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2002

39th Alfred and Winifred Hoernlé Memorial Lecture

Aiding Democracy around the World: The Challenges after September 11

Carl Gershman

The fall of communism in central Europe gave impetus to the 'third wave' of democracy, of which South Africa was a part. Dozens of authoritarian regimes were toppled and transitional countries 'found themselves frantically trying to adjust to a new global context'.

In this, the 39th Hoernlé lecture, Carl Gershman describes how the post cold war period and then September 11 refocused efforts to promote democracy. The political and ideological roots of terrorism shifted the focus of the established democracies on to the support of meaningful efforts to make the transition to modernity and democracy.

Mr Gershman also reminds us that 'there is no substitute for the courage, the tenacity, and the ingenuity of the people who work for democracy at the grassroots level'.

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, non-profit organisation created in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions around the world through nongovernmental efforts. The Endowment is governed by an independent, nonpartisan board of directors. With its annual congressional appropriation, it makes hundreds of grants each year to support prodemocracy groups in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

Carl Gershman has been president of the National Endowment for Democrarcy since 1984. He has presided over the Endowment's grants programme in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Latin America. Mr Gershman has also contributed vitally to the formation of the World Movement for Democracy and its African network, the Africa Democracy Forum.

Formerly, Mr Gershman was senior counsellor to the United States Representative to the United Nations, in which capacity he served as the US representative to the UN's Third Committee, which deals with human rights issues, and also as alternate US representative to the UN security council.

Mr Gershman received a BA degree from Yale University, (Magna Cum Laude); and a MEd from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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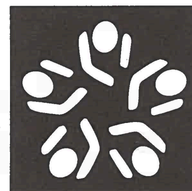

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THE ALFRED AND WINIFRED HOERNLÉ MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Hoernlé Memorial Lecture honours Professor R F Alfred Hoernlé, and his wife, Agnes Winifred Hoernlé, both of whom, as presidents, shaped Institute thinking during the organisation's early existence.

Alfred Hoernlé was an internationally recognised philosopher. He was born in Bonn, educated in Saxony and at Oxford, and became a professor of philosophy at the South African College at the age of 28. After teaching in Britain and the United States between 1911 and 1923, he became professor of philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand. He joined the Institute in 1932, guiding it as president for almost a decade from 1934 to 1943. Alfred Hoernlé is known also for his Phelps-Stokes lectures presented to the University of Cape Town in 1939, and published as *South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit*.

Winifred Hoernlé was a senior lecturer in social anthropology at the University of the Witwatersrand. She joined the Institute's executive committee in 1946, and held the position of president three times. In the 1940s, she was a member of the government commission of inquiry into penal and prison reform. Winifred Hoernlé also worked to improve the welfare of children and Asians.

Aiding Democracy Around the World: The challenges after September 11

I want to begin by thanking my good friend John Kane-Berman for inviting me to deliver the 39th Annual Hoernlé Memorial Lecture, and to let you know what an honour it is for me to do so. Alfred and Winifred Hoernlé helped shape and guide the South African Institute of Race Relations in the decades before the modern struggle for black liberation placed the issue of apartheid on the agenda of the entire international community. For 70 years, from that distant period until today, the Institute has never wavered from its central mission, which is the defense of liberal values. Through its Free Society Project, which has received sustained support from the National Endowment for Democracy, the Institute has played a vital role as a nonpartisan government watchdog organisation. Through this and other programmes, it has demonstrated its commitment to the principle enunciated a century-and-a-half ago by the American abolitionist Wendall Phillips, that 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.' It is thus a special pleasure for me to be here this evening.

It was in the spring of 1986, when I visited South Africa with the great American civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, that I first met John and was introduced to the work of the Institute. At the time South Africa was in the middle of a full-blown revolution, with the United Democratic Front seeking the removal of apartheid administrators from the black townships. Bayard was a follower of Gandhi and a deep believer in the efficacy of nonviolent struggle. In the view of many people, he had done more than anyone to instill the philosophy of nonviolence in the American civil rights movement. I must confess, though, that even Bayard found it hard to believe that the revolutionary struggle and the bitter, desperate

conflict we were witnessing in South Africa could be followed by a period of reconciliation and a peaceful transition to non-racial democracy. Neither of us expected a miracle, and only a miracle could have brought about such a transformation.

