

Cloudy, Mild

Partly cloudy. Continued mild with lows 60s and highs mid- to upper 70s. (Details, Page 2A.)

FRIDAY'S TEMPERATURES

8 a.m. 60	2 p.m. 73	8 p.m. 72
10 a.m. 72	4 p.m. 74	10 p.m. 70
Noon 73	6 p.m. 74	Midnight 67

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U.S. Erases Rights Issue With Cuba

By DON BOHNING
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The Carter Administration has quietly removed human rights as a major issue in normalizing relations with Cuba.

"There has been sufficient movement in the right direction [by the Cuban government] on the human rights question that it would not be an obstacle to further improvement in relations," a U.S. official acknowledged Friday.

He cited Cuba's actions in "repatriating American citizens, freeing political prison-

ers and improving conditions under which prisoners are held" as examples of movement in the right direction.

The same official noted, however, that "there is still a long way to go" and human rights "remains a concern," if no longer an insurmountable one, in Washington's relationship with Havana.

For years the Carter Administration and those preceding it had listed three major stumbling blocks to normalizing relations with the government of Fidel Castro. They were:

- An improvement in Cuba's human rights situation.

- A reduction in Cuba's military presence in Africa.

- Agreement on compensation for U.S. property expropriated by the Castro government after it seized power in 1959.

The first public indication — although largely ignored — that human rights was no longer the issue it once had been came in a White House report to Congress last week on U.S. policy toward Cuba.

"We will continue to indicate to the Cu-

bans that we cannot consider a total lifting of the U.S. embargo on direct trade until (1) there is some dramatic improvement in their African posture and (2) we reach agreement on a formula for payment of compensation for expropriated U.S. properties," the report says.

"We should also continue to make it clear to them that we cannot consider re-establishing diplomatic relations until these major problems are resolved," the report concludes.

It makes no mention of human rights as

a consideration in normalizing relations.

As recently as last July, however, human rights ranked among the U.S. priorities. Since then Castro has announced the release of more than 3,000 political prisoners, several hundred U.S. citizens and their families have been repatriated and progress has been made in reunifying Cuban families.

In its report to Congress, the Carter Administration defends the advances it has made toward a more normal relationship with Cuba, including the exchange of small diplomatic missions.