

The Beginning and the Ending of Human Rights

Ricardo M. Paras

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SUBJECT(S): HUMAN RIGHTS

KEYWORD(S): HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Chief Justice Ricardo M. Paras, in this speech, discusses the history of human rights. He begins by connecting human rights with religion, stating that the beginning of human existence also marked the beginning of human rights. He gives the early Egyptians, Mencius, Lao Tse, Confucius, Indian Emperor Asoka, Mohammed and Jesus Christ in substantiating this fact.

After discussing the early times where human rights was just a religious admonition, he then talks about the development of human rights as a political right. He traces the commencement of the political movement for human rights in Great Britain. He cites The United States of America and France as countries where the political movement for human rights also started.

Then, focused is transferred to the Philippines where there has been centuries of struggle for the recognition of the common man's or *tao's* human rights. Documents written by Philippine heroes like Apolinario Mabini, Emilio Jacinto and Jose Rizal are given to support this thesis.

After giving knowledge on the history of human rights, the Chief Justice goes on by saying that the future of mankind demands the full implementation of the fundamental human rights. He discusses, in the Philippine context, the concepts of the right to free speech and communication as well as the freedom from economic want.

As a conclusion, he gives a very brief discussion on what possibly can give an end to human rights: selfishness, arrogance and excessiveness.