Bayard died the following year, just before the events leading to precisely this miracle began to unfold. The presidential changeover from P W Botha to Frederik Willem de Klerk, the release from prison of Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the ANC, the abolition of apartheid and the negotiation of a new interim constitution, the election of Mandela as president at the head of an ANC-led government, three subsequent successful countrywide elections for national and local government, and most remarkably the creation of a common nation after decades of apparently irreconcilable racial conflict — the contemplation of all of this still leaves one breathless, despite all the difficult challenges for South Africa that still lie ahead. The South African transition is surely one of the most extraordinary and positive developments in modern history.

The transformation of South Africa was part of a worldwide phenomenon that the political scientist Samuel Huntington has called democracy's 'third wave'. While this wave of democratisation began before the fall of communism in Central Europe and the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War gave it a powerful momentum, causing the toppling of dozens of authoritarian regimes across the globe, a large number of them on the African continent. Eventually, of course, the wave receded, and the transitional countries found themselves frantically trying to adjust to a new global context. The problems they faced were formidable.

With the full onset of globalisation, for example, the newly democratising countries were suddenly buffeted by powerful economic forces that they couldn't hope to manage without radically modernising their economic, legal, educational, and social institutions. In addition, the disappearance of the political and ideological certainties of the Cold War unleashed lethal ethnic, sectarian, and communal tensions, leading to numerous intrastate wars and devastated societies that quickly became international breeding grounds for refugees, disease, crime, and violence.

These and other new challenges and obstacles prompted the established democracies to place a much higher priority than ever before on democracy promotion, which quickly became a major field of international assistance and cooperation. Before the post-Cold War period, the main providers of international democracy assistance were the West German party foundations, a handful of private United States foundations, and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which had become operational only in the mid-1980s. After 1989, with so many post-communist and other countries having to build the institutions of democracy and a market economy, the field expanded to include government assistance agencies; multilateral institutions like the United Nations, the European Commission, and the Organisation of American States; and additional private foundations. Many established democracies also created their own political foundations based on some variant of the NED or German model.

As the field grew, so did the scope of work. Election monitoring and assistance was accorded a high priority, especially during the early period of founding elections. But as time passed, resources were focused increasingly on issues of governance such as fighting corruption and strengthening local government, the judiciary, and the parliament. Considerable assistance also went to civil society organisations committed to monitoring government performance and increasing citizen awareness and participation.

Inevitably, critics emerged who raised questions about both the efficacy and the value of democracy assistance. One linked such assistance to the rise of 'illiberal democracy', the allegation being that in many of the so-called 'new democracies', elections simply masked and legitimised regimes that were hardly less repressive and corrupt than their authoritarian predecessors. Another warned that international funding was creating artificial nongovernment organisations (NGOs) and anointing them as the representatives of civil society, by-passing authentic grassroots organisations that were less responsive to the international donor community. There was also the nagging concern, voiced frequently within the democracy-promotion community itself, that some of the new

assistance was an exercise in social engineering by development specialists more than an effort to empower citizens to seek solutions to their country's problems. Some of these tendencies became especially pronounced when multiple agencies converged on a small failed state with the aim of carrying out a crash programme of nation-building.

The challenge facing the NED during this new period was to find its niche in this expanding field of activity and to define a unique role that would enable the NED to have a significant impact despite its relatively modest resources. It did this by strengthening its grants programme and supplementing it with new capabilities in the areas of research and international democracy networking. The grants programme, having been focused primarily in Latin America and Central Europe in the 1980s, expanded significantly to include support to groups in Africa, Asia, all the parts of the former Soviet Union, and even the Middle East. It provided both direct support to hundreds of indigenous NGOs operating often in perilous circumstances — civil society organisations in the Congo, for example, or Arab women's groups and Tibetan exiles — and technical assistance in the areas of political development and governance offered by the NED's affiliated party, labor, and business institutes. In addition, the NED simultaneously launched the Journal of Democracy and a programme of research, conferences, and fellowships that helped link the practitioner and academic communities around the world. It further developed its ability to network the growing international democracy community by launching the World Movement for Democracy, a loose, proactive association of democrats in all regions and fields of work designed to foster greater collaboration and solidarity among democratic forces around the world.

