

Xinhuanet 2002-03-11 14:22:36

BEIJING, March 11 (Xinhuanet) -- Following is the full text of the "Human Rights Record of the United States in 2001," published by the Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China Monday:

Human Rights Record of the United States in 2001

By Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China

On March 4, 2002, the U.S. State Department published "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices -- 2001." Once again the United States, assuming the role of "world judge of human rights," has distorted human rights conditions in many countries and regions in the world, including China, and accused them of human rights violations, all the while turning a blind eye to its own human rights-related problems. In fact, it is right in the United States where serious human rights violations exist.

I. Lack of Safeguard for Life, Freedom and Personal Safety

Violence and crimes are a daily occurrence in the U.S. society, where people's life, freedom and personal safety are under serious threat. According to the 2001 fourth issue of Dialogue published by the U.S. Embassy in China, in 1998, the number of criminal cases in the United States reached 12.476 million, including 1.531 million violent crime cases and 17,000 murder cases; and for every 100,000 people, there were 4,616 criminal cases, including 566 involving violent crimes. From 1977 to 1996, more than 400,000 Americans were murdered, almost seven times the number of Americans killed in the Vietnam War. During the years since 1997, another 480,000 people have been murdered in the country.

According to a report carried by the Christian Science Monitor in its January 22, 2002 issue, the murder rate in the United States at present stands at 5.5 persons per 100,000 people. According to data provided by police stations in 18 major U.S. cities, the number of murder cases in many big cities in 2001 increased drastically, with those in Boston and Phoenix City increasing the fastest. In the year to December 18, 2001, the number of murder cases in the two cities increased by more than 60 percent over the same period of the previous year. The number of murder cases increased by 22 percent in St. Louis, 17.5 percent in Houston, 15 percent in St. Antonio, 11.6 percent in Atlanta, 9.2 percent in Los Angeles and 5.2 percent in Chicago. According to the same report of the Christian Science Monitor, on campuses of colleges and universities in the United States in 2001, the number of murder cases increased by almost 100 percent over 2000, that of arson cases by about 9 percent, that of break-ins by 3 percent.

The United States is the country with the biggest number of private guns. On the one hand, worries about the threat of violence have led to rush buying of guns for self-protection; on the other hand, the flooding of guns is an important factor contributing to high violence and crime rates. Statistics of the FBI show that sales of weapons and ammunition in the United States in the three months of September through November of 2001 grew anywhere from 9 percent to 22 percent. October witnessed a record 1,029,691 guns registered. Statistics also show that shooting is the second major cause of non-normal deaths after traffic accidents in the United States, averaging 15,000 deaths annually. Over the history of more than 200 years, three U.S. presidents were shot, with two dead and one wounded seriously. There is much less personal safety for common people in the United States.

Since 1972, more than 80 people have been shot dead every day on average in the United States, including about 12 children.

On March 5, 2001, a 15-year-old student killed two and wounded 13 fellow students at Santana High School in California. This is the deadliest school shooting following one in a high school in the state of Colorado in April 1999, in which 13 were killed. Two days later, that is, on March 7, a 14-year-old girl student shot dead a schoolmate of hers in the cafeteria of a Roman Catholic school in Pennsylvania. On the same day, police overpowered a gunman who was about to shoot on the campus of the University of Albertus. On April 14, a 43-year-old man with two rifles and two short guns fired madly at a bar and its car park, killing two and wounding 20. On September 7, a gunman burst into a family on the outskirts of Simi Valley of Los Angeles and shot three people dead and wounded two. Earlier on August 31, a demobilized policeman shot dead another and set fire on himself. FBI called Los Angeles "the freest city for crimes." On December 7, a worker at a woodworking factory shot one fellow worker dead and wounded six others in Indiana.

On January 15, 2002, a teenage student fired at fellow student at Martin Luther King High School, seriously wounding two. This coincided with the 73rd anniversary of Martin Luther King, leader of the human rights movement in the United States and an advocator of non-violence. More ironically, on March 4, 2002, the very day when the U.S. State Department published its annual report, accusing other countries of "human rights violations," another shooting took place: in New Mexico, a four-year-old boy, while watching TV in his bedroom, shot dead an 18-month-old baby girl with his father's gun.

