

Praise for books by Nobel Peace Prize finalist
R. J. Rummel

"26th in a Random House poll on the best nonfiction book of the 20th Century"
Random House (Modern Library)

"... the most important ... in the history of international relations."
John Norton Moore Professor of Law and Director,
Center for National Security Law, former Chairman
of the Board of Directors of the U. S. Institute of Peace

"... among the most exciting ... in years."
Jim Powell

"... most comprehensive ... I have ever encountered ... illuminating ..."
Storm Russell

"One more home run ..."
Bruce Russett, Professor of International Relations

"... has profoundly affected my political and social views."
Lurner B Williams

"... truly brilliant ... ought to be mandatory reading."
Robert F. Turner, Professor of Law, former
President of U.S. Institute of Peace

"... highly recommend ..."
Cutting Edge

"We all walk a little taller by climbing on the shoulders of Rummel's work."
Irving Louis Horowitz, Professor Of Sociology

"... everyone in leadership should read and understand ..."
DivinePrinciple.com

"... exciting ... pushes aside all the theories, propaganda, and wishful thinking ..."
www.alphane.com

"... world's foremost authority on the phenomenon of 'democide.'"
American Opinion Publishing

"... excellent ..."
Brian Carnell

"... bound to be become a standard work ..."
James Lee Ray, Professor of Political Science

"... major intellectual accomplishment ... will be cited far into the next century"
Jack Vincent, Professor of Political Science."

“ . . . most important . . . required reading”

thewizardofuz (Amazon.com)

“ . . . valuable perspective”

R.W. Rasband

“ . . . offers a desperately needed perspective”

Andrew Johnstone

“ . . . eloquent . . . very important”

Doug Vaughn

“ . . . should be required reading . . .shocking and sobering”

Sugi Sorensen

*SUPPLEMENT TO THE
NEVER AGAIN SERIES*

Never Again

Ending War, Democide,
& Famine
Through Democratic Freedom

R.J. RUMMEL



Llumina Press

Copyright © 2005 R. J. Rummel

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from both the copyright owner and the publisher.

Requests for permission to make copies of any part of this work should be mailed to Permissions Department, Llumina Press, PO Box 772246, Coral Springs, FL 33077-2246

ISBN: 1-59526-138-9
1-59526-131-0

Printed in the United States of America by Llumina Press

Relevant books by R.J. Rummel

Understanding Conflict and War (five volumes)

*Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder
since 1917*

*China's Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder
since 1900*

*Democide: Nazi Genocide and Mass Murder
Death By Government*

Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence

*Saving Lives, Enriching Life: Freedom as a Right
and a Moral Good (online book)*

Never Again Series (Alternative History)

War and Democide Never Again

Nuclear Holocaust Never Again

Reset Never Again

Red Terror Never Again

Genocide Never Again (forthcoming)

*Never Again: Ending War, Democide, & Famine
Through Democratic Freedom*

The more power a government has, the more its foreign violence, democide, and famine.

The more constrained the power of governments, the less its foreign violence, democide, and famine.

At the extremes of power, despotisms kill, murder, and starve people by the millions, while many democracies grow surplus food, and refuse to execute even serial murderers.

Power kills.

Acknowledgements

Again, I owe many thanks to the editing of Marg Gilks. This was an especially difficult book to edit, but she did it with good humor and careful attention to details.

I owe more thanks than they know to my close colleagues Douglas Bond, Harris-Cliché (Pete) Peterson, and Rhee Sang-Woo for their many comments and suggestions over the years.

Many colleagues, students, and readers of my previous nonfiction books have unknowingly contributed to this one through their ideas, comments and suggestions, recommendation of sources, estimates, material they passed on to me, data, and their own research. In particular, I want to thank Rouben Adalian, Dean Babst, Yehuda Bauer, Israel Charny, William Eckhardt, Wayne Elliott, Helen Fein, Paul Hollander, Irving Louis Horowitz, Hua Shiping, Guenter Lewy, John Norton Moore, J. C. Ramaer, James Lee Ray, Storm Russell, Bruce Russett, Gregory H. Stanton, Robert F. Turner, Jack Vincent, and Spencer Weart.

This book is a summation of my research career. It is appropriate, therefore, for me to note my profound obligation to those great scholars and scientists who have had a fundamental impact on my ideas and research: Bertrand de Jouvenel, Friedrich von Hayek, Immanuel Kant, Karl Popper, Lewis F. Richardson, Ludwig von Mises, Pitirim Sorokin, Quincy Wright, and Raymond Cattell.

I continue to be indebted to the many visitors to my website at www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/ who commented on or questioned the material there. They often had an impact on my research and writing.

And foremost, always, is the love of my life, my wife Grace. For over forty years she has provided the love and supportive environment that has enabled my research and writing. Come here, baby.

Finally, I must insist. This is my book, and all its errors, mistakes, and misunderstandings are mine.

CONTENTS

<i>PREFACE</i>	1
Concordance Between Never Again Novels, This Book, and Website	
<i>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</i>	3
Human Security	
What Themes Run Through This Book?	
<i>PART 1. ON FREEDOM AS A RIGHT</i>	5
CHAPTER 1. Life Without Freedom	7
Table 1.1. How Many People Were Free in 2004?	
Sudan	
Saudi Arabia	
Burma	
China	
North Korea	
Some Other Antifreedom Nations	
CHAPTER 2. Universal Human Rights	29
CHAPTER 3. Philosophical Justification of Freedom	35
CHAPTER 4. Freedom as a Social Contract	38
A Convention of Minds	
The Global Evolution of Rights	
Summary	
<i>PART 2. ON DEMOCRACY</i>	48
CHAPTER 5. What Is Democracy?	49
CHAPTER 6. Electoral and Liberal Democracy	51

Table 6.1. Characteristics of Electoral and Liberal Democracy

CHAPTER 7. An Example of Liberal Democracy: President William Jefferson Clinton	54
CHAPTER 8. About Liberal Democracy	68
CHAPTER 9. Extent of Democracy	71
Extent of Liberal Democracies	
Extent of Illiberal Democracies	
Conclusion	
<i>PART 3. ON FREEDOM'S MORAL GOODS: WEALTH AND PROSPERITY</i>	75
CHAPTER 10. Freedom Is an Engine of Wealth and Prosperity	76
The Moral Good of Wealth and Prosperity	
The Example of Bill Gates' Freedom	
CHAPTER 11. The Power of the Free Market	81
Table 11.1. Human and Economic Development by Level of Freedom, 1998	
Figure 11.1. Plot of Standardized Values from Table 11.1	
Figure 11.2. Plot of Freedom and Economic Freedom Rating	
CHAPTER 12. The Free Market, Greed, and the Command Economy	86
CHAPTER 13. Scarcity and Famine: Lenin's Command Economy	91
Communism	
Lenin's Nationalization and Famine, 1920–1923	

CHAPTER 14. Scarcity and Famine: Stalin's Command Economy	95
Collectivization, 1929–1935	
Famine by Design, 1932–1933	
CHAPTER 15. Scarcity and Famine: Mao's Command Economy	102
Murder of Traditional Agriculture: Land Reform	
Collectivization: The Commune	
Great Leap Downward	
The World's Greatest Famine Ever	
CHAPTER 16. Democracy Means No Famine Ever	110
Table 16.1. 20 th Century Famine Totals	
<i>PART 4. ON FREEDOM'S MORAL GOODS: MINIMIZING POLITICAL VIOLENCE</i>	115
CHAPTER 17. The Mexican Revolution	117
Roots of Revolution	
Revolution	
CHAPTER 18. The Russian Revolution	125
Roots of Revolution	
Revolution	
CHAPTER 19. Freedom Minimizes Political Violence within Nations	135
Table 19.1. Freedom and Violence Ratings: Observed Frequencies	
Figure 19.1. The Less Democratic a Regime, the More Severe Its Internal Political Violence. Selected Sample, 1900–1987	
Table 19.2. The Less Democratic a Regime, the More Severe Its Internal Political Violence. Selected Sample, 1900–1987	

<i>PART 5. ON FREEDOM'S MORAL GOODS: ELIMINATING DEMOCIDE</i>	144
CHAPTER 20. Democide	145
Table 20.1. Democide, 1900–1987	
CHAPTER 21. The Rwandan Great Genocide	150
Background	
The Great Genocide	
CHAPTER 22. Death by Marxism I: The Khmer Rouge of Cambodia	159
Background	
Rule by Murder	
Table 22.1. Conditions of Life Under the Khmer Rouge	
CHAPTER 23. Death by Marxism II: Stalin's Great Terror	172
Prelude to the Great Terror	
The Great Terror	
CHAPTER 24. Death by Marxism III: Mao's Cultural Revolution	181
CHAPTER 25. Power Kills	192
Deadly Communism	
Table 25.1. Communist Democide, 1900–1987	
Other Mega- and Kilo- Mass Murderers	
The Unifying Cause of Democide: Power	
<i>PART 6. ON FREEDOM'S MORAL GOODS: ELIMINATING WAR</i>	197
CHAPTER 26. Battle of the Somme	198
CHAPTER 27. The Democratic Peace	208

Table 27.1. Democratic Versus Nondemocratic Wars,
1816–1991

CHAPTER 28. The Freer the People, the Greater the Peace 213

Figure 28.1. The Less Democratic Two Regimes, the
More Severe Their Wars, 1900–1980

Figure 28.2 The Less Democratic a Regime, the More
Severe Its Foreign Violence. Selected Sample, 1900–
1987

CHAPTER 29. Why the Democratic Peace? 218

PART 7. CONCLUSION 222

CHAPTER 30. Freedom is a Right and Creates Human Se-
curity 223

Table 30.1a. Wealth and Prosperity for 190 Nations by
Level of Freedom, 1997–1998

Table 30.1b. Deaths by Cause and Freedom Rating,
1900–1987

Preface

I wrote the original electronic version of this book for anyone interested in a solution to war, democide (genocide and mass murder), famine, and poverty, or in freedom itself. It appears online and as a pdf file at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE15.HTM. In this extensive revision, I still have the general reader in mind, but now I also am writing it as a supplement to my novels in the *Never Again* Series.

Democratic freedom has an incredible power to solve our most important problems, and I have sought different ways of communicating this, including publication of a number of hardcover books; *Death By Government* (1994) and *Power Kills* (1997) are two. I built a large website (www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/) to provide the theory, data, analyses, sources, and references for what I assert about freedom; on it, I used photographs of democide and various techniques to make the numbers dance, all in an effort to help visitors visualize the toll of democide.

Much impressed by the use of fiction to communicate a message under the guise of entertainment, as George Orwell did in *1984*, I have now turned to writing novels to spread the word about freedom. In my *Never Again* Series, two lovers are sent back in a time machine to 1906 by a fictitious society of the survivors of war and democide. Their mission: to prevent the horrors that killed hundreds of millions of people in the last century, and to promote democratic freedom to assure a peaceful world. Although trained in martial arts and provided with modern weapons and incredible wealth, the lovers run into one difficulty after another in their attempt to change history. Not the least of their troubles is their naiveté about power, and its effect on their own lives.

As readers of the series know, each novel in the series places the characters in an actual historical episode, bent on preventing democide or revolution, such as the mass murder by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, the Cultural Revolution of Mao, and the Stalin-ordered starvation of millions of Ukrainians. But fiction has to entertain above all, and I could not weaken this with lectures on the how, why, and context of what occurred. Nor could I give an extensive lecture on the value and meaning of democracy and freedom, or, in our age of value relativity, how one can rightfully promote freedom.

So, for the readers of my novels, here is a factual supplement that does all that. It answers the question: how could the Survivors' Benevolent Society be so sure that democratic freedom was a solution to the twentieth century's major evils—so sure that they nearly exhausted their vast resources to send two people back to 1906 forever; so sure that the Society's head sent her own much-loved adopted daughter. And why were these two time travelers, one a young professor of history, so convinced of the truth of this solution that they gave up the comforts of the modern age to live in the primitive past, never to return, and daily risk their lives with little probability of complete success?

The reader of my novels might consider this a report to the Society on the democratic solution—part of the documentation that persuaded them to send the time travelers on a one-way mission to change history.

Moreover, if readers want to learn more about certain events too briefly described in the novels, the Concordance below should be helpful for locating them in this book, or on my website.

Concordance Between Never Again Novels, This Book, and Website

Novels	Start year	Concept/Events	This book's chapters	Website address*
All		Democracy	5-9	DEMOC.HTM
		Democratic peace	27	MIRACLE.HTM
		Freedom	2-4	RIGHTS.HTM
		Democide	20	MURDER.HTM
		Genocide	20	GENOCIDE.HTM
		1900—1999	Democide = 174 million	20
Book 1	1910	Mexican Revolution	17	SOD.CHAP11.HTM
	1912	Chinese Revolution		NOTE2.HTM
	1914	World War I	26	
	1932	Ukrainian forced famine	14	NOTE2.HTM
	1942	Holocaust		HOLO.PAPER.HTM
	1966	Cultural Revolution	24	NOTE2.HTM
	1975	Khmer Rouge democide	22	SOD.CHAP4.HTM
	1994	Rwandan genocide	21	COMM.7.8.03.HTM
Book 2		Democratic peace & nuclear war		DENUKE.ART.HTM
	1885	Congo democide		COMM.7.1.03.HTM
Book 3				
Book 4		Russian Revolution	13, 18	NOTE2.HTM
Book 5**		Herero genocide		SOD.TAB14.1B.GIF
		Armenian genocide		SOD.CHAP5.HTM
Book 6**	1945	Vietnam (North) democide		SOD.CHAP6.HTM

*Add the page below to the site address www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/ with no spaces, e.g., for the GENOCIDE.HTM page, the full address is www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/GENOCIDE.HTM.

**Forthcoming.

Executive Summary

To promote freedom for everyone is to promote human security for all.

Human Security

Humanity now has a practical cure for foreign and civil war, democide (genocide and mass murder), famine and mass hunger, mass impoverishment, and gross economic inequality. Our accumulated scientific and scholarly knowledge, and the results of vast social and economic experiments involving billions of people over three centuries, now enable us to claim, with the same confidence that we can say that orange juice is nutritious, that we can create perpetual peace, long and secure lives, abundant food, wealth, and prosperity.

This is no dream, no utopian claim. This is the well-established fruit of the free market and human rights, of democratic freedom. The knowledge of this exists among economists and political scientists working on these problems. Even some of the highest officials, such as former President Clinton and current President George W. Bush, know of, and have acted on, the most surprising claim that fostering freedom is the way to peace. However, as incredibly important as this knowledge is, it is generally unknown by the public, including the major media and most professionals outside the relevant research areas.

In *Never Again: Ending War, Democide, & Famine Through Democratic Freedom*, I'm trying to communicate this knowledge in a way that everyone can not only assimilate, but understand it. You have a right to freedom, and it's important that you know why freedom is so powerful in saving lives and enriching life.

I have packaged the various threats to human life against which a people's freedom protects them by the idea of *human security*. Human *insecurity*, then, involves:

- economic and gender inequality,
- malnourishment and famine,
- poor health and disease,
- domestic turmoil and civil war,

- poor health and disease,
- domestic turmoil and civil war,
- foreign war,
- genocide and mass murder.

Freedom is a solution to all these threats—*democratic freedom produces human security*. Throughout the various chapters of this book, and its research links, including that to the results of a systematic statistical analysis of 190 nations for over 70 variables, I will show this.

What Themes Run Through This Book?

Several themes are repeated throughout this book, and provide the focus for the chapters. All concern the power of freedom to end or lessen threats to human security, and to drive human and economic development.

- Freedom is a basic human right recognized by the United Nations and international treaties; it is the heart of social justice.
- Freedom—encompassing free speech and the economic and social free market—is an engine of economic and human development, and scientific and technological advancement.
- Freedom ameliorates mass poverty.
- Free nations do not suffer from and never have had famines; by theory, they should not. Freedom is therefore a solution to hunger and famine.
- Free nations have the least internal violence, turmoil, and political instability.
- Free nations (liberal democracies) have virtually no domestic government genocide and mass murder, and for good theoretical reasons. Freedom is therefore a solution to genocide and mass murder, and the only practical means of making sure that it happens “never again!”
- Free nations do not make war on each other. The greater the freedom within two nations, the less violence there is between them.
- Freedom is a method of nonviolence—the most peaceful nations are those whose people are free.

PART 1

On Freedom As a Right

Freedom is like your arm—you take it for granted until its loss reveals its true value. Unfortunately, I do not have the power to wave my hand and teleport free people to live for a month or so under a tyranny where the ruling thugs totally repress freedom. The next best thing is to exemplify what life would be like under such a regime, and so in Chapter 1 we'll look at Sudan, Burma, China, Saudi Arabia, and North Korea.

After reading about life in these thugdoms, you may wonder how, in our age of value relativity, I can condemn such countries. One person's freedom is another's slavery, you might say, and we cannot judge one as bad and the other as good. So, in Chapter 2, we'll look at the rights that all people have by virtue of being human beings—their *human rights*.

There has been much effort by nations to define what these rights are and to foster their fulfillment. The United Nations and international agreements now well describe everyone's human rights, and in sum mean that *all have the human right to be free*. This now has the force of international law. And from this flows other rights, such as the freedom of speech, association, and religion.

Though nations have agreed that freedom is a human right, can philosophers justify this right? After all, by their practices and agreements, nations once accepted slavery. Turning to philosophy in Chapter 3, I point to several arguments that philosophers make to justify freedom: legal positivism, natural rights, freedom as a self-evident right, and utilitarianism.

In Chapter 4, I provide my own argument based on a hypothetical social contract. We would find, I argue, that virtually all people, blind to their personal benefits and acting through a hypothetical Convention of Minds, would agree to a social contract giving each other the right—the freedom—to choose how they live, and the freedom to leave any community in which they live. And the circumstances of this decision make these *socially just rights*. We also find that millennia of human

evolution have produced similar rights among nations, specifically the right any people have to sovereign self-determination and free immigration.

In sum, these chapters will show that legally, morally, and by the practice of nations, then, people should be free. And to further and guard this freedom, a country should be democratic.

Chapter 1

Life Without Freedom

Power kills and impoverishes life.

Billions of people live without freedom, as shown in Table 1.1, below. In the worst of these countries, they live in fear and insecurity. They are literally slaves, bought and sold, or effectively the slaves of their governments. They are hungry, starving, or diseased. They live in primitive refugee camps, suffer under torture or the immediate threat of death, or soon die of untreated diseases. They are prisoners, inmates of concentration camps, or internees in death camps. They are soldiers subject to the most barbarous treatment or involved in lethal combat. They are children performing dangerous forced labor. They are civilians cowering under bombing and shelling. They are women who, considered second-class citizens, cannot leave their homes without the permission of their husbands, and then must completely cover themselves and be accompanied by a male relative. They are the aged and infirm that barely subsist under dangerous environmental conditions.

Table 1.1
How Many People Were Free in 2004?

Rating*	Nations	World's population	
		Total (Bil.)	%
Free	88	2.78	44
Partially Free	55	1.32	21
Not Free	49	2.21	35

* From Freedom House (www.freedomhouse.org)

Even those who escape all this still live under the very real threat that war, revolution, disease, famine, extreme poverty and deprivation, or a dictator may destroy their lives, or the lives of their loved ones. So they live in fear of arrest and prison, of disappearing forever, of forced labor, genocide, mass murder, and an unnatural death.

Even in countries that are partially free, people still may be arbitrarily arrested, subjected to torture, executed without a fair trial, spied upon, and denied even basic rights because of their race, religion, or nationality. Criticize the government—especially its dictator or leader—and death may follow.

Sudan

All this is abstract—simple words. Yet such abstractions are ultimately personal. Sudan is a case in point. It is an Arab Muslim nation larger than the United States, whose people make on the average \$940 a year (purchasing power parity¹), have a life expectancy of fifty-seven years, and are among the least free in the world. Witness what happened to Acol Bak, a member of the Dinka tribe who lived in the southern village of Panlang.

Arabs attacked her village, killing her father, and though her mother escaped, they seized her and her brother. They were forced to walk north for three days to the village of Goos, carrying on their heads the goods stolen by their captors. They were given no food, and were able to drink only from filthy ponds along the way. Their captors then separated Acol Bak and her brother and sold them separately to different Arabs—yes, sold them, as people were sold in the sixteenth century slave trade. She would never see her brother again.

Her Arab master had a wife and daughter who forced her to work from morning to evening; in Acol's words, "I was the only slave in that house. If I said I was tired, I was beaten by all of them." She bore the scars of those beatings, and had her arm broken. Her accommodations were simple—outside and without bedding. Though she was only eight years old, her Arab master had her circumcised, in accord with Muslim tradition, and with no anesthetic.

But unlike so many slaves, Acol was in luck. A foreign Christian

¹ Purchasing power parity (ppp) equates the currencies in different countries so that \$1,000 will buy the same kind and amount of goods in each country. Thus, a purchasing power parity of \$940 ppp provides the same ability to buy goods and services in Sudan as it does in the United States, Mexico, Japan, or any other country.

group, who secretly entered the Sudan for this purpose, bought Acol with 248 other slaves and set them free. Although this policy of buying the freedom of slaves is controversial and may encourage more slavery, she did not care. She was free. She could return to her village where her mother was waiting.²

This happened in our modern age—not in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, but in the 1990s.

Not all of the people forced into slavery were children. Soldiers raped one forty-year-old woman, Akec Kwol, and took her north to a slave market, where they sold her like an animal. Her slave owner also tried to circumcise her, but she resisted and got herself slashed with a knife and scarred. Had she not finally submitted, she later explained, “They would have killed me. Because I was a slave, they had the right to do whatever they wanted to me.”³

And then among the thousands of other slaves, there was Victoria Ajang, a Sudanese now living in the United States. She testified before Congress regarding her escape from slavery: “On a summer night, the government militia forces suddenly swooped in on our village. We were at home relaxing, in the evening, when men on horses with machine guns stormed through, shooting everyone. I saw friends fall dead in front of me. While my husband carried out our little daughter Eva, I ran with the few possessions I could grab. All around us, we saw children being shot in the stomach, in the leg, between the eyes. Against the dark sky, we saw flames from the houses the soldiers had set on fire. The cries of the people forced inside filled our ears as they burned to death. Our people were being turned to ash.”⁴ She and her family escaped by jumping into a nearby river.

Buying and selling slaves in the Sudan is, ironically, a free market. There is no monopoly or government control over prices, which vary according to supply. In 1989, for example, a slave cost \$90, but within a year, the increase in slave raids caused the price to plummet to \$15. This is about equal to the cost of pruning shears at my local hardware store.

How can such slavery exist in this age of the Internet and space exploration? It is part of a civil war between the Arab Islamic North, ruled by a fundamentalist Muslim dictator, and a majority black South.

2 Linda Slobodian, *The Slave Trail*, 1997. See: www.vitrade.com/slave_trail/home.htm

3 Karin Davies, “Slave Trade Thrives in Sudan” at: www.domini.org/openbook/sud80210.htm

4 Nat Hentoff, “A Sudanese Woman Tells Her Story: Our People Were Turned to Ash” at: www.villagevoice.com/issues/0013/hentoff.php

This war began in 1989 when Lt. General Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir and the Arab-led Sudanese People's Armed Forces overthrew the democratic government in power at that time and imposed strict Muslim law and faith on the whole country. Sudan's population is about 35 million people, of which Sunni Muslims are about 70 percent, mainly in the North. Some 5 percent of the population, mostly southern blacks, is Christian. The rest of the 6 million living in the South are animist, attributing conscious life to nature and natural objects. The South had a protected and special constitutional status under the democratic government, but with its overthrow and especially with the effort of the new regime to impose Muslim law throughout the country, the South revolted and a bloody civil war resulted.

To defeat the South and motivate its Arab tribal militia to fight, the North made slaves part of their compensation, along with whatever they could loot, and gave Arab soldiers *carte blanche* to commit rape. Of course, old people did not fit into this scheme, since they are good neither as slaves nor for rape, so they were beaten up, if not killed. Young men were usually marched off to slavery, unless for some reason they were unsuitable, then they also were killed. According to the Muslim faith, all non-Muslim southerners, whether man or woman, old or young, are infidels. They have no rights, even to life. They may be killed as a matter of course, enslaved, raped, and deprived of their possessions.

In this civil war, bombing from the air killed many living in heavily populated areas of the South; even schools were bombed and children killed. Hospitals did not escape. There were many bombing attacks on the Samaritan's Purse, the largest hospital in southern Sudan. Bombers often attacked other medical facilities as well, sometimes with cluster bombs. Even more monstrous, the North bombed the wells that provided southerners' water, as well as the sites of foreign relief supplies that included food for the starving southerners. All this, in addition to the regime's socialist economic policies, has contributed to a massive famine.

But because they live under a fundamentalist Muslim regime, even northern Sudanese far from the civil war enjoy few human rights. For example, the government harasses and monitors women for correct dress, forbidding even slacks. Women who dare to defy the law risk arrest, conviction by an Islamic court of immoral dressing, and flogging, as recently happened to nine women students. Women also cannot hold any public office that would give them authority over Muslim men, nor can they marry a non-Muslim.

Neither men nor women have freedom of speech or religion—all

must accept the Muslim faith. To further religious rule, the government appoints only Muslims to the judiciary. Police can arrest and imprison any commoner for up to six months without trial, and while detained, suspects can expect officials to torture them as a matter of course. Worst of all, a Muslim dare not convert to another religion, for the punishment for doing so is death.

By 1999, 20,000 to 40,000 Sudanese were enslaved and nearly 4 million displaced from their homes and villages—the largest number for any country. Many more Sudanese simply gave up on the country. Over 352,000 had fled, escaping the fate of some 1.5 to 2 million who died as a result of the war, famine, or disease, or were murdered in cold blood by Muslim forces or rebels.

As of this writing, a preliminary peace agreement has just been signed between the regime and the southern-based rebels. There have been a number of such attempts at peace, and whether this one will succeed remains to be seen. Regardless, however, of its success or failure, the bloody and tyrannical regime of President Ahmad al-Bashir will continue to exist in Khartoum and deny Sudanese even the most basic human rights.

Now we have Darfur, a new democidal crises in the western region of Sudan. Perhaps over 350,000 people have been murdered outright or died as a result of the Muslim's dictator's war on those in Darfur alone, and possibly at least *2,000 people are dying of famine and associated diseases or being murdered there every day.*

Saudi Arabia

Sudan was a country at war with itself, and afflicted with government-created famine and disease. What about a country at peace, like Saudi Arabia? It also is an Arab Muslim country, with 22 million people who have a life expectancy of sixty-eight years, a much higher annual income of \$9,000 (purchasing power parity), and who live under the rule of an absolute monarchy. Life is better than in Sudan in that there is no war, rebellion, or famine killing hundreds of thousands of people. But as in Sudan, Saudis still suffer one kind of repression or another.

There is no freedom of speech in Saudi Arabia. Police may arrest Saudis for the most minor criticism of the ruling monarchy, the Saudi king or any royal personage, or the Muslim religion. People live in fear that something said or done in innocence will land them in prison and get them tortured and flogged. The authorities might even cut off a person's head.

Even trying to be honest can be dangerous. One poor fellow, Abdul-Karim al-Naqshabandi, apparently refused to help his employer by giving false testimony. In retaliation, his well-connected employer had him framed and arrested for a crime he did not commit. To get a confession, the police tied him up like an animal and beat and tortured him. He finally signed a confession to end the misery, and to get someone outside to hear his case. Even then, the police allowed no one to visit him in prison. And although he could present considerable evidence proving his innocence and provide the names of defense witnesses, the court would not give him the right to defend himself. He was sentenced to death and executed in 1996.

King Fahd Bin Abd Al-Aziz Al Saud's power is absolute. There are no national elections, no legislature, and no political parties. All are illegal. The country's constitution, by the king's decree, is the Koran, Islam's holy book. Its precepts are law. What this means for average Saudis is that they had better be Muslim and of a particular type, called Sunni (minority Shiite Muslims are always at risk of arrest and detention), and that they must obey religious law. They dare not change their Muslim religion or, by law, the courts can have them executed. They must not question the Muslim religion or the monarchy.

Just consider the two Sunni Moslems, Sheikh Salman bin Fahd al-'Awda and Sheikh Safr 'Abd al-Rahman al-Hawali. To make them repent for their "extremist ideas," the police arrested them in September 1994. Security forces worked them over year after year, until a court tried them in June of 1999, virtually five years later.

As long as they are careful over what they say and do, life is easier for Muslim men. The country's near totalitarian, religious rule especially enslaves women, who comprise roughly half the population. The Committee to Prevent Vice and Promote Virtue, the Mutawaa'in, or religious police, watch over every woman's behavior for violations of religious law, which they strictly enforce. This has created a harsh and rigid apartheid system against women. In public, they must wear an *abaya*, a garment that fully covers their body. It can be of any color, as long as it is black. The religious police keep a close watch that women also cover their head and face.

The unfortunate case of Nieves, a Filipina maid, provides one example of how these religious police work. She accepted a married couple's invitation to a restaurant to celebrate a birthday. By chance, a male friend of the couple also joined the celebration. The religious police happened by and, after spying on the group, arrested Nieves on suspicion of being there to meet the male—a clear immoral act. While under arrest she denied this, but since she could not read Arabic, au-

thorities tricked her into signing a confession she thought was a release order. This gave the court enough excuse to convict her of an offense against public morals and to sentence her to sixty lashes and twenty-five days in prison.

Then there was the Filipina Donato Lama. The police arrested her in 1995 for suspicion of committing the unpardonable crime of preaching Christianity. In a revealing letter about her later beating and confession, she wrote, "I was at my most vulnerable state when the police again pressured me to admit or else I would continue receiving the beating. 'We will let you go if you sign this paper. If not, you may as well die here.' Badly bruised and no longer able to stand another beating, I agreed to put my thumbmark on the paper not knowing what it was I was signing."⁵ The court sentenced her to seventy lashes plus eighteen months in prison.

Women cannot travel abroad or even on public transportation without the permission of a male relative. Even then, they must enter buses by a separate rear entrance and sit in the women's section. The government forbids them to drive a car, or even walk outside by themselves. Their husband or a male relative must accompany them, or for so "offending public morals," the religious police will arrest them. Nor can women play any role in the king's government.

Most important, the police ignore the violence frequently committed against women, especially that committed by their husbands. Even harder to believe, severely injured women must still have the permission of a male relative to enter a hospital. The testimony of one man in court is worth that of two women. Men can divorce women without cause while women must give legal reasons. In school, women may not study many subjects restricted to men, such as engineering and journalism.

In the words of feminist Andrea Dworkin, writing in 1978 but still applicable today,

Women are locked in and kept out, exiled to invisibility and abject powerlessness within their own country. It is women who are degraded systematically from birth to early death, utterly and totally and without exception deprived of freedom. It is women who are sold into marriage or concubinage, often before puberty; killed if their hymens

5 Amnesty International at: www.amnesty.org/ailib/intcam/saudi/briefing/3.html

are not intact on the wedding night; kept confined, ignorant, pregnant, and poor, without choice or recourse. It is women who are raped and beaten with full sanction of the law. It is women who cannot own property or work for a living or determine in any way the circumstances of their own lives. It is women who are subject to a despotism that knows no restraint.⁶

Saudi Arabia's treatment of women and non-Muslims, as well as the enforcement of religious rule over male Muslims, is the norm among the sheikdoms of the Middle East. We also saw this religious absolutism in fundamentalist Sudan. Algeria and Iran share it to a certain extent. Even in nonfundamentalist Muslim countries such as Egypt and Pakistan, governments deny human rights and women are second-class citizens.

Before the American-led alliance defeated the Taliban regime of Afghanistan in 2002, it even exceeded Saudi Arabia in its harsh and barbaric application of the Koran, denial of human rights, and savage suppression of women. The courts could even sentence women to death for adultery, as was the woman simply identified as Suriya by Taliban-run Radio. After convicting her of adultery in April 2000, officials took her to a sports stadium and stoned her to death in front of thousands of spectators. There are few other ways the Taliban could have picked to execute a person that are more cruel, inhumane, and prolonged. There was no word on what happened to the man involved in the affair, if anything.

The best label for the lives of all women in these Muslim countries is pseudo-slavery. Its only difference from real slavery is that the government does not allow men to buy and sell women. Otherwise, women are under the complete control of the government, their fathers, and their husbands.

Burma

While the fear, insecurity, and risk that common people experience in daily life in the Sudan and Saudi Arabia exists in many other Muslim countries, life can be even worse in some non-Muslim ones, such as

6 Andrea Dworkin, "Take Back The Day," 1978. At: www.nostatusquo.com/ACLU/dworkin/WarZoneChaptIIC.html

Burma (Myanmar). The 42.7 million people in this South Asian country are 89 percent Buddhist, have a life expectancy of fifty-five years, and earn in purchasing power parity \$1,200 a year. They are ruled by a socialist military regime, which allows no freedom. Life here is hellish, due to the military's savage repression of dissent, and their barbaric response to the rebellion of nearly a dozen ethnic minorities.

In the nine villages of Dweh Loh Township, northwest of Rangoon and near the Thai border, the Karen ethnic group has long been fighting for independence. During harvest time in March 2000, military forces attacked the villages, burned down homes, and destroyed or looted possessions. By sheer luck, some of the villagers managed to flee into the forest, leaving behind their rice and possessions and risking starvation—starvation made almost inevitable by the military's burning of crops and rice storage barns. Soldiers even torched the cut scrub needed to prepare the soil for planting. Those who remained in the village who were not killed were seized for forced labor or portering, or pressed into the military. That done, the soldiers mined all approaches to the village to prevent the villagers from returning.

Soldiers kill any male suspected of being a rebel. These are not all easy deaths. Sometimes soldiers gruesomely torture the victim and prolong death to cause as much agony as possible. Women or young girls are only marginally better off—the soldiers “only” rape them. Then they march them, along with the children and the village men left alive, to work sites to build barracks, defensive works, roads, railroads, or fences, or carry bamboo and firewood. Alternatively, the soldiers force them to porter ammunition and military supplies like mules. This is the most dangerous form of forced labor and many die from it.

Even the children do not escape. Soldiers routinely make them do such arduous labor, or even soldier. Worse, the military sell the girls into prostitution in Burma or into the Thai sex market across the border, which already exploits the bodies of 40,000 Burmese girls. Worse still, the military have forced children to walk ahead of soldiers to trigger mines. No military have used human bodies to clear mines like this since World War II, when the Soviets often compelled prisoners to sweep minefields with their feet.

Even for those Burmese children not forced into labor and portering, general conditions are disastrous for their future and that of the country. Even children living outside the civil war zones are unlikely to go to school. No more than one in five get so much as four years of primary school. They are more likely to be working at some job to help their family survive. According to UN estimates, about one-third of all children six to fifteen years of age are doing so. Many children do not survive to adulthood—half of all those that die each year are children.

In the civil war zones, children and adults alike routinely live on the edge of death. For example, anyone living in the township of Dweh Loh that contained the nine villages I mentioned, had an equal chance of doing forced labor, being looted, or suffering extortion by soldiers on the one hand, or of fleeing into the forests on the other. Those living in other townships throughout this area probably escaped to the forests to barely survive there on whatever food they could grow. Were soldiers to find these refugees, they might shoot them or make them porter under threat of death.

Life was no better for those living in the Nyaunglebin District to the west, where handpicked execution squads of soldiers operated off and on in the area, searching for rebels or their supporters. If these soldiers suspected a villager of even the most minor contact with rebel forces, if a villager was even seen talking to someone suspected of being a rebel, they usually cut his throat. Sometimes the soldiers also decapitated the victim and mounted the head on a pole as a warning to others.

This would have been an easy death compared to what soldiers did to three men they captured in Plaw Toh Kee, as reported by a villager there.⁷ No matter that these were simple farmers and cattle breeders, thought good men by the villagers and the village head. The soldiers suspected them of working for the rebels and that was enough. They forced the three men to stand against trees for days without food or water, beat them and punched them in the face because they could not answer any questions about the rebels, and then systematically made one-inch slices all over their bodies. Then the soldiers cut out their intestines, pushed the mess back into their stomachs, and kept these poor souls in this condition until finally killing them.

This is only one atrocity in many that I could recount as this civil war takes its toll on unarmed and peaceful villagers living in one civil war zone or another. There are around sixty-seven different ethnic groups in Burma, each with its own language and culture, many of which have rebelled and are fighting the military government.

With more or less ferocity, these rebellions have been going on since 1948, with a death toll of 200,000 or even possibly 400,000 Burmese. Both sides have also murdered outright an additional 100,000 to 200,000 Burmese. Moreover, rebellion, fighting, and brutal military pressure on the Burmese people have caused 500,000 to 1 million of them to be displaced within the country, many of whom the military

7 An Independent Report by the Karen Human Rights Group, March 31, 2000. At: www.ibiblio.org/freeburma/humanrights/khrg/archive/khrg2000/khrg0002.html

have commanded to live in inhospitable forced location zones. Others have escaped relocation for bare subsistence in the forests, bereft of home or village. Still 215,000 others have fled abroad and are formally listed as refugees by international refugee organizations. An added 350,000 Burmese are without refugee status and subsist in refugee-like conditions in neighboring Thailand.

The vast majority of Burmese, however, live far away from the civil war zones and are not members of the rebelling minority ethnic groups. They have other things to fear. Burma is a military dictatorship, and this regime is willing to use its weapons on unarmed people who protest or demonstrate. When students demonstrated against the regime on July 7, 1962, soldiers shot one hundred of them to death. On August 13, 1967, soldiers similarly shot over a hundred demonstrating men and women, and even the children that accompanied them. And so on and on, from demonstration to demonstration, until the worst of them all.

On August 8, 1988, doctors, students, teachers, farmers, musicians, artists, monks, and workers took part in peaceful, pro-democracy demonstrations in all major cities. The military demanded that the demonstrators disperse, and when they would not, soldiers fired round after round into the crowds. They massacred an incredible 5,000 to 10,000 unarmed people simply trying to express their desire for democracy. Soldiers and police then arrested hundreds of those escaping this bloodbath, and tortured them in prison. Many thousands escaped to border areas, leaving their loved ones, homes, and possessions behind.

