Jimmy Carter's Human Rights Diplomacy and the Democratization of Taiwan

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Abstract
President Carter began a new era of American diplomacy by attempting to refocus America's foreign policy towards promoting human rights. Taiwan provides an interesting case study to see the effectiveness of Carter's human rights policy and the difficulty in applying it to nations that were of critical importance during the Cold War. In particular, this thesis analyzes the relationship between arms sales to Taiwan, human rights, and the process of normalization with the People's Republic of China, as well as the integration of human rights into foreign policy decision making. This paper also examines the impact of American embassy initiatives on human rights and the process of democratization in Taiwan.

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Jimmy Carter, however, severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan, terminated the security treaty, and recognized the People's Republic as the sole legitimate government of China. A firestorm ensued. Reagan reaffirmed the Shanghai Communique. We understood the positive link between the defense of our own freedom and the promotion of human rights. But recent policies have cost our nation its reputation as the world's most admired champion of freedom and justice. Source: Primetime speech to the Democratic
National Convention, Jul 28, 2004. We cannot lead the world if our leaders mislead. We cannot enhance our own security if we place in jeopardy what is most precious to us, namely the centrality of human rights in our daily lives & in global affairs.