All of these capabilities were in place when the September 11 attacks occurred, which once again transformed the political and international context in which the NED was operating. Before September 11, the NED's work was accepted in the United States as an expression of American values and as a way to advance the country's long-term interest in the strengthening of liberal demo-

cratic societies and institutions around the world. Despite some rocky moments in the 1990s when some Members of the United States Congress questioned whether such work was still needed after the downfall of communism, the NED was able to retain broad bi-partisan support. Still, for much of the last decade, the job of making the case for why the United States should devote resources to helping countries become successful, functioning democracies often seemed like an uphill battle. What was missing from the discussion was a compelling argument that tied democracy promotion not just to America's values and long-term interests but to its vital security interests as well.

This picture changed dramatically with the terrorist attacks of September 11. To be sure, the immediate reaction in the United States was to respond directly to the terrorists by attacking their bases in Afghanistan, cutting off their finances, building a global anti-terrorist coalition, and strengthening domestic and international defense capabilities. But the public discussion that followed September 11, in which Americans tried to comprehend these horrific events, called attention to the need to address the political and ideological roots of terrorism. The radical Islamic terrorists who carried out the attacks were the products of deeply divided societies that had failed to meet the challenges of modernisation, and as a consequence had spawned movements virulently opposed to modernity in all its forms. But such societies also contained individuals, tendencies, and movements that wanted to adjust to modernity by building viable political and economic institutions. Clearly the interests of the United States and the democratic world as a whole would be served by finding ways to encourage and support meaningful efforts within these societies to make the transition to modernity and democracy.

The NED's mission of democracy promotion was thus profoundly relevant to the issues raised by the attacks of September 11. At the same time, the NED could not simply drop whatever else it was doing and reorient its programmes entirely toward the countries from which the terrorists had emerged. Democracy was back-sliding in many countries in Africa, Latin America, and other

regions, and the NED could not disengage from these problems. The challenge for the NED was to integrate the new priority of aiding democracy in the Muslim world into all aspects of its grants programme and other democracy-promotion activities. The development of a new 5-year strategic plan, which was scheduled to be presented to the NED Board anyway by the beginning of this year, offered the opportunity to address this new challenge.

In addition to a special section on aiding democracy in the Muslim world, about which more in a moment, the Strategy Document approved by the NED Board in January sets forth four broad objectives. The first objective, one that has always been a central part of the NED mission, is to encourage the opening of dictatorial systems. NED programmes in this area place special emphasis on the defense of human rights and the provision of access to independent information, activities that are necessary first steps in liberalising closed societies. The principle governing such programmes is feasibility. The NED presses the limits of what it is possible to do in circumstances that are often very difficult and dangerous. For example, if space opens up to make it possible to conduct democracy programmes inside dictatorial countries with the acquiescence of the government, NED readily takes advantage of this opportunity, in accordance with its pragmatic approach. If access to the Internet is available, even if it is highly restricted, the Endowment will seek to take advantage of that channel, too. The NED and its institutes also seek to build international pressure for democratic openings, as in the case of Burma, where American labor has defended the rights of Burmese workers in the International Labor Organisation, and National Democratic Institute (NDI) has recruited more than 3 000 parliamentarians in a campaign of international solidarity.

NED programmes in dictatorial countries thus vary along a spectrum of possibility. For example, in North Korea, which is the most closed country, the NED has provided support to groups in South Korea that document the repressive conditions in North Korea and are working to build an international campaign for the defense of human rights there. In Burma, it has supported cross-

border efforts from Thailand and India that provide training, education, and information to Burmese groups to help them develop their institutional capacity and their ability to communicate internally and with the international community. In Cuba, where it has become possible only recently to support internal democratic groups, the NED has provided assistance to journalists, independent workers' organisations, and cooperatives, all the while maintaining exile-based programmes that defend human rights, provide uncensored information, and encourage dialogue within Cuba and in the diaspora about the political future of the country. (Just last night NDI held a big dinner in Washington for Oswaldo Paya, the leader of the Varela Project, a petition drive within Cuba calling for a referendum on basic freedoms.) And in China the NED has conducted an even more diversified effort, aiding both internal programmes to promote democratisation, worker rights, and market reform; and external programmes that defend human rights and provide access to independent ideas and information.