Those Burmese who stay home, avoid demonstrations, and arouse no suspicion might still be conscripted by the military for forced labor or porter duty. Socialist in mind and spirit, the military have been ambitious in building railways, roads, airports, and so on. And to do so, they simply draft civilians. For example, those who lived near the route of the 110 mile e-Tavoy railway, built by the military in southern Burma, were among the 200,000 people that soldiers forced to work on the project for fifteen days a month without pay. Then there were the 30,000 the military conscripted for the Bassein Airport extension. Those who missed this might have been among the over 920,000 the military compelled to labor on the Chaung Oo-Pakokku Railroad.

For those living close to the soil, wholly dependent on what they can grow to eat, time is food. When the military force these civilians to work for days without pay, even bare survival is difficult. For many, the only choice is to flee or shirk work. But then the military's punishment for not doing the work can be even worse, as reported by one refugee.

Then the soldiers came to my house
and poked my wife in the side with a rifle

butt. They kicked her hard in the stomach, and she vomited blood. Then they kicked my baby son down into the fire, and all the hair on his head was burnt. They slapped my seven-year-old son in the face and he cried out. They beat them because I had escaped.⁸

Those who do the forced labor have to sleep at the work site, guarded, and without much shelter—sometimes none. The ground is their only bed. To go to the toilet they have to get permission from a guard. Their only food is what the workers themselves can bring. And they have to be sure not to be injured, because there is seldom any medical care. They also can die, as many do, from sickness or exhaustion. If they try to escape from the work site and soldiers catch them, if they are lucky, the soldiers will only severely beat them. Just resting without permission can get them beaten and killed by guards. This happened to Pa Za Kung, a man from Vomkua village in Chin State's Thantlang Township, doing forced labor on a road from Thantlang to Vuangtu village.

But portering is even worse than forced labor. The military make those living in war zones porter for them, but since as many as two porters are needed for each soldier to move much of their supplies and equipment, people living outside the war zones are also conscripted. Porters suffer from hunger, malnutrition, disease, and exhaustion. Rebel fire kills them, they step on mines, or soldiers shoot them because they cannot force their bodies to work any longer. Or soldiers simply abandon them with no medical care, no food, no help, no way home. All told, this is another form of slavery suffered by millions of Burmese.

Burmese generally have no rights other than to serve the military. This might have changed in 1990, when the military caved in to considerable international pressure resulting from their 1988 massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators, and held real democratic elections—and were shocked when the democratic opposition, under the leadership of 1991 Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, won 82 percent of the seats in the new parliament. The military then refused to yield power, and have held Aung San Suu Kyi under virtual house arrest ever since. They also arrested and tortured thousands of her support-

⁸ "A Comprehensive Response To Burmese Refugee and Displaced People Problem," The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade, October 5, 1994.

ers and members of other political parties, and have killed or disappeared thousands more. They even arrested hundreds of those elected to parliament, some of whom died under the harsh prison conditions. Member-elect Kyaw Min, for example, died of hepatitis caused by his imprisonment.

Having learned their lesson about the power of the democratic idea, the military no longer allow political activity or criticism. There is no freedom of speech or association. In this Buddhist country, the military keep a watch on Buddhist monks and prevent their involvement in political activity. They also restrict the leaders of other religions. There can be no unions. Just having a computer modem can lead to arrest, torture, and a fifteen-year prison sentence. Having a fax machine may even mean death, as it did for the Anglo-Burmese San Suu Kyi, who was honorary Consul for the European Union. No independent courts exist, and the law is what the military command. The military monitor the movements of common citizens, search their homes at any time, and take them forcibly from their homes to be relocated, without compensation or explanation.

Nor are Burmese free to start a business or invest. Since 1962, when the military overthrew the democratic government, the military have pursued a "Burmese Way to Socialism." This has left little room for private businesses and a free market, and companies run by the military dominate many areas of the economy, leaving as the most vigorous sector of the economy the heroin trade. This alone may account for over 50 percent of the economy.

The result is what one would expect. Among all countries, Burma has plummeted to near the bottom in economic freedom, possibly better than only communist North Korea. And the country is nearly bankrupt. However, perhaps having learned from this economic disaster, the military are now trying to liberalize their economic control and have invited foreign investment.

China

Burma is a small country, tucked beneath the mass of China to the north. China has more than 1.26 billion people, about 20 percent of the world's population, living under a communist dictatorship. They have a life expectancy of seventy years, and a purchasing power parity of \$3,800 (1999 estimate). Is life any better than in Burma, Saudi Arabia, or Sudan? This depends on when in the twentieth century one was born there. If a decade or so ago, yes. But anytime before then, no.

Before then, many Chinese died from disease or starvation, or were killed by soldiers in one of the hundreds of battles fought between war-

lords. And with the communist takeover of the whole country in 1949, tens of millions of Chinese were murdered in cold blood during the Communist Party's national campaigns, such as Land Reform, Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries, Three and Five Antis, Collectivization, and the Cultural Revolution.

Those who survived this monstrous bloodbath could well have starved to death in the famine caused by the Party's "Great Leap Forward" industrialization campaign, and the collectivization of all peasants into communes for factory-like farming. This famine occurred in the late 1950s and continued into the early 1960s; it was the world's worst ever. As many as 40 million Chinese might have starved to death or died from related diseases. This alone is over twice the 15 million killed in combat during World War II, including combatants from Germany, the Soviet Union, Japan, China, the United States, and Great Britain. All this I have detailed in my book on *China's Bloody Century*.

Life is better now for the average Chinese. Relatively. The Communist Party now largely leaves peasants alone to farm as they see fit and to sell their food. There is more freedom, especially, to pursue a business or invest. The Party is trying to liberalize the economy and give greater reign to private ambition and foreign investment. What was a deeply impoverished country in the 1960s, possibly even worse than Burma, is now rapidly developing its economy. Moreover, Chinese are freer from Party controls, rules, intervention, and especially Party attempts to remake their lives and culture.

Though it does so with a milder and more tolerant hand, the Communist Party still controls all aspects of government—it *is* the government. It is supreme; it shares power with no legislative body, no courts, no military, nor any other group. No one elects high Party leaders; they rise through power struggles within the Party. And except for those parts of the economy, culture, and family over which its policy is being liberalized, there still is little that Chinese can do without Party permission. It allows virtually no freedom of speech or association. Nor does it permit the Chinese to protest or demonstrate. And whatever their religious faith, the Party tightly controls it or makes it illegal.

Look at what happened to practicing members of the Jesus Family, a Protestant sect of which the Party does not approve. In 1992, police surrounded and arrested sixty-one members attending a monthly commune service in Duoyigou, Shandong Province. The police destroyed their village and confiscated all church belongings. A court eventually sentenced some of the members to between one and twelve years in prison for, among other things, taking part in an "illegal" religious meeting. The court gave the sect's leader and his sons the heaviest sentence of all for "swindling," because they were so bold as to collect

contributions for the church's annual Christmas celebration. Even if church members avoided prison, the police might harass them years later. After these people rebuilt their village, police sealed it off and those entering or leaving had to pay five yuan. Yuan Hongbing and Wang Jiaqi, two legal scholars, believed this was unjust and tried to help the sect take legal recourse, which only resulted in the police arresting them as well.

Even Catholics have suffered repression; many can only practice their religion underground. The Party considers Catholicism a "foreign, imperialist" import and has tried to keep it under tight control, arresting bishops and priests and burning their churches. In some places, churches are disguised as factories so that Catholics can pray at secret services.

As part of Party persecution of the Falun Gong sect (to members, it is not a religion), police are likely to arrest any Chinese who practice its combination of Taoism and Buddhism, and the meditation and martial arts techniques that lead members to a spiritual melding of mind, spirit, and body. There are as many as 100 million adherents in China, though the Party claims that no more than 2.1 million belong. Clearly, however, sect leaders can bring together many members quickly. On April 25, 1999, for example, a mass of 10,000 followers stood quietly in front of the compound housing the top Party leaders in Beijing.

Police have already arrested over a hundred sect leaders and thousands of its adherents for what, until recently, the Party labeled a "counterrevolutionary crime," and has renamed in less political terms a "crime disturbing social order." The Party recently held over 35,000 Falun Gong members in detention or in prison, and has tortured many. It has sent some 5,000 additional members to labor camps without trial. At least eighty-nine Falun Gong have died due to Party mistreatment.

Though this number is small and seems irrelevant in such a huge country, for each of the eighty-nine and those who loved them, it was terribly real. Sixty-year-old Chen Zixiu is a case in point. She traveled to Beijing to request that the Party lift its restrictions on the Falun Gong. The police arrested her, then beat and tortured her. Her aging body could not take it, and she was dead in four days. When her family collected her corpse, they found bruises all over her body, broken teeth, and dried blood in her ears.

Another woman, Zhao Xin, a professor at Beijing's Industry and Commerce University, died from a beating she received after her arrest for practicing Falun Gong breathing exercises in a Beijing park.

The Party cannot leave alone even that which most people regard as superstitions or simply good health exercises. In a crackdown on a group of Qi Gong practitioners, for example, over 21,000 have

been arrested for nothing more than fostering breathing and meditation exercises.

Action against unapproved sects or religious groups is simply an example of the Party's continuous campaign to suppress anything of which it does not approve—be it association, speech, unions, or movements. In China, there can be no association without Party permission, no nonprofit organization without registration. The Party must license all newspapers, magazines, and other publications, and no book can be published without Party approval. Censorship is common. There are even Party guidelines for publications, such as requiring that newspaper stories be 80 percent positive, 20 percent negative.

Disseminating or selling unapproved literature can lead to a long prison sentence. For example, police arrested two Beijing bookstore owners, sisters Li Xiaobing and Li Xiaomei, for selling Falun Gong publications, and a court sentenced them to six or seven years. The police even arrested the environmental journalist Dai Qing, who justifiably criticized a mammoth dam-building project on the Yangtze River, which will create the world's largest hydroelectric dam and displace one to two million people. A court sentenced him to ten months in prison and forbade him to publish in the future. Even for simply making a list of those convicted of protest-connected offenses—just a list—a court sentenced one fellow, Li Hai, to nine months in prison. After all, convictions are a “high-level state secret.”

Arrest and incarceration in prison, a labor camp, or a psychiatric hospital, forced drugging, brainwashing, psychological torture, physical torment, execution, a simple beating—all are Party tools. Their purpose is to control the Chinese population, advance Party policies, and maintain Party power through fear. There is no humanity in any of this. Note how the prison authorities treated the forty-two-year-old woman Cheng Fengrong. They handcuffed her to a tree and beat her, made her stand in the snow barefoot while they kicked her, and finally poured cold water over her head, which ran down her body and turned to ice at her feet.

Aside from the Party's great concern over what Chinese say and whom they associate with, there is still more reason why one would not want to be born in China. The Party also deems restricting population growth to be vital. It therefore forcibly intrudes into the core of a family's soul—the desire to have children. Since 1979, the Party has dictated who will have no more than one child, a policy largely applied to Han Chinese (comprising 92 percent of the population) living in urban areas. To prevent women from having a second child, the Party might sterilize them or, if they're pregnant, force them to undergo an abortion. If there are many pregnant women in an area, or just to ensure that there are no

second children, Party officials might enforce a local “Clean Out the Stomach Campaign” involving house-to-house examinations and forced abortions. If a woman still somehow manages to have a second child, the couple would likely be fined, and the child would be discriminated against and not allowed to attend the better schools.

What happened to the owner of a small clothing store is an example of the trouble a second pregnancy might cause. I will name her Woman X, since she is now a refugee and fears harm if the Party knows her name. After she had her first child, officials ordered her to use an intrauterine device to prevent another pregnancy. She did so for a while, but because of connected health problems, secretly removed it—and got pregnant. When they found out about this, Party officials fined her and forced her to undergo an abortion. The fine was too much for her meager resources to cover, and she could not pay it. Officials then seized her store. Penniless and distraught, she borrowed what money she could from relatives and fled alone, deserting her husband, child, and mother.

The result of the Party’s one-child policy was predictable in an Asian, male-oriented society. If a Chinese woman believed her first fetus to be female, she might well abort it. The second try might yield a male. If a female were born, the mother or her husband might murder or abandon it. Infanticide was naturally prevalent, and sometimes even encouraged by Party authorities. The result was that there were about 119 males born for every 100 females. It has led to playgrounds filled with masses of boys, few girls, and no siblings.

For traditional Chinese families, the end result is even worse. Who will take care of the aged parents? This has led to a Party reconsideration of the policy. One resulting reform is to permit families to have two children, if both parents are from single-child families.

With the liberalization of some controls, a much freer market, and less emphasis on remaking the society and culture, the Party now executes far fewer people than it did decades ago. Still, the numbers are very high by international standards. As expected, how many people the Party executes or otherwise kills without a fair trial and for political or religious “crimes” is unknown and difficult to estimate. Going by what the outside world knows, however, in just the one year of 1996 the Party executed at least 4,367 people. With a little more than 20 percent of the world’s population, and going only by documented executions, the Party performs about 75 to 80 percent of all known judicial executions in the world.

Nor can Chinese expect a decent burial if executed. As the still-warm body lies on the ground after being shot in the back of the head, doctors brought for this purpose will likely cut out the organs and rush

these to a hospital, without the prior consent of the executed or the family. At the hospital, doctors will transplant the organs into well-paying foreigners or the elite, or prepare the organs for shipment, so the Party can sell them in the international transplant market for much-needed hard currency. An American Chinese-language newspaper even advertised such organs for sale—one negotiated price was \$30,000.⁹

Executions are the result of official court sentences, but Chinese also die “off the record” from beatings, torture, or other mistreatment by authorities in prisons or labor camps. Even the Chinese press sometimes reports these deaths, as it did of a worker who, suspected of embezzlement, died after being beaten and tortured for twenty-nine hours. Chinese who simply demonstrate for democracy can be killed. During the nonviolent, pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989, soldiers, armored vehicles, and tanks slaughtered 2,000 to 10,000 demonstrators.

Those who escape execution or prison might still be sentenced to a forced labor or re-education camp. Life in either case can be worse than that in prison, however, and even death might seem preferable. It did for human rights leader Chen Longde. Beaten by guards with clubs and electric batons, tortured by other inmates who were promised reduced sentences if they got him to confess, and suffering from associated kidney damage, he finally jumped from a window. He survived, perhaps unfortunately, with two hips and a leg broken.

The Party forces inmates to fulfill a work quota or meet certain “reform” standards. Failure to meet a quota or spout communist dogma can be lethal. Camp officials may simply deny them benefits, or they may impose a more deadly punishment—they may beat them, starve them, or put them in painfully tightened leg irons or handcuffs for long periods. The quotas are not easy for inmates to fill, and could require them to work overtime with little sleep—sometimes no more than three or four hours. Moreover, camp authorities might combine work with required communist study, making it even harder to meet quotas. In some camps, guards routinely beat and harass inmates to force them to do more work. Of course, guards beat prisoners in other countries as well. But in China these beatings are not the idiosyncratic behavior of sadistic camp guards. They are the Party’s method to ensure work output and proper brainwashing. Overall, the Party admits to keeping 1.2 million prisoners, including detainees. This total is probably far under the actual number.

9 The Laogai Research Foundation at: www.laogai.org/reports/profit.htm

North Korea

Then consider North Korea, surely the worst place in the world in which to be born. Its communist dictator Kim Jong-il rules a population of 22.5 million with an iron hand, most of whom he is starving or weakening with malnutrition. Perhaps as many as 3 million North Koreans have died of starvation or associated diseases, not to mention those that Kim's regime has summarily executed. Even as I write this, people are dying by the hundreds, sometimes the thousands, every day, due to the long famine and poor rations caused by Kim's fanatical devotion to communism itself.

Consider what these people face just in their human need for food and health, leaving aside their enslavement.¹⁰ North Korea's population requires about 6 million tons of food a year for each person to have a minimum diet. The regime controls all farming, all agriculture, and can only produce about 4 million tons. There is a food shortfall of 2 million tons, or an amount 33 percent below what is minimally required.

Kim has imposed rationing, and his handouts are the only legal way to obtain food. There are no independent channels of distribution, except for the black market. This means that people get food as Kim and his thugs desire. Kim's food distribution system is highly unequal. Food is put aside first as "patriotic rice" and "military rice." This has resulted in a 22 percent cut in food consumption, from 700g a day per person to 400g a day—well below the minimum rice requirement set by the World Food and Agricultural Organization.

Kim uses the very food people need to live as a tool to reward and punish his subject slaves. In this "classless" communist society, the regime has divided North Koreans into a rigid hierarchy of three classes and fifty-one subdivisions, determined by their status within the communist North Korean Workers' Party and the military, their perceived faithfulness to communism, and their family backgrounds. Thus, vast numbers of people whose loyalties are questioned or who are deemed useless to the regime do not receive enough food to live long. The worst off are those people and families incarcerated in Kim's concentration or forced labor camps. They receive the lowest food allowance of all, despite being forced to work from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Attempts by South Korea, the United Nations, and the United States (the major provider) to supply food aid have not worked well. In 2002,

10 I have taken many of the following specifics from the exceptional report of Seong Ho Jhe's article in *Korea and World Affairs* (Summer 2003) on the food crisis in Korea. It is available at:

www.nkhumanrights.or.kr/NKHR_new/inter_conf/Seong_Ho_Jhe.pdf

food aid was 62 percent under its target, but even meeting the target would not substantially improve the food available to the average Korean, even were it equally distributed. It is not. The regime will not guarantee that food reaches those who need it most, it does not allow aid givers to carefully monitor who gets the food and, in some cases, it has redirected the food to its favorite classes or to the military.

Kim himself enjoys the best food the world can offer. Often this food is not merely imported, but gathered by his personal chef, sent from one country to another to buy the special food he desires. In his book *Kim Jong Il's Chef* (published in Japanese in 2003), written under a pseudonym after he escaped to Japan, Kim's chef described the countries he was sent to and for what food:

- Urumqi (in northwestern China) for fruit, mainly hamigua melons and grapes
- Thailand for fruit, mostly durians, papayas, and mangoes
- Malaysia for fruit, mostly durians, papayas, and mangoes
- Czechoslovakia for draft beer
- Denmark for pork
- Iran for caviar
- Uzbekistan for caviar
- Japan for seafood

This while most of Kim's people were starving, many to death.

There are no hospitals, doctors, or medical distribution and supply companies independent of the regime. All are nationalized. As with food, medical treatment and medicine is distributed as reward and punishment. Not surprisingly, medicine is in short supply and not available everywhere. An indicator of this situation is that only half of the population is now inoculated for such diseases as infantile paralysis and measles. Thus, the diseases associated with famine and malnutrition often receive no medical treatment at all. Under such conditions, even a cold can be fatal.

North Korea is one of the few countries in which population mortality rates have been increasing. The life expectancy has fallen to 66.8 years from 73.2; the newborn mortality rate has increased from 14 to 22.5, and the rate for those under five years of age has increased from 27 to 48 per thousand.

Aside from the daily accumulation of dead, the effects on the living have been disastrous. Long-term malnutrition has affected about half the living, and caused excessive underdevelopment in children—they are stunted in growth and excessively thin. There is

wide-scale dwarfishness and, most important from any humanitarian point of view, brain development has been retarded. Moreover, malnutrition has fostered rickets, scurvy, nyctalopia, hepatitis, and tuberculosis, among other diseases.

And all this without even recounting the regime's terror, repression, executions, and absolute violations of what those living in liberal democracies take for granted, such as the freedom of religion and speech, of opportunity and association, fair trials, rule of law, sanctity of the person, and freedom from fear. I can only describe this nation as a horrid, border-to-border slave labor camp, as I detailed in my *Death By Government*.

Some Other Antifreedom Thugdoms

There are many other thugdoms—nations—whose dictators allow no or little freedom, and daily commit abuses against human rights, including mass executions. For example, east of Burma and to the south of China is Laos, in which the treatment of its people by the Laotian Communist Party that controls the country can be best described as Stalinist.

Then in East Africa is the nation of Rwanda, where in 1994 Hutu soldiers and armed civilians killed hundreds of thousands of Tutsi, and armed Tutsi retaliated by murdering Hutu. By the end of this genocidal slaughter, Hutu and Tutsi had massacred as many as 1 million Rwandans within a few months, as Chapter 6 will report in full detail (and which I fictionalized in my novel *War & Democide Never Again*).

Iraq's former dictator Saddam Hussein (now held in prison by the newly sovereign Iraqi government under Prime Minister Iyad Allawi) gassed Kurdish women and children and destroyed over 3,000 of their villages in Iraq's north, and massacred Shiite men, women, and children in the south. Overall, his regime may have murdered 750,000 or even a million Iraqis.

And in 1971, as I also detailed in *Death By Government*, the West Pakistan military murdered Bengalis and Hindus by the hundreds of thousands in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

There are tens of millions more whose murder by one government or another I will discuss in Chapter 6. Here I mention this only to make the point clear. In such countries, and in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, China, and North Korea, the lives of the people have been filled with disease, starvation, forced labor, slavery, beatings, torture, and death. Their rulers have absolute or near-absolute power. And for those with absolute power, their whim is law, their fantasy a command, their wish a campaign. They do not see people as living human beings, each a self-conscious person

with a human soul. Such rulers see their citizens as bricks and mortar for building a paradise on earth, expendable pawns with which to fight a war, or robots to be programmed with a religious text.

Still, by what right can one criticize the lack of freedom in these countries? Why should one be free? Is one's personal enjoyment or desire for freedom sufficient to justify it for others? Really, what do we mean by freedom? And what are the consequences of such freedom for people or society as a whole?

Chapter 2

Universal Human Rights

A free society is a most socially just one.

If a people want to be free, should they be? Should those living in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, and China be free? Why? There are two ways of answering this. One is to prove that the benefits of freedom so overshadow any negative consequences as to be justified. This is what I will show in later chapters. The second way is to show that everyone has a right to be free regardless of the consequences, that freedom is moral and just in itself, and that it is immoral and unjust to deprive people of freedom.

That this is so may seem obvious, but it is not in much of the world. We saw in the previous chapter that the dictators of many nations obey no law. The law is what they command it to be, and their subjects must obey or suffer severe consequences. The people have no way of voting these dictators out of power, and to demonstrate or protest against them is to risk imprisonment, torture, and death. Their life is one of fear. Yet these dictators and their supporters often justify their rule as moral, or as socially or religiously just.

This belief is why some dictatorships come into existence in the first place. Large and powerful groups believe that this way of governing is necessary, as was true for Lenin and his Bolsheviks when they overthrew the pro-democratic provisional government of Russia in 1917. They may have such faith in their own ideology or religion and its teachings, as many do in Muslim countries, that they militantly demand that their church and government should be one. They may think their nation needs a dictatorship that can deal with its poverty and promote economic growth. They may be convinced that government must assure the economic right of the people to a job, social security, and health, before concerning itself with so-called Western human rights. They may be traditional monarchists who embrace a hereditary, authoritarian government that would maintain the great traditions and customs of their people.

Even those who know what life is like for the people who have no freedom in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, China, and North Korea might

still claim that believing they should be free is intolerant of different values, morally wrong, unfair, or ungodly. And fascists and communists are still around, though in the last half-century what we have learned about life under these isms has virtually discredited them. In my teaching I have known professors and students, for instance, who, persuaded by the Marxism-Leninism that provides the philosophical foundations of twentieth century communism that it is more socially just, were willing to replace their democratic freedoms with communist totalitarianism.

If people wish to live under a dictatorship, that is their choice. But what about people who have no choice, the people dictators deprive of any freedom with the force of their guns? Do we have a right to say that Burmese or Chinese rulers, or those of any other nondemocratic country, should free their people and democratize? Do those trumpeting such freedom ignore an Asian or African way, for example? What about God's way? Are not the holy teachings of the Bible or Koran above the selfish desire for freedom?

To answer, we must recognize that freedom is a general term, like liberty, independence, autonomy, and equality. In reality, freedom cannot be absolute; no one can be completely free. A person's talents, family situation, job, wealth, cultural norms, and laws against murder, incest, burglary, and so on limit their choices. And then there is the freedom of others that necessarily limits one's own freedom.

Broadly speaking, a person's rights, whatever they may be, define the limits to their freedom. In the Western tradition of freedom, these are their civil and political rights, including their freedom of speech, religion, and association. Some philosophers see these not only as morally justified rights in themselves, but also as means for fulfilling other possible rights, like happiness. The opposing position is that such rights have no special status unless granted by government to maintain tradition, as does an absolute monarchy like Saudi Arabia; to pursue a just society, as the Communist Party of China claims; to protect a holy society, as does a Muslim government like that in Sudan; or to economically develop a country, as attempted by a military government like that in Burma.

The internationally popular justification for a people's freedom is by reference to *human rights*, those due them as a human beings. The term "human rights" is recent in origin: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt first used it in a 1941 message to the United States Congress, when he declared that everyone has four human rights—freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from want and fear. Since 1941, there has been a vigorous international affirmation of these and other human rights. Many a nation's constitution has included them, and they now

are part of an International Bill of Rights. The latter comprises Articles 1 and 55 of the 1945 United Nations Charter, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and the two international covenants passed by the General Assembly in 1966, one on civil and political rights and the other on economic, social, and cultural rights. There is now a United Nations Human Rights Commission that can investigate alleged violations of human rights, and receive and consider complaints. In our nation-centered international system, this is a momentous advance for the human rights of all people.

The conventions and declarations of regional organizations have further strengthened these human rights. To mention a few examples, the Council of Europe adopted the European Convention on Human Rights, and European nations now have the European Court of Human Rights and the European Commission on Human Rights. The Organization of American States adopted the American Declaration on Human Rights, and the American states have created the Inter-American Convention and Court on Human Rights. The Organization for African Unity has created the African Charter of Human and People's Rights. Moreover, there have been many formal conferences among states and interested international government organizations on human rights, such as the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights involving 183 nations.

Human rights have also been the concern of many private organizations. These have sought to further define and extend human rights (such as the right to a clean environment), observe the implementation of human rights in all nations, publicize violations of human rights by governments (for instance, the right against torture and summary execution), or pressure governments to end their violations. Some of the many such organizations include the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Anti-Slavery Society, Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights, and the International Commission of Jurists.

Even warfare or rebellion is no excuse for dictatorships such as Sudan or Burma to torture or arbitrarily kill their people. Nations have agreed to moderate their warfare to preserve certain human rights, as exactly defined in the 1949 Geneva Convention, its 1977 Additional Protocols, and now the International Court of Justice.

All this international activity on human rights has multiplied the list of rights. People now have at least forty rights listed in the basic international documents on human rights, which are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that on Civil and Political Rights, and that on Eco-

conomic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The most basic of all these rights are those defining what governments cannot do to their people. From those stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these include everyone's right to

- life, liberty, and personal security;
- recognition as a person before the law, equal protection of the law, remedy for violation of their rights, fair and public trial, and the presumption of their innocence until proven guilty if charged with a penal offense;
- leave any country and return, and seek asylum from persecution;
- the secret ballot and periodic elections, and freely chosen representatives;
- form and join trade unions, equal access to public service, and participation in cultural life;
- freedom of movement and residence, thought, conscience and religion, opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association, and as a parent to choose their children's education;
- freedom from slavery or servitude, torture, degrading or inhuman treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest or detention or exile, arbitrary interference with privacy or family or home or correspondence, deprivation of nationality, arbitrary deprivation of property, and being compelled to join an association.

In effect, these human rights define what I mean by democratic freedom. A people's freedom of thought, expression, religion, and association is basic, as are the secret ballot, periodic elections, and the right to representation. In short, these rights say that people have a right to be free.

Therefore, those condemning the lack of freedom in, for instance, Sudan, are not imposing *their* values on another culture. *This is not a matter of value relativity.* Demanding human rights, and thus freedom, for the slaves in the Sudan—or Chinese political prisoners, or the women in Muslim countries, or Burmese forced laborers—is simply demanding that their rulers obey international law, itself based on general treaties, international agreements, and practices.

This law is universal. Every Arabian, Chinese, Rwandan, and all the world's peoples have the internationally defined and protected human rights listed above. No rulers can violate these rights of their

people without risking mandated sanctions by the United Nations Security Council. Many nations now even include human rights monitors or representatives within their foreign ministries so that a foreign dictator who denies the human rights of his people can be publicly exposed and diplomatically pressured to recognize them. For example, the United States Department of State has a Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs run by an Assistant Secretary of State. The bureau publishes an annual review of human rights around the world.

True, there is much hypocrisy here and with so many dictatorships in the world, the skeptic may feel that these rights are just words. Even some of the governments that signed the human rights documents allow few rights to their people. Note, however, that they felt compelled to sign them. This shows the sheer power and legitimacy of the idea of human rights.

These human rights documents lay down a marker. They define what should be, what is right, the moral high ground. Those who deny such rights now must defend their policies, not those who grant these rights. Indeed, any violation of a people's human rights by their rulers, as when the Chinese police arrest and torture people for practicing their creed or religion, is now a breach of *international law*. Unfortunately, the United Nations cannot automatically command sanctions or military intervention against governments for this. It is no longer a problem of what a people's human rights are, but of international and domestic politics, power, and interests.

Again, consider Sudan. Slavery and genocide against the southern black Christians continued without foreign intervention to stop it. This is because Sudan is a distant country, with little trade, few foreign embassies, hardly any foreign journalists, almost no tourists, and no cultural affinity with the world's most powerful countries. Moreover, intervention probably would disrupt sensitive diplomatic arrangements within the region, including the relations of the Muslim countries with Israel. It also might mean a local war, perhaps with Libya or even Iran providing the Sudanese rulers with military aid, which the democratic peoples of the world lack the interest and will to fight. However, if every day they were to see televised images of the starving children and the scars of slavery, and hear the stories of those tortured, then they would demand that their leaders do something.

Such was the case with the United Nations-supported, American-led military coalition that intervened in Somalia. The Somali government had collapsed into clan wars, and people were starving by the millions, with about 500,000 already dead. When the world's television screens and newspapers showed picture after picture of starving Somali

children, the horrified American public demanded action, and finally pressured the first President Bush into doing something.

Acting under a United Nations Security Council resolution, the United States intervened in December 1992 with 25,500 American troops. Their goal was to protect international famine relief efforts and end the political chaos. But soon after the Clinton Administration came into power in January 1993, its support for this intervention collapsed when the Somalis killed eighteen Army Rangers trapped into a fire-fight. President Clinton then reduced American forces, and the whole operation was handed over to a United Nations force of 22,000, which finally withdrew in March 1994.

Journalists and politicians believe the operation was a failure. It did not produce a pro-democratic government, assure the human rights of Somalis, or end the civil war. Still, it did save possibly a million people from starvation, which may be justification enough.

Even if international sanctions and intervention to protect human rights are difficult, the international community has moved more than one step forward. It has clearly articulated the law protecting everyone's rights. It does pinpoint the behavior of a government that is morally wrong. And if the international community cannot impose sanctions on the dictators who trample on their subjects' rights, or intervene to stop them, at least now the United Nations and international organizations can subject them to moral pressure. The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, makes this clear by stating that human rights are "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society . . . shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance"

In sum, a people's human rights well define their freedom. Regardless of how others may want people to live because of their ideology, religion, or moral code, wherever people live, no matter their culture, no matter what government they live under, the following principle applies to all.

A people's freedom—their human rights—is justified by United Nations certification, international treaties, agreements, and international law.

Chapter 3

Philosophical Justification of Freedom

Nothing . . . is unchangeable but the inherent and unalienable rights of man.

– Thomas Jefferson

Does agreement on human rights, even the international consensus shown above, define just rights? Because a majority, even an overwhelming majority, says something is a right, is it a moral, just right? Few philosophers would agree to this. Being philosophers, they still must ask why a right is a right. And there are many answers.

For one, there is the philosophical school called *legal positivism*, much influenced by the seminal work of John Austin (1790–1859), that does not accept internationally defined human rights as fundamentally moral or just. These philosophers separate law from morality, and argue that the rights of all people are only those that the world community has agreed to in their international deliberative assemblies, organizations, and by their treaties. Although for international law the positivist position is dominant among lawyers, judges, and academics, among philosophers it is a minority position. By this standard, human rights are international legal rights, as described, although not necessarily moral or ethically right.

Philosophers have debated much about how to justify rights, especially about what used to be called *natural rights* or the *rights of man*. These rights are a particularly Western idea that grew out of the medieval concern for the rights of lords, barons, churchmen, kings, guilds, or towns. One of the great documents promoting the rights of all subjects was the Magna Carta signed by King John of England in 1215. He promised thereby to govern according to the law, that all have a right to the courts. It established that no person, not even the king, was above the law.

With the eighteenth century Enlightenment and a growing faith in human reason, philosophers began to grapple with the meaning of “a right” and whether people generally had any. What emerged was the idea that all people have natural rights. These are what people think,

with reason and without emotional prejudice or personal bias, are the rights everyone should have as human beings. For example, two such rationally grounded natural rights that all people share with each other are their rights to life, and to equal freedom.

This philosophical conception of natural rights has been one of the most powerful ideas in history. It has been the force behind many revolutions and constitutions. For example, the philosopher John Locke, in his influential *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), wielded this idea like a sword, claiming that every human being has a natural right to freedom, equality, and property. He directly influenced the American Declaration of Independence, which almost a century later (1776) declared that “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

Some years later the French National Assembly approved the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789, which proclaimed that the purpose of political association is the preservation of one’s natural and inalienable rights to liberty, private property, personal security, and resistance to oppression.

The Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States, further defined everyone’s natural rights, among them the freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. Nations now recognize these rights as human rights, as I have pointed out, and they have become part of the constitution of one nation after another.

A variant of this natural rights approach is to claim that each person has only *one natural right*, and it is *self-evident*: each person exists, each is human, and therefore, each has an absolute right to equal freedom with all other humans. No more, no less. Then, treating this like an axiom in Euclidean geometry, no other right exists unless it is a derivation of, or implicit in, a person’s right to equal freedom. This thereby establishes the right to freedoms of religion, assembly, and speech. But, it denies the status of a right to what people want or need, but which can’t be derived from that of equal freedom, such as the right to a job, welfare, or clean air. Moreover, people do not have a right to what other people are compelled to secure for them.

Regardless of approach, philosophers can only justify these natural rights by their abstract reason, as though doing a mathematical proof. Nonetheless, using their logic and reason, they still disagree on what rights people have—for instance, to abortion, social security, and a minimum wage. This problem of defining what is reasonable is universal, and has encouraged philosophers to chase less subjective justifications of rights.

One favored solution among thinkers, such as the eighteenth century British theologian William Paley, jurist and philosopher Jeremy Bentham, and philosophers James Mill and John Stuart Mill, is their appeal to *utility*—what promotes the greater happiness of all is good. According to the utilitarians, the only rights that can be justified are those that assure the greatest happiness of the largest number of people. Utilitarians argue that this criterion provides an empirical measuring rod for what will be a right—overall, does it cause more happiness than pain? If so, then it is a right. If not, then it is not a right. I believe that in their hearts, this utilitarian argument has been the dominant justification for human rights by activists, and especially by diplomats from the democracies who negotiated the human rights agreements. They believed that by promoting human rights they were furthering human happiness in the world.

Chapter 4

Freedom As a Social Contract

*One man's justice is another's injustice;
One man's beauty is another's ugliness;
One man's wisdom another's folly;*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

A Convention of Minds

Finally, I will give my own argument for human rights. It's based on a hypothetical social contract, a favorite conceptual tool of political philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and Baron de Montesquieu. They used this idea to define a just society, and the power and limits of government.

Imagine, as Hobbes did in his *Leviathan* (1651), that in the original state of nature life was primitive, brutal, and short. People, therefore, saw the absolute need to secure their lives and property, and therefore all (hypothetically) agreed to participate in a social contract that would ensure this. They implemented it by forming a central government, and granting it the power to protect their lives and property in exchange for a pledge that each member would obey its laws. This social contract then defined the reciprocal duties of citizen and government. Violate the contract, and government may justly punish the violator; conversely, if the government violates the contract, for example by not protecting its people's lives from criminals or if the government itself is preying on its people, then they may justly overthrow it.

This idea of an implicit social contract between the people and their government contributed to the writing of the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. And it has much in common with that of the positivists, who stress international agreements as the source of human rights. After all, if universal in scope, thereby defining the rights of everyone, these agreements are akin to a general social contract.

To be clear, when philosophers use a hypothetical social contract to justify rights in a state of nature, they are trying to determine those rights that all people would agree should be guaranteed by government. To make this social contract objective and unbiased, philosophers assume that in their agreement on it, people are ignorant of their wealth, status, race, talents, or other attributes. They therefore have no idea how their choice of a social contract—of rights—would benefit them personally, which makes these rights just.

As I did in Part 2 of my *The Just Peace*, I will use a revised version of this social contract approach to more fully explore whether people would generally, regardless of their religion, ideology, or culture, agree on certain rights. I also want to broaden this contract to consider the connected principles of governance. Rights do not exist in a vacuum. Some possible rights, in their very definition, assume that government will or will not have certain powers. For example, among the human rights mentioned above are those to free association (one-party governments are then out), freedom of religion (so much for government based on the Koran or Bible), and the freedom to vote in free elections (which assumes a democratic-type government). However, this is not a one-to-one relationship between rights and governance. Monarchies and some dictatorships, for example, may allow freedom of religion, domestic movement, and immigration. But there is a close relationship between the rights people might want and how they should be governed to assure those rights, and I want to make this association clear.

It is also critical that rights agreed to in the social contract and associated principles of governance be just—that is, they should define what is *social justice*. This demands that the social contract satisfy certain requirements.

First, for the rights and principles to be morally just, they must be universal. It is hardly just if one person has the right to be a Buddhist while another person is not free to practice Judaism. Therefore, whatever people agree to in their social contract applies to all people, anywhere, at anytime.

