peoples in other hands who are denied all kinds of poliical and civil rights.

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