The U.S. media are inundated with violent contents, contributing to a high crime rate in the United States, especially among young people. Young people in the country get used to violence and crimes from an early age. With the extensive use of cable TV, videotapes and computers, children have more opportunities to see bloody violent scenes. A culture beautifying violence has made young people believe that the gun can "solve" all problems. An investigative report issued on August 1, 2001 by a U.S. non-governmental watchdog group -- Parents Television Council (PTC) -- says that violence in television programs from 8 to 9 p.m. in the recent one-year period was up by 78 percent and abusive language up by 71 percent. Even CBS, regarded as the "cleanest" TV network, had 3.2 scenes of violence and abusive language per hour. After the September 11 terrorist attacks, TV stations and movie houses in the United States exercised some restraint on the broadcasting and screening of programs and films of violence. But it was hardly two months before violence films, which have top box-office value, staged a comeback. International Herald Tribune reported that one American youth could see 40,000 murder cases and 200,000 other violent acts from the media before the age of 18. A survey by California-based Ethical Code Institute shows that over the past year, most American youth had the experience of using violence, including 21 percent of the boys in high schools and 15 percent of the boys in junior middle schools who had the experience of taking arms to school for at least once. The U.S. National Association of Education estimates that about 100,000 students in the United States take arms to school every day.

In recent years, voices for controlling guns and eliminating the culture of violence have been running high. On Mother's Day on May 14, 2000, women from nearly 70 cities in the United States staged a "Million Moms Mother's Day March," demanding that the U.S. Congress enact a strict gun control law. However, voices of the common people can hardly produce any results.

II. Serious Rights Violations by Law Enforcement Departments

Police brutality and unfair adjudication are intrinsic stubborn diseases of the United States. In March 2001, the family of a French victim brought a lawsuit against the police and prison guards of the state of Nevada. Nine prison guards were accused of beating the victim, Phillippe Leman, to death. Forensic examinations identified the cause of death as suffocation due to fracture of the throat bone. Yet, a local court pardoned the nine prison guards and acquitted them of responsibilities for the death of the French man.

Torture and forced confession are common in the United States, with the number of convicts on the death row that are misjudged or wronged remaining high. In December 2001, a man on the death row, Alon Patterson, claimed that Chicago police, who used a plastic typewriter cover to suffocate him, forced his confession due to torture. The case aroused extensive attention. As Chicago is under the jurisdiction of Cook County, Chicago Herald Tribune sent reporters to investigate the archives of several thousand-murder cases in Cook since 1991. They found that verdicts were determined in at least 247 cases without witness or evidence and that judgment was based on confessions of the accused only. The credibility of such "confessions" is subject to doubt.

U.S. federal laws and 38 states allow the death penalty. Since the 1990s, crimes punishable by death and the annual number of executions in the United States have been on the increase. Annual executions increased from 23 in 1990 to 98 in 1999. In the last 20 years, the United States has extended the death penalty to more than 60 crimes and speeded up executions by restricting the right of the convicted to appeal. Since 1976 when the U.S. Supreme Court restored the death penalty, about 600 persons have been executed in the United States. According to a February 11, 2002 Reuters report, from 1973 to 1995, the verdicts of 68 percent of convicts on the death row were overturned owing to misjudgment by the court. In the cases with overturned verdicts, 82 percent of the convicts were sentenced to lesser penalties and 9 percent were set free. Since 1973, a total of 99 convicts on the death row have been proven innocent. These people spent an average of eight years of terror in death confines, sustaining tremendous mental trauma. According to an analysis, main reasons for misjudgment were failure to get legal counsel on the part of the accused, confession forcing by the police and prosecutors, and misdirection of the jury by judges.