Second, to be morally just, the rights and principles must be practical. People must be able to live by them. A person can hardly judge another immoral for not doing something that is impossible to do. We could not obey, for example, a moral injunction against sexy dreams, if they were deemed immoral. Preventing these dreams is beyond our ability.

Finally, a just right or just principle also means that it is fair, even-handed. Two more requirements can assure this. One is that nearly everyone has a chance to discuss, debate, and finally agree upon the

rights all will have and on their associated principles of governance. The other requirement is that the agreement is objective. This can be achieved by making everyone hypothetically blind to his or her self-interests. A good example of this is the sculpture of a Greek goddess (possibly Themis) holding a scale of justice in the left hand and a sword in the other, which is found on the wall of many courthouses in the United States. So that her judgment will be uncorrupted and unbiased, she is blindfolded to hide from her whether the defendant is rich or powerful, young or old, man or woman, black or white.

The rights these requirements define should not only be just, but also well considered and vital. To achieve this, people must have the strongest motivation to seek, propose, and weigh such rights and the related powers of government. It would be easy enough for a person to say that another should have a right not to be discriminated against, but is this a right that the person would passionately support, even at the risk of death?

If a right can be agreed upon that meets the above requirements, then it is truly a basic and just right. Those rights and related principles meeting all these requirements will define social justice and just governance.

Now to have a little fun: suppose all people suddenly hear a voice inside their head. They look around for the source of the voice, but no one is talking—or if anyone is, the inner voice overrides what is being said. Some get anxious, wonder if they are going crazy.

But the voice has a soothing quality, and soon it tells everyone what is happening:

People of earth, what you hear is being sent to you telepathically from a spaceship near earth. We are galactic conservationists from another star system here to give you the following message.

All your lives are at risk. Your planet will be passing through a lethal galactic warp storm in two years, and the resulting radiation will exterminate all life on earth. As conservationists we are dedicated to protecting all intelligent life forms in the galaxy. We are here to save your species from death.

To do this, we have found a habitable planet orbiting a distant sun. It has no com-

peting intelligent life, and we can teleport all of you to it. However, according to the laws of our galactic federation, we can make such a transfer of intelligent life forms only if virtually all of you agree among yourselves on what rights you will have in your new world, and the related principles of government under which you will live. If you reach a strong consensus on this, we will then teleport you to this new world.

But our galactic federation also commands us to inform you of one technological problem. Our teleportation equipment for transferring alien life forms is not perfect, and we cannot promise that our equipment can keep your mind and body together—some or many of your minds may end up in different bodies, but without physical harm or loss of intelligence or faculties.

So that you may debate and agree on your rights and the principles governing your new world, in two months we will set up, telepathically, a Convention of Minds. In the convention all of you will be able to propose the guiding principles and human rights of your new world, debate them, and vote upon them.

This hypothetical Convention of Minds and possible transfer to a new world meets the requirements set out for defining just rights. First, all people would take part and the resulting rights and principles, on which if they get a consensus vote, would be universal. Second, since people would not know what body their mind would end up in after the teleportation, they would have to make their judgments independent of their race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, handicaps, and other physical characteristics and skills, as well as their wealth, power, and prestige. This will assure their objectivity. And the fact that everyone—all humankind—would be wiped out unless nearly all agree on the principles provides the important motivation to reach a universal solution.

Imagine now that the aliens convene the Convention of Minds, people make proposals, and the debate begins. What will be the patterns of

these proposals? Surely, they will reflect the full range of the world's ideologies, religions, and cultures. Democratic individualists, democratic socialists, state socialists, fascists, militarists, monarchists, and the few remaining Marxists and Maoists will offer their idea of rights and governance, as will Buddhists, Catholics and Protestants, Shiite and Sunni Muslims, Confucians, and pantheists. And surely, all secular humanists, nonpolitical atheists, advocates of nonviolence, environmentalists, feminists, gay activists, and many, many others will make their views known. Then there are the cultural differences between races, ethnicities, and nationalities that surely would influence, if not predetermine, the choice of rights and government.

Could everyone agree on one set of rights and principles? I do not believe so, and simulations of this convention that I have set up in my classes over the years have all confirmed this. Even if the survival of our species were at stake, people across the globe would not be able to agree on their rights and the associated principles of governance. They hold their beliefs so deeply, and for some so fanatically, that they would be willing to die for them. Thus, human history has seen people volunteer for suicide bombings and terrorist attacks, for fighting and possibly dying in guerrilla, civil, and international wars, and in violent revolutions. To therefore expect, for example, a practicing Catholic to accept that all Christians should have only the right to obey the Koran, and live under a Muslim's principles of governance, is unreasonable. Nor do I believe a liberal democrat would accept communist principles, nor a communist or socialist, capitalist ones.

The Convention of Minds would achieve no agreement on rights and governing principles. It would be deadlocked. But there would still be a solution.

The debate at first would be over the rights everyone would have to live by, and the principles governing all. Each would assume, naturally, that if everyone agreed on the socialist principles of government ownership of the means of production and its enforcement of relative equality in wages, benefits, advantages, and goods for all, these would have to be the principles operating universally and at all levels of government. Libertarians, however, surely would not agree to this.

When their beliefs prevent agreement, a large majority of people in the Convention would be like a watermelon seed squeezed between two fingers. They would be squeezed hard on one side by the prospect of not only their own death and that of their loved ones, but of all humankind. Pressing hard from the other side would be their logical and emotional inability to agree on proposed rights and principles. These opposing mental forces would likely pop the debate to a higher, transcendent level.

At this higher level, a *metasolution* would break the convention's stalemate.

Before I go into this metasolution, three examples may help clarify what "metasolution" means. If someone has a leak in his plumbing, he and his mate can debate how they should fix the plumbing, or they can hire a plumber to fix the plumbing as they see fit. The choice of plumber is a metasolution to the leak. As another example, imagine trying to divide farmland equally between two sons, but no matter how you divide the land, nothing is ever equal, and one or both will believe the division to be unfair. So, a metasolution: let one son divide the land and the other choose which half he wants. Finally, rather than continually trying to choose which of your two children gets what goodie or does what chore, alternate weeks—assign one child to take his bath first one week, and the other child the next. Then, simply give the child taking a bath first the goodie. Who gets to sit next to the window in the car on this trip? Why, the one taking their bath first this week. Another metasolution.

And the convention would propose such a metasolution, and even the fanatics of one principle or another would see the advantage of agreeing on it. This metasolution would follow the well-known argument, "well, if we can't agree, let's agree to disagree and do our own thing." That is, the metasolution upon which there would be a consensus would involve two simple rights. The first, a *free choice* right, would be that:

People have a right to form their own communities.

And the second, the *free exit* right, would state that:

People have a right to leave any community.

Together, these rights would give everyone the right to organize with each other a community governed by their own principles and with whatever rights they want, as long as they do not force this community on others and anyone is free to leave it.

Surely everyone in the convention would realize that in the new world, these two rights would need to be enforced, and the resulting communities protected from aggression by their neighbors; therefore I believe the metasolution would also involve a single principle of governance.

*A limited, democratic federation of all communities
would govern the new world.*

Its basic job would be to administer, guarantee, and protect the Free Choice and Free Exit rights.

By demand, no doubt, the convention would give each future community an equal vote in the federation's legislature. But also, those who see that their community might be one of the larger ones would equally demand that the convention protect them against rule by a majority of tiny communities. They would argue for a second legislative chamber of the world federation that would give each community votes proportional to its population. Moreover, even the most confirmed authoritarians or absolutists would settle for some mechanism to check the domination of this world government so that it does not unduly intervene in the affairs of their community, and so on.

However these articles of the future constitution would work out, the basic principle and associated government is clear. It would be a liberal democracy, as defined in the next chapter, except that the democratic civil liberties and political rights would refer to *communities* and not individuals. All communities would have a right to vote for their representative to the world government in fair and periodic elections, all would be equal before the law, all would have the freedom to organize, the freedom of speech, and so on. And the convention would realize the necessity, I am sure, of limiting the power of the federal world government to guaranteeing and protecting the Free Choice and Free Exit rights. This would be the only type of government that would allow everyone to do their own thing consistent with all having the same right.

Finally, if a vote of all people in the world were to be taken in the convention on just the Free Choice and Free Exit rights and democratic principle, then I believe that a huge majority of the world's people would adopt them. For if any monarchist, fascist, communist, liberal democrat, Muslim, or whatever could find enough others to agree to form their own community, then they would have the right to do so. People can live, therefore, under whatever government they want, even an utterly totalitarian one. Just one qualification: they must allow any of their community members to leave if they wish.

In short, people would *be free to be unfree*, and this is part of what democratic freedom means. Indeed, I would argue that the human or natural right to be free implies the Free Choice right. Free speech does not mean that you have to speak out. You can say nothing if you wish, or join a group in which this freedom is strictly circumscribed or even totalitarian in governance, such as the military or a monastery. Freedom of religion means that if people so desire, they can form a group in which only one religion is legitimate, and keep out those of other religions, as in a Catholic nunnery. And within liberal democracies today,

people usually can support and participate in antidemocratic political parties and movements. The communist party, for example, is legal in the United States and most other democracies.

We will get into this more in the next chapter, but here I might note that:

Democracy is a metasolution to the problem of diversity.

It provides a way of uniting under one government people who are vastly different socially, culturally, and philosophically. And as in the Convention of Minds, democracy solves this problem by saying “govern yourself, but do so in a manner consistent with the same right of others.” Democracy does not lay down a template for each person’s life, as do other types of government. Rather, as a metasolution it is a method of governance that prevents possible bloody conflicts over rights and principles for the greater society.

The Global Evolution of Rights

Yes, people have moral, just rights. They are universal, and what people would choose to live under, were they given the chance. And they are socially just. But all this is justified through a bizarre science fiction tale. Quite rightly, you might want a real-world example of the Free Choice and Free Exit rights. So let’s look at the evolution of international relations and its legal principles.

Throughout eons of human history, through the growth and collapse of clans and cities, nations and states, civilizations and empires; through the many human disasters and catastrophes, wars and revolutions; through the growth and decay of religions and creeds, philosophies, and ideologies; and through the countless day-by-day interactions of billions of people, a system of world governance has evolved based, in effect, on the two hypothetical rights emerging from the Convention of Minds.

The most basic right people have in the modern international system is that of *self-determination* for their country or national group, with its allied international legal principle of state *sovereignty*. The idea of self-determination has had tremendous power in international relations. In the twentieth century it was the force behind demands for independence by the former British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish colonies. Against the cries for self-determination, these nations could no longer justify their undemocratic and remote imperial rule. In a few decades after World War II, much of the world was decolonized, and by the end of the Soviet empire in 1991, no more than a few small and scattered colonies remained.

A corollary to the principle of sovereignty is that no other nation has a right to intervene in a nation's domestic affairs. The principle, really a metaprinciple, of sovereignty legally allows a community to govern itself with great freedom. Although by their agreements and treaties nations have placed certain restrictions on this sovereignty, such as restricting the right to carry out genocide or slavery, and obligating all governments to respect certain human rights, each nation still is nearly free to govern itself.

Why, for example, has the United Nations or a powerful coalition of democratic countries not invaded Burma, Sudan, or Saudi Arabia to stop their killing and denial of human rights? Of course, it is partly a matter of the costs involved and the apathy or ignorance of democratic peoples about what life is like in these countries. It is partly that the media does not constantly pound us with images of the horrors going on in these countries, as already noted. But more important, the sovereignty of these countries protects them. It is a very high legal and political hurdle to jump over for those who want intervention. Each country that might approve such an intervention especially has to wonder whether it is setting a precedent for itself.

Nonetheless, such intervention has happened—in Bosnia and Kosovo and, as I mentioned before, in Somalia. And now there are the intervention-invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the American-led coalition in its war against Muslim terrorists and their state supporters. But for this intervention to occur, the terrorists first had to hijack commercial jets loaded with passengers and fly them full throttle into the World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon, killing nearly 3,000 people overall.

And, although this is not respected by all countries, international law gives everyone the right to immigrate and, particularly, to request political asylum of another nation. This is, in effect, the Free Exit principle.

Finally, the United Nations has become a very limited global, federal government. It has a head of government, a legislature, an administration, and a judicial system. It only lacks a monopoly of force over the world, but such monopoly is not a defining characteristic of government. In operation, the United Nations meets the constitutional principles needed to guarantee and administer the Free Choice and Free Exit rights. The greatest remaining difference from what the hypothetical convention would decide is that since it has no military force of its own, the United Nations must depend on military contributions from member nations for its peacekeeping operations or to implement a Security Council resolution. But the direction of change is toward a stronger and more capable United Nations and even, eventually, its own very limited military capability.

So, through many millennia of civilizations, empires, city-states, nations, alliances, wars, and revolutions, the world's peoples have slowly evolved a metasolution to their vastly different societies and cultures, as a species evolves in response to its environment. This real-world metasolution has globally institutionalized the Free Choice and Free Exit rights, along with a federal, world government.

A final argument supports the outcome of the hypothetical Convention of Minds. Even before the Holocaust that began in 1941, the Nazi government increasingly discriminated against Jews living in Germany in the 1930s; many had relatives or friends imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps. Although immigration was legal and Jews could thereby escape from the Nazis, most still wanted to live in Germany. After all, it was where their ancestors were born, and where their friends and relatives lived. They could not easily pull up their roots and leave, and anyway, many knowledgeable Jews argued that the Nazi regime would change for the better or that, at least, things would get no worse. So they stayed—and most died.

Before this horror happened, however, some perceptive Jewish families who did not want to take any chances with their children decided to send them to school abroad. But where? In what country would they have the greatest opportunity to realize their potential? Generally they chose a democratically free country, such as Great Britain, Canada, or the United States.

These families made their choice under circumstances similar to those of the hypothetical Convention of Minds. They sent their children off to a different world, not knowing what their children would be like, ultimately, and therefore how they would benefit. They chose a nation in which their children would have the greatest freedom of choice, which was under a democratic government.

Summary

Virtually all people, blind to their personal benefits, and acting through a hypothetical Convention of Minds, would agree to a social contract giving each other the right to choose how they live, and the right to leave any community in which they live. And the circumstances of this decision make these socially just rights. We also find that millennia of human evolution have produced similar rights among nations, specifically the right to sovereign self-determination and free immigration.

Legally, morally, and by the practice of nations, then, people should be free. And to further this freedom and guard it, their country should be democratic. This raises the question: what is democracy itself?

PART 2

On Democracy

Human rights and the core idea of freedom are defining characteristics of a people. Their level of freedom can be measured on a scale. For instance, in Denmark, Japan, or South Africa, people have freedom; in Russia, Bolivia, and Burundi, they have partial freedom; in Algeria, Vietnam, and Cuba, they have no freedom. For a people to have freedom, they must live under a form of government that guarantees and protects their freedom. Such is liberal democracy. This part of the book describes this form of government in theory and in action.

Chapter 5 begins with the meaning of democracy, and in particular discusses the modern meaning of democracy in contrast to the idea of a republic and pure democracy. Chapter 6 clarifies the characteristics of democratic institutions, separating those marking an electoral from a liberal democracy, with due attention to the often confusing term “liberal.”

To give life to these abstract concepts, Chapter 7 describes the two presidential terms of President Clinton and his impeachment, a crisis period in the American democracy. The next chapter explains what the Clinton years tell us about how democracy operates, and why it should be valued. The final Chapter 9 shows that democracies are neither rare nor limited to Europe and a few other nations, but encompass a major, growing, and diverse proportion of the world’s population.

Chapter 5

What Is Democracy?

Liberal democracy is the institutionalization of human rights—it is the most practical solution to the freedom of each being compatible with the freedom of all.

Whatever freedoms people have cannot exist in a political vacuum. There must be some way of assuring and protecting their rights—their freedom—and government is the answer. Even libertarians, although they are the most ardent proponents of the maximum freedom, and believe that government is evil, generally accept that it is necessary or inevitable.

But not just any government will do. It must be one that not only commands obedience to its laws, but in its very organization embodies what being free means. This is *democracy*. As a concept, democracy has developed many meanings since its first use by the ancient Greeks, and even its well-established meanings have changed.

We can define democracy by its inherent nature and by its empirical conditions. As to its nature, Aristotle defined democracy as rule by the people (Greek *demokratia*: *demos* meaning “people” + *-kratia*, *-cracy*, meaning “rule” or “governing body”) and this idea that in some way the people govern themselves is still the core meaning of democracy. In the ancient Greek city-states and the early Roman Republic, democracy meant that people participated directly in governing and making policy. This was possible because of the small populations of these cities—hardly ever more than 10,000 people—and the exclusion of women and slaves from participation. Although limited to free males, this idea of direct participation of the people in government was the essence of democracy up to modern times; now it is usually known as pure or direct democracy.

Many philosophers of the Enlightenment, such as Immanuel Kant and John Locke, disliked direct democracy, although otherwise they favored freedom. For one thing, it was impractical for nations of millions of people, or even for cities of hundreds of thousands. Clearly, a representative system was necessary. For another, they felt that direct democracy, as it

was understood, was mob rule—government by the ill-informed, who would simply use government to their own advantage.

This distrust was evident in the eighty-five essays of *The Federalist* (1787–1788) written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay on the proposed Constitution of the United States. They assumed that people behave to fulfill their self-interest and are generally selfish, making a direct democracy as a means to achieve justice and protect natural rights dangerous. Nonetheless, they believed strongly in the “consent of the governed,” and argued for a republican form of government in which elected representatives would reflect popular will. This was a general view among the authors of the Constitution, who believed that by establishing a republic they would institutionalize the central ideas of their Declaration of Independence (1776):

. . . We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That, to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . .

Constitutionally, therefore, the founders of the United States established a republic, not a democracy—as political philosophers then defined democracy. A republic is based on the consent and will of the people, but implemented through a buffer of elected representatives and indirect election, as by the president and vice president of the United States. These representatives are elected by an electoral college, with the electors chosen by the voters of each state and their number dependent upon the number of senators and representatives each state sends to Congress.

That the United States was created as a republic and that we now call it a democracy has caused considerable confusion. My references to the United States as a democracy on my website have earned me well over a dozen emails informing me that it was not a democracy, but a republic. The problem is that, in the twentieth century, the understanding of democracy as the direct participation of citizens has been transformed to mean any government in which the people elect their representatives. Democracy now generally means a republican or representative government.

Chapter 6

Electoral and Liberal Democracy

Freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation.

– Thomas Jefferson

With this contemporary understanding of the term democracy, what are its characteristics? One necessary and sufficient set of characteristics involves the electoral system through which people choose their representatives and leaders, and thus give their consent to be governed and to have those representatives communicate their interests. The manner in which democracies conduct their elections varies from one to another, but all share these characteristics: regular elections for high office, a secret ballot, a franchise that includes nearly the whole adult population, and competitive elections.

Having a near-universal franchise is an entirely modern addition to the idea of democracy. Not long ago, governments that were called democratic excluded from the franchise all slaves and women, as did the United States through much of its history (male, black American former slaves got the right to vote after the Civil War; women did not get this right until 1920, when Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment), as well as all non-slave males who did not meet certain property or literacy requirements. We now consider it perverse to call democratic any country that so restricts the vote, as did the apartheid regime in South Africa that limited voting to the minority population of whites.

Real competition in the elections is a key requirement. Many communist nations exhibited all the electoral characteristics mentioned in their periodic election of legislators handpicked by the Communist Party, who then simply rubber-stamped what the Party wanted. “Competitive” means that those running for office reflect different political beliefs and positions on the issues. If they do not, as in the communist nations, then the government is not democratic.

Besides its electoral characteristics, one kind of democracy has characteristics that, while neither necessary nor sufficient for democracy to exist, are crucial to freedom. These involve the recognition of certain human rights discussed in the previous chapter. One is the freedom to organize political groups or parties, even if they represent a small radical minority, that then nominate their members to run for high office. Another right is that to an open, transparent government—in particular, the right to know how one’s representatives voted and debated. There are also the rights to freedom of speech, particularly the freedom of newspapers and other communication media to criticize government policies and leaders; freedom of religion; and the freedom to form unions and organize businesses.

One of the most important of these is the right to a fair trial and rule by law. Above the state there must be a law that structures the government, elaborates the reciprocal rights and duties of the government and the people, and which all governing officials and their policies must obey. This is a constitution, either created as a single document like that of the United States, or a set of documents, statutes, and traditions, such as that of Great Britain.

If a democracy recognizes these rights, we call it a *liberal democracy*. If it does not, if it has only the electoral characteristics but suppresses freedom of speech, possesses leaders that put themselves above the law and representatives that make and vote on policies in secret, then we can call it a *procedural*, or better, an *electoral democracy*.

For American readers particularly, there is conceptual confusion over the term “liberal.” In the mid-seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, political philosophers emphasized the root meaning of liberal, which is from the Latin *liberalis* for “free man” and the French *liber* for “free.” It stood for an emphasis on individual liberty—on the freedom of a people versus their government. A liberal slogan of the time was “the government that governs least governs best.” It was hammered out in England’s Glorious Revolution of 1688, the French Revolution, and the American Revolution, and articulated in the works of John Locke, Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill. This emphasis on freedom from government regulation and controls we now call classical liberalism, and presently is reflected best in the political philosophy of American conservatives.

Libertarians also trace their philosophy back to classical liberalism, but this is true only regarding the classical liberal emphasis on economic freedom and human rights. Classical liberals, unlike modern libertarians and liberals, believed that the government had a strong moral role. Conservatives show their affinity for this moral role by supporting laws against dope, prostitution, and gambling.

In modern times “liberal” has evolved to mean a belief that government is a tool to improve society and deal with the problems of poverty, discrimination, and monopolies, among others, and to improve public health, education, social security, the environment, and working conditions. There is no less an emphasis on human rights, a dedication that is shared by Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and modern liberals, but today’s liberals no longer accept minimum government, nor do they see in the government the danger that classical liberals attributed to it.

In liberal democracy, however, the root definition of “liberal” is meant, not its modern sense. A liberal democracy means that a people rule themselves through periodic elections in which nearly all adults can participate; they elect their highest leaders to the offices for which they are eligible, and they are governed under the rule of law that guarantees them certain human rights.

So democracy now means a republican form of government, which may be only electorally representative in its characteristics, or liberal. Table 6.1, below, summarizes these two kinds of democracies.

Table 6.1
Electoral and Liberal Democracy

Characteristics of electoral democracy

secret ballot
regular elections for high office
competitive elections
near-universal franchise

Characteristics of liberal democracy

An electoral democracy, plus
freedom to organize political
parties/groups
open government
freedom of speech/free media
freedom of religion
freedom to form unions and
businesses
fair trial/rule by law

Chapter 7

An Example of Liberal Democracy: President William Jefferson Clinton

Just as a large segment of liberal political opinion never could accept Nixon as a “legitimate” president, neither can a large segment of conservative political opinion today accept Clinton’s legitimacy in the Oval Office

– Jim Hoagland

So far, all I have written about democracy is in the form of concepts and abstractions that may roughly connect to real-life experience. It’s time for an example that well illustrates the nature of liberal democracy in action: the 1998 to 1999 impeachment and trial of William Jefferson Clinton, the president of the United States.

The Clinton impeachment was a deeply divisive, partisan political battle, and most Americans developed strong opinions supporting or opposing it. After all, this was a matter of determining whether the nationally elected president of the United States would be fired. As I review the events leading up to the impeachment and the impeachment itself, my only interest is in what Clinton’s presidency says about liberal democracy, not in arguing for or against the president, the impeachment, or his two campaigns for the office.

To begin at the beginning, Clinton was born in Hope, Arkansas, in 1946, a few months after his father died. When he was two years old, he lived with his grandparents in Hope while his mother studied nursing in New Orleans. Two years later his mother married a car salesman, and Clinton joined the new family. His stepfather was hardly a good role model for the young boy; he was an alcoholic who physically mistreated Clinton’s mother.

At fourteen, Clinton joined a youth program to learn about government, and was a delegate in a group that went to Washington, D.C. There, President John F. Kennedy invited the group to meet with him in the White House. This was an unforgettable experience for teenage Clinton, who was very much impressed by Kennedy; he even shook his hand. More important for the future was the fact that the experience

decided young Clinton on politics as a profession and sparked his ambition to be president.

Clinton was an excellent student, and much involved in student politics. He completed high school, got a degree in international affairs from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and won a two-year Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University in England. On his return to the United States, he attended Yale Law School and received his law degree in 1973.

During this whole period, from the time he attended Georgetown to getting his law degree, he tried to learn politics firsthand. He worked in the office of Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas, and in the presidential campaign of Senator George McGovern in 1972. He also took part in demonstrations against the Vietnam War.

Note several things about Clinton's rise so far. The first is that his humble beginnings did not prevent him from actually meeting and shaking hands with the president of the United States—not only the highest office of the country, but also the most powerful in the world. Second, he could obtain work in the office of an American senator and take part in the lawmaking of America's highest legislative body. And, without fear of retribution or any negative consequences, he was also able to help Senator McGovern wage his election campaign to defeat that of the incumbent, President Richard M. Nixon.

Most revealing about liberal democracy, Clinton felt free to join public demonstrations, even in England, against a war his country was conducting. As exemplified in the first chapter by Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, and China, in many parts of the world such demonstrators could be arrested, tortured, and even executed by the regime on their return to their country; as well, the regime could retaliate against their family, even kill them. In other countries, demonstrators could be harassed by authorities, and perhaps forfeit any possibility of holding a future political office. But living in a liberal democracy, Clinton had nothing to fear from secret police. He could learn the art of politics from personal experience and prepare himself to run for political office while also exercising his right to public protest.

After receiving his law degree, Clinton worked on the staff of the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. Then in 1974 the University of Arkansas appointed him to their Law School faculty, and he also began his formal political career by running for Congress as a Democrat. He lost, but in 1976, he decided that he would be more successful if he worked up from a lower rung on the political ladder, and successfully campaigned for the office of the Attorney General of Arkansas. He then used this position to run for the highest state office, and the people of Arkansas elected him governor at age thirty-two.

However, he had yet to learn the democratic limits of this high office. Because of his reform policies and a tax he had imposed, Arkansans kicked Clinton out of office in the 1980 elections. But he had learned well how to manage democratic politics. After Clinton showed public remorse for his “mistakes” in office (and after running a carefully calculated campaign), Arkansans returned him to the governorship in 1982. They also reelected him three more times.

To Clinton, this was all preparation to run for president. He had passed up the opportunity to do so in 1988 because of rumors about his womanizing, but in 1992, he felt that he stood a good chance of being nominated by the Democratic Party. Much stronger candidates for the nomination had refused to run, believing that the huge popularity of President George Bush resulting from his victory in the 1990–1991 Gulf War made his reelection to the presidency certain. Clinton thought, however, he could stress poor economic conditions, the “Reagan-Bush deficit,” and the need for change. And to the surprise of many who did not see him as a national figure, he did win the nomination. Then, with the motto “It’s the economy, stupid,” he won the presidential election with 43 percent of the vote.

Both sides in this election used their freedom of speech to the fullest extent, with Clinton’s opponents focusing on his womanizing, his participation in anti-Vietnam War demonstrations while in England, and his alleged draft dodging along with a subsequent cover-up.

What is also noteworthy about this election is that out of nowhere, a wealthy business executive, H. Ross Perot, was able to capture public attention as an independent, even running ahead of President Bush and Governor Clinton in popularity at one point in the campaign. He finally got 19 percent of the presidential vote. Had he not made several missteps in his campaign and been politically inexperienced, he might even have won the three-way election.

Since democratic campaigns are a running test of a candidate’s character, experience, strength, and capacity for office, those who try to run for the highest offices without prior political experience seldom succeed. Nonetheless, sometimes they do, as did Jesse Ventura, a professional wrestler, actor, and talk show host who, on less than \$400,000, won a three-way election campaign for governor of Minnesota. In liberal democratic elections, outsiders are a constant threat to established parties and candidates, as it should be when the consent of the governed rules.

Who people elect is a matter of their perception and interest, how well off they are in their job and income, and their judgment of the candidate’s character and promises. And they are free to exercise their judgment, no matter how biased, anywhere along the campaign trail,

whether in voting for the candidates in caucuses or party conventions, or in voting for the final nominee, or in running themselves as a party nominee or an independent.

During President Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign, economic conditions were good, and Clinton and his supporters ran an excellent public relations and political campaign against Republican Senator Robert Dole and independent candidate Perot. Fearing a voter backlash over excessive negative campaigning, and thinking that the public already was upset by several scandals surrounding Clinton and his White House, Republicans did not capitalize on them. Near the end of the campaign, public opinion polls made it clear that these scandals would have little impact in the coming election, making Dole cry out in frustration, "Where's the outrage?"

Moreover, Republicans made some disastrous political mistakes, the worst of which was allowing Clinton and his supporters to establish in the public mind that the Republican-dominated House of Representatives had shut down the government in an argument with the president over the budget. They also allowed the Democrats to convince the public that the Republicans had no compassion for working families, children, and the elderly. Clinton easily won reelection in 1996 with 49 percent of the vote.

While the Clinton story gives us insight into the nature of liberal democratic elections and the public's participation in, and determination of, who governs them, it is President Clinton's second term that provides a key understanding of this kind of government. This term would be a tumultuous and most historic one for the country.

Even in his first term, President Clinton's opponents forced him to respond to allegations of wrongdoing committed while he was governor of Arkansas, involving investments that he and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton had made in the Whitewater Development Corporation, an Arkansas real estate development firm. Revelations and questions about this, and associated affairs having to do with the savings and loans firm Madison Guaranty, eventually led to an official federal investigation by an independent counsel, Robert Fiske. Congress had established the office of Independent Counsel as a result of the Nixon Watergate scandal. Presumably, the independent counsel would be free from the assumed conflict of interest a Justice Department would have in investigating the president or members of his cabinet, since the president appointed the top people at Justice. Besides the Fiske investigation, the House and Senate Banking committees also held hearings on the Whitewater affair.

Notice that democratic leaders cannot escape the law, even regarding what they might have done before being elected or appointed to

office. Prosecutors may investigate their past and present activities, force them to testify before a grand jury, indict them, and even bring them to trial. This contributes to what keeps democracies limited, which is their checks and balances system. This means that the executive leaders, legislature, and courts are in constant competition against each other for power and influence, and they watch each other for opportunities to gain advantage or weaken one another. This balancing is particularly true when there are political parties close in power. If the opposing party controls the legislature, as it did during all but two years of the Clinton presidency, it acts as an ever-vigilant watchdog over the executive. Scandals play a major role in this, and provide the opposition with ammunition to weaken their opponents—which became particularly clear in the impeachment of the president. All this contributes to keeping democratic leaders responsible, prudent, and limited in their power.

When one political party dominates a state, controls the legislature, executive, and courts, and has a sympathetic media, then there is usually political corruption. When there is a strong opposition party to exploit the corruption of the governing party for electoral gain, incumbents will be more careful about obeying the letter and spirit of the law. Moreover, when democratic states have a dominant party controlling all government bodies, with only a weak opposition to appeal to public outrage over high taxes and government intervention, they tend toward Big Government. Such had been the case in Hawaii, for example, which Democrats wholly governed in the four decades before finally electing a Republican governor in 2002.

Clinton did not have it so easy. He always faced a strong Republican Party, and in all but two of the years of his two terms, they controlled both the House and Senate.

As mentioned, there were several scandals involving the president and his White House during his first term. Although these did not prevent his reelection, they helped create a dominant view among conservatives that he and his administration were politically corrupt, and that he was engaged in a systematic abuse of power.

The first White House scandal occurred when his aides suddenly fired seven long-term employees of the White House travel office in 1993. This firing was done in a rush, with unjustified and later disproved accusations of fraud made against the White House employees, and the FBI was used to investigate them. Apparently, these accusations and the investigation were only an excuse to cover the wish to replace them with Clinton friends and supporters. The First Lady officially denied any involvement in this, although there was evidence to the contrary.

Because of the possibility that she was lying and that the presidential aides had misused the FBI, Attorney General Reno requested that a three-judge panel appoint an independent counsel to investigate. This turned out to be Republican Kenneth Starr, whose name in a few years would become almost as well-known as President Clinton's. Judge Starr had served in President Reagan's Justice Department, had been a federal judge, and had served as solicitor general under President Bush. A three-judge panel had already appointed him to replace Independent Counsel Fiske in the investigation of Whitewater. Years later, he would clear both the president and First Lady of indictable wrongdoing in this.

Another scandal involved the apparent suicide of the Clintons' close friend, Deputy White House Counsel Vince Foster, who had handled the Clintons' taxes and Whitewater matters. Upon his suicide, Clinton's aides removed files from Foster's office before police could search and seal it. This raised the question of a serious cover-up of Whitewater wrongdoing. As if Independent Counsel Starr did not have enough to investigate, the three-judge panel asked him to also determine whether Foster's death was a suicide and whether White House aides illegally removed files from his office. In his report to Congress on his investigation, Starr affirmed that Foster had committed suicide and that the president and First Lady had not carried on a cover-up.

Yet another scandal was the discovery that the White House had requested from the FBI, and had been holding without official justification, as many as a thousand secret FBI files, many on top Republicans and opponents. Controversy, especially in 1996, swirled around how the White House used these files and who was responsible for this. A three-judge panel also turned the matter over to Independent Counsel Starr to investigate. After several years, he cleared the president and First Lady of any responsibility for this matter. Nonetheless, that these files were under White House control and that aides might have exploited them in their campaign against President Clinton's opponents helped feed the outrage that would later lead to Clinton's impeachment.

Further scandals intensified the feeling among conservatives that the White House was corrupt, but the one that finally led to impeachment involved Paula Jones, a former clerk in the Arkansas State government. Encouraged and surrounded by President Clinton's opponents (called "Clinton-haters" by President Clinton's supporters), she alleged that while he was the governor of Arkansas in 1991, one of his state troopers invited her up to the governor's hotel room, and that when she was alone in the room with the governor, he dropped his pants and asked her for oral sex. The White House and Clinton supporters responded aggressively to these charges, and tried to undermine

her credibility. James Carville, a Democrat political consultant credited with guiding Clinton's presidential election campaign to victory in 1992, and his chief defender against all accusations of abuse of power, called Jones "Arkansas trailer trash."

Angered by such personal attacks, Jones filed a civil suit of sexual harassment against President Clinton, and demanded \$700,000 and a personal apology. Working through his lawyers, Clinton appealed the suit, and asked for a delay until after his term was over. But the Supreme Court ruled that the suit should go ahead. After more legal twists and turns and appeals, including Paula Jones upping her demand to a million dollars, President Clinton settled the case in 1999 by sending her a check for \$850,000, with no apology.

Notice first that no matter how powerful the president is, no matter how much support he has, a lowly citizen can sue him in court. Just as important, despite the president's power, the White House sources at his disposal, his small army of lawyers, his broad support in the media, and his popularity, the courts can force the president to defend himself in court according to the law. Keep in mind that in military terms, he was the most powerful head of any country in the world. Moreover, he, his lawyers, and his supporters used the major media that supported him, every technical legal device ever written into the law, and any possible wayward interpretation of the law to claim that Jones had no right to sue him—an expected reaction from any high official caught in such a sexual scandal. The absolutely critical point here is not what Clinton and his supporters did, but that it all was to no avail. In a liberal democracy the law rules. In this case, no matter his twists and turns, the law sided with an unknown clerk from Arkansas against the president of the United States.

While this suit was underway, Clinton began an eighteen-month affair in the White House and his Oval Office with twenty-two-year-old Monica Lewinsky, a White House intern. Although President Clinton disputes that he had sexual relations with Lewinsky, she did give him oral sex, a fact later proved by a DNA test of the semen on a blue dress she wore during one of these meetings.

Lewinsky confided details of this affair to a friend, Linda Tripp, who began secretly taping their telephone conversations. Tripp later explained that she did this because Lewinsky had asked her to lie in a deposition for which Tripp had been subpoenaed in the Jones suit. Jones' lawyers were trying to show that what allegedly happened to Jones was but a pattern of sexual misconduct by President Clinton, and had subpoenaed Lewinsky, who told Tripp she would lie to protect her lover. Tripp had worked in the White House, and there had seen Kathleen Willey, a White House volunteer, shortly after Willey left an Oval

Office appointment with Clinton in 1993. Willey told Tripp that Clinton had kissed and fondled her, and therefore Tripp was important to the Jones defense; but if she told the truth in the deposition, she believed, the White House would try to ruin her credibility.

After she'd gathered twenty hours of taped conversations with Lewinsky, Tripp turned them over to Independent Counsel Starr, whose investigative load was already heavy. Judge Starr took this information to Attorney General Janet Reno, who then asked the three-judge panel responsible for appointing independent counsels to appoint Judge Starr to investigate the Lewinsky affair. There is nothing in the law against sexual affairs in the White House, but the President might have broken several laws on other matters, including possible sexual harassment of Lewinsky, asking her to lie in court, and bribing her to keep quiet.

By decision of the Supreme Court, President Clinton also had to give a pretrial videotaped deposition in the Jones suit. In January of 1998, with Jones sitting across from him, Jones' lawyers then questioned Clinton for six hours. He had no idea that they knew about his affair with Lewinsky, and was quite surprised when they brought it up. Given a broad definition of sexual relations, approved by the judge sitting in on the deposition, President Clinton denied under oath that he had sexual relations as so defined with Lewinsky, and claimed that he did not remember ever being alone with her in the White House.

Within days, news of the Lewinsky affair and the deposition swept the country. For weeks commentators, analysts, and politicians of all flavors discussed, argued, and dissected the news. Some top commentators thought President Clinton would have to resign within a week or so. The media exploited the slightest rumor, and bit players in the scandal, no matter how remotely involved, had their fifteen minutes of fame before television cameras. No two lawyers seemed to agree on the law covering this affair or the possible impeachment, and sometimes directly contradicted each other. It seemed that the law was a mess. But the law allows interpretation, and often the expertise of different lawyers varies.

