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For the Record . . .

On Moral Principles In Our Foreign Policy

From an interview with Sen. Fred R. Harris (D-Okla.) by Elizabeth Drew on "Thirty Minutes With" over station WETA on July 27.

Q.: What would be a foreign policy based on idealism . . . ?

Senator Harris: I would say the kind of idealism that I'm talking about recognizes the reality of what we profess. And that's primarily about human beings. For example, you can't say that you believe in innate worth of human beings and then kill some off in the name of your own interests in a country or be involved in overthrowing the government clandestinely.

Dean Rusk, former Secretary of State, once appeared before the Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations on which I served and said, in effect, "Gentlemen, we operate in all the back alleys of the world. And because our adversaries don't play clean and so forth, why, we have to be as dirty as they are often and we have to use methods that we're ashamed of, that we can't say aloud to ourselves." Well, I think that raises very serious questions about our morality and I don't think we can respond on that because if we believe what we say then we have to believe that down-trodden people will rise and that our interests are the same as the interests of the people in a country. And that—you know, people have said, "A country such as ours, which is one based upon the consent of the governed, can't be a world power because we have to tell our people everything." I say we can't be a world power unless we can tell our people everything. And that means that we operate on some basic principles.

Now, that would be that we would stop economic and military aid to Pakistan where this slaughter has been going on with our help, in effect. And it would mean that we'd stop subsidizing a racist country like South Africa with a sugar quota at the expense of the American housewife, and it would mean that we'd stop giving more aid to a country like Brazil which tortures political prisoners as a part of government policy than we used to give it when it was not a military dictatorship. And the same is true of Greece exactly.