The United States has the biggest prison population in the world. Prisons there are overcrowded, and inmates ill-treated. A study by the Judicial Policy Institute under the Juvenile and Criminal Hearing Center shows that during the 1992-2000 period, 673,000 people were sent to state or federal prisons and detention centers, and 476 out of every 100,000 people were detained. With prisons burdened with too many inmates, violent conflicts keep occurring. In December 2001, about 300 inmates in a California prison staged a riot, which was put down by prison guards, using tear gas and wooden bullets. Seven prisoners were seriously wounded. The prison in question incarcerated more than 4,000 inmates though it was designed to keep no more than 2,200. Overcrowding often leads to violent clashes among prisoners. In 2000 alone, more than 120 prisoners staged riots, in which ten people were wounded. Drug taking is prevalent in U.S. prisons. In the last ten years, at least 188 inmates died of drug abuse.

Punishment for sex offenders in the United States has become more and more severe. Many phased-out cruel punishments have been reinstated. Some criminals would select the extreme penalty of castration in exchange for a penalty reduction. Castration had been removed as a penalty scores of years before. According to the Los Angeles Times, in California in the last three years, two sex offenders received castration in return for release.

In February 2002, the world was shocked to learn of a scandal involving a crematorium in the United States. Tri-State Crematory in the state of Georgia, instead of cremating human bodies after receiving money for the service, threw the corpses in the woods or stacked them in wooden sheds like cordwood, leaving them to rot there. The shocking practice is said to have lasted 15 years. More than 300 bodies have been found on the grounds of the crematorium so far. The crime is shocking enough, but the state of Georgia does not have a law that is applicable for the crime. What verdict to pass on the suspect remains a legal difficulty.

III. Plight of the Poor, Hungry and Homeless

While the best-developed country in the world, the United States confronts a serious problem of polarization between the rich and the poor. Never has a fundamental change been possible in conditions of the poor, who constitute the forgotten "third world" within this superpower.

The gap between high-income and low-income families in terms of the wealth owned by either group has further widened over the past two decades. In 1979, the average income of the families with the highest incomes, who account for 5 percent of the total in the United States, was about ten times as great as that of the families with the lowest incomes, who account for 20 percent of the total. By 1999, the figure had grown to 19 times. According to a New York Times analysis of a U.S. Census Bureau survey in August 2001, the economic boom the United States experienced in the 1990s failed to make the American middle class richer than in the previous decade. The true fact is that the poor became even poorer and the rich, even wealthier. For most of those in between the two opposite groups, life was worse at the end of the 1990s than at the beginning of the decade. Right now, the richest 1 percent of the Americans own 40 percent of the national wealth. In contrast, the share is a mere 16 percent for 80 percent of the American population. The richest 20 percent of the families in Washington D.C. are 24 times as rich as the poorest 20 percent, up from 18 times a decade ago.

Problems facing the poor, hungry and homeless have become increasingly conspicuous. According to a 2002 report of the American Food Research and Action Center on its website, 10 percent of the American families, in other words 19 million adults and 12 million children, suffered from food insecurity in 1999. In a national survey of emergency feeding program (Hunger in America 2001), America's Second Harvest emergency food providers served 23 million people in the year, 9 percent more than in 1997. The figure included nine million children. Nearly two-thirds of the adult emergency food recipients were women, and more than one in five were elderly.

In its annual report published in December 2001, the United States Conference of Mayors reported a sharp increase in the number of the hungry and homeless in major cities. In the 27 cities covered by a USCM survey, the number of people asking for emergency food increased by an average of 23 percent, and the increase averaged 13 percent for those asking for emergency housing relief. Demand for emergency food supplies grew in 93 percent of the cities covered by the survey. Of those who asked for emergency food, many -- 19 percent more than in the previous year -- had children to support. Of the adults who asked for emergency relief, 37 percent were employed. Hunger in these cities was attributed to low incomes, unemployment, high housing rent, economic recession, welfare reforms, high medical bills and mental disorders. According to a report issued by the U.S.

Department of Labor on November 29, 2001, 4.02 million Americans -- the highest number in 19 years -- were living on relief. The National Alliance to End Homelessness has reported that 750,000 Americans are in a permanent state of homelessness, and that up to two million have had experiences of having no shelter for themselves. People without a roof over themselves have to spend the night in places like street corners, abandoned cars, refuges and parks, where their personal safety cannot be guaranteed.

