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**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

July 24, 1997

The Honorable Madeleine Albright  
Secretary of State  
2201 C St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20520

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
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Dear Madam Secretary,

We write to express our dismay at the disregard for fundamental democratic principles which has recently been shown by President Alberto Fujimori of Peru, and we urge the United States government to register its strong disapproval of these violations of human rights.

The two most glaring examples that disturb us are the removal of Peruvian Supreme Court Judges because they raised questions about President Fujimori's plans to run for a third term, and the decision to revoke the citizenship of a television station owner because he voiced criticism of Fujimori's policies.

Drastically curtailing the independence of the Judiciary by removing Judges for the "crime" of honestly differing with a Presidential interpretation of the Constitution, and expelling from the country a media figure for the "crime" of airing criticism of the government are two acts wholly inconsistent with democratic practice. Obviously democracy means a good deal more than simply winning the most recent election. Striking at the ability of the Judiciary to enforce constitutional limits on government, and intimidating journalists who present views the government finds inconvenient are the actions of a dictatorship, and of a leader who is willing to use democratic norms in some cases but is prepared to trash them when they threaten his self interests.

We believe it is essential for America to voice its strong disapproval of these acts and of the general trend that they portend against democratic practices if we are to preserve our credibility as supporters of human rights. If we do not speak out strongly against such blatant violations of democratic practice when they are engaged in by governments that seem to be friendly to us, we will have lost the ability to have any real moral impact when we speak out against such practices on the part of our enemies.

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