The second objective is democratising semi-authoritarian countries. Semi-authoritarianism is one of the many terms (including pseudo-democracy, hybrid regimes, and competitive authoritarianism) used to describe countries that fall somewhere between dictatorship and electoral democracy. A factor common to all such regimes is that the elections are not free and fair, because they are constrained and controlled by the ruling party or otherwise distorted by fraud and manipulation. In addition, such regimes tend to have an overwhelmingly dominant executive; formal democratic structures but authoritarian political culture and practices; serious human rights violations; residual authoritarian laws even where there is a new democratic constitution; and a very high level of corruption and inequality. The rule of law is extremely weak, as are the institutions of the state that are supposed to provide security and look after the social and economic needs of the people.

Ironically, these problems are the product of the democratic revolution I mentioned earlier — or to be more precise, the unfinished democratic revolution. The fall of authoritarian regimes in Latin America, the Soviet bloc, and large parts of Asia and sub-

Saharan Africa triggered a worldwide process of democratisation that in many instances produced significant results. But in the large majority of cases it came up against ingrained legacies of authoritarian culture and practice. As many transitions stalled, hopes for an inexorable forward movement toward democracy gave way to the realisation that democratisation is a slow and arduous process, subject to reversals, and that some variation of semi-authoritarianism, more or less harsh, is likely to persist in many former dictatorships for some time to come.

The NED is committed to staying engaged in semi-authoritarian countries such as Russia, Ukraine, Kenya, Venezuela, and Egypt whose success or failure will significantly affect the prospect for democratic development in their respective regions. Moreover, since semi-authoritarianism involves shortcomings in so many different sectors, the NED is often able to respond in a comprehensive way by taking advantage of its multi-sectoral structure that includes party, union, and business institutes, while also supporting civil society and independent media.

While there are no easy answers to the problems of semi-authoritarianism, the NED has found it especially important to assist efforts to establish more neutral, independent, and effective election administration and to assist civil society organisations and the mass media in monitoring the conduct of elections; to expand the constitutional, legal, and political space for civil society, NGOs, and opposition political party development; to establish linkages between civil society and political parties, and also to promote collaboration between them and independent media, trade unions, business associations, and the grassroots informal sector; and to encourage cross-border assistance within regions as a way of strengthening democratic cooperation and solidarity, sharing relevant experiences, building on local momentum for change, and promoting regional integration and the gradual enlargement of democratic practice.

The third NED objective is consolidating new democracies. These are countries where democratic institutions have been established only recently and are still very weak, but where elections are reasonably free and fair and there is broad support within and

outside the government in favor of deepening democratic consolidation. In such emerging democracies as Thailand, Mexico, Bulgaria, Ghana, or Bangladesh, democracy cannot be taken for granted and back-sliding is an ever-present possibility. Special emphasis should be placed on efforts to make governments more accountable and transparent in their functioning; generating, supporting, and sharing innovative solutions to problems of consolidation; increasing broad-based participation in the political process; and strengthening the capacity and transparency of political parties.

The consolidation of these emerging and vulnerable democracies is especially important at a time when progress has stalled on so many other fronts. Not only do models of successful transition help lift the spirits of those trying to break out of semi-authoritarianism. They also offer practical lessons in how to overcome the obstacles to making democratic institutions effective. No one is more capable of transmitting these lessons than the activists from newly consolidated democracies. Their contribution to those still struggling against the legacies of authoritarianism is one of the less appreciated by-products of successful transitions.

The fourth objective we have called healing war-torn societies. As already noted, the political uncertainties unleashed by the end of the Cold War and the pressures of globalisation have led to the breakdown of old political structures and to heightened religious and ethnic conflict. While the wars in the Balkan region have attracted the most attention, many conflicts in such countries as Somalia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Afghanistan have been even more devastating.