Lives of the rich seem more valued than lives of the poor. According to *la Liberation* on January 9, 2002, the federal fund set up by the American government would compensate victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks according to their ages, salaries and the number of people in their families, plus a sum in compensation for the mental trauma the family members suffered. This way of fixing the compensations produced shocking results. If a housewife was killed, her husband and two children would be entitled to 500,000 U.S. dollars in compensation from the fund. If the victim happened to be a Wall Street broker, the compensation would be as much as 4.3 million U.S. dollars for his widow and two children. Families of many victims protested against this inequality, compelling the American government to commit itself to revising the method.

IV. Worrying Conditions for Women and Children

Gender discrimination is an important aspect of social inequality in the United States. Until this day, there has been no constitutional provision on equality between men and women. On September 18, 2000, with support of some NGOs, a dozen surviving "comfort women" brought a class action with a federal court in Washington D.C., demanding public apology and compensation from the Japanese government. The U.S. government, however, issued a statement of interest in July 2001, calling for dismissal of the lawsuit on the ground that recruiting of "comfort women" by the Japanese army during the Second World War was a "sovereign act." The statement aroused protests from the U.S. National Organization for Women, the Truth Council for World War II in Asia and other NGOs. This incident, in its own way, reflects current conditions in protection of women's human rights in the United States and America's official attitude towards women's rights demand.

Violence against women is a serious social problem in the United States. According to U.S. official statistics, one American woman is beaten in every 15 seconds on average and some 700,000 cases of rape occur every year. According to the 121st edition of the American Census published on January 24, 2002, in 1998 about one million people were suspected of involvement in violence between spouses and between men and women as friends. In March 2001, Amnesty International USA issued a report after two years' investigation, saying that the human rights of female prison inmates in the United States are often fringed upon and that they often fall victim to sexual harassment or rape by prison guards. Seven states even do not have laws or legal provisions banning sexual relations between prison officials and female inmates.

Protection of American children's rights is far from being adequate. The United States is one of the only two countries that have not acceded to Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is one of the only five countries that execute juvenile offenders in violation of relevant international conventions. More juvenile offenders are executed in the United States than in any of the other four. In 25 states, the youngest age eligible for death sentence is set at 17; and 21 states set that age at 16 or do not impose an age limit at all. Besides, the United States is among the few countries where psychiatric and mentally retarded offenders could be executed. According to the Human Rights Watch, in the 1990s, nine juveniles were sentenced to death in the United States, and the number was greater than that reported by any of the other countries.

American children are susceptible to violence and poverty. According to a report published on November 28, 2001 by the U.S. Violent Policy Center, analysis of the murder data released by FBI shows that from 1995 to 1999, 3,971 infants and juveniles aged one to 17 years were murdered in handgun homicides. The firearm homicide rate for American children was 16 times the figure for children in 25 other industrialized countries. Black children have the highest rate of handgun homicide victimization, seven times higher than that for white children. In April 2000, the U.S. Fund for the Protection of the Child published a green paper on conditions of American children. It quotes

the poverty statistics of the American government for 1999 as saying that more than 12 million children were living below the poverty line set by the federal government, accounting for one-sixth of the total number of children in the country. A report by the U.S. Health and Public Service Department released at the beginning of 2001 says that 10 percent of the American children have mental health problems and that one out of every ten children and children in adolescence suffered from mental illnesses that are serious enough to hurt. Nevertheless, those able to receive treatment could not exceed one-fifth.

The problem of missing children is serious. Figures published by FBI in 2001 showed that in 1999, 750,000 children went missing, accounting for 90 percent of the total number of people who went missing in the year. To put it another way, an average of 2,100 children at 17 or younger went missing every day. Since the Missing Children Act was enacted in 1982, the number of children registered by police as missing has increased by 468 percent.