All of this was subject to partisanship, and nothing arouses partisan passions more in a democracy than a dispute over whether the head of government should resign or the people should fire him.

Meanwhile, President Clinton denied to his supporters and White House staff that there had been any sex with Lewinsky. And of course Clinton's defenders, especially those in the major media, tried to muddle the investigation by constantly claiming this was an investigation of sex, rather than of perjury or abuse of power. Within days Clinton tried to defend himself on television; wagging his finger, he made the now famous declaration that we all have seen a thousand times: "But I want

to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time—never. These allegations are false. And I need to go back to work for the American people.”

In July the independent counsel finally gave Monica Lewinsky full immunity for testifying against President Clinton, and she gave him her blue dress with President Clinton's semen stains. Before Judge Starr's grand jury, she provided details about her sexual relations with President Clinton, but also claimed that he had not asked her to lie, or to keep quiet about their relationship.

Shortly thereafter, President Clinton also had to answer questions before the grand jury. Independent Counsel Starr did this with a closed-circuit television hookup to the White House, which he also videotaped. President Clinton answered many questions on the Lewinsky affair and information she had provided, but would not answer any questions about sex. However, after President Clinton finished his testimony, he went on national television and admitted an “inappropriate relationship” with Lewinsky, and that his comments and silence had given a “false impression.” Then, in lieu of an apology, he said, “I deeply regret that.”

In September of 1998, Independent Counsel Starr gave his report on this scandal to the House of Representatives, as required by law. It was, in effect, a 453-page indictment of President Clinton, listing eleven allegedly impeachable offenses. The House almost immediately released the full report to the public, as well as thousands of pages of evidence soon thereafter. Within days, the House Judiciary Committee also made public the full videotape of President Clinton's testimony before the grand jury.

This openness illustrates well the transparency of a liberal democracy. Opponents or proponents will disclose all that is politically important, including dirty laundry, about some politician, legislation, or policy. This is a crucial role of the opposition, and the reason why having a strong opposition is a basic ingredient of liberal democracy. They want to embarrass and weaken the party in power so that they can turn into law their favored legislation and win the next election. Even supposedly secret testimony, conversations, and reports are exposed this way—as is a mass of trivia. Surely partisans on all sides will spin whatever is disclosed to show its best or worst side. But it is public, and people are free to make of it what they will.

The public release of the Starr Report, as it became known, was a serious blow to President Clinton's prestige. It changed a partisan po-

litical conflict into a super-charged political fight over President Clinton's future. Over a hundred newspaper editorials eventually called for his resignation; television and the Internet covered the affair day and night. He was publicly mocked; cartoonists never had it so good, late-night comedians constantly made fun of him, and Clinton joke after joke made the rounds through email and the Internet.

Political humor has an important function in a democracy. Although meant to be funny, the jokes express public dismay and pinpoint special concerns about high officials' behavior. In a democracy it is better for a politician to be criticized by professors of political science than have well-known comedians earn their popularity at his expense.

What saved President Clinton was the loyalty of Democrats, who circled Party wagons around him, and a politically astute offensive by the president and White House aides. Judge Starr became a target of constant demonizing attacks. He was accused of being "sex crazed, and an extreme right-wing zealot." Legal action against him for leaking grand jury testimony was later dismissed by the courts. While polls gave the president a job rating above 60 percent, Judge Starr's was in the twenties. Other opponents, such as Linda Tripp, were no less demonized.

President Clinton's supporters were vehement: "It's only about sex, and nobody's business," "President Clinton told the truth; this is a conspiracy of Clinton haters," and so on. It was all, the First Lady claimed, a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Meanwhile, the other side claimed that "Clinton always lies, and is deceitful," "what he did in the Oval Office is a disgrace to the presidency; he has systematically abused power" while in office, and so on. President Clinton's previous scandals were revisited, and even Arkansas state troopers were brought out of obscurity for interviews regarding their claims of helping in his sexual escapades while governor.

The president's supporters also made a concerted effort to uncover sexual affairs of major Republicans in the House who were supporting impeachment, perhaps for revenge, but surely to show that "everyone does it." They forced Speaker-designate Bob Livingston to confess to an extramarital affair and resign, even as the full House was about to begin deliberations on the articles of impeachment. They also made public a decades-old affair by Representative Henry Hyde, chairman of the very House Judiciary Committee set to consider the president's impeachment.

When the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee began consideration of a resolution calling for a formal impeachment inquiry, the fight was now formally joined and in deadly earnest, but still constrained by the Constitution and House rules. This began the long, complex political process for removing President Clinton from office.

Other than wartime, this legal process of removing a democratically elected chief executive in midterm is the most dramatic theater people in democracies experience. Everyone soon knows almost everything public and private about the cast of characters; the acting is superb, the speeches and exhortations moving, and the appeals to mind and heart well studied. Each day is a new scene, the plot is clear, and only the end is in doubt.

A successful impeachment by the House is like an indictment brought by a prosecutor before a court. It describes the particulars of an alleged wrongdoing. Then, before a judge, a court holds the trial on the indictment, with both prosecutors and defense lawyers presenting evidence and arguments. For impeachment, the court is the Senate.

The Constitution specifies “treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors” as the grounds for impeachment, but what high crimes and misdemeanors are is subject to considerable legal interpretation. Only a majority vote of the House is enough to approve articles of impeachment, and this had only happened once before, in 1868 against President Andrew Johnson. Impeachment was also considered in 1974 when the House Judiciary Committee approved three articles of impeachment against President Richard Nixon, but before the full House could debate them, the audiotapes of President Nixon’s conversations in the Oval Office were released. They were the “smoking gun” evidence that he had participated in the cover-up of the Watergate affair; soon his support collapsed in the House, and he resigned.

Once the House votes on impeachment, the Senate holds a trial on the impeachment articles, as noted. All senators sit as the jury, and the chief justice of the Supreme Court presides over the trial. The senators hear witnesses and can ask them questions, and at the end of the trial, they vote regarding removal of the president. Two-thirds of the senators must approve removal for it to occur. Were this to happen, the chief justice would swear in the vice president as the new president. The Senate vote on Andrew Johnson’s removal was one vote short of two-thirds.

The House Judiciary Committee reported to the full House on its recommendation to investigate the impeachment of President Clinton, and in October 1998 the Republican House voted to conduct this investigation. Hearings by the House Judiciary Committee on impeachment began soon afterwards and were fully televised.

A variety of witnesses gave testimony before the committee, including Independent Counsel Starr. He came down hard on President Clinton, claiming he intentionally deceived. Opposition to impeachment came from a variety of sources, most of them claiming that what Clinton did was not impeachable, though morally reprehensible. Many legal and constitutional scholars argued that his behavior did not meet

the Constitutional basis for impeachment. Some argued that yes, he lied in his civil deposition, and yes, the independent counsel could (and some said should) indict him for this after he left office, but that it was not an impeachable offense. Chairman Hyde also sent President Clinton eighty-one questions to answer in place of direct testimony.

At the end of the hearings, the Republican members presented the committee with four articles of impeachment, claiming that the president committed perjury before the grand jury, committed perjury and obstruction of justice in the Jones case, and provided false responses to the eighty-one questions. The committee approved the articles on December 11 and 12. All Republicans voted for three of the articles and all but one voted for a fourth; no Democrat voted for any. The committee then passed the approved articles to the full House for debate and a final vote.

This American drama did not paralyze international relations and foreign adversaries, in particular Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq against whom an American-led coalition fought the 1990 Gulf War. Possibly seeing a weakened president, Saddam refused to allow any further weapons inspections by the UN in his country, inspections he had agreed to when he was defeated in the Gulf War. Coincidentally or not, President Clinton launched air strikes against Iraq in retaliation just when the full House scheduled the opening debate on his impeachment. Republicans questioned the timing of this, and the Democrats demanded that the House put off considering impeachment until the president ended military action. But the Republicans were in control, and the continuing raids did no more than delay House proceedings for a day.

On December 18, the full House began an acrimonious debate on the impeachment of President Clinton. The next day, the House passed 228 to 206 the first article of impeachment, perjury before Independent Counsel Starr's grand jury. It also passed the third article, obstruction of justice related to the Jones case, with a vote of 221 to 212. The other two articles failed to pass. It was now up to the Senate to determine whether these two articles were enough to remove the president from office.

The Senate trial began on January 7, 1999, and was televised throughout. As dictated by the Constitution, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William H. Rehnquist, presided over the trial. The trial started with a reading of the charges, and then the chief justice swore in the senators, who went one at a time to the front of the chamber to sign an oath book promising to do "impartial justice." There were fifty-five Republican and forty-five Democratic senators. If all Republicans voted for removal, twelve Democrats would have to join them to get the sixty-seven votes required.

Thirteen Republican House members, headed by Chairman Henry Hyde, prosecuted the case for removal. In sum, they accused President Clinton of “willful, premeditated, deliberate corruption of the nation’s system of justice through perjury and obstruction of justice.”

Charles Ruff, main White House counsel, led President Clinton’s defense with a team of seven lawyers. Their main argument was that the Republicans provided no more than “an unsubstantiated, circumstantial case that does not meet the constitutional standard to remove the president from office.”

Both sides presented their arguments and evidence in three days, and the senators had two more days to ask questions. As the trial progressed, Democrats and Republicans used one partisan maneuver after another, although with less bitterness than in the House debate. The Democrats tried unsuccessfully to dismiss the case, and both sides fought over whether there would be witnesses, how many witnesses there would be, and who they would be. They argued over whether the witnesses would give testimony in the Senate chamber or by deposition. Most important, this partisan struggle ended in a Senate vote not to hear Monica Lewinsky’s testimony in person, but by video clips of a deposition she gave under questioning by House prosecutors. They also voted to question other witnesses by deposition.

Finally, on February 8, this twelve-month, historic crisis in American politics was almost over. Each side had three hours in which to present their closing arguments, then for three days the senators debated behind closed doors. On February 12, in the Senate chamber and before television cameras, the Senate voted. All Democrats and ten Republicans voted President Clinton not guilty on alleged perjury, 55 to 45. On alleged obstruction of justice the vote was split, 50 to 50. President Clinton would remain in office.

The national day by day, twenty-four hour discussion and debate over the fate of the president cannot be isolated from the House impeachment and the Senate trial. All this provided representatives and senators with an amazing input of knowledge, insights, legal opinions, and interpretations that made witnesses almost redundant. Most important, as the impeachment approached conclusion in the House, and then as the Senate trial progressed, public opinion not only continued to support President Clinton, but his numbers actually improved. During Senate deliberations, some polls showed over 70 percent support for the president. Moreover, polls showed that the people wanted to get this over with as quickly as possible; they felt that the Republicans were unnecessarily delaying the proceedings, and intended to punish Republicans in the next election if they removed President Clinton.

Generally, answers to specific questions in the polls showed that arguments supporting President Clinton persuaded more people than arguments demanding his removal. The senators were, after all, politicians, and doubtless were influenced in their votes by public opinion. Indeed, David P. Schippers, chief investigative counsel for the House Judiciary Committee for the impeachment, claimed in his book *Sell Out* that, due to the overwhelming public support for Clinton, the Republican Senate leadership had decided against trying to fire Clinton, and had organized the trial to get it over with as soon as possible.

Chapter 8

About Liberal Democracy

Democracy is not so much a form of government as a set of principles.

– Woodrow Wilson

What do the campaigns, scandals, and the impeachment of President Clinton tell us about the nature and workings of liberal democracy? It is self-government. Throughout the history of the Clinton presidency, adult Americans could have campaigned and voted for Clinton or his opposition in the presidential elections of 1992 and 1996. Americans could also have campaigned and voted for the representatives and senators who voted on his impeachment and removal. Americans could make their voices heard regarding his scandals and impeachment by writing letters to the editors of newspapers, telephoning radio talk shows, or by posting their opinions for or against him on the Internet via chat groups or on their own web page. And Americans could organize demonstrations or participate in them, build organizations to work for or against him, and contribute money to one side or the other.

Note also that there is a democratic culture involved. This dictates that compromise and negotiation will settle disputes with a tolerance for differences. If the conflict is profound and the stakes very high, if there is no solution other than one side losing and the other side winning, then democratic procedures must be used that are within or dictated by the law. Such was the impeachment and trial of President Clinton. But, consider. The president had vast public and secret resources at his disposal, such as the secret service, the FBI, and the CIA. As commander-in-chief of all American military forces, he had them at his command. Could he not have used this power, if he so desired, to have the army surround Congress and the Supreme Court and dictate the outcome of their impeachment proceedings? That this was not even considered by anyone in the media, that there was not the slightest rumor of this, that even his most extreme political enemies never thought this a possibility, shows the strength of this liberal democracy.

But let's say that the president did issue such orders. What would happen? There is no doubt about the answer: he would be disobeyed.

His orders would have to go through the military Joint Chiefs of Staff and the secretary of defense, and then down the command structure. The respect for the Constitution is so deeply ingrained in the military and those who are appointed to high office, democratic norms and customs are so unconsciously held that, instead of being obeyed, the president's very attempt to use the military unconstitutionally would be reported to Congress and become an article of impeachment.

Alternatively, suppose that he had secretly plotted with a group of generals or colonels to use their troops in a coup against the Constitution. If anything like this had been launched, it would have been soundly defeated for three reasons. First, this junta could only be a very small group, and thus militarily outgunned. Second, even ordinary soldiers would not obey the commands of their officers, because this would too clearly be a treasonous, antidemocratic action. And third, even if this were successful, the people would rise up in rebellion against such a totally antidemocratic usurpation of power.

One more example is the outcome of the year 2000 American presidential election. The Democratic candidate, Vice President Albert Gore, got a majority of the national vote and came within a couple of hundred votes of winning Florida's electors, which would have given him the 270 electoral votes needed to become president. As it was, with Florida's slim margin giving the Republican candidate, Governor George Bush, its electoral votes, he won the presidency by only 271 electoral votes. Because of the importance of the Florida electors and the very slight margin of victory for Bush, Gore refused to concede the election and he, his supporters, and the Democratic Party waged a public relations and legal onslaught on the ballots cast in Florida, particularly in highly Democrat counties. They argued that all the ballots had not been counted, the voting machines had malfunctioned, or that the ballots were too complex for many voters.

I need not go into the legal and political victories and defeats in this campaign to overturn Bush's victory, except to note that we all learned a new vocabulary about machine ballots, including chads, pregnant chads, tri-chads, hanging chads, swinging chads, dimples, and so on. Suffice it to say that after two Florida Supreme Court victories for Vice President Gore and two United States Supreme Court decisions vacating or overturning them, Gore finally lost hope of getting the recount of ballots that he wanted. Over a month after the election, Gore finally and graciously conceded the election to Bush.

This was the closest election in American history. And yet—and this is the point to this example—in spite of the heated partisan rhetoric and the claims that the election had been stolen, there was no

violence. There were no violent demonstrations, no riots, no necessity to call out the army, and no coup. The decision of the Supreme Court was accepted; law triumphed over the desire for power. This is almost unbelievable, considering that this election was to determine who would be the most powerful leader in the world, and which economic and social policies would dominate the country. But it is the way liberal democracy functions.

This type of government stands in sharp contrast to the alternatives, such as rule by a king, as in Saudi Arabia; by a dictator, as in Sudan; by the military, as in Burma; or by an elite, as in China. It is inconceivable that any of these rulers would be questioned by a court, undergo examination by the people's representatives over some scandal, stand trial while in office, or stand aside and let another person rule because of a court decision. In these countries or others like them, people would not be able to criticize or demonstrate against their rulers without serious and possibly lethal repercussions. They and their families might be arrested and tortured if documents—even letters or emails—criticizing the government are found in their homes. In such countries, when the people threaten the power of their dictators, those dictators could, and do, use tanks and machine guns against them.

Chapter 9

Extent of Democracy

There are 88 liberal democracies scattered all over the world.

All this being understood, so what? Are there not only a small number of democracies? Are there not even fewer liberal democracies like the United States, almost all being in western Europe? In fact, is not my characterization of liberal democracy too Western, hardly fit for nations in Asia, South America, and Africa?

Extent of Liberal Democracies

The answer is no to each of these questions. As listed on the Freedom house website (www.freedomhouse.org/), out of 192 nations in 2003, 121 are democracies. Of these, 89 are electoral democracies, accounting for 44 percent of the world population. They include the European and North American democracies, as well as such diverse nations as Andorra, Bahamas, Belize, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dominica, Grenada, Iceland, Japan, Kiribati, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Nauru, Palau, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, South Africa, South Korea, Suriname, and Taiwan. This variety of cultures, races, ethnicities, and geography should dispel the notion that liberal democracy is a peculiarly Western type of government that the West is trying to push on the rest of the world.

I should also mention that there are a number of more or less socialist economic systems among the liberal democracies, such as those in Denmark, Norway, India, and Israel. Their governments still protect human rights. Consider the socialist policies of Sweden, for example, which sometimes is called “The People’s Republic of Sweden,” a play on what communist parties call their own nations.

Like the United Kingdom, Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, with a democratically elected parliament. The people also elect its prime minister to parliament, and he is usually the head of whichever

party gets the most parliamentary seats. King Carl Gustaf XVI has no formal political power and only a ceremonial role. Sweden has extensive and comprehensive national welfare and health insurance systems. Doctors work for the government and hospitals are government run, with health care covered by taxes. If people are sick or must stay home to take care of sick children, the government will make up for most of the income lost. Bear a child, and get a year of government mandated leave from work, with pay. People also get government allowances for their children and support if their children continue their education after they are sixteen years old. Workers and their employers also must contribute to worker retirement benefits, which they receive when they turn sixty-five, and which are supplemented by added employee fees.

Sweden has an industrial policy that sees the government as necessarily involved in and in some ways directing the economy. There are stiff laws covering the hiring and rejection of job applicants and, if hired, their firing. Government closely regulates, subsidizes, and sets price ceilings on home purchases or rentals, and strictly enforces regulations on home building. It stimulates investment, and provides special tax benefits to steer businesses in the direction desired by government. Also, as part of its industrial policy, the Swedish government favors and encourages very strong unions and large, centralized business associations. This has led to the economic dominance of large corporations and unions.

To support government welfare policies and involvement in the economy, people pay over an average of 50 percent of their income in taxes, while businesses can pay as much as 65 percent. One measure of the cost of government regulation, and the opportunities people and businesses lose because of it, is that about 35 percent of all workers were working for the government in 1992. An even better measure is that the government alone creates one-third of the market value of all Sweden's goods and services. Another third of the value results from government redistribution of income, through such channels as the national welfare policies and national health program mentioned previously. This shrinks the private economy's value to only a third of all Sweden's products and services. By contrast, this value is about two-thirds for the United States.

Regardless of Sweden's welfare statism and its reputation for socialist policies, as a liberal democracy the government protects the freedom of its people—their human rights—to speak out, protest, demonstrate, organize against these policies, and vote out of power those who support them. Swedes even enjoy a fair amount of economic freedom. Among 123 countries whose economic freedom was ranked for 1999 by the

Economic Freedom Network, Sweden ranked in economic freedom about 22 out of 111 nations, and the *Network* rates it with 8 out of 10 possible points. The United States is ranked 4, with 9.1 out of 10 points. In further comparison, of the countries I described in Chapter 1, the *Network* ranks China 87, and places Burma at the bottom among all 111 countries in economic freedom. The *Network* did not rank Sudan, Saudi Arabia, or North Korea, but surely they must be near the bottom.

As to the 89 liberal democracies, this number is a sharp increase from the 44 that existed in 1973, and the total lack in 1900 (the democracies that existed, such as the United States, were electoral but illiberal) and shows well that the world is becoming increasingly democratic. Democracy is now the world's dominant form of government, and with the death of fascism through World War II, and of communism with the end of the Cold War, democracy has no real competitors for hearts and minds. When all 121 electoral and liberal democracies are considered, the odds of a person being born in a democracy today are slightly greater than 61 percent.

Extent of Illiberal Democracies

In 2003 there were thirty-two nations that were electoral illiberal democracies—that is, their people were only partially free, some so marginal as to make it a toss-up whether we should call them democracies. These included such nations as Armenia, Colombia, and Turkey. All restrict some of the people's basic rights against government that characterize a liberal democracy. An impeachment like that of President Clinton might still take place in most of them, but not with the same vigor, concern for the law, and intimate involvement of the public. In these countries, freedom of speech or religion or association may be under pressure or even compromised.

Just to mention some of the problems regarding human rights in these countries, in Columbia the courts tend to be corrupt, and extortion is common. Colombian drug lords have considerable influence, and may even have dictated some of the laws. Violence is endemic; all sides commit atrocities, including the murder of officials and activists.

In Turkey the military has undue influence, and security forces have often killed those suspected of terrorism or of supporting a Kurdish rebellion. The government limits freedom of speech. Turks may not, for example, insult government officials. Government-organized groups or sympathizers have attacked and threatened human rights activists. They may even be responsible for the disappearance or murder of journalists

and newspaper owners. Appeal to the highest court over politically sensitive judgments may be useless, and the courts themselves seem to be under military control.

And in the Ukraine government corruption is widespread as well, and bribery is a way of getting or preventing government action. Consistently, political pressure on the courts and intervention in their process is common. Starting and running a business is often difficult, since businessmen must compete with an in-group of present and former members of the political establishment. The government limits freedom of speech. Ukrainians cannot, for example, attack the honor and dignity of the president.

Nonetheless, aside from the serious human rights problems of the illiberal electoral democracies, a citizen of any of them can vote regularly by secret ballot in competitive national elections. They can vote the top leadership out of power. This is why these countries are still democracies, although only electoral ones.

Conclusion

Overall, the case for democratic freedom is strong, as I have tried to show in this and the previous chapter. But I can make an even stronger case. In the following chapters, we'll see that freedom is not only a human or natural right, certified by international agreements and supported by moral reasoning, that it is not only a socially just metasolution to human diversity, but that it is also a moral good. This means that the social and political consequences of freedom make it a supreme value in itself.

PART 3

On Freedom's Moral Goods: Wealth and Prosperity

People who are free to go about their business and interests create, innovate, take risks, do what is important to them, and spend long hours pursuing their dreams. Especially, they soon find out that they can often gratify their own desires by satisfying the interests and dreams of others. Such is the free market. Such is the power of freedom. Such is this force for wealth and prosperity.

This does not mean that all free people are wealthy. It means, however, that economic well-being, good health, education, and opportunity are spread across the population. It is no accident that the most economically developed, technologically and scientifically advanced nations, the most healthful nations, the nations with the best systems of education, communication, and transportation, are those that are democratically free.

I'll illustrate the power of freedom with the example of Bill Gates who, with his partner Paul Allen, created Microsoft and the computer operating system that enables the vast majority of desktop and laptop computers to work. Then we'll examine why freedom is so powerful, and discover that economic freedom is not a system of selfishness and greed, as the most prevalent myth claims, but that it reflects in practice the utopian ideal of people seeking, and often sacrificing to discover and then pursue, ways of fulfilling the interests and desires of others.

Freedom's power to create wealth and prosperity is best understood by contrast with its opposite, the command economy of communism. In Chapter 12 I describe this system and then in the next three chapters show what this political economic system did to the Soviet Union under Lenin and then Stalin, and China under Mao Tse-tung. Pure and simple, their tyrannical rule over their economies by absolute command, fear, and murder created monumental deprivation and starvation and the world's worst famines, killing in total over the three regimes around 45 million Russians and Chinese—almost *double* all the combat deaths in World Wars I and II.

And Chapter 16 reveals that, in stark contrast to the consequences of a command economy and nondemocratic types of governments, *no democracy has ever had a famine.*

Chapter 10

Freedom Is an Engine of Wealth and Prosperity

What is most important for democracy is not that great fortunes should not exist, but that great fortunes should not remain in the same hands. In that way there are rich men, but they do not form a class.

– Alexis de Tocqueville

The Moral Good of Wealth and Prosperity

Democratic freedom is a right everyone has, as previous chapters have established. This in itself is just, and to deny people their freedom would be unjust. And as a just right, no one can morally deny people their freedom for whatever end, as has happened to billions of people.

For example, some rulers and their supporters deny their people freedom by arguing that doing so is necessary to develop the country economically, achieve national glory, promote racial or ethnic purity, or create a communist paradise. This is to make of freedom a tool that those in power can manipulate or ignore, depending on the ends they seek. This is a destructive premise that, for too long, intellectuals have allowed dictators and their supporters to assume. Freedom is not a tool; it does not have a utility attached to it that justifies government granting it or taking it away. In this sense, democratic freedom is a *moral good*, something that is to be sought or held for its intrinsic moral value, and for no other reason.

Yet, amazingly, there are actually consequences to freedom that are also important moral goods. When we compare what happens to an economy and society when people are free and democratic versus un-free, the results of freedom are often the very ends that some dictators try to fulfill by repressing freedom. So stressing that freedom is a moral good is not erecting a firewall against any negative consequences, for the consequences are not only positive, but moral goods in themselves. It's like eating fruit, which is tasty and filling and inherently good, but which also reduces the probability of getting cancer or suffering a stroke or heart attack.

One of freedom's desirable consequences is to promote unrivaled wealth and prosperity; it is an unbeatable engine of technological and economic growth. As an example of how freedom can produce this miraculous result, consider the life of William (Bill) Gates, who could not have created the computer software he did other than in a free society—software that has contributed greatly to our prosperity.

The Example of Bill Gates' Freedom

Gates was born into an upper middle-class family in 1955; his mother taught school and was a regent of the University of Washington, and his father was a prominent lawyer. Gates went to public elementary school, then to the private Lakeside High School in Seattle, where he learned about computers and soon became fascinated by them.

By the time he was thirteen, he and his best friend, Paul Allen, were already programming computers, and spent as much of each day as they could on the school's mainframe computer—playing with it, causing it to crash, rewriting its programs, and writing new ones themselves. In those days, computer time was costly and had to be rationed; because of their excessive use of it, the school finally had to ban them from the computer for short periods.

Gates and Allen had become so good at using it, however, that a computer business, the Computer Center Corporation, hired them and two other hackers from the school to solve some problems with their computer, paying them for their services with unlimited computer time. Now Gates and Allen could work on a computer day and night, while also reading computer manuals and picking the brains of other employees. This ideal life did not last, however, for in 1970 the company went out of business.

Gates and Allen's next break came when Information Sciences hired them to program the company's payroll. Again they were given free computer time—probably more important to them than whatever money they made. The company also paid them royalties for any of their programs it sold.

Encouraged by all this, Gates and Allen made their own small computer for measuring traffic flow, and started a little company, Traf-O-Data, to sell it. This earned them about \$20,000. Though he was still only a high school student, Gates' computer skills were becoming more widely recognized. His school asked him to program a scheduling system for them, and he and Allen wrote the program together.

While they were seniors, company officials at the defense corporation TRW, impressed by what they heard about Gates and Allen's

successes, hired them to debug TRW computer programs. This was another big break for the two. The job not only helped them further refine their software writing skills, it started them thinking about setting up their own software company.

In 1973 they graduated from Lakeside. Because of Gates' excellent grades, recommendations, and achievements, he was able to get into Harvard University, where he chose to study pre-law. After all, his father was a lawyer and the field of computer sciences didn't exist then. But he soon discovered Harvard's computer center, and all else was lost. He would work at night at the center and sleep through his classes.

Allen moved close to Gates so that they could continue to develop and work on their ideas. After Gates finished his freshman year, he and Allen got programming jobs at Honeywell Information Systems. They still were working for others, however, and Allen particularly wanted to set up their own company. Gates was reluctant to drop out of Harvard to do this.

Then, in December of 1974, a chance event led to the start of Microsoft. Accounts disagree on how this event came about, but a popular version is that on his way to see Gates, Allen happened to stop to look over some magazines. On the cover of *Popular Electronics* he saw a picture of the new MITS Altair 8080, the first microcomputer. He bought the magazine, took it to Gates and, after both had read it, they saw what an opportunity the Altair was.

This was a most propitious time to be interested in computers. The IBM room-sized mainframe dominated the computer market and most computer specialists were interested in mainframe hardware or programs. Microcomputers (also to be called desktop or personal computers) for the general market had yet to be made, but Gates and Allen recognized that small personal computers were the future for businesses and home computing. And all of these computers would need system software to run them, as well as software for specific needs.

Stories also vary as to what happened next. One version is that Gates called MITS and claimed that he and Allen had written a program they called BASIC for the Altair. The company expressed interest and wanted to see it, but Gates had lied—there was no such program. Encouraged by the company's interest, he and Allen raced to write one. One problem: they had no Altair at hand. So, while Gates focused on the writing of BASIC, Allen developed a way of simulating the Altair chip using one of Harvard's computers, the PDP-10. In about eight weeks they finished, and Allen flew to MITS to demonstrate their new BASIC on the Altair, a computer he had yet to see or touch. The gutsy test was a success on the second try, and MITS bought the rights to the program. This victory finally convinced Gates that the personal com-

puter market was set to explode and, more important, that they had the skills to share in it.

In 1975, Micro-soft—later to be Microsoft—was born, and Gates soon dropped out of his junior year at Harvard to devote himself to the new business. Its initial product was the BASIC system Gates and Allen had written, and several large companies were eager customers. At the time, I was also writing computer programs for my research, and can attest to one overwhelming principle of computer life. It is cheaper to buy a good program than to write one or hire programmers to do it. This was one of the main reasons for Microsoft's early success.

By 1979, Microsoft had sixteen employees, and Gates moved the company from Albuquerque, its first home, to Seattle, Washington. The company continued to grow and create new products. It produced a spreadsheet program, which later would become the MS-Excel spreadsheet we know today. And it produced the first version of what is now the overwhelmingly popular MS-Word.

Paul Allen, who had been instrumental in so much of Gates' early work and then in the growth of Microsoft, had to resign in 1983 because of Hodgkin's disease. Eventually he successfully fought off the disease and, made a very rich man with his Microsoft shares, went on to form his own software companies. He also bought the Portland Trailblazers basketball team.

What made Microsoft so dominant in the computer market, and what has mainly contributed to Gates' wealth, was a deal he made with IBM in 1981, when Microsoft had only grown to about thirty people.

With great foresight, Gates had bought an operating system, which he rewrote into what he called MS-DOS (Microsoft disk operating system). The operating system is the software that runs a computer. It interfaces between the computer hardware, such as the computer processor, memory chips, hard disks, floppy drives, CDs, monitor, and so on, and the applications, such as word processing or spreadsheet programs.

At that time IBM, the dominant force in the computer market, was preparing a new line of personal computers, and needed a good operating system for them. They were in negotiation with a more established company, but Gates impressed them, and Microsoft got the job to write the operating system for IBM's new computers. This was an amazing deal for his small company. Within years IBM began to turn out personal computers like McDonald's turns out hamburgers, and each one started up with a rewritten MS-DOS.

This was not enough for Gates, however. He had always been interested in making the computer more graphically oriented so that users could clearly see on their monitor what they were doing with the computer, such as when trashing a file or transferring a file out of one

folder to another, and he began the development of such a program in 1982. This evolved into a graphically-oriented, pseudo system program that operates on top of MS-DOS. Finally shipped in 1985, it was the first version of Windows. Its latest incarnation as Windows XP, or an earlier version, is now used on virtually all IBM computers and compatibles in the world.

In 1986, Microsoft successfully went public with its stock offering of \$21 a share, and by 1995 Microsoft had 17,801 employees. Gates had realized his dream. He has played a dominant role in making personal computing available to everyone, and his products have continued to dominate the field. I do my work on a Macintosh computer with an Apple Corporation operating system 10.3 that competes with Windows—and personally I think Apple's system software is better. Yet because of their quality, I use Microsoft's Word and Excel programs.

In recognition of his contributions, President Bush Senior awarded Bill Gates the National Medal of Technology in 1992. Bill Gates also has been more than amply rewarded financially. On May 22, 2000, his wealth, tied partly to the near 141 million shares of Microsoft that he owns, was \$72,485,700,000. This made him the richest man in the world. Not even the wealthiest of monarchs, with jewels and gold bars piled at their feet, can beat Bill Gates' worth. According to one rumor, he is so rich that when he got the bill for his \$50 million manor built on Lake Washington, he turned to his wife Melinda and asked her to get his wallet. If he had worked ten hours a day, every day of the year, since the founding of Microsoft in 1975, I calculate that he earned about \$1.3 million per hour.

How can one man become so rich? Surely, Gates was lucky in being in the right place with the right friends at the right time when the personal computer revolution was just beginning. Supportive and affluent parents played a role in his success, as did his naturally deep interest in computers, a proclivity for the mathematics of it, and a willingness to work hard. But most important, he was free to follow his star. He needed no government approval. Personal computers and related hardware and software were a new market, and there were virtually no government regulations telling Gates what programming he could and could not do. Of course, Gates and Allen had to satisfy certain government registration requirements when they set up Microsoft, and there were more regulations covering Microsoft going public in the stock market. But it was entirely up to Gates how hard he worked, what he produced, and what he charged for his products.

Chapter 11

The Power of the Free Market

The more freedom a people have, the greater their health, wealth and prosperity; the less their freedom, the more their impoverishment, disease, and famines.

For the world as a whole, there is a very strong, positive correlation between democratic freedom and the economic wealth and prosperity of nations, as Table 11.1 and Figure 11.1 show. Much of this is due to the close association between civil liberties and political rights and economic freedom, as shown in Figure 11.2. (I am tempted to call this the *Bill Gates Effect*.) And this positive correlation goes far beyond economic matters to include the social and physical welfare of a people, as well.

The more freedom people have, the greater their nation's technological growth and scientific contributions, and the availability of railroads, paved roads, and airports. The more freedom people have, the better their health services, hospitals, doctors, and life expectancy. The more freedom a people have, the higher the instance of literacy, high school and college graduates, universities, and books published; and so on. To adopt a current term for all this, the more freedom, the more human security.

But why should freedom be so productive? One reason is that people like Bill Gates can follow their interests and fully realize their inherent capabilities and talents.

But also, they have an incentive to work and produce what people want because they are rewarded—and handsomely so, if they can satisfy the desires of millions. There is something more here, however, than simply following personal interests and getting material rewards. People naturally take care of what they own. It is like driving a rented automobile versus their own car—in subtle and perhaps even in some extreme ways, they are probably rougher on the rented car. After all, they lose nothing when they rapidly start and stop a rented car, corner it at high speed, screech its tires, grind its gears, ignore potholes, and let it get filthy. The rental cost is the same either way.

TABLE 11.1
Human and Economic Development
by Level of Freedom, 1998

	Free	Partly free	Unfree
Number of nations	83	71	86
Average freedom rating [1]	13	8	3
Average PPP per person, \$ [2]	11,918	4,285	3,733
Average HPI [3]	14	26	34
Average HDI [4]	0.8	0.63	0.58
Average GNP per person, \$	11,082	2,420	2,384

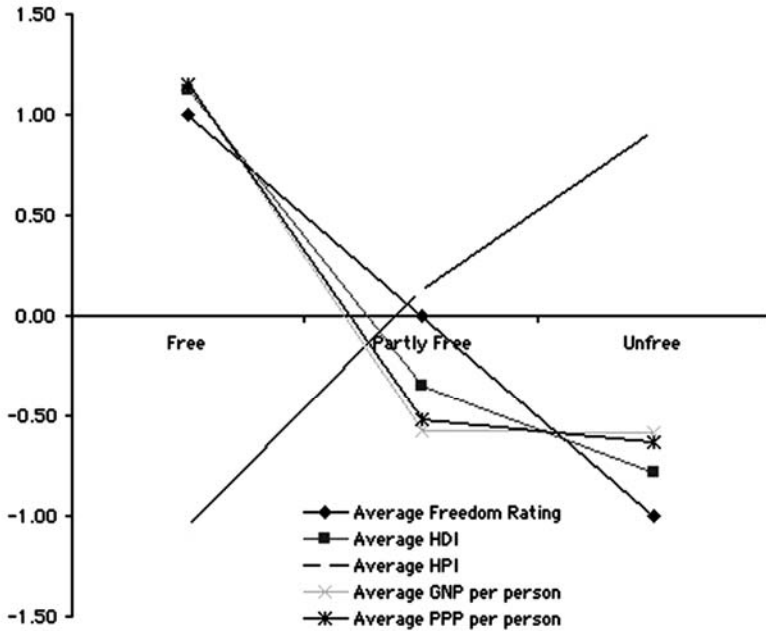
Notes

1. Freedom = combined rating of Freedom House on civil liberties and political rights, which varies from a rating of 2 to 14. For this table, free = ratings of 11—14, Partly Free = 6—10, Unfree = 2—5.
2. PPP = purchasing power parity per person, or the average person's ability in \$ to purchase goods comparable to what can be purchased by those living in other states. This is a good measure of comparable average wealth.
3. HPI = Human Poverty Index. Source is the United Nations Development Program.
4. HDI = Human Development Index. The index comprises life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, gross primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment, GNP per capita in purchasing power parity. Data for 1998.

This is like the commons, or common areas of a neighborhood. People take care of their house and yard. It is personal property and a reflection of their inner self, a matter of personal pride. But the commons, such as a public park, is owned by the public and therefore by no one. Government bureaucrats are the stewards over such property, and by law must manage it. But this is not their personal property, and therefore they do not have a primary motivation to take care of it and improve it. Usually, their personal motivation is to do the least amount of work at the best wage, and even if they do the best job possible, they do not do more than needed. So I see trees and flowers planted along newly built public roads withering and dying for lack of water, and I walk in parks whose grassy areas are overgrown with weeds and littered with paper cups, beer cans, and all the debris of people who use facilities they do not own. And I dare not think about using a public restroom!