Efforts by the international community to negotiate solutions to such conflicts are generally limited to holding talks among leaders of different ethnic, religious, or tribal factions. But peace agreements will not last unless civil society is brought into the process and becomes invested in negotiated solutions through an inclusive democratic process. Including civil society groups also has the effect of diluting the influence of some non-democratic people who control armed factions and thus must be part of the talks.

In many of these situations, the NED has been able to provide critically-needed support to groups in civil society that defend human rights, educate about democracy, and provide training in conflict resolution. Often they use innovative techniques, including popular theatre and concerts as well as traditional media, to build trust and nurture a culture of tolerance. In effect, they establish enclaves of democratic values and inter-ethnic dialogue and become centers of grassroots pressure for peace and reconciliation. They also help marshall international support for democracy assistance and the defense of human rights. If negotiations are started, they can then give voice and representation to civil society in the process of establishing peace. In a post-war setting, they can also help the process of healing and offer an alternative model and vision of democratic social and political organisation. The goal in divided societies is to build a culture of peace as a necessary foundation for democratic development.

In addition to describing these four broad objectives, the NED Strategy Document devoted a special section to the whole question of aiding democracy in the Muslim world, a vast region that consists of more than one billion people and stretches some 10 000 miles from Morocco to Indonesia. This is an immensely diverse region politically, composed of countries that fall into all of the categories listed above — from dictatorships such as Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Turkmenistan; to semi-authoritarian countries like Pakistan, Egypt or Tunisia; to electoral or emerging democracies such as Turkey, Mali, Indonesia, and Bangladesh; to war-torn countries like Algeria, Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan. Fully one-eighth of the world's Muslim population lives as a minority in democratic India.

While recognising this diversity, there are three principal reasons for highlighting the importance of aiding democracy in the Muslim world. First, there is a significant 'democracy gap' between the Muslim world as a whole and the rest of the world. According to the most recent Freedom House survey of Freedom in the World, only 11 of the 47 countries with a Muslim majority (23 percent) have democratically elected governments, as compared with 110 of the 145 non-Muslim countries (76 percent); and none of the 16 Arab states is an electoral democracy. Second, it is also within the Muslim world that democracy is under political and ideological challenge from Islamic movements that preach intolerance and hatred. Such movements may not be broadly representative of the population in the countries where they exist, but their influence is considerable. Finally, since such movements often resort to violence to achieve their ends, it is within the Muslim world where the absence of democracy has provided fertile soil for the growth of terrorism that targets the world's democracies.

Within these deeply divided societies, the moderate forces face four inter-related challenges. The first is to liberalise the political system, ending repression and human rights violations, permitting freedom of expression and association, and introducing genuine party contestation. The second is to modernise the state and the economy, so that meaningful steps can be taken to reduce poverty, ignorance, and inequality and to provide young people with opportunity and hope. The third is to control corruption and establish a genuine rule of law. And the fourth is to end the political abuse of religion and to reconcile Islam — the framework in much of the Muslim world for political and social activism — with modern concepts of pluralism, citizenship, and individual rights.

In meeting this last challenge, the Strategy Document emphasises the importance of involving in NED programmes liberal Muslims — individuals who work within the Islamic tradition and who are also in favor of liberal democracy — as a way of strengthening these elements and countering the political abuse of religion. While many NED country programmes already involve liberal Muslims, the Document urges that they be expanded in the Middle East and, where appropriate, in parts of Asia and Africa to strengthen existing networks of liberal Islamic thinkers and develop new ones; to promote a public discourse on Islam and democratic politics; and to develop civic education programmes that provide a modernist treatment of the role of Islam in public life. In addition, the Document recommends that more focus be given to the dissemination of first-hand accounts and systematic

analyses of life in Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan under the Taliban, the three contemporary examples of theocratic dictatorships. Conversely, it also emphasises the need to highlight the positive lessons to be drawn from the experiences of Turkey, Bangladesh, Mali, Senegal, Bahrain, Morocco and other contemporary examples of Muslim countries where democratisation has progressed. Finally, the Document underlined that empowering women at the grassroots level and promoting their enhanced participation in the political and cultural life of Muslim societies are preconditions for democratic progress.