American children often fall prey to sexual abuse. According to a report published in September 2001 by a group of researchers at the University of Pennsylvania after three years' investigation, about 400,000 American children are streetwalkers or engage in various obscene activities for money near their schools. Children who have fled their homes or are homeless suffer most severely from sexual abuse. Sexual harassment against children by clergymen in the United States is serious. According to Newsweek published on February 26, 2002, the Boston archdiocese of the U.S. Roman Catholic Church has over the past decade paid 1 billion U.S. dollars in compensation in lawsuits of sexual harassment by its clergymen against children. About 80 Boston clergymen are suspected of having molested children sexually. One has been accused of sexually molesting more than 100 children. This, the greatest scandal in the United States following the Enron case, has aroused nationwide attention to the problem that is also common among clergymen elsewhere and, as a result, a string of similar cases have been brought to light.

V. Deep-Rooted Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination is the most serious human rights problem in the United States, a problem that the United States has never resolved since its founding. The United States, as a matter of fact, was notorious for genocide against aboriginal Indians, trade of African blacks and black slavery. In recent years, scandals of racial discrimination have occurred, one after another.

On April 7, 2001, a white police officer shot to death an unarmed black youth in Cincinnati, Ohio, as he was trying to run away after breaking traffic rules. Black people in the city staged mass protests following the death of Timothy Thomas, which culminated in a racial conflict. The incident once again aroused worldwide attention to the problem of racial discrimination in the United States. According to the Observer of Britain published on April 15, 2001, Cincinnati is one of the eight large cities in the United States where the problem of racial discrimination is most serious. Even though the world is already in the 21st century, racial segregation is still practiced by virtually all schools in the city. Timothy Thomas was the fourth black person killed by white police in succession from November 2000 to April 2001, and the 15th black suspect killed by white police in the same city since 1995. It is beyond people's comprehension that during the same period, killing of white suspects by the police never occurred. According to the Associated Press, the mass protests in Cincinnati matched those that broke out after the killing of Martin Luther King.

Racial discrimination is discernible everywhere in the United States. The proportion of federal government posts taken by ethnic minority Americans is much smaller than the proportion of their population in the national total. According to an article in the July-August issue of the bimonthly

World Economic Review, of the 535 senators and Congress men and women, those of Latin-American origin with voting rights number only 19, or 3.5 percent of the total, even though ethnic Latin-Americans account for 12.5 percent of the country's total population. Blacks account for 13 percent of the American population, but are able to win only 5 percent of the public posts through election. There are legal provisions to the effect that colored people must account for a certain percentage in the police force. The true fact, however, is that few black people are able to join the police force and even fewer serve as senior police officers. Take for example Cincinnati. Black people account for 43 percent of the local population but, of the 1,000 members of the local police force, only 250 are blacks. None of the CEOs and presidents of the top 500 companies in the United States are blacks. Blacks holding senior posts at Wall Street investment companies are rare, if any.

Social conditions are bad for ethnic minority Americans. According to the 2000 population census, blacks unable to enjoy medical insurance are twice as many as whites. Only 17 percent of the black population is able to finish higher education, in contrast to 28 percent for whites. The unemployment rate was twice as high for blacks as for whites. Meanwhile, blacks employed for menial service jobs are more than twice as many. Incomes for the average white family averaged 44,366 U.S. dollars in 1999. For an average black family, however, the figure was 25,000 U.S. dollars. According to statistics provided by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, the number of employed ethnic minority Americans has increased by 36 percent since 1990, but the number of charges against racial or ethnical harassment at work-sites has doubled, averaging 9,000 a year. Of the five largest dumps of harmful wastes, three are in residential areas inhabited mainly by blacks and other ethnic minority Americans. Up to 60 percent of the blacks and ethnic Latin Americans are living in places where harmful wastes are dumped.

Racial discrimination is frequently seen in America's judicature. Half of the 2 million prison inmates are blacks, and ethnic Latin Americans account for 16 percent of the total. According to an investigative report published by the United Nations, for the same crime the penalty meted out against the colored can be twice or even thrice as severe as against the white. Blacks sentenced to death for killing whites are four times as many as whites given death penalty for killing blacks. The U.S. Department of Justice reported on March 12, 2001 that threats by the police with force against blacks and ethnic Latin Americans are twice as possible as against whites.

