

A MINORITY VIEW

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## ARE ACADEMIC ELITES COMMUNISTS?

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Grove City College publishes an excellent newsletter titled "Visions and Values." Its July 2006 edition features an interview with Dr. Richard Pipes, acclaimed Russian historian and Harvard University professor of Sovietology. The interview was conducted by Grove City College professor of political science Dr. Paul Kengor.

Dr. Pipes, who served on the National Security Council during the Reagan administration, explained that there are actually only a few communists among academics. At first glance, that's a puzzling observation, given the leftist bias at most college campuses. Drs. Pipes and Kengor explain the puzzle in a way that makes perfect sense.

While academic leftists, and I'd include their media allies, are not communists, they are anti-anti-communists. In other words, they have contempt for right-wingers, conservatives or libertarians who are anti-communists. Why? Academic leftists, and their media allies, are in agreement with many of the stated goals of communism, such as equal distribution of wealth, income equality and other goals spelled out in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' "Manifesto of the Communist Party." Leftist elites love the ideas of communism so much that they are either blind to, or tolerant of, its many shortcomings.

In practice, communism is nothing less than sheer barbarism that makes even the horrors of Naziism pale in comparison. Professor Rudolph J. Rummel of the University of Hawaii outlines that barbarism in his book "Death by Government," a comprehensive detailing of the roughly 170 million people murdered by their own governments during the 20th century. From 1917 to its collapse in 1991, the Soviet Union murdered about 62 million of its own people. During Mao Zedong's reign, 35,236,000, possibly more, Chinese citizens were murdered. By comparison, Hitler's Nazis managed to murder 21 million of its citizens and citizens in nations they conquered. Adding these numbers to the 60 million lives lost in war makes the 20th century mankind's most brutal era.

At home and abroad, leftists have done a thorough and commendable job documenting and condemning the horrors and crimes of Hitler and his fascist Nazi regime, but when have you heard them direct similar condemnation of Joseph Stalin, his successors and Mao Zedong? By and large, they've chosen to overlook the horrors of communism.

The reason for their reluctance to condemn the barbarism of communism is simple. Dr. Pipes says, "Intellectuals, by the very nature of their professions, grant enormous attention to words and ideas. And they are attracted by socialist ideas. They find that the

ideas of communism are praiseworthy and attractive; that, to them, is more important than the practice of communism. Now Nazi ideals, on the other hand, were pure barbarism; nothing could be said in favor of them."

Often, when people evaluate capitalism, they evaluate a system that exists on Earth. When they evaluate communism, they are talking about a non-existent Utopia. What exists on Earth, with all of its problems and shortcomings, is always going to fail miserably when compared to a Utopia. The very attempt to achieve the utopian goals of communism requires the ruthless suppression of the individual and an attack on any institution that might compromise the loyalty of the individual to the state. That's why one of the first orders of business for communism, and those who support its ideas, is the attack on religion and the family.

Rank nations according to whether they are closer to the capitalism end or the communism end of the economic spectrum. Then rank nations according to human rights protections. Finally, rank nations according to per capita income. Without question, citizens of those nations closer to capitalism enjoy a higher standard of living and a far greater measure of liberty than those in nations closer to communism.

[Return to Articles Page](#)