The NED's Strategy Document and global grants programme reflect the existence today of a self-generating, autonomous, and extraordinarily decentralised world democracy movement made up of tens of thousands of democracy activists working to expand democratic participation, government accountability, economic opportunity, human and minority rights, independent media, and the rule of law. Within this movement the grassroots NGOs working throughout sub-Saharan Africa play a vital role, even though their accomplishments in their own countries, and their contribution to the broader movement, are often overlooked. I can understand why there are many people within the policy and academic communities who view African democracy as a glass at best half-empty. But I think their view is not only unhelpful, since it can only discourage pro-democracy efforts in Africa, but also mistaken.

A few years ago the NED's Journal of Democracy ran a series of articles on African trends, one of which bemoaned the rapid closure of the democratic opening that began in 1989. It charged that both African leaders and the international community preferred a cynical form of 'virtual democracy' — electoral forms that camouflage unchallenged state power, human rights abuses, violence, and criminality — to real democratisation. In the same issue there was a different assessment written by the Ghanaian political scientist E Gyimah-Boadi, who saw instead a rebirth of genuine African liberalism marked by the rise of constitutional democracy, the flourishing of civil society, and the emergence of parliaments as key institutions in African governance.

To be sure, Gyimah-Boadi also called attention to some of the severe shortcomings in African democracy, among them numerous instances of electoral fraud, continued strongman rule in many countries, widespread corruption, and intensified ethnic, sectarian, and communal violence. But he took heart from powerful countertrends, including 'increasingly competitive multiparty elections, crusading journalists, increasingly assertive judicial bodies, livelier parliaments, and more-vibrant civil societies'. He was also encouraged by the durability of the democratic wave, which by 1998 had already lasted longer than the short-lived post-colonial experiment in democracy.

Writing in a more recent issue of the same journal, another political scientist, Nicholas van de Walle, points out that the pur- veyors of gloom not only underrate the gains that have been made and set impossibly strict standards, but also overlook the enormous diversity of African regimes. Van de Walle distinguishes, for example, between 14 sub-Saharan countries where the incumbent regime was pushed from power during the early years of the democratisation wave (1990–94), and ten other countries where the single party regime managed to hold on to power despite the transition to multiparty competition. Using the Freedom House system that scores countries on political rights and civil liberties (a score of 1 is the most free while 7 is the least), he found that the 14 countries averaged 3.2 for political rights and 3.4 for civil liberties, while the corresponding scores for the other 10 countries were 5.5 and 5.4. 'Getting rid of the old ruler', van de Walle concludes, 'opened space for new political actors and organisations, spurred competition, set a precedent for future elections, and often reinforced the legislature and judiciary relative to the executive branch. Ten years later, it continues to matter.'

The main point seems to be that small gains matter, since they can be used as building blocks for further gains later on, and also provide the political space that make possible what van de Walle calls 'institutional learning'. This is the process whereby people gain experience, confidence, and new capabilities, and democratic institutions can become rooted and durable. Viewed from afar, the democratic space that permits such growth may seem limited and

constraining. But for the activists who fight for such space, every new opening is a beachhead that must be cherished and defended. All democracy activists embrace this principle, but the African activists do so, I think, with unequaled determination.

In so doing, they also convey the message that the principal agents of change are the people themselves. International democracy assistance, in the form of both technical and financial help, is important. But there is no substitute for the courage, the tenacity, and the ingenuity of the people who work for democracy at the grassroots level.

This is especially true in those countries that have suffered the most from communal and sectarian violence. I am continually amazed to learn about groups like the Badya Center for Integrated Development Services which promotes peace, education and human rights among youth, women, and street children in the Nuba mountains of Sudan; or the Center for Democracy and Human Rights which defends human rights and promotes the rule of law and responsible local government in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone, where some of the worst atrocities have been committed; or Les Amis de Nelson Mandela that is one of the many grassroots groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo that provides training in human rights, the rights of women, and legal services. Such groups — and there are many, many others — should remind us that even in the most violent countries, the glass is half-full if there are people with the courage to choose life and resist inhumanity.