The incentives of private ownership versus the commons gives us an understanding of why plantation owners often took good care of

FIGURE 11.1. Plot of Standardized Values from Table 11.1

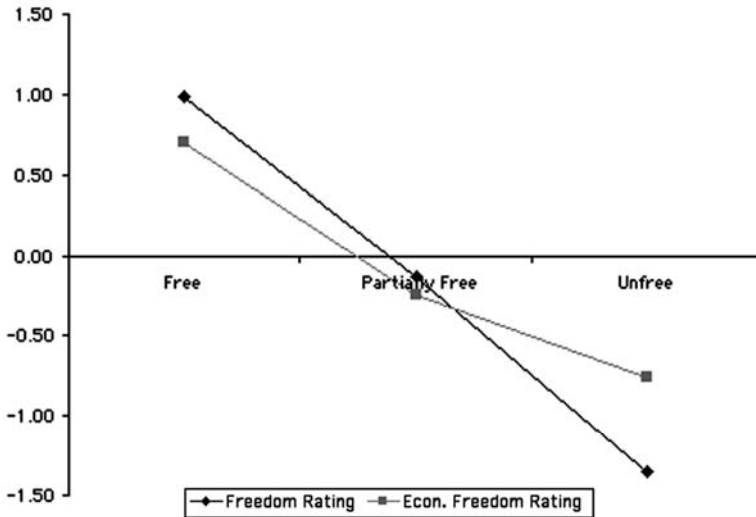
**Notes**

All data in Table 11.1 were standardized by row so that they could be plotted together. Standardization involved subtracting the average of a row from a datum and dividing by the standard deviation of the row. This makes standardized values comparable across variables, since each standardized variable has an average of zero and standard deviation of one.

slaves they bought, though the owners might punish them severely for trying to escape or refusing to work. By comparison, the biggest slave-like establishment of modern times, the Soviet *gulag*—the forced labor camp system—took little care of its laborers. Camp managers often worked them to death or allowed them to die of malnutrition and exposure. The life expectancy in some camps, especially the mining camps in Kolyma, was a matter of months. Why? The incentive for the camp managers was to get the most out of the workers for the least cost, then pocket the extra funds—not to take care of the prisoners. These people were not personal property, but public property. This was the very worst of the commons.

Besides the joys of freedom, the prosperity it creates, and the incentives of private ownership, there is the individualization of choice and behavior. While people share much with their neighbors, friends, and loved ones, each person is different. Each has values, perceptions, and experience that no economic and social planners can know, or usually

FIGURE 11.2. Plot of Freedom and Economic Freedom Rating*

**NOTE**

All ratings were standardized for 190 nations and then averaged within each group. See Figure 11.1 for the meaning of standardization and the source of the freedom ratings. The economic freedom is from James Gwartney and Robert Lawson, *Economic Freedom of the World: 2000 Annual Report*

even guess at; in no way can each become data in some planner's computer, because the path through life for each is unique. This means that only the individuals can best judge what they value, desire, want, and can do. To borrow a useful cliché, each alone knows where their shoe pinches.

This is more basic than it may at first seem. In the free market, everyone is free to buy and sell, to create and build, as did Bill Gates. This freedom enables everyone to best adjust to the world around them and apply their unique values and experience. Therefore, a farmer who has learned from his parents and his own direct experience how to till the soil unique to northeastern Ohio, to read the local weather patterns, and to plant and fertilize the seeds that will grow well in the rocky soil, will best know how to make his farm productive. No government official far away at the state capital in Columbus or the national capital in Washington, D.C., can do as well. And really, were they to command him how to farm, they would destroy his incentive to produce, and the farm's productivity. The loss of this freedom to farm is a loss of personal experience, knowledge, and values that government commands cannot replace. History has shown the catastrophic results of this in communist nations, as I will detail in Chapters 13 to 15.

Moreover, in a free market, buyers and sellers automatically balance the cost and amount of goods. This means it is often more profitable to sell many items at a small profit than a few at a high profit. This encourages lower prices and cheaper goods to meet the mass demand of poorer people. Some producers will specialize in building yachts and make a profit at it, but many others will find it most profitable to market cheap clothes, fast food, games, and thousands of devices that make life easier. And in this way, businesses are encouraged to produce more items, more cheaply, and of better quality. We have seen this regarding computers.

Note also, as free market economists like Milton Friedman, Ludwig von Mises, and F. A. Hayek have stressed, free market prices are an economy-wide message system. They communicate shortages, where things are cheap, and where production might be profitable enough for a business to move into the market; they also communicate where demand is slack and businesses might cut back production. Prices in a free market tell businesses what to put on the supermarket shelves, where, when, and at what price. Therefore, the free market is equally a massive distribution system.

Think about this for the moment, about the miracle of the thousands of goods on the supermarket shelves, many from faraway countries and other states. Who decides this? What great mind or computer figures out what is to be sold in what market for how much, when? And all without shortages, and long lines waiting for a supply truck to arrive, as is often the case in command economies. How is this done without the economic planners that socialists believe necessary? Automatically and spontaneously, by the decisions of hundreds of thousands of free producers, suppliers, truckers, and market managers, all responding to different prices and demand.

This is why the command market and government intervention fail to improve prices and allocation over the free market. Instead, it creates economic dislocations, hardship, privation, and, as we will see, famine. No government officials, no social scientists, no central computer program, can possibly figure out what each person wants, when, and where, and how all this can be balanced for tens of millions of people. A government cannot improve the free market price mechanism, even at the minimum by antitrust, antimonopolistic laws; it can only distort or destroy.

Chapter 12

The Free Market, Greed, and the Command Economy

Underlying most arguments against the free market is a lack of belief in freedom itself.

– Milton Friedman

You may believe that I am exaggerating the role of freedom, and that for Gates' success detailed in Chapter 10, his talent and initiative were most important. Then consider what his life would have been like in a country that allowed no freedom, such as the former Soviet Union.

The Communist Party that ruled this country placed the strongest emphasis on economic and technological development, and it is natural to believe that someone with Bill Gates' abilities and interests would prosper there. First, however, for Gates simply to survive without going to a labor camp or to his death, he and his parents could not question the Party line, and both his parents and grandparents could not have been connected to the previous czarist government, or be bourgeoisie. Presuming, then, that Gates was clean of any such "counterrevolutionary" taint, he might have succeeded as a scientist or engineer. But he could not have produced any great jump in software development.

The Party strictly limited the use of computers, all of which it owned. For over a decade it kept computers under lock and key, to be used only with Party permission. Gates, therefore, would not have had the free use of computers that enabled him to develop his programming ability and to eventually write the programs he did. And, since all private businesses were illegal, there could be no Microsoft to design personal computers or write software. Such could only be done within some Party-run shop. If, in such a shop, Gates had written useful software, it would be the property of the Party, to dispose of as the Party bureaucracy wished.

There is a slight hint of such a statist attitude in the American Justice Department taking Microsoft to court in 1997 for monopolistic practices. Specifically, it accused Microsoft of making its Internet Explorer part of Windows 95, and thus stifling competition with other

Internet browsers, such as Netscape. In April of 2000, a federal judge ruled that Microsoft did violate antitrust laws, and in June issued a final judgment ordering the dissolution of Microsoft. However, this order was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, while the court did hold that Microsoft had an illegal monopoly on computer operating systems. With a new Republican administration in 2001 that brought a new Secretary to the Justice Department, its plan to split up Microsoft was dropped.

This case reflects an anti-free market attitude toward competition, big business, and success—and likely some envy of Gates' wealth. More important, this action by the previous Clinton administration probably shows the power of political contributions or their lack. Gates had naively refused to make any large contributions to the Democratic Party or President Clinton's two presidential campaigns, while Microsoft's chief competitors had done so. It was their complaints about Microsoft that brought action.

Many of the commentaries on this case saw capitalist greed as Microsoft's, and especially Gates', primary motivation. Indeed, this view reflects a general criticism of free-market capitalism itself as the incarnation of greed. These critics see entrepreneurs and business people as being out only to make a profit, and economic competition as nothing more than capitalists climbing over each other to profit from the poor. Such critics want an economic system wherein each tries to help others and provide for their needs, rather than people trying to get rich at each other's expense—a view that lies at the root of much leftist and socialist thought today. Even many that strongly support a free market see greed as its driving force. This not only gives ammunition to the enemies of this freedom, but also mischaracterizes it altogether by reference to something that is an aspect of the system and not its central, psychological dynamic.

Imagine a utopia where people are highly motivated to provide services and fulfillment to others, usually total strangers. They see this as being in their own self-interest. Many of these people also spend sixty to seventy hours a week trying to provide such services. Also imagine—unbelievable as it may seem—that in this utopia some of these people spend their life savings and borrow huge sums of money to discover or provide new things that they believe other people might want. That is, in this society *the chief preoccupation of people is to satisfy the wants of others, or to determine how they might do this, and do so with the least expense to those getting the services or goods.*

Such an unbelievable other-directed society does seem utopian. But if we could have such a society, would it not be inherently moral? Is this not the dream of many communitarians, philosophers, and theologians?

gians—that people spend their time, energy, and resources to provide others with what they need and want?

This utopia does exist. It is the free market. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, intellectuals, writers, authors, journalists, computer programmers like Bill Gates, movie stars, business owners, financiers, stock owners, and all other individuals making up the whole population comprise the free market, as do all large and small businesses. The automobile repair shop, the computer discount house, the Italian restaurant, the Chinese laundry, the small Catholic college, the mom and pop grocery store, and so on and so on, exist to give people a particular service. If this service is unwanted or the business charges too high a price, then it goes bankrupt. Moreover, entrepreneurs are constantly trying to invent new businesses or services that will fill some need or want not yet recognized by others. If no such want exists, or its fulfillment is not worth the cost, the businesses fail. Such working and striving to satisfy others is a moral ideal. That this is the essence of the free market is unappreciated.

Again consider what Bill Gates and Paul Allen did. They spent unbelievable hours of their own time learning about computers and how to program them. This they were doing out of sheer interest, not because of greed. When they had learned enough, they began to satisfy the needs of others, particularly in helping to debug mainframe computer programs, and in writing their own programs to fill needs that others had expressed. When they started Microsoft, they wanted to sell software and make money, to be sure. But to do this, they had to speculate on what kind of software would most benefit the users of computers, and they had to make an initial investment of time and resources in writing it. If they were wrong, they lost what they put into the program. If they'd struck out enough times, Microsoft would have gone bankrupt. Microsoft succeeded, however, more than anyone dreamed possible, and the simple reason for this is that Gates and Allen, and then Gates alone, saw what people needed most, and worked to satisfy that need.

Years ago I wanted a good word processor to use in writing my books, and a spreadsheet program with which to do my analyses. Microsoft foresaw my need with very good software, and I bought their Word and Excel. I thereby contributed to Gates' wealth, to be sure, but I did this freely and received in return two programs I could not write, and which have made me far more productive.

Bill Gates and Microsoft are participants in a technological revolution that began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one that was really a revolution in freedom. As government loosened its stranglehold on national economies and foreign trade, as it allowed creative and en-

terprising people to produce new things, there was a surge in new inventions, new businesses, and the earnings and wages of the poor. Before this revolution, laws tied workers to a farm or manor and forced them to live the most basic and poorest of lives. They often faced the threat of starvation if a harvest was meager, if they lost or broke their tools, or if they were dispossessed of their land by the government or feudal lords. They wore the most basic and plainest of clothes and ate the simplest and cheapest food. The revolution of freedom liberated the poor from this kind of servitude, assured them of a basic wage, and enabled them to improve their consumption. Much to the complaint of the upper classes, who saw this as “putting on airs,” the poor began to dress in better, more colorful clothes, and to eat a greater variety of foods.

All of us are the inheritors of this freeing of the market and the resulting technological revolution. The automobiles people drive, the televisions they watch, the movies they see, the cell phones they answer, the planes they fly, and—exemplified by Microsoft—the computers they use, all owe their development and availability to the free market. At a more basic level, we can best see the operation of the free market in the availability of an amazing variety of cheap foods for the poor and lower middle class. An American supermarket is a cornucopia of agricultural wealth, with choices of fruits, vegetables, meats, cereals, breads, wines, and so on from many areas of the United States and countries of the world. Similarly, department and hardware stores shelve, hang, and display a wide variety of goods. To see the results of freedom, you need only shop in any of democracy’s stores.

Let’s look at new inventions and innovations. Freedom promotes a continuous reduction of the cost of goods compared to the average wage, such that even the most complex and advanced products are available to the common person. An example of this is the rapid evolution of the handheld calculator.

When I was a graduate student working on my M.A. thesis in 1960, I had to calculate statistics on a large Monroe mechanical desktop calculator. I had to punch the numbers into it, move some switches to do a specific calculation, and physically crank it (like starting an old car) to get the results. By computer standards today, this Monroe was painfully slow and clumsy, but it was still better than doing the arithmetic by hand. I could calculate sums, cross products, and correlations, but it took me about two months and a sore arm to do all the necessary calculations. My university paid about \$1,100 for the machine then, or about \$6,408 in current money.

By the early 1970s, I could pick up a handheld Hewlett Packard electronic calculator that would do all these calculations and many more, such as logarithms and trigonometric functions, store one figure

or calculation in memory, and function on a small battery. It cost about \$400, or about \$1,709 in today's dollars.

Now I can get such a handheld calculator for \$10; paying slightly more will get me a calculator that will do much more than the obsolete Hewlett Packard. And for about \$900 I now can buy a personal computer—for example an iMac with monitor, keyboard, modem, CD drive, and an internal hard disk—that has a capability undreamed of a mere decade ago and on which I could have done all the necessary calculations for my M.A. thesis in seconds, not months. This is comparable to the free market, through innovation and competition, bringing the price of a new automobile in 1960 down to the cost of a new shirt today—which makes one wonder what the price of an automobile now would be without any government regulations on its production and quality.

I did my Ph.D. dissertation on the Northwestern University mainframe, a central IBM computer worth tens of millions of dollars in current money. It had a memory of 36 kilobytes and filled a huge, air-conditioned room with its blinking lights, spinning tapes, massive central processor, very slow printer, batch punch-card input, and bustling attendants. The whole atmosphere of computer, lights, air conditioned room, and all the rest created a feeling of almost spiritual mystery. To use this monster, I had to learn to write my own computer programs, and to change some of its functions I had to rewire part of the computer. That was in 1962 and 1963.

Today I sit before a flat seventeen-inch color monitor connected to a new Macintosh G5 that has one gigabyte of memory (nearly 28,000 times the memory on the mainframe), a 28.5-gigabyte hard disk, a DVD-rewritable drive, a modem, and a color printer. The total cost of all this was about \$3,500. Incredible power at an unbelievably low cost compared to what I could have bought only one human generation ago. This is the fruit of freedom.

But still, while many may accept this productivity of the free market, they may believe that a command economy with the best and the brightest scientists and technicians doing the planning, and a focus on producing the most goods for the most people—on providing for the needs of all people—can be even more successful. Especially for the poor. Government is then seen as the best engine of wealth, prosperity, and equality for all. This idea has a solid grip on the minds of too many intellectuals and academics, and so in the next chapters I will describe what happened in the Soviet Union and communist China when this idea ruled each.

Chapter 13

Scarcity and Famine: Lenin's Command Economy

[I]t is necessary to . . . distribute the food provisions . . . with the view of cutting down on the number of those who are not absolutely necessary and to spur on those who are really needed.

– Lenin

Communism

This idea of a free market was the cornerstone of classical liberalism, whose bible in the eighteenth century was British philosopher and economist Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. He argued that wealth is best created when government keeps its hands off the economy and there is free trade. This free, or *laissez-faire*, market is, however, only one political-economic model.

The major competing model in the twentieth century was that based on the economic and historical analysis presented in *Das Kapital*, written by the nineteenth century German political philosopher Karl Marx. Along with Friedrich Engels, Marx established the “scientific” socialism that we now call communism. In his many works, including his influential pamphlet *What Is To Be Done*, Russian revolutionary and philosopher Vladimir Ilich Lenin then showed how Marx-Engel's politico-economic theory could be put into effect—how a communist revolution could be induced and a communist nirvana achieved through the dictatorship of the proletariat. Scholars now think his work is such a basic addition to Marxism that they make Marxism-Leninism synonymous with communism.

Communism has been the most influential politico-economic theory of the twentieth century. With its claims of empirical proof and a scientific theory of history, and its utopian plan to rid the world of poverty, exploitation, economic greed, and war (all of which it claims are due to capitalism), it captured the minds of many intellectuals and workers. And through revolution, invasion, and war, these believers took over one country after another: Russia, China, Mongolia, North

Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Cuba, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Grenada, Nicaragua, and South Yemen. This is an impressive roster indeed.

The communist politico-economic model explicitly claims that while the free market will lead to the impoverishment of the worker and its own destruction, communism will create socio-economic equality and a society in which abundance will reign and provide “from each according to their ability, and to each according to their need.” This abstract model seems ideal and has misled many a compassionate person. But let’s look at what this model really meant in practice—what such a command economy in the former Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin, and in communist China under Mao Tse-tung, accomplished compared to a free market.

Lenin’s Nationalization and Famine, 1920–1923

I will discuss in detail the 1917 Bolshevik (communist) coup against the Russian Kerensky government in the next chapter. Here, however, as a precursor to Stalin’s collectivization of the peasant and his intentional famine in the Ukraine described in the next section, I want to note the severe famine that Lenin created as a result of his command policies in the Soviet Union soon after he seized power.

After the Red Army had won control over much of Russia, the Communist Party—in effect, the new government of the Soviet Union—issued a Decree on Land that encouraged peasants to seize large estates, thus depriving cities and towns of food. This created much local disorder, as did the Party establishing committees of peasants to “assume the responsibility for repression,” and the decree that in all small, grain-producing districts, officials should pick twenty-five to thirty “wealthy” hostages to be killed if the peasants did not deliver their “excess” grain. In practice, excess grain often turned out to be any grain—even the peasants’ reserve and seed grain was expropriated by detachments of workers ignorant of farming. The Party sent tens of thousands from the cities to uncover the peasants’ “excess,” which resulted in more disarray hardly conducive to good harvests. As Lenin himself confessed, “Practically, we took all the surplus grain—and sometimes even not only surplus grain but part of the grain the peasant required for food.”

By 1920, in what was sometimes called ‘War Communism,’ thirty percent of what the peasant produced was being requisitioned. It was

no longer necessary that Lenin requisition supplies for the Red Army's conflict with the anticommunist White armies, which no longer posed a serious threat. Rather, Lenin's purpose was to move from a capitalist free market to a socialist one—to a command economy, as he declared. He wanted to nationalize the peasant, although not in the total way that Stalin would do a decade later through collectivization.

Nationalization and its attendant forced requisitions was Lenin's solution to the problem of paying for peasants' grain when funds were not available. And it prevented peasants from keeping their grain and other crops from the Party. The Party also made many new laws to assure this. It set low prices for the peasants' produce, banned private trade, and established a system of rationing. Unlike a free market, this provided little motivation to produce—notwithstanding the likelihood of new detachments of workers coming through to expropriate or loot whatever was in a field or house. Understandably, the harvest of 1921 was only 40 percent that of 1913, before the revolution.

This disastrous harvest, coupled with the loss (or consumption due to hunger) of the reserve food supplies necessary for peasants to survive periodic droughts, had human costs far beyond the hundreds of peasant rebellions it caused. In 1921, a drought that in some Russian provinces formerly would have created no more than a minor famine instead triggered one of the worst ones in modern times: over 30 million people faced starvation.

Faced with a calamity that could threaten the survival of communism, the Party began providing some aid to the starving while urgently requesting international help. International relief, particularly from the United States through the American Relief Administration (ARA), was soon forthcoming. But even in the face of this historic disaster, Lenin wielded aid and food as a socialist weapon. Said Lenin, without an iota of compassion for the victims, "it is necessary to supply with food out of the state funds only those employees who are actually needed under conditions of maximum productivity of labor, and to distribute the food provisions by making the whole matter an instrumentality of politics, used with the view of cutting down on the number of those who are not absolutely necessary and to spur on those who are really needed."¹¹

The Party requested foreign aid for the Russian Republic, but mentioned nothing about the counterpart famine in the Ukraine. The Party must have known as early as August of 1921 that the southern Ukraine

11 Quoted in G. P. Maximoff, *The Guillotine at Work: Twenty Years of Terror in Russia (Data and Documents)*. Chicago: The Chicago Section of the Alexander Berkman Fund, 1940, p. 149.

was verging on famine, but Lenin refused to allow a transfer of food from the north to the south. Indeed, the Soviets tried to feed Russia with Ukrainian grain, justifying this by exaggerating its grain production. In effect, many Ukrainians were starved to death to feed hungry ethnic Russians. The Party allowed no aid from the outside until American relief officers forced the issue, and even then the Party hindered the aid effort. Lenin was using starvation to pacify Ukrainian nationalism and defeat the many rebellions there—to crush peasant resistance, a goal that Stalin would also tackle with famine in the early 1930s.

Then, in the summer of 1922, irrationally (unless one has firmly in mind the communist obsession with building socialism), the Party resumed large-scale grain exports. This, even though the Party had to starve part of the population to get the grain. But it wanted capital for industrial heavy equipment. So it asked the ARA to continue aid so that some of these people could be fed. Thus, the picture that displayed the heartlessness of communism versus the apolitical compassion of democracies: in the port of Odessa, Russians saw the SS *Manitowac* unloading American famine relief supplies while nearby the SS *Vladimir* was loading Ukrainian grain destined for Hamburg.

Although there were agricultural dislocations caused by civil war, Lenin and the Communist Party were mainly responsible for some 5 million people starving to death or dying from associated diseases. The toll would have been much higher had not the ARA provided about \$45 million in aid (about \$474 million in 2002 dollars) to keep alive about 10 million people.¹²

But this was not yet the worst that the Russian people would suffer. That would be the fruit of Stalin's tyranny.

12 For the overall toll of mass murder during the civil war and deaths from this man-made famine amounting to murder, see the estimates, calculations, and sources in Table 2A in my *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917* (1990). The table is also on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/USSR.TAB2A.GIF. For other tables and a summary chapter of the book, see: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE4.HTM

Chapter 14

Scarcity and Famine: Stalin's Command Economy

You [Party activists] must find the grain It is a challenge to the last shred of your initiative and to your Chekist spirit Comrade Stalin expects it of you.

—Hatayevich (Central Committee member)

Collectivization, 1929–1935

After Lenin's death from a stroke in 1924, there was a struggle for Party rule between Leon Trotsky, commissar for war and Lenin's heir apparent, and Josef Stalin, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. By 1928 Stalin had won the battle and had full control over the Red Army, secret police, and communist cadre. He could now carry out his plans to fully socialize what was now known as the Soviet Union. He especially intended to go much further than Lenin had dared go with the peasants, and nationalize—without compensation—-independent farms, their livestock, and land, and consolidate them all into huge farm factories run by the Party. Each farmer was to become an employee earning a daily wage for his work. It was to be total collectivization of the peasantry.

Theoretically, the idea has a certain appeal: turn “inefficient” small plots on which farmers could not use modern farming equipment (equipment they also could not afford) into large, factory-like farms, each with its own tractors, each efficiently allocating farmers to specialized tasks. Of course, this required persuading farmers to give up their land, livestock, tools, and often their homes to the communes, and to become workers with regular wages, hours, and tasks.

The peasants resisted, of course. They killed their animals rather than give them up, burned down their homes, fled to the cities, shot at the troops who came to enforce the Party's commands, and committed suicide. This Peasant War destroyed and depopulated whole villages. Even nomadic herdsmen were not exempt, as Stalin decreed that the Party also must settle them into communes, and collectivize their wan-

dering herds. By March 1, 1930, 14,264,300 peasant holdings had been collectivized throughout the Soviet Union.

As it turned out, once they “voluntarily” turned all they owned over to a collective farm, the peasants found it more like a penal colony. Party functionaries in Moscow commanded commune work and activity, usually from thousands of miles away. They regimented the life and daily routine of each commune member, although they knew nothing of local conditions and farming. Peasants, now commune “workers,” had to obey orders without question, or communist agents, spies, or their supervisors would report them. In words that a peasant living under Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge in Cambodia could have uttered, Myron Dolot pointed out:

We were always suspected of treason. Even sadness or happiness were causes for suspicion. Sadness was thought of as an indication of dissatisfaction with our life, while happiness, regardless of how sporadic, spontaneous, or fleeting, was considered to be a dangerous phenomenon that could destroy the devotion to the communist cause. You had to be cautious about the display of feelings at all times, and in every place. We were all made to understand that we would be allowed to live only as long as we followed the Party line, both in our private and social lives.¹³

This Peasant War was the largest and most deadly war fought between World Wars I and II. The Party fought the war by “persuading” peasants to “voluntarily” join the communes using lies, false promises, peer pressure, coercion, and finally naked force. A massive, coordinated propaganda barrage extolled the manifold virtues of collectivization and condemned those “rich” peasants—or *kulaks*—who were systematically and selfishly sabotaging this humanitarian Party effort to spread the benefits of communism to the poor peasant.

Stalin also formally declared war on kulaks. Party activists and even everyday workers became convinced that these kulaks were wholly responsible for the resistance to collectivization and its associ-

13 Miron Dolot, *Execution by Hunger: The Hidden Holocaust*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1985, p. 92.

ated violence. Party officials throughout the Soviet Union spewed hate propaganda and consistently harangued activists on kulak evil-doing. Whipped into a frenzy of hostility, activists and cadres who were sent out to the countryside in waves of collectivization unleashed their pent-up rage on any assumed kulaks.

The kulaks were not only scapegoats, they were the focus of attack. Stalin pursued collectivization through a campaign to eliminate the kulaks as a class, and decreed the liquidation of all kulaks and their families, even extended families. This meant execution for many, or slow death in labor camps for many more. Others were barely more fortunate to be deported to forced settlements in remote regions like Siberia, which in some ways were worse than camps. Kulaks were regarded more as vermin than people.

This kind of scapegoating, deception, propaganda, and use of naked force is intrinsic to a command economy. To command an economy means just that, to use commands that subjects absolutely must obey—or else face prison, camp, or death—to get done what is planned. Since human beings have their own interests and are unwilling to be used as the bricks and mortar to construct a utopia, they have to be persuaded or pushed, and as communist cadres everywhere have seemed to say, “If some die in the process, so be it—you can’t make an omelet without breaking eggs.”

In actuality, those liquidated “kulaks” were mainly the peasants who had been more successful farmers—they owned fatter cows, they built better houses or barns, and they earned more than their neighbors. They were not the rich (the average kulak earned less than the average factory worker, or the rural official persecuting him), or the exploiting landlord. They were simply the best farmers. And they paid for their success. The Peasant War consumed their lives and the country. Speaking with Churchill during a World War II summit, Stalin admitted that this Peasant War was worse than that against the Nazis; it “was a terrible struggle It was fearful.” After saying that he had to deal with 10 million kulaks, Stalin claimed that “the great bulk was very unpopular and was wiped out by their laborers.”

Stalin’s estimate was not far off. From 1929 to 1935, the Party deported to labor camps or resettlements, usually to a slow death, possibly 10 million, maybe even 15 million “kulaks” and their families. Even infants and children, and the old and infirm. Apparently even they stood in the way of progress, of Stalin’s collectivization. The cost in lives? The Soviets themselves admitted that their collectivization and dekulakization campaigns might have killed 5 million to 10 million

peasants.¹⁴ This was mass murder, a hidden Holocaust that few in the world outside the former Soviet Union know about. All to apply an untested, theoretical economic model of a command economy—Marxism-Leninism.

And did collectivization work? No, this greatest of experiments in scientific, social engineering utterly failed. It denied the laws of economics and human nature, of the free market; and so, the communes never did produce enough food for even the Soviet table. The Party had to resort to massive food imports and to giving the communes some freedom, but to no avail. Stalin helped agricultural productivity most when he permitted peasants, during their time off, to plant food on a little plot of land the Party gave them near their collective. As one might expect, these little plots became highly productive, and eventually accounted for most of the food produced in the Soviet Union, strongly vindicating the free market model.

Famine by Design, 1932–1933

Incredibly, the horror of collectivization was only the beginning. The Peasant War and the resulting communes totally disrupted the agricultural economy. By 1932, famine again threatened, but there was the Peasant War, and the Party could not give aid to the enemy. In fact, Stalin saw the famine as positive—it would encourage peasants to join the collectives, particularly if that were their only source of food.

But Stalin perceived another potential benefit from a famine. He could use it to squash Ukrainian nationalism. Ukrainians, even top communists, were becoming more assertive about strictly-Ukrainian interests: music, language, literature, and interest in Ukrainian history were undergoing a renaissance. Stalin could not allow this to continue, since Ukrainian nationalism, at the heart of which was the peasant, was inherently an opposing force to communism. Destroy the Ukrainian peasant, and Russian immigration into the Ukraine and collectivization would easily follow.

So in 1932, Stalin launched a new and differently fought assault in the Peasant War by ordering an impossible grain delivery target of 7.7 million tons out of a Ukrainian harvest already reduced by a third from

14 For the overall toll of collectivization, see the estimates, calculations, and sources in Table 4A in my *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917* (1990). The table is also on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/USSR.TAB4A.GIF. For other tables and a summary chapter of the book, see: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE4.HTM

that of 1930. After much argument, Ukrainian officials got this reduced to 6.6 million tons, but when the Party apportioned quotas among the villages, said one survivor, “Our village was given a quota that it couldn’t have fulfilled in ten years!” In effect, the quotas were a sentence to death by starvation for Ukrainian peasant families. Stalin’s war strategy on this front was simple yet imperial in scope: force the unwilling peasants into communes, while also destroying the spiritual resources and cultural achievements that supported their nationalism.

Although collecting and exporting more grain than ever, the Party showed the starving peasants no mercy. It took even warm baked bread off the peasants’ tables. It marshaled detachments of workers and activists to seize every last bit of produce or grain, including the seed grain needed for planting. They went through peasant homes with rods, pushing them into walls and ceilings, seeking hidden stores of food or grain; they dug up or poked around yards with rods, searching for hidden food; they brought in special animals to sniff out the food, much as trained dogs now sniff for drugs in travelers’ suitcases. To the Party officials and activists, peasants had to have food hidden somewhere, since they were still alive.

To survive, the peasants ate roots; they boiled bark and the soles of their boots for the broth. But at each grasp for food, the authorities stepped on their hands. When the peasants started eating their dogs and cats, the Party ordered village officials to bag a “certain quota of dog and cat skins,” and they went through the village shooting these animals. When the peasants tried to eat birds and their eggs, communist activists organized systematic bird hunts, shooting birds out of the trees with shotguns. Finally, the peasants ate horse manure; they fought over it, sometimes finding whole grains in it. Emaciated, enfeebled, near the end they sometimes ate their own children and those of their neighbors that they could kidnap—as North Koreans have during their communist-made famine.

The Party left the peasants with nothing. It ordered the military and police to seal Ukrainian borders to block the import of food. It black-listed some villages with especially stubborn peasants, totally isolating them from the outside, and it forbade the sale of any food or other products—even soap.

The starving peasants died by the millions in the winter of 1932–33. Stalin prevented any aid until he was sure that the Ukraine would no longer resist collectivization or be a threat to communism. About eighteen months of famine did it. With whole villages lifeless, highways and fields dotted with the dead, the survivors too weak to work, with the Ukraine prostrate and even workers in the cities now threatened, Stalin

ended quotas in March 1933; in April some army grain reserves were released for distribution to the dying peasants.

The result? The Ukraine was like a huge Nazi death camp, with about a fourth of all peasants dead or dying, and the rest so weak and debilitated that they were unable to bury the dead. On Stalin's orders, about 5 million Ukrainians had been murdered through starvation, 20 to 25 percent of the Ukrainian farm population. Another 2 million probably starved to death elsewhere; 1 million died in the North Caucasus alone. While Stalin intended the Ukrainian deaths, those elsewhere were the unintended by-products of the war on the peasants—collectivization.

Still, the Party did learn a little from this famine. It loosened its controls and, as mentioned, allowed the peasants to operate small, free market plots. But this was not enough to prevent famines. There were some local famines in the next decade, and another major one occurred in the Ukraine and Byelorussia from 1946 to 1947. This time only 500,000 to 1 million people starved to death.

Regardless of these famines, no matter the costs of collectivization, some Western intellectuals claimed that the communist-induced, rapid industrialization had brought a better life to the average citizen. It's hard to believe now, but there were Western books and articles extolling Soviet progress, and pointing to this as the wave of the future that all our politico-economic systems should emulate. One such work, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?*, was written by the English socialists Sidney and Beatrice Webb during the worst of the collectivization and the Ukrainian famine. Even years later, when details of the cost of Soviet communism and the famine and the nature of the Party's dictatorship were much better known, they would write that the country was a "full-fledged democracy." And the very influential British playwright and socialist George Bernard Shaw called the Soviet Union "a really free country."

In the eyes of these writers, the Soviets now had national health care, guaranteed housing, social security, no unemployment, and a "democratic government" that marshaled all society's resources to create a better future, unlike the dictatorship of the rich in the West where greedy capitalists climbed over each other to impoverish the worker.

This stuff could only have been written by utterly ignoring the reality of Stalin's mass murder, his enslavement of his people, and his famines. It is as though these Western supporters had visited a Nazi concentration camp and emerged claiming that the camp's government guaranteed that their subjects would have food, work, a place to live, and the democratic right to elect the head of their barracks.

Even some thirty years after Stalin's death in 1953, even after some seventy years of Party command over the economy, even after life in the Soviet Union had markedly improved since the collectivization and famine years of the early 1930s, the Soviet citizen hardly lived better than in czarist times. As is typical of communist countries, shopping in Soviet cities was often a long hassle, with days spent just to find toilet paper, sausages, or shoes. To buy scarce goods, people waited in line to be given a ticket to buy an item, waited in line to pick up the item, and waited in yet a third line to pay for it.

The communist elite were too important to waste such time and deserved better, to be sure; they had their own restaurants, their own stores in which to buy the best goods, their chauffeured cars, and their Party-owned villas or retreats.

On the rise was one of the best indicators of public health, infant mortality; it was not decreasing, as it does in all free market democracies. Such was the result of a command economy.

Chapter 15

Scarcity and Famine: Mao's Command Economy

[The famine] resulted mainly from the massive intervention of ignorant zealots in the agricultural process and from the tendency of the Central Plan itself to become an inexorable trap.

– Miriam and Ivan D. London and Lee Ta-ling

Murder of Traditional Agriculture: Land Reform

“Well,” some with a sense of Russia’s long history under the czars might say, “this really is Russia, and you know the Russians; they are barbarians compared to Western Europeans.” Then consider a country that is far different culturally, one whose people have a reputation for intelligence and industriousness.

In 1949, the Communist Party under Mao Tse-tung won the Civil War against the Nationalist government, and gained control over mainland China. Immediately, Mao moved to consolidate and centralize power, destroy any source of opposition, and make communist authority supreme throughout the land. Acceptance, if not outright loyalty, had to be assured to apply the communist economic model, especially among the mass of peasants. With actual or potential resistance liquidated, Mao then could command nationalization, collectivization, and forced industrialization.

In hammering out this transitional “dictatorship of the proletariat,” Mao and his henchmen in the Party murdered many millions of Chinese, sent them to forced labor camps to die, or caused them to commit suicide. Often, simply being a more prosperous peasant, a simple businessman, a minor member of the former government, a humble priest, or a Westerner’s friend was enough to merit such a fate. Any resistance to the Party or criticism of Mao or communism was reason for a bullet in the back of the head. This terrorism soon reached into the smallest villages and farthest reaches of China.

This preparatory softening up and totalization of Chinese society took almost four years. It involved many movements and campaigns,

each an effort by the new rulers to define specific goals and identify enemies, to name these and assign suitable tactics and perhaps quotas to the lowest cadres, and to mobilize the masses through slogans, giant mass meetings, required political and orientation sessions, and often outright incitement to violence against the class enemy. Some of these movements were meant to improve economic growth or social welfare, such as the “Increase Production and Thrift,” “Patriotic Cleanliness and Health,” and “Elimination of Illiteracy” movements.

Perhaps the best known of these movements was that of “Land Reform.” China was and still is a land of farming villages. Traditionally, much power in the village rested with the gentry and the relatively rich landowners. They were a largely independent power base, historically moderating between the peasants and the local and central governments. This was not a feudal, peasant-landlord class system as had existed in Europe. The Chinese peasant was independent and often owned his own small piece of land.

Acting through the Party’s organization, officials, and cadre, the method Mao used to destroy this free agricultural market was simple: make the peasants hate their landlords and the “rich” and then give him their land and wealth. If the Party also could incite the peasant to kill or participate in killing the landlord, he would support the Party out of fear of revenge or of losing his new land. Therefore the Party’s directive to cadres:

Adopt every possible measure to rouse the hatred of the people and excite them into frenzy and hysterical animosity against the landlords. The high-ranking cadres responsible for the Land Reform Movement must not hesitate to allow the Land Reform Squads a free hand in executing landlords¹⁵

The technique was for a group of activists to occupy a village, and then within a few days to select the victims and arrange a “trial.” The cadre would then haul the victims out of their beds at night, beat, humiliate, insult, and spit upon them, and eventually bring them before a table at which sat a “tribunal” composed of Party activists, one or two local sympathizers and, if possible, someone with some judicial experience to lend legal color to the proceedings. Then there would be the

15 Quoted in Ching-wen Chow, *Ten Years of Storm: The True Story of the Communist Regime in China*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winsten, 1960, p. 101.

“jury,” a crowd of local peasants whom the activists had already aroused against the victims. Fear conjured manufactured hatred on peasant faces—the cadre was watching them for compassion for the victims or lack of enthusiasm for the proceedings.

Amid cries of “enemy of the people,” or “counter-revolutionary jackal,” or “imperialist lackey,” the cadre would force the victim to face his “jury” with his hands tied and, with prompting from the “tribunal,” recite his crimes against the revolution. Then a member of the “tribunal” would say that the victim’s punishment should be death, at which the coached “jury” would shout, “Death!” Then the cadre would immediately shoot the victim, or wait until after he’d dug his own grave.

The Party officially ended “Land Reform” in 1953. According to the Party, the movement affected around 480 million of about 500 million peasants; almost 114 million acres forcibly changed hands. Under this guise of redistributing land to the peasants, the party destroyed the power base of the gentry and rich peasants, and got the acquiescence, if not the support, of the poorer peasants.

