

Why Do We Give a Pass to Evil?  
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I recently wrote an editorial about Genocide, with its long trek through history\227but one of my colleagues noted that I had not mentioned the USSR, one of the worst human rights offenders ever. My friend, Swedish human rights attorney Bertil Haggman, compiled the violent death statistics of the USSR from 1917 to 1982: The Communist Genocide (in Swedish), ten years before the demise of the Soviet Union. Haggman estimated about 104 million dead in his 1982 book; now the numbers are known to be closer to 150 million victims and he is updating and translating his book. No doubt the Nazis would have approached like numbers had they ruled for 75 years rather than 12 years.

Haggman notes that in a 2007 opinion poll in Sweden, 95 percent of Swedish children knew about the Jewish Holocaust, but 90 percent knew nothing about the Soviet labor and concentration camps. Why have the Soviets been given such a pass?

In 1932-33, a famine was raging in the Ukraine, a famine that Stalin created and ruthlessly carried out to punish uppity peasants and an incipient independence movement. His thugs confiscated the entire grain production of the Ukraine and dumped it on the world market, deliberately starving 7 to 10 million Ukrainians. Western journalists were ferried around by the Soviets, who prevented them from seeing anything damaging. The German Consul in Kharkiv and journalists Gareth Jones and Malcolm Muggeridge tried to blow the whistle on this horror, but were scorned by the mainstream press, and most shamefully, by the falsifications of New York Times journalist, Walter Duranty.

The Communists did a much better job of sowing propaganda among gullible idealists than the Nazis, whose message was only too clear to liberals. World War II, in which the Soviets were our allies against the Nazis, gave them more breathing space to do what they did without criticism. The heavy-handed Un-American Activities Committee of the US Senate was too obnoxious to convince idealists; it took the surprising revelations of Soviet Premier Khrushchev to finally open the curtain that had hidden the reality of Stalin and his genocides. It was very painful for western Communists to admit they had been duped into believing in an imaginary utopia.

When we see the tally of Communist slaughters, the list includes not just the Soviet Union, but China, Soviet satellites, and other Marxist states such as North Korea, most of which have used starvation as a weapon. It is astonishing to think of how much of a pass they are given by our press and educational institutions.

Our presidents are always keen on human rights. Their programs, however, are out of necessity selective and thus hypocritical. A president learns that moral positions sometimes conflict with practical considerations; he cannot just condemn bad actors uniformly. It was much easier to look moral condemning some of our allies who were military dictatorships (Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea) than to condemn autocracies that had oil, such as the Saudis or Iraqis.

The same thing is true for \223Amnesty International,\224 which is constrained to condemn only those countries that give them access. Amnesty has always been much more critical of human rights abuses in the West, with more criticism of Israel than of Burma, Sri Lanka, or Saudi Arabia. They have rarely condemned hideous Muslim practices directed against women, an issue that is left for both feminist groups and the U.S. State Department in their annual list of the worst human rights offenders.

There are holocausts going on today that appear to be getting a pass. Can anyone estimate the death toll for women in the Muslim world and Africa? Who is counting, and who dares to try to count? When European newspapers bend over backwards to avoid identifying arrested \223terrorists\224 or the names of \223honor killers\224 and rampant child abusers, we must wonder why they are giving such monsters a pass.

Apparently it is politically incorrect to identify some monsters while others get all the attention. The monsters get away with it because they can.

672 words

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