Activists from these groups, and hundreds of others from Africa and other regions, will gather in Durban next April for the Third Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy. We are grateful to our South African friends for welcoming us so warmly, and for providing us with so much support and cooperation. South Africa is a wonderful venue for a world democracy meeting, and we are especially happy that our meeting will coincide with South Africa's Freedom Day. As I think I have explained this evening, the challenges at hand are formidable, and we will not be able to accomplish the work that lies ahead if we do not remember how far democracy has come. We can therefore look forward to our meeting in Durban with confidence and even inspiration.

Vote of thanks by theChief Executive of the Institute, John Kane-Berman

The first Hoernlé lecture was delivered in 1945 by Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr, deputy prime minister in General Smuts's government. He was also a vice-president of the Institute, but, unfortunately, too liberal for his party's good. Hofmeyr was thus seen as one of the reasons why Smuts lost the 1948 general election, following which we had all those years of intensified apartheid. But 1948 was also the year after President Truman proclaimed the commitment of the United States to the containment of communism.

It was no coincidence that communism and apartheid finally collapsed at the same time. Nor is it coincidence that both the National Endowment for Democracy and the South African Institute of Race Relations are still in business.

Carl Gershman has told us this evening that some members of the US congress had wondered whether the NED was still needed after the downfall of communism. But history had not come to an end after all, and even before the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11th last year, the NED had identified four broad objectives:

- the opening up of closed and dictatorial systems;
- democratising semi-authoritarian societies;
- consolidating new democracies; and
- helping heal war-torn countries.

September 11th added a new dimension: the promotion of democracy is vital from a security perspective. Many people have blamed the attacks on poverty, and, by implication, on the divide between the rich world and the poor. Carl Gershman is surely right, however, in focusing on the link between terrorism and the absence of democracy in a great many Muslim countries. Moderate forces in these countries, he says, face four challenges:

- liberalising their political systems;
- modernising the state and the economy so as to be able to reduce poverty;
- controlling corruption and establishing the rule of law; and
- ending the political abuse of religion.

Some of these challenges abound on this continent. In adopting President Thabo Mbeki's ambitious New Partnership for Africa's Development (known by its acronym, Nepad), the new African Union breaks new ground in explicitly recognising that development depends critically on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Nor, as Carl reminded us, is the picture of democracy in Africa as bleak as it sometimes appears. He cited some of the gains that have been made, and I know that the NED and its partners are deeply engaged in building upon them.

There is also good news on the economic front: the African economy as a whole grew by 4.3% last year, is growing by 3.1% this year, and is expected by the IMF to grow by 4.2% next year. (Nor is this South Africa's doing: our figures are lower so we drag the continental average down.)

That said, Carl's warnings are timeous. 'Democracy cannot be taken for granted and backsliding is an ever-present possibility'. Nepad has been badly damaged by South Africa's persistent refusal to speak up clearly, and in public, for democracy in Zimbabwe. 'Even in the most violent countries,' Carl told us, 'the glass is half-full if there are people with the courage to choose life and resist inhumanity.'

Our own government's most reprehensible failure with regard to Zimbabwe is not on the level of diplomacy, but at a moral level: we have given no sign of sympathy, let alone support, to people fighting to restore democracy there. In fact, we continue to denigrate them. Yet President Mbeki and his colleagues must know how important such encouragement was to their own long struggle.

Our own government's unwillingness to speak out for democracy in Zimbabwe has also given rise to questions about the depth of its own commitment should it ever face a major loss of support. This is one of the reasons why civil society in South Africa needs to

keep up the pressure on our government with regard to Zimbabwe. Carl Gershman quoted the famous words of Wendall Phillips nearly 150 years ago: 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.'

The Institute has been playing that role for nearly 75 years. Our ability to do it has been greatly enhanced in recent years by the continued support of Carl Gershman and the NED, mostly channelled through the International Republican Institute, for which I would like to thank them. I can promise them that we will keep playing it, because, as Phillips implied, the job is never complete.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to welcome Carl Gershman here this evening. In thanking him for the inspiration and upliftment he has given us in his Hoernle lecture, I want to present him with two local first editions of semi-autobiographical works written several decades apart by people in some ways several worlds apart: *Blame Me on History* by Bloke Modisane and *My Traitor's Heart* by Rian Malan. I would also like to pay tribute to the work the NED is doing under his leadership. Its global reach is awe-inspiring, but equally impressive are the niceties of its approach, depending on local possibilities. Also to be admired are the combination of idealism and humility with matter-of-fact application at the grass-roots level. As he said, 'Small gains matter...every new opening is a beachhead that must be cherished and defended. We are delighted that South Africa has been chosen for the third assembly of the World Movement for Democracy. We look forward to seeing Carl and his colleagues in Durban in April next year.