How many landowners and their relations the Party murdered or caused to commit suicide in this vast and bloody campaign, we can never know. A reasonably conservative figure is that about 4.5 million landlords and relatively rich and better-off peasants were murdered. As fantastic as this human toll may seem, the words of the highest Party rulers give it credibility. In official 1948 study materials about “agrarian reform,” for example, Mao instructed cadres that “one-tenth of the peasants [about 50 million] would have to be destroyed.” This would have to be “30 million landlords and rich peasants” according to a speech in the same year by Jen Pi-shih, a Party Central Committee member.¹⁶

Collectivization: the Commune

With power now tightly centralized, society totally under control, and all possible countervailing forces destroyed or weakened, and now with a true command economy to work with (and having learned nothing from Stalin’s horrible agricultural debacle), Mao put collectivization into effect. After some preliminary collectivization of the peasants into cooperatives, in April of 1958 Mao began the forced collectiviza-

16 For a breakdown of China’s democide by period, see Table II.A of my *China’s Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900* (1991). The table is also on my website in two parts at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TABIIA.1.GIF and www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TABIIA.2.GIF. For other tables and a summary chapter of the book, see: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE2.HTM

tion of peasants into communes with the establishment of the Sputnik commune in Honan Province. With unintentional irony, Beijing's *China Youth News* described what it was like to live in this commune:

At dawn the bugles sound and whistles blow to gather the population of the commune A quarter of an hour later the peasants are drawn up in a line. At the orders of their brigade and company commanders they now move off in military step to the fields, carrying their banners. Here you no longer see the small groups of peasants, two or three at a time, smoking and making their way leisurely to the fields. Instead you hear the measured tramp of many feet and the sound of marching songs. The age-old habit of living haphazardly has now disappeared forever with the Chinese peasants. What an enormous change! In order to adapt itself better for modern life and collective labor the commune has launched a movement for the shifting and reunification of the villages. The peasants now move together in groups to spots nearer to their place of work. What an astonishing change! From the days of antiquity the peasants have regarded the home as their most precious possession, handed down to them by their ancestors. But now that the little patches of land, the small houses and the livestock have become the property of the commune, and now that the bonds which attached the peasants to their villages have been severed so that there is nothing left of their former home which they could still desire, they feel at peace. Now they say: "The place where we live doesn't matter to us; we are at home anywhere."¹⁷

17 Quoted in Suzanne Labin, *The Anthill: The Human Condition In Communist China*. Translated by Edward Fitzgerald. New York: Praeger, 1960, p. 101.

The “success” of this “model” commune, so the Party reported, led to a “spontaneous demand” by the peasants throughout China for communes of their own. Acceding to this, the Party ordered communes set up everywhere. Then the newly acquired land, and all else the peasants owned, such as farming tools of all sizes and types, and even houses, became the property of the communes. Virtually all that hundreds of millions of peasants owned was nationalized in one titanic gulp.

By the end of 1958, the Party had organized into 26,000 communes over ninety percent of the population—about 450 million Chinese. The peasants were now the property of the commune, to labor like a factory workers in teams and brigades at whatever the Party commanded, to eat in common mess halls, and often to sleep together in barracks. In an instant, for about one-seventh of humanity, Mao had destroyed family lives, traditions, personal property, privacy, personal initiative, and individual freedom. Mao and Party functionaries now dictated every condition of peasant lives, truly creating a *command* agricultural economy.

Mao still found time for even more movements to remove any possible critics or opponents to Party policies and ideology. One example was the “Anti-Rightist” Movement, which was notable for assigning quotas. Mao gave educational institutions, from primary and middle schools to technical schools and universities, quotas of between five and ten percent of their staffs to be delivered to the state as “rightists.” Those selected would then be imprisoned, tortured, and possibly executed. And because the quotas for rightists were often higher than institutions had legitimately qualified rightists to fill, rightists had to be invented. To understand this system is to know that some institutions would enthusiastically overfill their quotas.

Great Leap Downward

But the Anti-Rightist Movement was a diversion from the main line. Even as Mao was displaying the first model commune and planning to modernize agriculture, he was also undertaking to catch up with the West in industrialization, particularly with Great Britain in steel production. Indeed, Mao considered collectivization and industrialization the two legs of China’s socialism, necessary for China’s “walking on two legs,” as he put it.

Beginning in May 1958, slogans, exhortations, and drum-beating mass meetings mobilized the whole country in a “Great Leap Forward.” The Party hastily built workshops and factories—reportedly half a million in Hopei Province alone, in less than two months. It erected iron

smelters throughout the countryside—1 million by October, involving 100 million Chinese. It ordered the communes, and “encouraged” millions of urban families to contribute pots, pans, cutlery, and other iron and steel possessions for smelting. Peasants had to work day and night, fourteen or sixteen hours or more, on these projects.

Production statistics zoomed, but top Party officials soon realized that local authorities had falsified the statistics. What factories and workshops produced was often worthless junk; much of the iron produced in backyard furnaces was impure and unusable slag.

All of this demolished Chinese living conditions. In a pre-1937 survey of 2,727 households in 136 different areas of China, an adult male consumed an average 3,795 calories a day. In 1956, official sources reported the daily individual food consumption as less than 2,400 calories—an astounding 37 percent drop.

In 1957, according to official statistics, rice production was 82 million tons. This reduced to 340 grams (12 ounces) per person per day, and considering the better rations of officials, soldiers, and agents, the ordinary person got less than 320 grams, as refugees reported, or under half the normal daily calories needed. Although there were nearly 150 million fewer people in 1936, the rice production then was about the same as in 1957. Predictably, in 1956 and 1957 there was famine in certain districts.

Then there were the many Chinese the Party murdered during this collectivization period. As best as we can estimate, the collectivization and the “Great Leap Forward,” as well as the campaigns against “rightists,” probably cost an additional 5,550,000 Chinese lives.

The World’s Greatest Famine Ever

This was not all this economic model, supposedly vastly superior to the free market, cost the Chinese people. The worst was yet to come. The effects of collectivization and the “Great Leap” were disastrous. Already in 1959, the negative effects on public welfare evident in previous years were multiplying. For example, *Honan Peasant’s Daily*, a provincial newspaper, disclosed that many peasants died from overwork or malnutrition that summer. During two summer weeks, 367,000 collapsed and 29,000 died in the fields. Other papers revealed that over a similar period, 7,000 died in Kiangsi, 8,000 in Kiansu, and 13,000 in Chekiang.¹⁸

18 Valentin Chu, *Ta Ta, Tan Tan: The Inside Story Of Communist China*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1963, p. 74.

Trapped by these conditions, with the Party forbidding peasants from leaving their commune or workplace, they could only rebel. From 1959 to 1960, peasants rose up in arms in at least five of China's provinces, in rebellions that the military could not subdue for over a year. Reports from Honan and Shantung stated that "members of the militia stole weapons, set up roadblocks, seized stocks of grain, and engaged in widespread armed robbery." In 1959, rebellions took place over a large area in Chinghai, Kansu, and Schechwan; during the same year Chinese, Hui, and Uighur forced laborers rebelled together and destroyed trucks, mines, bridges, and tunnels.

All this was part of the buildup to the worst famine in world history. According to the demographer John Aird in a U.S. Bureau of the Census study, during the late 1950s and early 1960s possibly as many as 40 million people starved to death. However, the demographer Ansley Coale, using official Chinese data and adjusting for underreporting of vital statistics, concluded that 27 million died. More recent research now suggests that the toll was 30 million Chinese. As a comparison to this massive mountain of dead, it's as though every person residing in Texas and Virginia in 2002 starved to death.

This famine was largely the result of failed communist policies and the grandest, most ambitious, most destructive social engineering project ever: the total communization and nationalization of an agriculture system involving over half a billion human beings, its reduction to military-like central planning and administration, and the vast and hurried "Great Leap Forward."

A wide-scale drought affected 41 percent of the farmland in 1959, and 56 percent from 1960 to 1961. This doubtlessly triggered the Great Famine. It might have caused a million or so deaths, had it happened in the 1930s under the corrupt Nationalist regime. But now the agricultural system was in such disarray and social policies were so counterproductive that the greatest of all famines was inevitable.

Famine added to privation was enough for some people. More so than in 1959 and 1960, peasants resorted to armed rebellion. During 1961 and the following year in southern China, there was continuous guerrilla warfare, and Fukien Province, across from Taiwan, also saw a serious armed uprising. Colonel Chung, a former army officer, led some 8,000 peasants to attack the militia and loot granaries in Wuhua. Official sources admit that, during 1961 alone, resistance included 146,852 granary raids, 94,532 arsons, and 3,738 revolts. In addition, according to General Hsieh Fu-chih, the minister of security, there were 1,235 assassinations of party and administrative cadres.

As with the Soviet Union, many Western intellectuals were under the spell of Chinese communism, and particularly that of Mao, and ar-

gued that he had greatly improved the lot of the average Chinese. Here also, if we ignore all the mass murder, total deprivation of freedom, and resulting Great Famine, we still must find these arguments naïve or ill-informed. Life for the city dweller was better under the previous fascist Nationalist regime than under the communists. After more than twenty years of communism, the average Chinese standard of living had fallen below what it was before the Sino-Japanese War that began in 1937.

Need I say more about the consequences for human life of a command economy versus a free market? Yes, and that is to make explicit that there never has been a famine in a democratic nation. Never.

Chapter 16

Democracy Means No Famine Ever

... famines do not occur in democracies.

– Amartya Sen

To further prove that to deny people freedom is to produce an economy of scarcity, famine, and death, note the wide-scale famines that communist parties also have made elsewhere. In Chapter 1, I mentioned the famine in communist North Korea and the Party's bankrupting of the country. In an entirely different part of the world, communist Ethiopia put in place controls over agricultural production in the 1980s, and 1 million Ethiopians starved to death or died from connected diseases—this is out of a population of 33.5 million people, which made this famine nearly as large as China's, proportionally.

These empirical economic experiments with an alternative theoretical model to the free market, this incredibly bloody rebuilding of whole societies and cultures to match utopian plans, this forced fitting of people into one job or another, and this effort to do better by dictator's command what free people can do for themselves has totally failed. Think of the marketplace in any liberal democracy compared to the shortages, long lines, limited choices, massive famines, and bloody repression that prevailed in these command economies. Better yet, just think of the success of Gates and Microsoft. There is a joke Eastern Europeans made about the command economy when they lived under communism: were a communist country to take over the great Sahara Desert, we would hear nothing for ten years, after which there would be a shortage of sand.

Famines have also happened in authoritarian and fascist nations, although they were not even close in deaths to those under communism. By contrast, no democratically free people have ever had a famine. None. This is so important that I will put an even sharper point on it.

*By the very nature of freedom, a free people
are immune to one of humanity's worst disasters,
a famine.*

TABLE 16.1
20th Century Famine Totals

	Free	Partly free	Unfree	Colonies	Totals
No. of Countries	0	15	30*	16	60
Famine dead (000)	0	14,374	>60,080	>12,115	>86,569

* Angola 1974—76 famine counted in both unfree and colony categories.

This can be seen in Table 16.1.¹⁹

This is not because nature is kinder to democracies. Note, for example, that in 1931 the worst drought ever to hit the United States began in the Midwestern and southern plains states and centered on Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. By 1934 the drought had spread to twenty-seven states and covered over 75 percent of the country. Without rain, farmlands that had been over-plowed and over-grazed became powder dry, resulting in huge dust storms called “black blizzards.” Drought took out of cultivation about 35 million acres of farmland, and dust storms were removing topsoil from 225 million acres more. In 1935 alone, 850 million tons of topsoil probably blew off the southern plains.

As the drought and dust storms continued year after year, whole farm families fled in caravans, wagons and carts piled high with belongings, leaving behind vacant homes and farm machinery partly buried in dusty soil.

Through a variety of relief, cultivation, and conservation projects and programs, Congress and the Roosevelt Administration acted to help farmers survive the drought, saving what land, crops, and livestock they could. Finally, in 1939, the rains came and the drought was over. While even lesser droughts had caused many tens of millions to starve to death where governments forbade a free market, I could not find a reference to even one American starving to death during the Dust Bowl. Some Americans did die of suffocation in the dust storms, however, and some died of related diseases.

The worst famine to hit a European country in the last two centuries was the Irish famine from 1845 to 1849, which is sometimes blamed on a free market. A fungus attacked and destroyed the potato, the major

¹⁹ The list of countries with famines and the death toll is on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF4.TAB4.3A.GIF

crop of Ireland's peasants, causing massive famine throughout the country and the death of perhaps 1 million people, almost 13 percent of the population. Now, Great Britain had united Ireland with her by the 1801 Act of Union, and before that had ruled Ireland as, in effect, a colony. Over the previous centuries the British had tightly controlled the development of the Irish economy through many repressive laws, such as those inhibiting world and British trade with Ireland. In particular, various British governments were intent on suppressing Roman Catholicism, the religion of virtually all Irish peasants. Dating from 1695 and not fully repealed until 1829, laws to this end had a disastrous effect on Ireland's agriculture.

For example, the British forbade Irish Catholics to receive an education, engage in trade or commerce, vote, buy land, lease land, rent land above a certain worth, reap any profit from land greater than a third of their rent, and own a horse worth more than a certain value. This code so distorted Ireland's agricultural system, so impoverished the peasants, and made them so dependent on their landlords that any natural disaster wiping out their crops could only mean a major famine. Moreover, because of limits on the franchise, the secret ballot, and the manner of representation and legislative voting, Great Britain was not even an electoral democracy at the time of the famine. It did not become a democracy until it democratized its electoral system later in the century.

But there is even more to freedom than just avoiding disaster. It is no accident that democratically free people are the most economically advanced, technologically developed, and wealthiest in the world, as shown in Figures 11.1 and 11.2 of Chapter 11. Nor is it by chance that the poorest nations are those in which their dictators allow no or little open economic competition, prevent people from buying and selling goods freely, and encourage bribes of government bureaucrats or their relatives.

Then look at the economic miracles in Germany and Japan. The Allied bombing of these countries in World War II thoroughly destroyed their economies and infrastructures. Germany and Japan also had to absorb millions of returning soldiers and civilians, which for West Germany alone was about 8 million ethnic and Reich Germans, most homeless and hungry. How did these countries recover as fast as they did, going from being among the most devastated of nations in 1945 to being among the most economically powerful states in the early 1990s? In each case, it was the effects of freedom, particularly a free market.

Of course, when the Allies occupied these countries after the war, they provided aid to relieve starvation, but this would have been only a

short run solution had they not also broken up monopolistic government-big business cartels, encouraged private enterprise, freed the marketplace of many government controls, assured the rule of law, and democratized the political systems. It is to the credit of the Japanese and West German postwar leaders that when given their nation's independence, they maintained and enhanced their people's democratic freedom. Both Japan and Germany are now liberal democracies.

For further proof, note the rapid economic growth and modernization of now-democratic South Korea. A good measure of this growth is in its annual total of goods and services, or gross domestic product. This averaged a growth rate of 5.3 percent annually, 1950 to 1985, despite the devastating Korean War during the first three years. For the world as a whole, the average was less than half that, or 2.3 percent. In 1998, South Korea's growth rate was even higher at 6.8 percent, and it is now becoming a close competitor to Japan.

Compare this to North Korea, with the same ethnicity, culture, and traditions, and with a more developed industrial base before the communist takeover. While the southern half of Korea is prospering, the north under a command economy is bankrupt and economically ravaged, with its people suffering under a severe famine and dying in the millions.

There is also the example of now-democratic Taiwan, whose economy from 1950 to 1985 grew at a rate of 7 percent, leveling off in 1998 to 4.8 percent. Taiwan now is among the industrially developed nations. Then there is the "Asian tiger" that is Singapore, whose authoritarian government has allowed the market to be free; it has become an economic jewel of southeast Asia. From 1950 to 1985 it grew at an average annual rate of 7.9 percent, making it then the economically fastest growing country in the world.

Hong Kong, formerly under British colonial rule, was another free market, economic jewel; since communist China took it over from Britain by treaty in 1997, it remains to be seen how long this will last. Located on a series of small islands and a small strip of mainland China, it comprises only 397 square miles. In 1945 it had a population of fewer than 600,000, but through natural population growth and by absorbing millions of refugees fleeing communist China, its population swelled to over 6 million. Despite the many people on this small bit of land, there was little unemployment; it had a bustling, productive, and continually growing economy, and an annual growth rate of 6.9 percent up to 1997, which was only slightly behind Singapore and Taiwan at the time.

Now compare the results of the freedom in South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong to what happened in mainland China when

Mao deprived its people of any freedom: total economic disaster, rebellions, economic retrogression, and tens of millions of people starving to death.

With the death of Mao in 1976, the new Party dictators began to liberalize its economy and introduced a semi-controlled free market in many areas of the country, as described in Chapter 1. Total Party control had so devastated the economy that once the Party lifted many of its controls, China's economy leaped forward at or near a double-digit rate. In 1998, it was growing at 7.8 percent. The Chinese people are rebuilding their cities, a new class of Chinese investors and businesspeople is competing with businesses from abroad, and for the first time in decades, the Chinese now have plenty of food. The signs of economic vigor and growth now astound a visitor returning to China after thirty years' absence.

Of course, I have only given examples here and not a systematic analysis of the consequences of freedom for all nations. That has been done elsewhere²⁰ and proves in general what the above examples show: the evidence overwhelmingly supports freedom as a means to the economic betterment of society and the fulfillment of human needs. Quite simply,

freedom produces wealth and prosperity.

These are moral goods of freedom, a moral reason for people to be free.

Part 1 established that people have an inherently moral right to be free, regardless of the consequences of freedom—its utility. Now we can say that freedom does have very desirable, moral consequences for humanity: wealth and prosperity. We have known for nearly two centuries this result of freedom, and its teaching by classical liberals of previous centuries did much to free Western economies from the heavy hand of government regulation and control. This may be the most important moral good of freedom, but it's not the only one. Freedom has yet other moral goods, and of these not many people are aware.

20 See the appendix at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM

PART 4

On Freedom's Moral Goods: Minimizing Political Violence

The daily news always seems to be about internal (or domestic) political violence somewhere in the world. People are constantly trying to replace their ruler by violence, revolt against their government, rebel against some government policy, or fight a civil war to achieve independence. In July of 2000, these violent political confrontations were occurring in about forty nations. I've briefly discussed the civil wars in Sudan and Burma, Somalia's clan wars, the Civil War in Russia after the Bolshevik coup of 1917, and the numerous rebellions against Mao's collectivization and "Great Leap Forward." The question naturally follows: why do human beings constantly kill each other in this way?

Before answering this, I want to provide an understanding of how violent this internal political conflict can be. Readers may not realize that such violence has been more destructive of human lives than international war. The probability of a person being killed in an international war is less than that of dying in a revolution, guerrilla warfare, rebellion, civil war, or riots. This is not even taking into consideration government democide—genocide and mass murder—such as that of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao, which itself has totaled more dead than all internal and international wars together. That is so important that I will devote the whole of Part 5 to it.

China has lost tens of millions of people in her own civil wars—her Taiping Rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century alone might have killed as many as 40 million Chinese, and the Chinese Civil War between the Nationalist government and the communists left almost 2 million battle dead.²¹

21 For the sources, estimates, and calculations, see Table 1.A of my *China's Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900* (1991) and on my website at: <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TAB1.A.GIF>

Of the twelve wars the United States has fought, including World War II, none killed more Americans than died in its Civil War.²²

In Chapter 17, we'll look at the Mexican Revolution, which killed many times the number that died in the American Civil War. In the next chapter I try to untangle the many threads of the Russian Revolution and Civil War, one of the bloodiest of the twentieth century. This close look at the Mexican and Russian revolutions should show why people who share citizenship can kill each other on such a massive scale. The explanation for their excessive violence and that in other nations? Their undemocratic governments' suppression of their people's freedom. We'll examine that in detail in Chapter 19.

22 For the Federal armies in the American Civil War 359,528 were killed in combat or otherwise died; for the Confederate forces the number was about 258,000 dead. The total dead in the war was near 617,528.

Chapter 17

The Mexican Revolution

Said a Valle Nacional police officer of Mexican forced laborers: "They die; they all die. The bosses never let them go until they're dying."

– John K. Turner

Roots of Revolution

The roots of Mexico's revolution lie in the rule of Porfirio Díaz, a former general who in 1876 rebelled against President Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada and seized power. Mexicans later elected him to the presidency and, except for one term, consistently reelected him, sometimes without opposition, until revolutionaries forced his exile in May of 1911. While Mexico therefore had elections, they usually were a façade. Competition for office was not free and open, political opponents were assassinated, and the fear of government officials and their supporters limited political speech.

Díaz tried to conciliate various groups, such as the Catholic Church, landed interests, and big business, and he was particularly committed to the economic growth of Mexico. He promoted foreign investments and ownership, eased the transfer of public lands to private hands, and helped concentrate the ownership of land for more efficient usage. He caused some one million families to lose their land, including the ancestral lands of some 5,000 Indian communities. By 1910, when the revolution broke out, fewer than 3,000 families owned almost all of Mexico's inhabitable land, with over 95 percent of the rural population owning no land at all. Nearly half of these landless lived on large, privately owned farming or ranching estates or plantations, called haciendas. These sprawled across much of Mexico, containing about 80 percent of the rural communities. Some were huge; one was so large that a train took a day to cross its six million acres.

Deprived of their land, impoverished and unemployed, the mass of Indians and *peons* (the unskilled laborers or farm workers of Latin America), were a huge pool for authorities and landowners to exploit. And so they did. Under Díaz, profiteering police and government officials protected greedy landowners and pitiless labor contractors. This

enabled the venal, corrupt, and ruthless to ensnare Indians and peons in a nationwide system of chattel slavery and indebted labor.

One of the main methods used to enslave peons on haciendas was to advance them money. While it was usually a small amount, the peon found it almost impossible to repay. His wages were abysmal because of the ready availability of impoverished peons in the countryside, and living costs were, by hacienda contrivance, high. For example, a peon usually could buy his necessities only at the company store, since he was paid in coupons or metal disks that only the company store would accept. Running away from this forced labor was not an option. If he did, the police would search for him, usually catch him, and return him to the hacienda. Then, as a lesson to others, he would be whipped publicly, sometimes even to death. Moreover, debt was by law inherited—passed down to a peon's sons on his death—so his sons also could become indebted slaves through no fault of their own.

But the peon could become indebted in ways other than through the hacienda. He was enmeshed in a system of Mexican customs and laws that encouraged, if not required, that he spend more money than he had. For example, baptism demanded a fiesta, a priest, and liquor, the cost of which the peon could only cover by pledging his future wages. This was also true for the cost of a wedding, a baby's birth, and even tools. Whether they were on the hacienda or not, to the poor and landless a debt was usually forever, and once in debt, the peon had no rights. By law, the debt holder had all the power, which on the hacienda was power over life and death, as surely as though these peons were slaves in ancient Rome.

Besides indebted peons, haciendas had other sources of such slaves. Hacienda bosses would entice impoverished and landless Indians and other peons into signing contracts to work on plantations about which the workers knew nothing; upon arrival, they would discover that there was no escape. The police would arrest and jail the poor and those dispossessed of land for trivial or trumped-up charges, and then sell them to hacienda owners. Yet another source was a police roundup of such people, as though they were cattle, followed by their deportation to a hacienda to work until they died. In some areas, these roundups were the routine—even a matter of government policy. Local officials would contract with a hacienda to supply so many peons per year, and the district political boss, or *jefe politico*, often fulfilled his contract by kidnapping and selling young schoolboys for fifty pesos each.

There were some comparatively good haciendas, to be sure. There, owners still forced the peons to work, and would whip to maintain discipline and order, but they treated them with the paternalistic civility

accorded to personal slaves. These haciendas were the exception, however. Normally, they were hellish for the peon, whose life on them was usually short and miserable. The owners had them whipped when their work slowed for any reason, and for the slightest infraction. They were sometimes whipped to death. After all, they were cheap to replace, and the police showed no concern over their murder.

On many haciendas, the peon's misery went far beyond whipping. Hacienda bosses would often rape the peon's wife and daughters, and would force the prettier ones to be their concubines. Nor did all the haciendas provide enough nutritional food for their peons in the field, or changes of clothing, bath facilities, or toilets. Because of this ill treatment, many soon died from disease, exposure, and exhaustion, deaths that can only be classed as murder. In some places, such as Valle Nacional, the forced labor system became at least as deadly as that in the Soviet gulags and the Nazi labor camps at their worst, but the victims died within guarded haciendas instead of work camps surrounded by guns and barbed wire.

The bosses especially mistreated the Indians enslaved on the haciendas, and they often were among the first to die. Two-thirds of Yaqui Indians on haciendas died in the first year; on some haciendas, a few would survive for two years. And haciendas were killing Mayans, members of another Indian nation, at a greater rate than they were being born.

Bosses also badly mistreated non-Indian peons. In three months on one large hacienda near Santa Lucrecia, they killed more than half of three hundred new workers. In the Valle Nacional hacienda, out of some 15,000 new workers taken on in one year, bosses killed about 14,000 within seven or eight months. I would doubt this incredible death rate, were it not for the words of Antonio Pla, general manager of a large portion of the tobacco lands in Valle Nacional: "The cheapest thing to do is to let them die; there are plenty more where they came from." Said one of the police officers of the town of Valle Nacional, "They die; they all die. The bosses never let them go until they're dying."

Even the process of deportation to the haciendas was lethal, particularly for Indians. Soldiers seized and deported five hundred Yaqui Indians a month to work on haciendas as slaves. This was even before Díaz decreed that the War Department must capture and deport to the Yucatán every Yaqui Indian found, regardless of age. As many as 10 to 20 percent died during deportation, especially if the trip was a long one, and involved the military herding the deportees over mountains on foot. Sometimes whole families would commit suicide rather than endure the deportation and the slave labor that lay at the end.

Out of a rural population of nearly 12 million in 1910, it's possible that 750,000 unknowingly contracted themselves into slavery on haciendas in southern Mexico, and over 100,000 on the Yucatán peninsula. The far more prevalent debt bondage may have enslaved an additional 5 million peons—nearly 41 percent of the total population of Mexico. These numbers far exceed those of Sudan's outright slavery and Burma's forced labor. Compare this to American slavery in 1860 just before the Civil War, where there were 3,951,000 slaves, or 12 percent of the population. What was in effect slavery in Mexico is most comparable to the slavery of ancient times, yet it happened in our time, during the youth of some people alive today.

This lethal slavery alone would be enough to condemn this reprehensible government and justify the coming revolution. But there is more. This slave system necessarily depended on a certain amount of terror and resulting fear.

Each of the states of Mexico had attached to it an *acordada*, a picked gang of assassins. They quietly murdered personal enemies of the governor or *jefe políticos*, including political opponents, critics, or alleged criminals, no matter how slight the evidence against them. For example, officials gave the son of a friend of Díaz, a member of the *acordada*, two assistants and the instructions to "kill quietly along the border" any person he thought connected to the opposing Liberal Party.

But much killing was also done publicly, and carried out directly by officials. In 1909, they summarily executed sixteen people at Tehuiztingo, and on a street at Velardena, officials shot several people for holding a parade in defiance of the *jefe politico*. They forced twelve to thirty-two others to dig their own graves with their bare hands before shooting them. In the state of Hidalgo, a group of Indians who had resisted government takeover of their land were buried up to their necks, then officials rode horses over them. From 1900 to 1910, this government probably murdered more than 30,000 political opponents, suspects, critics, alleged criminals, and other undesirables.

Díaz's policies obviously provided opportunity for the venal and corrupt, and offered security and assistance to the rich and well placed. As long as they went along with the system, bureaucrats, officials controlling government largesse, and the upper middle class and wealthy profited from Díaz's rule. Nonetheless, his policies also created an explosive atmosphere. Many of the well-off Mexicans were still angered that he encouraged foreigners to exploit the country's resources. Now, also, intellectuals were promoting among the lower class a sense of being enslaved. And Díaz's army, the muscle he needed to back up his policies, was small, corrupt, and inefficient.

Revolution

Given all this, rebellion was inevitable, and it did happen, several times. The first successful rebellion was led by Francisco Madero in 1910; it launched the Mexican Revolution. A member of the upper middle class, as most revolutionary leaders are, Madero believed in a liberal constitutional government. Indians and peons understandably supported him. With the former bandit chief Pancho Villa as his leading general, Madero won major victories against government forces and encouraged other rebellions throughout the country. In May of 1911, the government collapsed, Díaz fled into exile, and Madero took over the presidency.

Leading a revolution is one thing; rebuilding a government is quite another. In office, Madero turned out to be ineffective, especially in promoting changes to the system. He did, however, give peons and workers free rein to air their grievances and seek change. This did not sit well with the Mexican elite, who saw this freedom, added to the disorders still plaguing the country, as endangering their property. In early 1913, Victoriano Huerto, the general commanding the Mexican army in Mexico City, rebelled against Madero and, joining with other rebel groups, forced him to resign. General Huerto then made himself president, and in a few days, someone assassinated Madero.

Huerto's presidency was even worse than Madero's. He was disorganized, repressive, and dictatorial, and instigated the most violent phase of the revolution. Separate rebel forces, Villa's among them, took violent action to restore constitutional government in three northern states. In the south, Emiliano Zapata organized and generated a peon rebellion demanding land reform.

President Wilson of the United States tried to help these rebellions by embargoing arms to General Huerto, resulting in the American Navy's temporary takeover of Veracruz to stop a shipment of German arms, while allowing the rebel constitutionalists to buy them. Eventually, constitutionalist forces closed in on Huerto, and he escaped into exile in July 1914.

Still, even the constitutionalists could not establish a stable government, nor could they agree among themselves on what was to be done and by whom. Civil war again broke out in December of 1914. Finally, by the end of 1915, the rebel leader Venustiano Carranza won control over most of Mexico. Despite the refusal of Zapata (assassinated in 1918) and Villa and some of the other rebel leaders to accept terms, Carranza took over the government and held control until 1920.

Carranza never brought about the reforms he had promised, and in 1920, Alvaro Obregón, one of Carranza's most effective generals during the civil war, threw him out of power and eventually had himself elected president. Though dictatorial, Obregón brought relative stability, order, and change to Mexico.

What I left out of this sketch of the Mexican Revolution is the violence, ruthlessness, and cruelty on all sides. In the north in the opening years of this rebellion, for example, government forces simply shot all captured rebels, showing no mercy. In later years of the war, when President Carranza ordered General González to destroy the Zapatista "rabble" in Morelos, his troops burned down whole villages, destroyed their crops, marched women and children into detention camps, looted factories, devastated the local sugar industry, and hanged every male they could find. They left a wasteland behind them.

Rebels were equally vicious and often extended their butchery to top government officials and supporters. A case in point was their seizure of the town of Guerrero. They murdered all captured federal officers, along with the town's top Díaz supporters and officials, including the judge, *jefe político*, and postal inspector. The rebels raped at will; in Durango, the U.S. ambassador reported that fifty women "of good family" killed themselves after rebels raped them. Villa himself forced "his attentions on a Frenchwoman," creating an international incident.

When rebels captured and held Mexico City in 1914, they pillaged homes and businesses, shot police officers and political opponents, and hung those they suspected of crimes. In one case, they hung three people outside a police station, with signs announcing their crimes. One was a "thief," a second a "counterfeiter," but the sign on the third said, "This man was killed by mistake."

From the beginning of the revolution, the forces of the Villistas and Zapatas showed disregard for human life. When Pancho Villa captured the town of Torre in 1910, he killed two hundred Chinese, a nationality he and his followers much despised. Nor did he have any high regard for the lives of his own troops. Once, when an American journalist was interviewing him, a drunken soldier yelling nearby disturbed Villa. Without interrupting his conversation, he pulled out his gun, looked out the window, and shot the man.

Their officers were no better, but among them Rodolfo Fierro stands out. It is said that he once personally executed three hundred prisoners, pausing only when he had to massage his bruised trigger finger. Often, these rebels were simply bandits and murderers legitimized by a cause. In one especially heinous case, a rebel leader captured a coal train in a

tunnel, burned it, and then waited for a passenger train to run into the wreckage so that he could loot the train of gold and rob passengers of their valuables.

With the collapse of the Díaz regime, many state governors and federal generals no longer obeyed the central government. During the Carranza presidency, they in effect became warlords, some levying their own taxes, some refusing to turn over federal revenues, some ignoring federal laws and orders they did not like. Some became bandits, looting territory or states under their control; some bandits became generals controlling little states of their own. High military officers would loot and kill as they wished, even in Mexico City. Over all of Mexico for as long as a decade, all these warlords and rebel armies may have slaughtered at least 400,000 people in cold blood, perhaps even over 500,000—more than have died in combat in all American foreign wars.

Before and during the revolution, the government used a detestable conscription system. With the choice of who would be drafted left to the local *jefe politico*, graft and bribery were endemic. If a man had the money, he could buy himself out of the draft or bribe officials. Even worse, those who criticized the regime, those who tried to strike, or those who otherwise annoyed officials found themselves drafted. The army served the function of a forced labor camp for the poor and undesirable, and so became known as “The National Chain Gang.”

The government used press-gang methods extensively during the revolution. In one case, seven hundred spectators at a bullfight were grabbed for the army; in another case, one thousand spectators were abducted from a big crowd watching a fire, including women that they forced to work in ammunition factories. In Mexico City, people were afraid to go out after dark, even to post a letter, since it literally could result in “going to the cannon’s mouth.”

Soldiers so conscripted received little training, and officers threw them into combat as so much expendable equipment—there were always replacements, including criminals, vagabonds, beggars, and, of course, Indians and peons. Rebels and Indians easily killed them all. Because of the graft among their officers, these soldiers often got little medical care and little food. Some would die of starvation, many of disease.

One example of this was in the territory of Quintana Roo where, before the revolution, an army of 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers was in the field, continuously fighting the Maya Indians. These soldiers were almost all political suspects and therefore really only armed political prisoners. According to a government physician who served as the chief of sanitary service for the army in this territory, all the soldiers—over 4,000—died of starvation over a two-year period while General Bravo, their

commanding officer, stole their unit's commissary money.²³ This is murder. And from 1900 through the first year of the revolution, aside from combat deaths, the army's treatment of its conscripts murdered nearly 145,000 of them.

In total, the battles, massacres, executions, and starvation during the revolution probably killed 800,000 Mexicans. Nearly 1.2 million more probably died from influenza, typhus, and other diseases. In fact, the overall toll from all causes might even be closer to 3 million, given the population decrease for these years.^{23a}

23 John Kenneth Turner, *Barbarous Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969, p. 123.

23a For a breakdown of the toll, see Table 16.1 in my *Death By Government* (1994). The table is also available on my website at:
www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DBG.TAB16.1.GIF

Chapter 18

The Russian Revolution

When we are reproached with cruelty, we wonder how people can forget the most elementary Marxism.

– Lenin

Roots of Revolution

The Russian Revolution that began while that in Mexico was still going on was no less bloody, and like the one in Mexico, to understand it we will have to begin several years before it took place.

With the death of his father Alexander III in 1894, the last Russian czar, Nicholas II, came into power. He was a dedicated autocrat opposed to any liberal tendencies in Russia, a view strongly shared by his wife, Princess Alexandra. He was also an absolute Russian nationalist who imposed a policy of Russification throughout the empire, which included Poland and Finland in the west. As were many of his officials and Russians in general, he was anti-Semitic, and he overtly supported anti-Semitic activity.

Russians economically and culturally discriminated against their 5 to 7 million Jews, and government anti-Semitism encouraged and helped legitimize the periodic pogroms that swept Russian cities and towns. Officials allowed incendiary anti-Jewish propaganda to be published on government printing presses, and just stood by while gangs attacked Jews and their property. From 1900 to the abdication of the czar and the end of the Romanov dynasty in 1917, at least 3,200 Jews were murdered throughout Russia.

In line with its general suppression of freedom, officials killed and massacred others as well, such as shooting two hundred demonstrating workers in the Lena gold field. The most important massacre of these years occurred in January of 1905 in St. Petersburg, when soldiers shot down 150 to 200 peaceful demonstrators. This “Bloody Sunday,” as it became known, catalyzed what was a revolutionary situation into outright revolution.

In the years leading up to Bloody Sunday, Russia had been in turmoil. Strikes, student demonstrations, and peasant disturbances were frequent. Several revolutionary movements were violently seeking reform, such as the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats, who organized protests and tried to incite the masses. Because of Bloody Sunday, student demonstrations became almost continuous, revolutionary groups organized huge strikes, and in many regions, peasants rebelled. Bombings and assassinations were widespread.

This culminated in a massive general strike that finally persuaded Nicholas II and his officials to compromise. They issued the so-called October Manifesto that promised civil liberties, a new *duma*—legislature—with actual power to pass and reject all laws, and other reforms. The manifesto went far toward turning the government into a constitutional monarchy. It split the opposition into moderates willing to accept it and radicals believing it hardly went far enough. The radicals fought on—in the next year alone, terrorism by the Battle Organization of the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Socialist Revolutionaries Maximalists caused 1,400 deaths and, in the year following that, still another 3,000 deaths. But the Manifesto ended the 1905 revolution.

Throughout the years leading up to and following this revolution, the monarchy fought the revolutionaries in one district or another with harsh regulations, newspaper closings, arrests of editors, and, for six months, even summary court martials with almost immediate execution. The records of overall executions tell the story of these tumultuous years and the monarchy's response. From 1866 to 1900, officials executed no more than 94 people, perhaps as few as 48; from 1901 to 1904 it executed nearly 400 people; from 1905 through 1908, the number rose to 2,200; and from 1908 through the remaining years of the monarchy, executions might have reached 11,000.