VI. Wantonly Infringing upon Human Rights of Other Countries

The United States ranks first in the world in terms of military spending and arms export. Its military expenditure accounts for nearly 40 percent of the world total, more than the combined military expenditure of the nine countries ranking next to it. Its arms exports account for 36 percent of the world total. U.S. defense budget for the 2003 fiscal year announced by the U.S. Defense Department on February 4, 2002 totaled 379 billion U.S. dollars, up 48 billion U.S. dollars, or 15 percent, over the previous year and representing the highest growth rate in the past two decades.

The United States ranks first in the world in wantonly infringing upon the sovereignty of, and human rights in, other countries. Since the 1990s, the United States has used force overseas on more than 40 occasions. On April 1, 2001, a U.S. military reconnaissance plane flew above waters off China's coast in violation of flight rules, causing the crash of a Chinese aircraft and the death of its pilot. It presumptuously entered China's territorial airspace without permission from the Chinese side and landed on a Chinese military airfield, seriously encroaching upon China's sovereignty and human rights. After the incident, the United States made all sorts of excuses to defend itself, refusing to make a public apology for the serious consequences of its intruding aircraft and trying to shirk its responsibilities. This aroused great indignation and strong protests from the Chinese people.

The United States has built many military bases all over the world, where it has stationed hundreds of thousands of troops, violating human rights everywhere in the world. Before the September 11 incident, the United States had stationed its troops in more than 140 countries. Today, the United States has expanded its so-called security interests to almost every corner of the world. In recent years, U.S. troops stationed in Japan have frequently committed crimes. In 1995, three American soldiers raped a Japanese schoolgirl in Okinawa, sparking massive protests by the Japanese people and arousing the alert of world public opinion. In fact, scandals like this happen almost every year. On January 11, 2001, an American soldier was arrested for molesting a local schoolgirl in Okinawa. On January 19, the Okinawa parliament adopted a resolution of protest against frequent criminal activities by American soldiers, calling for reduction of U.S. troops in Japan. However, in an e-mail message to his subordinates, the U.S. commander in Okinawa insulted the Okinawa magistrate and parliament. On June 29, another soldier of the U.S. air force sexually assaulted a Japanese girl in Kyatan of Okinawa.

The NATO headed by the United States dropped a large number of depleted uranium bombs during the Kosovo war, subjecting peacekeeping soldiers as well as the local people to serious danger. The U.S. side claimed that one of the reasons for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Kosovo is that "it would not let radiation hurt our boys." Latest reports say that the United States knew the dangers of depleted uranium bombs and where they were dropped, and that, when dividing up peacekeeping zones, it allocated the most seriously contaminated areas to allied forces. After the U.S. army entered Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, it gave a boost to the sex industry in the two places. Over the past year, Bosnia-Herzegovina uncovered dozens of women trafficking cases, many of which were associated with the U.S. army. Most of the U.S. soldiers were involved in prostitution and some of them were even involved in selling women. In September 2000, the U.S. Army published a report of more than 600 pages, detailing all kinds of bad behaviors committed by the No.82 air-borne division of its First Army during their peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, admitting that the general atmosphere of the U.S. army in Kosovo is very inhumane.

Available data indicate that in the Gulf War the United States dropped more than 940,000 depleted uranium bombs with a total weight of 320 tons onto Iraqi land, causing serious destruction to the environment of Iraq and the health of its people. The Ministry of Health of Iraq pointed out in a report that the number of cancer patients in Iraq increased dramatically after the Gulf War, from 6,555 in 1989 and 4,341 in 1991 to 10,931 in 1997. In the ten years since the end of the Gulf War, the incidence rate of leukemia, malicious tumors and other difficult and complicated cases in areas hit by depleted uranium bombs in southern Iraq was 3.6 times higher than the national average and the proportion of women with miscarriage was ten times as high as in the past. On February 22, 2002, Emad Sa'doon, a medical expert with Basra University in southern Iraq, disclosed to the media that after many years of research the medical group led by him found that in the 1989-1999 period, the number of patients with blood cancer doubled and the number of women with breast cancer increased 102 percent.