PREVIOUS HOERNLÉ LECTURES

Lecturer	Lecture
J H Hofmeyr	Christian principles and race problems (1945)
E G Malherbe	Race attitudes and education (1946)
I D MacCrone	Group conflicts and race prejudice (1947)
Winifred Hoernlé	Penal reform and race relations (1948)
W M Macmillan	Africa beyond the Union (1949)
Edgar Brookes	We come of age (1950)
H J van Eck	Some aspects of the South African industrial revolution (1951)
S Herbert Frankel	Some reflections on civilisation in Africa (1952)
A R Radcliffe Brown	Outlook for Africa (1953)
Emory Ross	Colour and Christian community (1954)
T B Davie	Education and race relations in South Africa (1955)
Gordon W Allport	Prejudice in modern perspective (1956)
B B Keet	The ethics of apartheid (1957)
David Thomson	The government of divided communities (1958)
Simon Biesheuvel	Race, culture and personality (1959)
C W de Kiewiet	Can Africa come of age? (1960)
Dennis Cowen	Liberty, equality, fraternity — today (1961)
Denis E Hurley	Apartheid: Crisis of the Christian conscience (1964)
Gwendolen M Carter	Separate development: The challenge of the Transkei (1966)
Keith Hancock	Are there South Africans? (1966)
Meyer Fortes	The plural society in Africa (1968)
D Hobart Houghton	Enlightened self-interest and the liberal spirit (1970)
Tony Mathews	Freedom and state security in the South African plural society (1971)
Philip Mayer	Urban Africans and the bantustans (1972)
Alan Pifer	The higher education of blacks in the United States (1973)
M G Buthelezi	White and black nationalism, ethnicity and the future of the homelands (1974)
Monica Wilson	'...So truth be in the field...' (1975)
Marshall W Murphree	Education, development and change in Africa (1976)
G R Bozzoli	Education is the key to change in South Africa (1977)
Hugh Ashton	Moral suasion (1978)
Alan Paton	Towards racial justice: Will there be a change of heart? (1979)
Leon Sullivan	The role of multinational corporations in South Africa (1980)
Alan Paton	Federation or desolation (1985)
Charles Simkins	Liberalism and the problem of power (1986)
M M Corbett	Guaranteeing fundamental freedoms in a new South Africa (1990)
Richard Goldstone	Do judges speak out? (1993)
Lionel Abrahams	The democratic chorus and individual choice (1995)
Michael O'Dowd	Ideas have consequences (2000)

The Hoernlé Memorial Lectures

The IRR is republishing the text of the Hoernlé Memorial Lectures, a series of talks which started in 1945. The original introductory note to the lecture series reads as follows:

> *A lecture, entitled the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture (in memory of the late Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernle), President of the Institute from 1934—1943), will be delivered once a year under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations. An invitation to deliver the lecture will be extended each year to some person having special knowledge and experience of racial problems in Africa or elsewhere.*
>
> *It is hoped that the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture will provide a platform for constructive and helpful contributions to thought and action. While the lecturers will be entirely free to express their own views, which may not be those of the Institute as expressed in its formal decisions, it is hoped that lecturers will be guided by the Institute's declaration of policy that "scientific study and research must be allied with the fullest recognition of the human reactions to changing racial situations; that respectful regard must be paid to the traditions and usages of the various national, racial and tribal groups which comprise the population; and that due account must be taken of opposing views earnestly held."*

About the IRR

Since 1929, the Institute of Race Relations has advocated for a free, fair, and prospering South Africa. At the heart of this vision lie the fundamental principles of liberty of the individual and equality before the law guaranteeing the freedom of all citizens. The IRR stands for the right of all people to make decisions about their lives without undue political or bureaucratic interference.

IRR