Nonetheless, considering the revolutionary activity and the bombings, assassinations, and disturbances involved, the violent deaths would have been surprisingly low for an empire this huge and diverse and with an already bloody history, had it not been for World War I, its treatment of ethnic Germans and POWs, and the massacre or extermination of rebellious nations and groups in the empire's southern periphery. In 1915, the Duma expropriated all the property of the 150,000 to 200,000 Germans living in Zhiton-tir Gubernia and deported as many as 200,000 to the east under conditions so harsh, anywhere from 25,000 to almost 140,000 died.

The worst killing took place in the Kirghiz Kazak Confederacy. Following Russian orders, local authorities murdered Turkish-speaking Central Asian nomads outright, or, after robbing them of their animals

and equipment, drove them into the winter mountains or desert to die. Except for some who escaped across the border into China, authorities may have murdered as many as 500,000 nomads.

Then there were the Armenian volunteers who wore Russian uniforms, but served as irregulars with the Russian army. When Russia invaded the eastern provinces of Turkey during the war, these Armenian irregulars quite possibly murdered hundreds of thousands of Kurds between 1915 and 1916, as revenge for Kurd murders of Armenians in Turkey. It's unclear whether the Russian army was responsible for this, but it at least bears some onus for these deaths.

Worst of all, the Russian monarchy bears full responsibility for its treatment of 2.3 million German, Austro-Hungarian, Czech, and Turkish prisoners of war. Surely the Russian people suffered greatly during the war. There were wide-scale shortages of necessities and resulting localized famines; medical services that had always been poor deteriorated during the war, resulting in the spread of disease. Moreover, Russian soldiers themselves suffered from hunger, poor medical care, and unsanitary conditions, with perhaps 1.3 million dying of disease. Russia was in no shape to give POWs the same treatment that Britain, for example, could give them.

Nonetheless, even taking this into account, Russian-held POWs were abysmally mistreated and died in transit to camps and in the camps themselves by the tens of thousands. Just consider that during the transportation of POWs to camps, they might be locked in railroad cars or wagons for weeks. In one case, officials kept two hundred Turkish POWs suffering from cholera in sealed wagons for three weeks until they reached their destination, where they found sixty scarcely alive in the filth; 140 had died.

Already weakened by hunger and sickness during the long trip, prisoners then might have to plod ten to thirty miles to their final camp; some died on the way. Reaching camp provided no security, since the conditions in many were lethal. During the winter of 1914–15, in just one camp 1,300 men died—over half of the camp's POWs. When the doctors complained about the number of deaths to a general who came on a tour of inspection, his answer was that still more men died in the trenches.

During this same winter in the Novo Nikolayevsk camp, the prisoners were lucky even to have rotten straw to sleep on, and especially lucky to get a blanket. Camp doctors had no medicines or surgical appliances; they did not even have soap. Sick and healthy lay together indiscriminately. Often water was not to be had for days, or it would drip from icicles onto their straw beds. No wonder that when typhus

broke out, it spread rapidly and prisoners died in huge numbers. Only when these epidemics threatened the Russians themselves did they finally allow captive officers to help their men.

The Russian monarchy probably was responsible for the deaths of 400,000 POWs altogether. Since officials knew about the conditions in the camps and could have done much to alleviate them, this was as much murder as the death of 3 million Soviet POWs in Nazi concentration camps during World War II.

Revolution

By 1917, the war was going so badly for the Russians that many troops refused to fight and whole units were deserting, while on the home front there was continuous turmoil, including general strikes and massive demonstrations against the war and the monarchy. On March 8 alone, 30,000 people were on the streets, demonstrating. Nicholas II's cabinet tried to dismiss the Duma it had called into session to deal with the crisis, which it thought responsible for much of the unrest, but instead of dissolving, some members set up a provisional cabinet—in effect, a rebel provisional government.

Nicholas II and his cabinet had lost all power to affect events—the Russian Revolution had begun.

Events moved fast as one military unit after another joined the rebels, including the czar's own guards who, under orders from the provisional government, took the empress and her children into custody. On March 14, France and England, Russia's allies in the war, recognized the provisional government as the legal government of all Russia. Under tremendous pressure, having lost the crucial support of the aristocracy, his troops, and foreign powers, and no longer able to control the streets, Nicholas II abdicated.

The day before the abdication, the provisional government formed a new government to be headed by Prince Georgy Lvov. This government and the subsequent one of Aleksandr Kerensky, a democratic socialist who took over as prime minister in July, inherited a country in economic and political chaos, with a near-total breakdown in government authority and military morale, frequent strikes, plots, and the opposition of diverse, radical revolutionary groups. Not the least of these were the Bolsheviks, founded and led by Vladimir Ilich Lenin, who already in July had organized an unsuccessful uprising in Petrograd. Kerensky's government itself was disorganized, feared a coup from the right, and was quite unable to move against those openly plotting to seize power from the left.

Originally the left wing of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, Lenin's Bolsheviks were a small, uncompromising, and militant group of dedicated Marxist communists. Their incredibly small number, considering subsequent events, was clear when the first all-Russian Congress of Soviets was held, and only 105 out of 1,090 delegates declared themselves as Bolsheviks.

In November of 1917, with the powerful Petrograd garrison remaining neutral, Lenin seized the Winter Palace in Petrograd. Since this was the seat of Kerensky's shaky government, and he had only 1,500 to 2,000 defenders, the 6,000 to 7,000 soldiers, sailors, and Red Guards Lenin's Bolsheviks had thrown together easily overthrew the government. Widely unpopular, however, and faced with strong political opposition, Lenin at first made common cause with the Left Social Revolutionaries, a militant socialist group, in order to survive, centralize power, and consolidate this communist revolution. In 1919, Lenin adopted the name "Communist Party" for the Bolsheviks and their political allies.

To fight this forceful takeover of the government, generals throughout the Russian empire created whole armies—some led by anti-Russians and nationalists, some by anti-communists, some by pro-monarchists or pro-authoritarians, some by advocates of democracy. These so-called White armies were a direct threat to the new Communist Party and its so-called Red Army.

Moreover, in the areas the communists controlled, the clergy, bourgeoisie, and professionals opposed them. The urban workers, who had been communist allies at first, also soon turned against them when they saw that the communists had taken over the soviets (elected governing councils) and would not yield power to worker unions or representatives. Peasants, who had also been especially supportive when the communists began to divide among them land taken from rich landowners and the aristocrats' estates, turned to outright rebellion when the communists began forcibly requisitioning their grain and produce.

In the first year and a half of Lenin's rule, in twenty provinces alone, there were 344 peasant rebellions. Up to early 1921, there were about fifty anti-communist rebel armies. For example, in August of 1920, the starving peasants of the Kirsanov District, Tambov Province, rebelled against further communist extortion of grain. The rebellion soon spread to adjoining districts and destroyed Party authority in five of them. Under the command of Aleksandr Stepanovich Antonov, the rebellion became a full-scale armed insurrection. He created two armies composed of Red Army deserters and revolting peasants; by February 1921, he had as many as 50,000 fighting men, including internal guard

units. Until his defeat in August of 1921, he controlled Tambov Province and parts of the provinces of Penza and Saratov.

Many such rebellions broke out throughout the Soviet Union, as it was now named, although few were as dangerous to Communist Party control. (In 1921, the *Cheka*—secret police—admitted to 118 uprisings.) This Peasant War, which could just as well be called a Bread War, continued even after the White armies were defeated. It was so serious that in 1921, one Soviet historian noted that the “center of the [Russian Republic] is almost totally encircled by peasant insurrection, from Makno on the Dnieper to Antonov on the Volga.”

White armies and peasant rebellions aside, even in the urban industrial areas, communist control was precarious, at best. What saved Lenin and the Party was their “Red Terror.”

By 1918, Lenin had already ordered the wide use of terror, including inciting workers to murder their “class enemies.” According to *Pravda*, the Party organ, workers and poor should take up arms and act against those “who agitate against the Soviet Power, ten bullets for every man who raises a hand against it The rule of Capital will never be extinguished until the last capitalist, nobleman, Christian, and officer draws his last breath.” Understandably, there was a wave of arbitrary murders of civil servants, engineers, factory managers, and priests wherever the communists controlled the country. Mass shootings, arrests, and torture were an integral part of covert communist policy, and not simply a reaction to the formation of the White armies. Indeed, the Red Terror preceded the start of the Civil War.

After an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Lenin in August of 1918, he legalized the terror, and directed it against “enemies of the people” and “counter-revolutionaries,” defined primarily by social group and class membership: bourgeoisie, aristocrats, “rich” landowners (*kulaks*), and clergy. The Party’s organ *Pravda* helped launch this expanded Red Terror with this cry for blood: “Workers, the time has come when either you must destroy the bourgeoisie, or it will destroy you. Prepare for a mass merciless onslaught upon the enemies of the revolution. The towns must be cleansed of this bourgeois putrefaction. All the bourgeois gentlemen must be registered, as has happened with the officer gentlemen, and all who are dangerous to the cause of revolution must be exterminated Henceforth the hymn of the working class will be a hymn of hatred and revenge.”

Lenin’s Red Terror operated through a variety of official organs, including the People’s Courts for “crimes” against the individual, the Revolutionary Courts, and the various local Chekas for “crimes” against the state. Lenin also gave the right of execution to the Military

Revolutionary Tribunals, Transport Cheka, Punitive Columns, and the like. Communists jailed actual or ideologically-defined opponents, tortured many barbarously to force them to sign false confessions, and executed large numbers.

For example, communists executed a butcher in Moscow for “insulting” the images of Marx and Lenin by calling them scarecrows (a clear “enemy of the people”) and threatened to shoot anyone in Ivanovo-Vornesensk who did not register their sewing machines (obvious “counter-revolutionaries”). A communist functionary issued an order in Baku that local officials should shoot any telephone operator who was tardy in response to a call (doubtless “sabotage”). With information that an Aaron Chonsir in Odessa was engaging in “counter-revolutionary activities,” the Cheka looked through the street directories to find his address. Finding eleven people with the same name, they arrested them all, interrogated and tortured each several times, narrowed it down to the two most likely “counter-revolutionaries” and, since they could not make up their minds between the two, had both shot to ensure getting the right one. Obviously the revolution was still immature—in the late 1930s, Stalin would have had all eleven shot.

And so communists shot vast numbers of men and women out of hand: 200 in this jail, 450 in that prison yard, 320 in the woods outside of town; even in small outlying areas, such as the small Siberian town of Ossa Ochansk, they massacred 3,000 men in 1919. This went on and on. As late as 1922, the communists executed 8,100 priests, monks, and nuns. This alone is equivalent to one modern jumbo passenger jet crashing, with no survivors, each day for thirty-two days.

Moreover, the communists showed no mercy to prisoners taken in clashes with the White armies, and often executed them. They even shot the relatives of defecting officers, as when the 86th Infantry Regiment went over to the Whites in March of 1919—the communists killed all the relatives of each defecting officer. Places reoccupied after the defeat of one White army or another suffered systematic bloodbaths as the Cheka screened through the population for aristocrats, bourgeoisie, and supporters of the Whites. When the Red Army captured Riga in January of 1919, communists executed over 1,500 in the city and more than 2,000 in the country districts. When defeated White General Wrangel finally fled with his remaining officers and men from the Crimea, the Red Army and Cheka may have slaughtered from 50,000 to 150,000 people during reoccupation.

Undeniably, the Whites themselves carried out massacres, killed prisoners, and were guilty of numerous atrocities. But these were either the acts of undisciplined soldiers or ordered against individuals by sa-

distic or fanatical generals. Lenin, however, directed the Red Terror against entire social groups and classes.

Then there was the Peasant War, which, although it tends to be ignored in the history books, was no less vicious than the Civil War. Under the guise of requisitioning food, communists tried to plunder village after village, which understandably resulted in pitched battles, massacres, and frequent atrocities. Just in July of 1918, twenty-six major uprisings began; in August, forty-seven; and in September, thirty-five. The communists fiercely fought the Peasant War over the full length and breadth of the new Soviet Union from 1918 through 1922, and at any one time, there were apparently over one hundred rebellions involving thousands of peasant fighters.

If, of course, any “enemies of the people” were captured or surrendered, the communists were likely to kill them out of hand; they also massacred those who had helped the rebels, provided them with food and shelter, or simply showed sympathy. They leveled some villages “infected with rebellion,” slaughtered inhabitants, and deported remaining villagers north, with many dying in the process.

About 500,000 people were killed in this Peasant War, half in combat and the other half murdered by the communists. The effect on food production was catastrophic and, as described in Chapter 13, was a partial cause of a severe famine in which 5 million people starved to death or died of associated diseases.

The number of combat deaths in the Civil and Peasant Wars—rather than those resulting from mass murder—was likely about 1,350,000 people. Although a fantastic toll by normal standards, this was a fraction of the total killed during this period.

With the growing strength and improved generalship of the Red Army, and the lack of unity and a common strategy and program among the opposing White armies and peasant rebels, by 1920 Lenin and the Communist Party had surely won the Civil War. And through the Red Terror, they also had secured the home front. The terror eliminated or cowed the opposition and enabled Lenin to stabilize the Party’s control, assure its continuity and authority, and, above all, save communism.

Lenin bought the success of the Red Terror at a huge cost in lives. Not only did the communists shoot political opponents, class “enemies,” “enemies of the people,” former rebels, and criminals, but they shot citizens guilty of nothing, fitting under no label but “hostage.” For example, in 1919 the Defense Council commanded the arrest of members of the Soviet executive committees and Committees of the Poor in areas where snow clearance of railway lines was unsatisfactory, to be shot if the snow was not soon cleared away.

The number murdered throughout Soviet territory by the Red Terror, the execution of prisoners, and revenge against former Whites or their supporters, as a conservative estimate, was about 500,000 people, including at least 200,000 officially executed. All these are added to the probable 250,000 murdered in the Peasant War.

Don't dismiss all the communist executions during these years as the traditional Russian way of handling opposition. Czarist Russia executed an average of seventeen people per year in the eighty years preceding the revolution—*seventeen!* From 1860 to 1900, Soviet sources give only ninety-four executions, although during these years there were dozens of assassinations. And in 1912, after years of revolts, assassinations of high officials, bombings, and anti-government terrorism, there was a maximum of 183,949 imprisoned, including criminals—less than half the number executed, not imprisoned, by the communists during the Civil War period.

Lenin and his henchmen did not shrink from their carnage. They not only accepted this incredible blood toll; they proclaimed the need for one many times higher. In his speech in September 1918, Grigory Zinoviev, Lenin's lieutenant in Petrograd, said, "To overcome our enemies we must have our own socialist militarism. We must carry along with us 90 million out of the 100 million of Soviet Russia's population. As for the rest, we have nothing to say to them. They must be annihilated."

To those killed in the Red Terror and the Peasant War, we must add those that died from the brutal regime in the new concentration and labor camps, or in transit to them. Lenin created these camps in July of 1918, with a Party decree that officials must compel inmates capable of labor to do physical work. This was the beginning of the communist forced labor system—gulag—which we could as well call a slave labor system, and which became as deadly as some of the most lethal haciendas for forced laborers in pre-revolutionary Mexico. Within a year, Party decrees established forced labor camps in each provincial capital and a lower limit of three hundred prisoners in each camp. The communists established the first large camps on the far north Solovetsky Islands. In an August 1919 telegram, Lenin made the criteria for imprisonment in such camps clear: "Lock up all the doubtful ones in a concentration camp outside the city." Note the word "doubtful," rather than "guilty."

From the beginning, the communists intentionally made the conditions in some of these camps so atrocious that prisoners could not expect to survive for more than several years. If prisoners were not executed, they often died from beatings, disease, exposure, and fatigue.

The communists occasionally emptied camps by loading inmates on barges and then sinking them.

With all this misery, one would think that a court had tried and sentenced these prisoners, but no. A simple bureaucratic decision sent people to these camps. By the end of 1920, official figures admitted to eighty-four such camps in forty-three provinces of the Russian Republic alone, with almost 50,000 inmates. By October of 1922, there were 132 camps with about 60,000 inmates. During this revolution period, 1917–1922, the communists probably murdered 34,000 inmates in total.

Overall, in the Red Terror, the Peasant War, the new concentration and labor camps, and the famine reported in Chapter 13 (of which, conservatively estimated, the communists are responsible for half the deaths), Lenin and his Party probably murdered 3,284,000 people, apart from battle deaths. When these are included, this revolution cost about 4.7 million lives, or about 3 percent of the population.²⁴ This is almost twice the death toll from all causes in the American Civil War—1.6 percent.

How do we account for such violence in the Russian and Mexican Revolutions, and other such violence in Sudan, Burma, Iran, Pakistan, China, Congo, Nigeria, and wherever else people by the hundreds and even millions have been killed? That is the subject of the next chapter.

24 I give the estimates, calculations, and sources for this Russian Civil War toll in Table 2A in my *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917* (1990). The table is also on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/USSR.TAB2A.GIF. For other tables and a summary chapter of the book, see: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE4.HTM

Chapter 19

Freedom Minimizes Political Violence within Nations

The use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.

– Edmund Burke

Although few have been as violent as the Mexican and Russian, twentieth century revolutions, civil wars, violent coups, and rebellions number in the hundreds.²⁵ What sense can we make out of all these? Does the fact that the Mexican and Russian people were not free have anything to do with the revolutions? To answer these questions, I looked at those nations that experienced political violence during 1998 and 1999.²⁶ Table 19.1 provides a contingency count of the level of a nation's freedom versus its violence, almost all internal.

To determine the table, I divided 190 nations into four groups in terms of their level of freedom, and similarly, but independently, in terms of their level of violence. The results show how the level of a nation's freedom matches up with its level of violence. Out of the forty-seven nations that had extreme violence, thirty-one of them, or 66 percent, were unfree. No free nations had any high violence.

Then consider the nations that had low or no violence—mainly the free nations. Of the forty-seven nations with low or no violence, 74 percent were free. All unfree nations had some sort of violence, none at the low level.

To see especially the relationship between freedom and violence, look at the count of nations in the diagonal cells from the low for free nations to the high for unfree. By far, the highest count is in the di-

25 For a list of present conflicts, those concluded since WWII, and a conflict map, see www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/index.html. I provide some links to data sources on conflict and war on my links page at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/LINKS.HTM

26 The list is available on my website as a freedom versus violence table at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.TAB.A.19.GIF

TABLE 19.1
Freedom and Violence Ratings
Observed Frequencies

Freedom ratings	Violence ratings				Totals
	Low	Low medium	High medium	High	
Free	35	10	2	0	47
Partly free	11	27	7	3	48
Partly unfree	1	7	27	13	48
Unfree	0	4	12	31	47
Totals	47	48	48	47	190

Percents of Overall Totals

	Low	Low medium	High medium	High	Totals
Free	18.4	5.3	1.1	0	24.7
Partly free	5.8	14.2	3.7	1.6	25.3
Partly unfree	0.5	3.7	14.2	6.8	25.3
Unfree	0	2.1	6.3	16.3	24.7
Totals	24.7	25.3	25.3	24.7	100

Chi Square = 173.8

Chi Square significance = $p < .0001$

agonal, as it should if there is the close relationship between freedom and violence pointed out in this chapter.

Of course, all this may be by chance. But this is tested by the chi square statistic at the bottom of the table, which shows that the odds of getting these results by chance is greater than 10,000 to 1.

By now, it seems obvious. The one common ingredient for bloody internal violence is that the people who usually suffer from it also must endure being partially or totally enslaved. Liberal democracies had little internal political violence.

But, you may object, these results were only for two years, and these could have been odd years. To answer this objection, I have collected internal conflict statistics for 214 governments (regimes) from 1900 to 1987, selected to best represent the variation among nations in their development, power, culture, region, and politics. Then I calculated the average number killed for democracies, authoritarian regimes (where people are partly free), and totalitarian ones (where there is no freedom), and listed the results in Table 19.2. The results are plotted in Figure 19.1.

As we can see, the stark difference in average internal violence between democracies and those nations whose people have no freedom holds up even over these eighty-eight years. For internal violence, therefore, there is this very important correlation:

TABLE 19.2
The Less Democratic a Regime, the More
Severe Its Internal Political Violence.
Selected Sample 1900–1987*

Government	Mean internal violence dead [a]	Mean internal violence dead as % of population [b]	Number nations
democratic	11,500	0.14	42
authoritarian	33,660	0.59	139
totalitarian	181,606	1.48	33

Analysis of Variance:

Row 1 vs. 2: F-Ratio = 5.36 $p < .005$ (one-tailed).

Row 1 vs. 3: F-Ratio = 6.15 $p < .003$ (one-tailed).

* Sample of regimes with and without violence.

a. This is the mean of the battle dead for the given type of regime.

b. This is the mean of the percent of the population killed in internal violence for the given type of regime.

The more democratic freedom a people have, the less severe their internal political violence.

This is a statistical fact.²⁷ That freedom minimizes such violence does not necessarily mean that freedom ends it, however. Some rioting, civil strife, terrorism, and even civil war might still occur. Freedom is no guarantee against this. In the world at large, with all the issues people and governments may fight over, we have no proven and useful means of ending every kind of internal political violence forever, everywhere, even for democracies. But we now know that we can sharply reduce such violence, on the average, to the mildest and smallest amount possible, and that is through freedom.

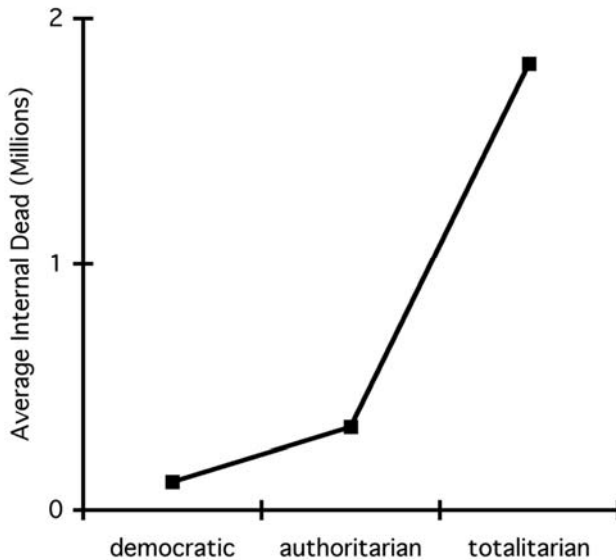
27 For the tests of the general relationship between internal political violence and democracy, see Chapter 35 in my *Understanding Conflict and War, Vol. 2: The Conflict Helix* (1976; at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/TCH.CHAP35.HTM);

“Libertarianism, Violence Within States, and the Polarity Principle,” *Comparative Politics*, 16 (July 1984), 443–462 (at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DP84.HTM);

“Libertarian Propositions on Violence Within and Between Nations: A Test Against Published Research Results,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 29 (September 1985), 419–455 (at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DP85.HTM); Chapter 5 in *Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence* (1997); and Appendix: “Testing Whether Freedom Predicts Human Security and Violence,” on my website at:

www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM

FIGURE 19.1
The Less Democratic a Government,
the More Severe Its Internal
Political Violence 1900–1987*



*For a sample of 214 governments.

How do we understand this power of democratic freedom? Many believe that the answer to this is psychological and personal. They think that free societies educate people against the mass killing of their neighbors; that free people are not as belligerent as those elsewhere; that they have deep inhibitions against killing others as people were killed in Mexico, Russia, Burma, and Sudan, for example; and that free people are more tolerant of their differences. There is much truth in all this, but commentators often neglect the social preconditions of this psychological resistance to political violence. The answer is that:

The social structure of a free, democratic society creates the psychological conditions for its greater internal peace.

Where freedom flourishes, there are relatively free markets, and freedom of religion, association, ideas, and speech. Corporations, partnerships, associations, societies, leagues, churches, schools, and clubs

proliferate. Through free people's interests, work, and play, they become members of these multiple groups, each a separate pyramid of power, each competing with the others and with government for their membership, time, and resources.

We can liken these pyramids to what we might see from a low flying plane, looking across the downtown core of a city and out to the suburbs. Some buildings are very tall, some short, and others, away from the downtown area, are close to the ground. Imagine each building standing for some group's power in a free society, and we have a good analogy of how a free people disperse power. In contemporary societies, the government will be the tallest and largest building of all, with some other buildings close in size. One might be a church, as in Israel or in a Catholic democracy; another big building might be some corporation, like Microsoft in the United States. Others might be some powerful political party, a wealthy and influential family, or a group like a labor union.

While each group is distinct and legally separate, their memberships overlap and crosscut society. As stockholders, political party members, contributors to an environmental group, workers, tennis players, churchgoers, and so on, people belong to many of these groups. Friends and coworkers probably belong to some of the same groups, but also to some different ones.

Similarly, in a free society the critical social distinctions of wealth, power, and prestige are subdivided in many ways. Few people are high on all three. More are low on all three, but these people are not close to a majority. Most people have different amounts of wealth, power, and prestige. Even Bill Gates, while the highest on wealth, does not have the prestige of a top movie actor or a popular musician, or the power of the judge that decided to break up his Microsoft because of its "monopolistic practices." Even the president of the United States, despite his great power and prestige, is only moderately high on wealth. And the adored movie actor will be high in prestige and moderately high on wealth, but low on power.

All this pluralism in their group memberships and in wealth, power, and prestige cross-pressures people's interests and motivations. That is, their membership in separate groups cuts up into different pieces what they want, their desires, and their goals; each is satisfied by a different group, such as their church on Sunday, bowling or tennis league on Tuesday night, the factory or office for forty weekday hours, the parent-teacher association meeting on Wednesday, and family at home. These interests differ, but overlap, and all take time and energy. Moreover, each person shares some of these interests with others, and which others will differ depending on the group. For all free people across a society, there is a constantly changing crisscross of interests and differ-

ences. So, for a person to satisfy one interest requires balancing it against other interests. Does one take the family on a picnic this weekend, play golf with friends, do that extra work that needs to be done around the house, or help a political party win its campaign?

This cross-pressuring of interests is true of a democratic government as well. After all, a democratic government is not some monolith, a uniform pyramid of power. Many departments, agencies, and bureaus make up the government, each staffed with bureaucrats and political appointees, each with their own official and personal interests. Between all are many official and personal connections and linkages that serve to satisfy their mutual interests. The military services, for example, coordinate their strategies and may even share equipment with other departments and agencies. Intelligence services will share some secrets and even sometimes agents. Health services will coordinate their studies, undertake common projects with the military, and provide health supplies when needed. So multiple shared and cross-pressured interests sew together a democratic government itself. And these interests are shared with nongovernmental interest and pressure groups, and will be cross-pressured by them as well.

Because of all these diverse connections and linkages in a democratic society, politicians, leaders, and groups have a paramount interest in keeping the peace. And where a conflict might escalate into violence, as over some religious or environmental issue, people's interests are so cross-pressured by different groups and ties that they simply cannot develop the needed depth of feeling and single-minded devotion to any interest at stake, except perhaps to their families and children. Keep in mind that for a person to choose, along with others in a group, to kill people or destroy their property demands that they have an almost fanatic dedication to the interest—the stakes—involved, almost to the exclusion of all else.

Yet there is something else about democratically free societies that is even more important than these violence reducing links and cross-pressures. This is their culture. Where people are free, as in a free market, exchange dominates and resolves conflicts. "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." "You give me that, and I'll give you this." Money is often the currency of such exchange, but exchanged also are privileges of one sort or another, benefits, positions, and so on.

Except where such exchange is so standardized that there is little room for bargaining, as in buying a hamburger at the local fast food restaurant, in a democracy people soak up certain norms governing their conflicts. These are that they tolerate their differences, negotiate some compromise, and in the process, make concessions. From the highest government official to the lowest worker, from the consideration of bills

in a legislature to who does the dishes after dinner, there is bargaining of one sort or another going on to resolve an actual or potential conflict. Some of this becomes regularized, as in the bargaining of unions and management in the United States as structured by the Labor Relations Board, or the tradition in some families that dictates that the wife will always wash the dishes. But so much more involves bargaining.

Therefore, in a free society, a culture of bargaining—what one might call an exchange or *democratic culture*—evolves. This is part of the settling in that takes place when a nation first becomes democratic. Authoritarian practices, doing things through orders, decrees, and commands sent down a hierarchy, gradually gets replaced by many hierarchies of power and the use of bargaining and its techniques of negotiation and compromise to settle conflicts. Free people soon come to expect that when they have a conflict, they will negotiate the issues and resolve it through concessions and the splitting of differences. The more years a democracy exists, the more its people's expectations become hardened into social customs and perception. No matter the conflict, people who have long been democratically free do not expect revolution and civil war. For, most important, *they see each other as democratic, as part of one's in-group, one's moral, democratic universe.*

They each share not only socially, in overlapping groups, functions, and linkages, but also in culture.

This structure of freedom, this “spontaneous society,” as F.A. Hayek called it in his *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, serves to inhibit violence, as shown, and to culturally dispose people to cooperation, negotiation, compromise, and tolerance of others. Just consider the acceptance and application of the Constitution of the United States and Congressional rules in settling that most serious of political conflicts in 1999—whether President Clinton would be fired from office—and the even more potentially violent, month-long dispute over the outcome of the 2000 American presidential election. These supremely contentious disputes, these most potentially violent issues, were decided with no loss of life, no injuries, no destruction of property, no disorder, no political instability. These two examples, more than any others, show the sheer power of a democratic institution and culture to peacefully resolve social and political conflicts.

But this is, so to speak, one end of the stick. This spontaneous society explains why a free people are most peaceful in their national affairs, but why should those societies in which people are commanded by absolute dictators, where people are most unfree, be most violent? The worst of these dictators rule their people and organize their society according to ideological or theological imperatives. Be it Marxism-Leninism and the drive for true communism as in the Russian Revolution, socialist egali-

tarianism as in Burma, racial purity as in Nazi Germany, or the realization of God's will as in Sudan, the dictators operate through a rigid and society-wide command structure. And this polarizes society.

First, the competing pyramids of power—church, schools, businesses, and so on—that discipline, check, and balance each other and government in a free society do not exist. There is one solid pyramid of power, with the dictator or ruling elite at the top, with various levels of government in the middle and near the bottom, and with the mass of powerless subjects at the bottom.

Second, where in a free society separate cross-cutting groups service diverse interests, there is now, in effect, only one division in society: that between those in power who command, and those who must obey. In the worst of these nations, such as Pol Pot's Cambodia, Kim Chong-il's North Korea, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Mao's China, the people can only work for the Party, buy food from its stores, read newspapers it publishes, see only its movies and television programs, go to its schools, study its textbooks, and pray at a church it controls, if it allows a church at all.

These restrictions sharply divide society into those in power and those out of power—into “them” versus “us.” This aligns the vital interests of *us versus them* along one conflict fault line traversing society, as a magnet aligns metal filings along its magnetic forces. Any minor gripe about the society or politics is against the same “them,” and when one says “they” are responsible for a problem or conflict, friends and loved ones know exactly whom is meant—the whole apparatus of the dictator's rule: his henchmen, police, officials, spies, and bureaucrats.

Since this regime owns and runs nearly everything, any minor issue therefore becomes a matter of the dictator's power, legitimacy, or credibility. A strike in one small town against a government-owned factory is a serious matter to the dictator. Such a strike may be symbolic for the people, a display of resistance they should support, and if the dictator shows weakness in defense of his policies, no matter how localized, the strike can spread along the us versus them fault line and crystallize a nationwide rebellion. So the dictator must use major force to put it down. The regime cannot afford to let any resistance, any display of independence, anywhere in the country by anybody, go unchallenged. Even a peaceful demonstration, like those in Burma and China, must be violently squashed, with leaders arrested, tortured for information, and often killed.

So, rule is by the gun; violence, a natural accompaniment. But there is more to this. As a culture of accommodation is a consequence of freedom, a culture of force and violence is a consequence of dictatorial rule. Where such rule is absolute, this is also a culture of fear—the re-

sult of not knowing when another might perceive something one is doing as wrong, and report it to the police; not knowing whether authorities will consider one's ancestry or race or religion reason for persecution; and not knowing about the safety of one's loved ones, who may be dragged off to serve in the military, disappear because of something they said, or be made some sexual plaything.

The fear exists up and down the dictator's command structure, as well. The secret police may shoot a general because of his joke about the "Great Leader," or they may jail and torture top government functionaries because of a rumored plot. The dictator himself must always fear that his security forces will turn their guns on him.

Where power becomes absolute, massive killing follows, and rebellion is a concomitant.

There also are partly free regimes, such as a monarchy ruled according to tradition and custom, as in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia; or an authoritarian one, as in Mexico before its revolution, where arranged elections and compliant military, police, and rich landowners kept the dictator in power. Power in this case is more dispersed, and some freedoms do exist. And therefore, the violence, on average, is less than in those nations in which the people have no freedom. If, however, the authoritarian rule is especially unjust and despicable, as it was in Mexico and Russia before their revolutions, the resulting violence can be quite bloody. Regardless, the correlation holds.

The less free a society and the more coercive the commands that dominate it, the greater the polarization and culture of fear and violence, and the more likely extreme violence will occur.

In Part 3, I showed that by promoting wealth and prosperity, freedom is a moral good. Here, I have pointed out that freedom also promotes nonviolence and peace within a nation. This is also a moral good of freedom. *It is another moral reason why people should be democratically free.*

Political violence within nations is only one form of violence, however. There is another form, far more deadly than any other, and that is democide—genocide and mass murder. I need a separate part of this book to deal with this.

PART 5

On Freedom's Moral Goods: Eliminating Democide

By shooting, drowning, burying alive, stabbing, beating, and crushing, with torture, suffocation, starvation, exposure, poison, and other countless ways that lives can be wiped out, governments have killed unarmed and helpless people. Intentionally. With forethought. This is murder. It is *democide*.

Few people seem to know about democide, and for this reason Chapter 20 provides a description of democide, its massive accumulation of corpses, and where it has occurred. But these are all statistics—abstract, remote, cold; they do not touch the heart and mind. Therefore, in the four chapters following, I try to provide a deep human understanding of democide in Rwanda, Pol Pot's Cambodia, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Mao's China.

The explanation for all this killing is theoretically solid. It is empirically grounded. It is historically recognized. It speaks to the essence of democide. And, it is simple. Namely:

Power kills. Absolute power kills absolutely.

We'll see this in Chapter 25.

Chapter 20

Democide

In the twentieth century, governments murdered, as a prudent estimate, 174 million men, women, and children. It could be over 340 million.

The absolutely incredible number of murders governments have carried out, often as policy decided by ruling thugs, is largely unknown. Were people, even the most educated, asked to guess at the number governments murdered in the last century, they probably would suggest 10 million. Maybe even 20 million. This is much too low.

The more popularly understood term for government murder is *genocide*, but there is a difference between democide and genocide²⁸ that must be understood. In short:

- *democide* is a government's murder of people for whatever reason;
- *genocide* is the murder of people because of their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, or language.

The most infamous example of genocide was Nazi Germany's cold-blooded murder of nearly 6 million Jews during World War II. Men, women, and children died simply because they were ethnic Jews. Many people incorrectly believe that was the only major case of government murder.

But as we've learned, there has also been the Burmese military genocide of the Karen minority, the Sudanese Muslim regime's genocide of the southern black minority, the Chinese Communist Party's genocide of the Falun Gong (Chapter 1), and the Mexican government's genocide of Indians (Chapter 17). Nongenocidal democides include the Chinese Communist Party's Land Reform (Chapter 15), Burma's military murders of pro-democracy demonstrators (Chapter 1); the Mexican and Saudi Arabian governments' murders of political op-

28 Described in my "Democide versus Genocide: Which is What?" at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/GENOCIDE.HTM

ponents (Chapter 17 and Chapter 1 respectively), and the deadly famine Stalin imposed on the Ukraine (Chapter 14).

Those who have been living in a democracy all their lives may find it difficult to accept the truth that governments murder people by the thousands and millions. Even some of my political science colleagues have resisted the thought. I could see them wince when, at a conference or meeting, for example, I said outright that Kim Il-sung, the deceased dictator of North Korea, was responsible for the murder of something like 1.7 million people. We can easily call someone who kills people in cold blood a murderer, such as London's famous "Jack the Ripper," who killed six or seven people in 1888, or the "Boston Strangler," Albert DeSalvo, who killed thirteen people in 1962–1964. But we may resist calling a "government leader" a mass murderer, even when speaking of Uganda's Idi Amin, who physically took part in some of the murders carried out by his regime, and who was responsible for the violent deaths of some 300,000 of his subjects.

Part of this reluctance to call a government or its ruler a murderer comes from the fact that to do so is a new and strange thought. Democide is a black hole in our textbooks, college teaching, and social science research. Few people know the extent to which governments murder people. In the twentieth century, the age of great advances in technology, medicine, wealth, and education, governments nonetheless probably murdered around 174 million people. The worst of these murderous governments are listed in Table 20.1.²⁹

This is more than four times those killed in combat in all international and national wars, including World Wars I and II, Vietnam, Korea, the Mexican Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the Chinese Civil War. The toll could even be more than 340 million. This is as though we'd had a nuclear war, but with its deaths and destruction spread over a century. Yet, few know about this obscene slaughter.