The United States always flaunts the banner of "freedom of the press". Yet according to an Agence France-Presse report on February 21, 2002, the annual report of International Journalism Institute published on the same day pointed out that the way in which the U.S. government dealt with the media during the Afghan War and its attempt at suppressing freedom of speech by independent media were "the most amazing in 2001."

In the United States, close to 100 companies manufacture and export considerable quantities of instruments of torture that are banned in international trade. They have set up sales networks

overseas. In its February 26, 2001 report, Amnesty International said some 80 American companies were involved in the manufacture, marketing and export of instruments of torture, including electric-shock tools, shackles and handcuffs with saw-teeth. Many instruments of torture and police tools are high-tech products, which can cause serious harms to the human body. For instance, handcuffs, which would tear apart the flesh of the tortured if the victim slightly exerts himself, are very cruel, and so is a high-pressure rope for tying up a person. Although categorically prohibited by U.S. law, the Commerce Department of the United States has given official export licenses for exporting such tools.

According to statistics, American companies have secured export licenses and sold tools of torture overseas valued at 97 million U.S. dollars since 1997 under the category of "crime control equipment." It is inconceivable that, while the U.S. State Department is talking about human rights, the U.S. Department of Commerce has given export licenses for products determined as instruments of torture in statutes of the U.S. government, said Dr. William Schulz, who conducted the investigation.

The United States has also conducted irradiation experiments with the dead bodies of babies from overseas. The Daily Telegraph and the Observer of the United Kingdom disclosed in June of 2001 that the United States has recently declassified some top-secret documents, which indicate that in the 1950s the United States carried out what was called "Project Sunshine" experiments. For these experiments, about 6,000 dead babies were obtained from overseas and cremated without permission of their parents. The ashes were sent to laboratories for irradiation studies.

The U.S. government has until this day refused to sign the Basel Convention, which restricts the transfer of waste materials. It often transfers dangerous waste materials by different methods to developing countries, damaging the health of the people of other countries. The Associated Press reported on February 25, 2002 that, according to an estimate by environmental protection organizations, as much as 50 percent to 80 percent of the electronic wastes collected by the United States in the name of recycling have been shipped to a number of countries in Asia for waste treatment, causing serious environmental and health problems to the local people.

The United States has announced its withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, refusing to bear the responsibilities of improving the environment for human survival and bringing about negative impacts on environmental protection efforts in the world.

The Third UN Conference Against Racism held in Durban of South African in September 2001 was an important gathering in the area of international human rights at the beginning of the new century. It attracted representatives from more than 190 countries, which reflected the burning desire of the international community to eliminate hatred accumulated over time and eradicate the remnants of racism through dialogue and cooperation. The United States, however, turned a deaf ear to the voices of the international community. Ignoring its international obligations, it asserted openly to boycott the conference before it was opened. Although the United States sent a low-level delegation to the conference as a result of prompting and persuasion by the United Nations, it took the lead in opposing discussing slave trade and colonial compensation, expressed opposition to putting Zionism on a par with racism, and walked out of the conference midway. Behaviors of the United States at the conference revealed its hypocrisy when it professes itself as "a world judge of human rights" and show how arrogant and isolated the hegemonic acts of the U.S. government are.

For many years, the U.S. government has year after year published reports on human rights conditions in other countries in disregard of the opposition of many countries in the world, cooking

up charges, twisting facts and censoring all countries except itself. It also publishes a report every year to make a so-called appraisal of anti-drug trafficking campaigns of 24 countries including all Latin American countries. The United States deals with any country it deems "inefficient in cracking down on drug trafficking" with condemnation, sanctions, interference in the latter's internal affairs, or outright invasion.

In 2001, without support from the majority of member countries, the United States was voted out of the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the International Narcotics Committee. This shows, from one aspect, that it is extremely unpopular for the United States to push double standards and unilateralism on such issues as human rights, crackdowns on drug trafficking, arms control and environmental protection. We urge the United States to change its ways, give up its hegemonic practice of creating confrontation and interfering in the internal affairs of others by exploiting the human rights issue, go with the tide of the times characterized by cooperation and dialogue in the area of human rights, and do more useful things for the progress and development of the human society.