There is a good reason why. The authoritarian and totalitarian governments that do most of this killing usually control who writes their histories, and what appears in them. Also, democratically free people project onto the rest of the world their own democratic cultural biases. They see governments as largely doing good things for people. Some policies may be wrong, some stupid, but the idea of murdering people because of their politics, religion, or ethnicity, or by quota, is alien—except, of course, for what those evil Nazis did to the Jews. And our

29 For the genocidal component and the democide as a percent of the population, see Table 1.2 in my *Death By Government* (1994). This is also available on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DBG.TAB1.2.GIF

political science textbooks tell us that governments have positive functions, such as national defense, welfare, and security—that they provide a legal framework within which people can achieve their own interests. With this background, it is difficult to conceive of nondemocratic governments as many are: a gang of thugs holding a whole nation cap-

TABLE 20.1
Democide, 1900–1987

GOVERNMENTS	YEARS	DEMOCID (000) [1]			ANNUAL	
		TOTAL	DOMESTIC	GENOCIDE	RATE % [2]	
MEGAMURDERERS	1900–87	151,491	116,380	33,476		[4]
DEKA—MEGA...	1900–87	128,168	100,842	26,690	0.18	[4]
U.S.S.R.	1917–87	61,911	54,769	10,000	0.42	
China (PRC)	1949–87	35,236	35,236	375	0.12	
Germany	1933–45	20,946	762	16,315	0.09	
China (KMT)	1928–49	10,075	10,075	Nil	0.07	[5]
LESSER MEGA...	1900–87	19,178	12,237	6,184	1.63	[4]
Japan	1936–45	5,964	Nil	Nil	Nil	
China (Mao Soviets) [2]	1923–49	3,466	3,466	Nil	0.05	[5]
Cambodia	1975–79	2,035	2,000	541	8.16	
Turkey	1909–18	1,883	1,752	1,883	0.96	
Vietnam	1945–87	1,670	944	Nil	0.10	
Poland	1945–48	1,585	1,585	1,585	1.99	
Pakistan	1958–87	1,503	1,503	1,500	0.06	
Yugoslavia (Tito)	1944–87	1,072	987	675	0.12	
SUSPECTED MEGA...	1900–87	4,145	3,301	602	0.24	[4]
North Korea	1948–87	1,663	1,293	Nil	0.25	
Mexico	1900–20	1,417	1,417	100	0.45	
Russia	1900–17	1,066	591	502	0.02	
CENTI—KILOMURDERERS	1900–87	14,918	10,812	4,071	0.26	[4]
TOP 5	1900-87	4,074	2,192	1,078	0.89	[4]
China (Warlords)	1917-49	910	910	Nil	0.02	
Turkey (Atatürk)	1919-23	878	703	878	2.64	
United Kingdom	1900-87	816	Nil	Nil	Nil	
Portugal (Dictatorship)	1926-82	741	Nil	Nil	Nil	
Indonesia	1965-87	729	579	200	0.02	
LESSER MURDERERS	1900-87	2,792	2,355	1,019	.1	[4]
WORLD TOTAL	1900-87	169,202	129,547	38,566	.1	[6]

1. Includes genocide, and mass murder; excludes war-dead.
These are most probable mid-estimates in low to high ranges.
Figures may not sum due to round off.
2. Guerrilla period.
3. Average
4. Average of that for three successive periods.
5. For the 1944 mid period global population.

tive with their guns, enslaving the people to their whims, and looting, raping, and killing at will.

Moreover, democratic culture predisposes liberal democracies to avoid conflict and seek cooperation with other nations, even those ruled by despots. Democratic governments do not seek to arouse public opinion against other countries that will destabilize diplomatic arrangements and create pressure for hostile action. Seldom do democratic governments point their fingers at those guilty of democide, unless already in conflict with them and therefore in need of public support. Even then, they often will avoid doing so until the proof is overpowering (as in Rwanda, as discussed below), and even then, democracies will avoid the terms murder or genocide.

Even in the American war against the Taliban and then Saddam Hussein, and subsequently the Iraqi and foreign terrorists and insurgents, the argument for these wars was not that these thugs murdered people wholesale, but that the wars were justified as part of a war on terror and in defense of American national security.

Such reluctance to term foreign rulers or nations guilty of genocide is also illustrated by the many decades-long refusal on the part of the U.S. State Department to admit, despite the evidence from its own ambassador and other diplomats at the time, that the Turkish government planned and launched a genocidal campaign against its Armenian citizens during World War I, murdering as many as 1.5 million of them. Turkey is a member of NATO, refuses to admit the genocide, and has taken strong diplomatic action against those who make this claim. Yet Turkey perpetuated the first large-scale act of genocide in the twentieth century, not Russia or Germany.

Although I have mentioned democide in previous chapters, I have not focused on it to show the nature and extent of this abominable and utterly inhumane practice. Now I will, beginning with Rwanda's Great Genocide of 1994. This involved the plotted murder in four months of over 600,000, perhaps 800,000, even possibly as many as 1 million Tutsi and Hutu—at least 14 percent of the population. In the number of people killed within such a short period of time, it is one of the twentieth century's worst acts of democide.

Second we will look at the largely non-genocidal democide committed by the Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia, 1975–1979. This killer regime murdered about 2 million Cambodians in four years, or a little less than one-third of the population. Many more were killed than in Rwanda, but over a much longer time. I also will give examples from Stalin's democide, unmatched historically in the 42.7 million he

murdered,³⁰ and Mao's vast democide of 37.8 million,³¹ second only to Stalin.

The various totals I will present, such as 100,000 or 200,000 murdered, in terms of human beings killed is hard to grasp. To feel what 100,000 dead means, think of laying 100,000 corpses head to toe, in a line alongside a straight road. Assume, since many were babies, young children, and short adults, that each corpse averages a little more than five feet long. Now, to drive a car down this road along these 100,000 bodies, you would have to drive almost one hundred miles to reach the last corpse. This provides a simple multiplier—200,000 murdered would stretch head to toe nearly two hundred miles, and a million murdered would be almost a thousand miles. Maybe now you can feel how incredible, how horrible it is that 100,000 or even 1,000 human beings (end to end, a little less than a mile), each a separate soul, each with a unique personality and emotions, each a thinking, feeling human being, would have their precious lives wiped out. Each death also leaves countless heartbroken loved ones, thus multiplying the toll. This human misery is not in the numbers, but numbers are necessary for recounting the sad tale of such gargantuan crimes.

30 This figure is based on the estimates, sources, and calculations summarized in Table 1.A of my *Lethal Politics: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900* (1991). The table is also given on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/USSR.TAB1A.GIF

31 Includes the Civil War period. The figure is based on the estimates, sources, and calculations summarized in Table 1.1 of my *China's Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917* (1990). The table is also given on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TAB1.1.GIF

Chapter 21

The Rwandan Great Genocide

For innocents on both sides this was a historically unprecedented catastrophe. Over 1 million might have died, and around 2 million Hutu were forced to flee their homes, with possibly some 1.2 million ending up in Zaire alone.

Background

The Rwandan Great Genocide of 1994, though by far the largest in the country's history, was only one of many acts of genocide carried out by different Rwandan governments in the decades before 1994, and that have continued since.

Located in the south-central region of Africa and bordered by Burundi, Zaire, Uganda, and Tanzania, Rwanda is smaller than the state of Maryland. In 1999, its population was about 7.2 million, making it one of the most densely populated countries, and one of the poorest. One important ethnic group was the small minority of Tutsi, who made up 15 percent of Rwandans, and who tended to be tall and thin. The overwhelming majority of Rwandans, over 80 percent, were ethnic Hutu, more likely to be short and stocky.

The Western media have greatly misunderstood the 1994 genocide as a tribal meltdown, as ethnic hatred and intolerance run amok. The mental picture is of a Hutu running wildly down a street, swinging a machete at any Tutsi he can catch. This is largely a myth. Rather, the genocide was a well-calculated mass murder planned by Hutu government leaders. Surely individual Hutu who hated Tutsi, or had grievances against certain Tutsi, joined in the bloodfest, and undoubtedly, sadistic Hutu saw this genocide as an excuse to kill. But we should not overlook the many Hutu who refused to kill, and protected Tutsi even at the risk of their lives.

This genocide was, pure and simple, part of a political struggle to maintain power, as was the "ethnic cleansing" that happened later in Bosnia and Kosovo. It exemplified the iron law of human behavior: *power kills.*

Centuries ago, the Tutsi migrated from the north to Rwanda and proceeded to dominate the Hutu with a feudal system, but without the strict tribal or ethnic divisions one sees in Rwanda today. At the time, “Hutu” and “Tutsi” distinguished social and political groups, rather than ethnic. Generally, Tutsi were cattle owners and members of the court, while Hutu were farmers, but these were not indelible distinctions: Hutu could become Tutsi, and vice versa. Nor was Tutsi political domination absolute. Hutu chiefs became part of the hierarchy, and custom required Tutsi governors to recognize certain obligations to the Hutu. In many ways there was a sharing of power, and eventually, both Tutsi and Hutu spoke the same language, generally were Catholic in religion, and shared the same culture.

Then came colonization. Germany first took Rwanda in the nineteenth century, and then after the defeat of Germany in World War I, the victors turned Rwanda over to Belgium as a protectorate. As Germany had, Belgium tried to rule at a distance by indirectly governing through existing Rwandan political institutions, which largely meant working through the Tutsi. Certainly colonial authorities thought the Tutsi to be more intelligent and vigorous, more like Caucasians, and therefore favored them in government, education, and business. In effect, Belgium promoted a more rigid and pervasive Tutsi rule over the Hutu. Since the difference between Tutsi and Hutu was not always readily evident, the colonial authorities defined a Tutsi as anyone who owned ten or more cows, and a Hutu as anyone with less. Moreover, Christian missionaries, particularly of the Roman Catholic Church, taught that the Tutsi were Hametic rather than Negroid in origin, possibly from Ethiopia, and with Christian roots. Where the difference between Tutsi and Hutu had been unclear before colonization, hardly stressed in social affairs and interaction, it now became a precise government and social matter. In 1926, Belgium introduced identity cards indicating whether the holder was Tutsi or Hutu.

After the end of World War II, there was much talk about equality and freedom. Western intellectuals began spreading the word about the benefits and justice of democracy, and Christian missionaries joined in this new ideological wave, promoting democracy and equality among the Hutu. Yet for all the teaching about social justice, the Hutu were still required to carry ethnic identity cards; and behind the scenes, the colonial authorities continued to support Tutsi control over all governmental functions. All this did much to aggravate Hutu and Tutsi differences, therefore, while encouraging the wish for self-government among the great majority of Hutu.

Independence and self-determination were the irresistible cry during the 1950s, and Belgians came to see Rwandan independence as

inevitable. This raised the question of what kind of government an independent Rwanda would have. Being members of a democracy themselves, colonial authorities wanted to give more power to the Hutu majority and prepare free elections and a democratic government. So they changed colonial policy and began to prepare the Hutu for a large role in government by encouraging their education, and phasing them into more numerous and more important official positions. This further encouraged the belief among Hutus that by right, the government belonged to them.

In 1959 this rising sentiment culminated in a Hutu rebellion against both Belgium and the Tutsi government and elite. The Hutu massacred about 10,000 Tutsi, and the next year forced 100,000 to 200,000 to flee the country with their king. The Hutu then declared a republic, and in 1962 Belgium granted Rwanda full independence.

Over the next decades, Tutsi would continually invade one border area of Rwanda or another to overthrow the Hutu government. In the years between 1961 and 1967 alone, they tried this ten times. The resulting fighting and genocide over the years forced Tutsi from their homes, and increased the number of refugees to about 600,000, among whom the men became ready fighters in new Tutsi incursions.

In 1963 they launched the most serious of these invasions, this one from Uganda, and for the first time threatened to bring down the government. But they were soon defeated, and only succeeded in provoking another Hutu massacre of Tutsi who had remained in the country. Also, during this and other invasions of this period, Tutsi carried out their own genocide, murdering some 20,000 Hutu.

Despite their unsuccessful attempts to defeat the Hutu government, the Tutsi refugees would not give up. Under German and then Belgian colonial rule, they had come to believe that they were superior to Hutu in all-important ways, and that it was only right that they, and not the Hutu, rule the country.

Among themselves, the Hutu were split between the north and south, as shown in 1973, when Defense Minister General Juvenal Habyarimana overthrew the president, accusing him of favoritism for southern Hutu, and made himself president. His new power was not secure either, but he did defeat a coup against him in 1980, and remained in power until the beginning of the Great Genocide.

Added to the political difficulties of his rule was the collapse in the international market for coffee, the principal crop of Rwanda, which led to famine in some areas. Moreover, President Habyarimana drove the government deeply into debt, forcing him to turn to the World Bank for aid. This he got in return for the promise to liberalize the economy

from government controls, but he spent the money on building up the army, and ignored the World Bank's stipulations.

President Habyarimana's government allowed Rwandans virtually no freedom. He created a strict one-party state with the intention of controlling and quickly mobilizing the population. The government divided people into communes, and any citizen who wanted to move in or out of an assigned commune had to report to the police. All citizens had to register, and, as in Burma, the government forced everyone to do a certain amount of forced labor: building roads, clearing brush, digging ditches, and so on. They also had to participate in weekly propaganda meetings to glorify the party.

Rwandans have been among the least free in civil and political rights. On a scale of 2 (free) to 14 (unfree), Freedom House³² rated the Rwandan people as 13 in lack of freedom for 1993, and a bottom 14 for the following year, when the Great Genocide occurred.

In 1990, in the midst of Rwanda's economic troubles, Tutsi refugees again invaded the country. With the help of the Ugandans, they had formed a political and military force they named the Front Patriotique Rawndais (FPR, sometimes called the RPF), but were again defeated, this time with the help of Belgian and French troops. The FPR tried to hold onto parts of the country and periodically resumed its offensive until the government launched the Great Genocide in 1994.

While this civil war was devastating part of the country, economic troubles increased. Inflation, along with personal and government debt, rose sharply. Coffee prices dropped so low that the government destroyed coffee plants and replaced them with other crops. The World Bank responded to another request for aid, and provided more funds toward overcoming Rwanda's huge national debt.

By this time, Hutu extremists had resurrected the old nonblack, Ethiopian theory about Tutsi origins that Belgium had once used to justify Tutsi rule, only now, the Hutu used this myth to their advantage. Extremists claimed that the Tutsi did not belong in Rwanda, that they were outsiders who had invaded the country and subjugated the Hutu. They argued for the total expulsion of all Tutsi. Government anti-Tutsi propaganda also made much of the genocide of Hutu by the Tutsi in neighboring Burundi. There, the ethnic division was about the same as in Rwanda, but the Tutsi were in control. In 1972, the Burundi government responded to a Hutu uprising by massacring about 150,000 Hutu, and after another Hutu uprising in 1988, the Tutsi massacred as many as 200,000 of them. The Hutu Rwandan government regularly cited this

32 At: www.freedomhouse.org

genocidal slaughter by the Burundi Tutsi as a reason why they could not allow the Tutsi within their own borders to take or share power.

However, the United Nations, United States, Belgium, and other African nations were applying considerable pressure to President Habyarimana to come to terms with the FPR and end the civil war. Badly in need of more foreign aid, in 1992 he agreed to form a coalition government with all political parties, and to share power with Tutsi leaders until he could hold an election. This hardly sat well with the Hutu political and military elite and extremists, but in any case, President Habyarimana found one reason or another to delay fulfilling this agreement—perhaps in order to prepare for the Great Genocide. Also, the United Nation's mandate for overseeing this accord was to expire in April of 1994; then UN troops would have to withdraw. Meanwhile, Tutsi FPR forces, helped by Ugandan military, continued the civil war, broken by only occasional cease-fires.

By April of 1994, events had prepared the way for the Great Genocide. The economy was a mess, and tensions between Hutu and Tutsi were at a boiling point due to the continuing FPR assaults. The country was so beleaguered that it began to look as though Habyarimana would finally surrender to foreign pressure and allow the Tutsi to share power. Radical Hutu elite and top governmental leaders, however, had other plans.

The Great Genocide

In April of 1994, a plane carrying Habyarimana and Burundian President Ndadaye crashed under mysterious circumstances. The prevailing theory was that Habyarimana's own Presidential Guard shot it down. Whether radical Hutu planned this assassination or not, it triggered the Great Genocide.

There was bloodlust in the air, and some Hutu and Tutsi now felt free to settle scores and kill those they resented. However, the government—that is, President Habyarimana's wife, a few close advisors, and three brothers-in-law—had prepared for the Great Genocide before Habyarimana's death.

Their middle-level organizers numbered about three to five hundred officials and bureaucrats. The police, with a special Hutu militia (*inter-hamwe*) of 7,000 to 14,000 Tutsi-haters at their command, did the dirty work. Officials in on the plan had specifically organized the militia to murder Tutsi, and they succeeded very well: some may well have killed as many as two to three hundred people. Militia killers also encouraged—and sometimes ordered at gunpoint—Hutu civilians to kill their

Tutsi friends and neighbors. Hutu who refused, or who showed reluctance, were themselves murdered. Insiders had also trained a Palace Guard of about 6,000 Hutu to help the militia and exterminate Hutu and Tutsi political opponents and their supporters. Even Hutu moderates did not escape death. Meanwhile, every day a radio station from the capital exhorted Hutu, as their patriotic duty, to grab whatever weapon they had and kill Tutsi without mercy.

Note that this was not an act of massacre by the uneducated, undisciplined masses, ordinary folk easily misled and aroused. As with the Holocaust, when Nazi killing squads were often led and composed of Ph.D.s and other professionals, the claims of the powerful and authoritative easily swayed the well-educated to murder. In the Great Genocide, Hutu lawyers, teachers, professors, medical doctors, journalists, and other professionals made their contribution to the methodical annihilation of the Tutsi or defiant Hutu.

Since most Rwandans were Christians, the country had many churches in which the Tutsi sought refuge. Not to be deterred, the Hutu killers simply surrounded the churches and set them on fire, or forced their way in and systematically butchered all inside. Hospitals were also a favorite target, since they not only hired many Tutsi, but also were places where the Hutu killers could easily find and kill wounded or sick Tutsi. For example, on April 23 militia and soldiers from the Rwandan army killed 170 patients and medical personnel at the Butare Hospital. Dr. Claude-Emile Rowagoneza, a Tutsi, gave testimony on what he saw happen in and outside the hospital:

The massacres were delayed until April 20th. That day everyone was asked to stay at home except those working in the hospital. Medical staff was transported to the hospital. Nurses had to walk and many were stopped at the check-point, asked to show their identity cards, and killed if they were Tutsi. There were 35 doctors at the hospital of which four were Tutsi. Because of the danger all four Tutsi stayed at the hospital, as did some nurses. Drs. Jean-Bosco Rugira and Jean-Claude Kanangire are known to have been killed, and the fate of Dr. Isidore Kanangare who was hiding in the hospital and may have been evacuated by the French, is unknown. In mid-May injured

soldiers from the Kanombe barracks started being brought to Butare Hospital and no more civilians were being admitted. They also started deciding who were Tutsi on the basis of their features, looking at the nose, height, and fingers because the identity cards were no longer accurate. Some of the doctors at the hospital risked their lives by helping threatened staff by hiding and feeding them When the patients' wounds had healed some of the doctors—the “bad” doctors—expelled the Tutsi although everyone knew they would be killed outside. At night, the interhamwe and the soldiers came in but these doctors were colluding willingly. If people refused to go, they were taken out at night. They could be seen being killed by the interhamwe waiting at the gates. Later the Prime Minister came down to Butare . . . and while here he had a meeting with medical staff. They all said peace had returned and told the patients that it was safe to return home Those who did were then killed My wife was taken twice by interhamwe but neighbors insisted that she was Hutu My sister, mother, and father fled to Burundi but all my aunts, uncles, and in-laws were killed except for my mother-in-law. In other words, more than 40 of my relatives were killed.

By June 6, eight weeks later, this deliberate Great Genocide had already taken some 500,000 Rwandan lives, mostly Tutsi. Whole families were massacred, including babies. As the Great Genocide progressed, the United Nations, Belgium, and particularly the United States showed extreme caution in calling this genocide a genocide. Nor could they decide whether to remain engaged in the country. In the first few days, Belgium withdrew completely when Hutu killed ten of its soldiers. Not understanding what was going on, the UN reduced its peacekeeping soldiers from 4,500 men to 270, and fully restricted the

action of even this small contingent. As UN troops retreated from one base after another, waiting Hutu militia set upon and massacred the Tutsi families that had huddled under the UN flag for protection.

It took the Clinton Administration three weeks—by which time hundreds of thousands had already been massacred—to declare a state of disaster in Rwanda. Even then, they characterized the situation as one of tribal killings, with crazed Hutu civilians roaming the streets with machetes hacking away at any Tutsi within reach. In actuality, this genocide was no less planned than the Holocaust or Turkey's World War I genocidal slaughter of their Armenians.

The American declaration provided unintended cover for the Hutu government to continue its Great Genocide. Even when the deliberate nature of the government's action became too blatant to ignore, the Clinton Administration refused to call it genocide. To do so would have required foreign signatories of the Genocide Convention, including the United States, to immediately get involved. The Clinton Administration also continued to delay agreeing to the details of a UN dispatch of troops, and prevented any foreign action until June 8, nearly three months into the Great Genocide. Then, the Security Council finally received U.S. agreement, and authorized troops to enter Rwanda and prevent further genocide. These troops backed the Tutsi FPR, helped defeat the Hutu conspirators, and caused their government to collapse. An FPR-backed government then took power, and installed a dictatorship as severe as the one it replaced.

At this point I should stress that the Tutsi were not blameless in the Great Genocide. In retaliation for the government's actions against them, Tutsi civilians and the FPR killed Hutu, sometimes at random. For innocents on both sides, this was a historically unprecedented catastrophe. As mentioned, over 1 million might have died, and around 2 million Hutu were forced to flee their homes, with as many as 1.2 million ending up in Zaire alone. All would live miserable lives in refugee camps, suffering from hunger and disease, and often in danger from attacks by armed gangs of Tutsi. Localized cholera epidemics were frequent; just one of these killed 20,000 refugees. Still, Hutu were unwilling to leave the camps, fearing Tutsi reprisals—with good reason. When the new Tutsi government tried to close one camp in southwestern Rwanda, troops opened fire on an unarmed crowd of Hutu protesters, an act which the United Nations claimed killed 2,000.

Overall, perhaps one-third of a 1993 population around 7.3 million died or fled the country during the Great Genocide and the subsequent fighting. Though foreign troops and the FPR had ended the Great Genocide itself, the killing was not over. Several thousand Hutu rebelled against the new government, and with the support of the local

Hutu population, they continued to attack and murder Tutsi. To deny these rebels cover, soldiers cleared rebel areas of banana plantations, particularly in the northwest, all but destroying the local economy. From May 1997 to March 1998, these hostilities killed about 10,000 Tutsi and Hutu in this region alone.

These are just numbers, of course. At the personal level, we can more easily *feel* what these facts mean for one Tutsi small businessman, Immanuel Sebomana. He was on a bus in northwestern Rwanda when Hutu rebels stopped it. Sebomana immediately jumped from a window and ran for his life into the bush. Behind him, the rebels surrounded the bus, set it on fire, and killed any of the remaining passengers who tried to escape. Meanwhile, Hutu civilians joined the soldiers gathered around the bus, cheering and singing while thirty-five passengers died.

Chapter 22

Death by Marxism I: The Khmer Rouge of Cambodia

In proportion to its population, Cambodia underwent a human catastrophe unequalled by any other country in the twentieth century. It probably lost slightly less than 4 million people to war, rebellion, manufactured famine, and democide—genocide, nonjudicial executions, and massacres—or close to 56 percent of its population.

Background

Rwanda represents a clear case of genocide by a government trying to maintain power. The incredible killing that took place in Cambodia from 1975 to 1979 is different. First, it is an example of large-scale, nongenocidal mass murder, and only secondarily one of genocide. Second, this democide was part of an attempt by communists to impose a revolution on the country. They tried to abolish its religion, eradicate its culture, totally remodel its economy, communize all social interaction, and control all speech, writing, laughing, and loving. They exterminated anyone with any ties to Western nations, or to Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand, and eliminated everyone who had any connections to the previous government or military. Because of all this, it is necessary to focus on the intended revolution itself to explain how and why this one government, in four years, could and did murder more than one-quarter of its population.

A little smaller than Oklahoma, Cambodia is located in southeast Asia, bordered by Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and the Gulf of Thailand. Cambodia's population in 1970 was about 7.1 million, slightly smaller than Rwanda's. It was almost wholly Buddhist.

The devastating history of Cambodia during the 1960s and 1970s is intimately bound up with the Vietnam War. Communist North Vietnamese provided military aid and soldiers to Cambodia's own communist guerrillas, the Khmer Rouge, or Red Cambodians. Cambodia was an avenue for war supplies from North Vietnam to their army and Viet Cong guerrillas fighting under their command in South Vietnam against South Vietnamese and American troops. As a result, the

United States systematically bombed Khmer Rouge guerrillas and Viet Cong supply routes and, in a final attempt to destroy these routes, invaded Cambodia from South Vietnam. But American congressional and public opinion hostile to the invasion soon compelled American forces to retreat back to South Vietnam.

In proportion to its population, Cambodia underwent a human catastrophe unequaled by any other country in the twentieth century.³³ It probably lost slightly less than 4 million people to war, rebellion, manufactured famine, and democide—genocide, nonjudicial executions, and massacres—or close to 56 percent of its 1970 population. Successive governments and guerrilla groups murdered almost 3.3 million men, women, and children, including 35,000 foreigners, between 1970 and 1980. Most of these, probably as many as 2.4 million, were murdered by the communist Khmer Rouge, both before and (to a much greater extent) during their takeover of Cambodia after April 1975.

The United States had supported and supplied the Cambodian military government of General Lon Nol, but the American Congress ended all aid to him with the withdrawal of the United States from the Vietnam War in 1973. After successive retreats, Lon Nol could no longer even defend the capital, Phnom Penh, against the Khmer Rouge guerrillas. The Cambodian army declared a cease-fire and laid down its arms. On April 17, 1975, a ragtag bunch of solemn teenagers clad in black pajamas, red scarves, and Mao caps, and carrying arms of all descriptions, walked or were trucked from different directions into Phnom Penh. They were part of an army of 68,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas that had achieved victory for a Communist Party of only 14,000 members against an army of about 200,000 men.

Rule by Murder

At first, the people hardly knew what to make of these victorious guerrillas. After all, the war was over, the killing had stopped, and people who had chafed under the Lon Nol government were relieved and happy. Many intellectuals and middle-class Cambodians, disgusted with the everyday corruption of the government, were willing to try anything that brought change, even communism. The Khmer Rouge was cheered, and there were public and private celebrations.

33 See Figure 1.2 of my *Death By Government* (1974), which is also available on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DBG.FIG1.2.GIF. I provide estimates, calculations, and sources of the Khmer Rouge catastrophe at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP4.HTM

But before the people could settle down and enjoy a few days of peace, the Khmer Rouge did the unimaginable: they turned their weapons on the 2 to 3 million inhabitants of the capital. Shouting threats of immediate death, waving their arms angrily, and actually shooting inhabitants, they demanded that everyone leave the city. In Phnom Penh and all other newly-occupied cities and towns, their order to evacuate was implacable. The Khmer Rouge kicked nearly 4,240,000 urban Cambodians and refugees, even the sick, infirm, and aged, out of the cities and towns into a largely unprepared countryside. Even for those on the operating table or in labor during childbirth, the order was absolute: "Go! Go! You must leave!"

Families evacuated any way possible, carrying what few possessions they could grab. The wealthy and middle classes rode out in cars that were soon abandoned or stolen from them by the Khmer Rouge. Some left on heavily loaded motor scooters or bicycles, which were also soon confiscated. This vast multitude of urbanites and refugees, with only their feet to move them, formed barely moving lines that extended for miles.

Some ill or infirm hobbled along; others, thrown from the hospitals, crawled along on hands and knees. According to a British journalist who watched the slowly moving mass of evacuees from the safety of the French embassy, the Khmer Rouge was "tipping out patients [from the hospitals] like garbage into the streets Bandaged men and women hobbled by the embassy. Wives pushed wounded soldier husbands on hospital beds on wheels, some with serum drips still attached. In five years of war, this is the greatest caravan of human misery I have seen."

Failure to evacuate meant death. Failure to begin evacuation promptly enough meant death. Failure of anyone to obey Khmer Rouge orders meant death. Failure to give the Khmer Rouge what they wanted—whether a car, motor scooter, bicycle, watch, or whatever—meant death.

The direction from which people exited the city depended on their location at the time they received the evacuation order. The Khmer Rouge told refugees to return to their home villages, but particularly for the urbanites, where they went after evacuation and what village the Khmer Rouge eventually settled them in depended on the whim of the soldiers and cadres along the way. People were jumbled together, trudging along for days or weeks, usually with only the clothes, coverings, and provisions they had snatched at the last moment. Many had minimal supplies, since they had believed the Khmer Rouge who, to minimize disorder, had told them that the evacuation would be for only

a few days. The very young and the old, and those already sick, injured, or infirm soon died on the roads or trails. One of these trudging millions, a medical doctor named Vann Hay, said that every two hundred meters, he saw a dead child.

And, as the pitiful evacuees reached their homes or assigned villages, there was usually no relief from the horrors they'd already suffered. The situation was just different in kind.

The toll from this outrageous and bloody evacuation, including those killed outright, is in dispute. Whether 40,000 to 80,000 evacuees were murdered or died, as one scholar sympathetic to the Khmer Rouge claimed, or 280,000 to 400,000 died, as the CIA estimated, the sheer horror of this urban expulsion is undeniable.

Primarily, this was done as a matter of ideology. The Khmer Rouge saw the cities as the home of foreign ideas, capitalists, and their supportive bourgeoisie intellectuals; they were thoroughly corrupt, and required a thorough cleansing. And those the Khmer Rouge believed the city had corrupted—its professionals, businesspeople, public officials, teachers, writers, and workers—must either be eliminated or reeducated and purified. To the Khmer Rouge, the best way to remake those “corrupted minds” that they allowed to survive was to make them work in the fields alongside pure peasants. Consider the slogans broadcast over Radio Phnom Penh and spoken at meetings at the time: “what is infected must be cut out What is rotten must be removed What is too long must be shortened and made the right length It isn't enough to cut down a bad plant, it must be uprooted.”

This inhuman expulsion was an opening salvo in the Khmer Rouge campaign to utterly remake Cambodian culture and society, and to construct pure communism forthwith. Pol Pot and a few henchmen, who organized and loosely commanded the Khmer Rouge, planned all this. Pol Pot was a Cambodian communist revolutionary who had received his higher education and radical ideas in France, and helped found the Khmer Workers party—Khmer Rouge—in 1960, which he then headed. He subsequently organized and led the guerrilla attacks on Prince Sihanouk's Western-oriented government in the 1960s, and against the American-supported General Lon Nol government that overthrew it in 1970.

It should be noted that under Khmer Rouge rule, Cambodia was not one totalitarian society dictated by one set of doctrines or rules, except at the most abstract and general level. How the Khmer Rouge applied such abstractions, under what rules, and with what punishment for violations, varied from one district or region to another. This is why I write that Pol Pot “loosely” commanded.

TABLE 22.1
Conditions of Life
Under the Khmer Rouge

Civil/Political

no freedom to travel abroad or from village to village
no freedom to choose employment
no freedom of speech
no freedom of organization
no freedom of religion—no religion allowed
no courts, judges, or appeals
no codified law or rules

Social/Cultural

no public or private worker rights
no independent work or living (all in collectives)
no skilled private or public medical care
no foreign medicines
no mail or telegrams
no radio, television, or movies
no international telephones or cables
no newspapers, journals, or magazines
no books or libraries
no general schooling
no holidays or religious festivals

Economic

no money (all money eliminated)
no banks
no wages or salaries
no markets
no businesses
no restaurants or stores

Personal

no independent eating (all cooked and ate collectively)
no personal food
no regional gastronomic specialties (all ate the same)
no private plots to grow food
no personal names (all personal names had to be given up)
no independent family life
no sexual freedom
no music
no freedom from work after the age of five
no personally owned buses, cars, scooters, or bicycles
no personal clothes, pots, pans, watches, or anything
no freedom to cry or laugh
no private conversation

Nonetheless, Pol Pot and his henchmen managed to hold the initiative, establish control throughout the country, and create the surprising uniformity in most regions shown here in Table 22.1.

Take a moment and study the table. It shows that, with the Khmer Rouge seizure of power over Cambodia, its people were plunged into a border-to-border prison with rigid rules that made their lives worse, more controlled, and more dangerous than those of slaves.

The Khmer Rouge collectivized peasants everywhere—95 to 97 percent of the population was eventually forced into collective farms—and expected evacuees and peasants to work solely for the communist revolution. They forbade all political, civil, or human rights. They prohibited travel without a pass from village to village. They forced Cambodians to eat and sleep in communes, and ordered even young children to work in the fields. In some regions, they made peasants work from about 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 or 10:00 p.m., with time off only for “political education.” They closed permanently all primary, secondary, and technical schools, as well as colleges and universities. They shut down all hospitals and automatically murdered Western-trained medical doctors. They prohibited sex between the unmarried and, in some places, they threatened boys and girls with death for as little as holding hands. Unauthorized contact was forbidden even between those who were married, also at risk of death. The Khmer Rouge allowed no appeals, no courts, no judges, no trials, and no law. They eliminated all money, businesses, books, and newspapers. They banned music. They eliminated practicing lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers, scientists, and all other professionals, because whatever truths these professions possessed, “the peasant could pick up through experience.”

This is all incredible; some details may help its digestion. Just consider how the Khmer Rouge controlled personal relations. They made showing love to relatives or laughing with them dangerous, often perceiving this as showing less dedication to, or poking fun at, the Great Revolution. It was even dangerous to use some term of endearment, such as “honey,” “sweetheart,” or “dearest,” for a loved one. When a spy overheard the doctor Haing Ngor referring to his wife in this manner, the spy reported him for both this and eating food he picked in the forest, instead of bringing it into the village for communal eating. The local cadre interrogated him about these sins, and told him, “The *chhlop* [informers] say that you call your wife ‘sweet.’ We have no ‘sweethearts’ here. That is forbidden.” Soldiers then took him to a prison where cadre members severally tortured him, cut off his finger, and sliced his ankle with a hatchet. He barely survived.

This deadly communist revolution created pitiful human dilemmas. Think about what this same doctor, Haing Ngor, went through when his wife suffered life-threatening complications during childbirth. To help her deliver her baby would mean death, since the Khmer Rouge forbade husbands from delivering their wives' babies. In any case, to use his medical skills to save her would in effect tell the cadre that he was a doctor, and would result in not only his death, but possibly that of his wife and newborn child. To do nothing might mean their death anyway; still, if he did nothing, the wife might pull through. He chose to do nothing—perhaps he could do nothing anyway, since he had no proper medical instruments. Both mother and baby soon died, leaving a gaping wound in his heart that never healed.

(Haing Ngor subsequently came to the United States after the defeat of Vietnam, became an actor, and received an Academy Award for his performance in *The Killing Fields*, the movie about the murderous Khmer Rouge regime. In 1996 he was murdered for money as he arrived home in Los Angeles, for which three members of the Oriental LazyBoyz street gang were subsequently tried and convicted.)

But even if Ngor's child had been born, he could not have kept it for long. The Khmer Rouge took children away from their parents and made them live and work in labor brigades. If the children died of fatigue or disease, the cadre was good enough to inform their parents; then, what emotion the parents showed could mean their life or death. If they wept or displayed extreme unhappiness, this showed a bourgeois sentimentality—after all, their children had sacrificed themselves for the Great Revolution and the parents should be proud, not unhappy. Similarly, a wife expressing grief over an executed husband—an enemy of the Great Revolution—was explicitly criticizing the Khmer Rouge. This unforgivable act of bourgeois sentimentality could mean her death.

Throughout Cambodia, fear was a normal condition of life. The Khmer Rouge systematically massacred people because of past positions, associations, or relatives. Top military men under a previous government, former government officials or bureaucrats, business executives or high monks, when discovered by the cadre, were murdered along with their whole families (including babies), sometimes after extended torture. This root-and-branch extermination of the tainted even reached down to cousins of cousins of former soldiers—when Khmer Rouge cadres came to believe that the villagers of Kauk Lon really were former Lon Nol officers, customs officials, and police agents, troops forced every villager (about 360 men, women, and children) to march into a nearby forest. As they walked among the trees, waiting soldiers ambushed and machine-gunned them all down.

Similar slaughter often awaited those who had had any relations with the West or Vietnam, even sometimes with the Soviet Union, or with those who had ever opposed the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge were even known to execute those found with Western items, such as books, or those who spoke French or English, or who had been schooled beyond the seventh grade. In some areas, even wearing glasses was a capital offense.

Then there was the killing of people for laziness, complaining, wrong attitudes, or unsatisfactory work. I will give only one example of this, but for me, as a teacher, it is the most hideous of all the accounts I read. This is the Buddhist monk Hem Samluat's description of an execution he witnessed in the village of Do Nauy:

It was. . . of Tan Samay, a high schoolteacher from Battambang. The Khmer Rouge accused him of incompetence. The only thing taught the children at the village was how to cultivate the soil. Maybe Tan Samay was trying to teach them other things, too, and that was his downfall. His pupils hanged him. A noose was passed around his neck; then the rope was passed over the branch of a tree. Half a dozen children between eight and ten years old held the loose end of the rope, pulling it sharply three or four times, dropping it in between. All the while they were shouting, "Unfit teacher! Unfit teacher!" until Tan Samay was dead. The worst was that the children took obvious pleasure in killing.³⁴

The scale of these murders can be gauged from the admission of Chong Bol, who claimed that, as a political commissar at the end of 1975, he had participated in the killing of 5,000 people. Think about this for a moment. If this murderer had been a citizen of a democracy and had admitted killing even one-tenth this many people in cold blood, historians would record him as history's most monstrous mur-

34 John Barron and Anthony Paul, *Peace with Horror: The Untold Story of Communist Genocide in Cambodia*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, pp. 148–149. American Edition titled *Murder of a Gentle Land*. New York: Reader's Digest Press—Thomas Y. Crowell.

derer. As an officer of a government, as with the Nazi SS soldiers, Soviet death camp managers, and Chinese commissars, who also exterminated thousands, his murders will be noted as acts of his regime, and history will forget the individual murderer. Such heinous crimes are depersonalized, their horror lost among general abstractions. They are just statistics.

Not only did the Khmer Rouge run amok massacring their people, they also tried to destroy the very heart of peasant life everywhere. Hinayana Buddhism had been a state religion, and the priesthood of monks with their saffron robes was a central part of Cambodian culture. Some 90 percent of Cambodians believed in some form of Buddhism. Many received a rudimentary schooling from the monks, and many young people became monks for part of their lives. The Khmer Rouge could not allow so powerful an institution to stand and therefore set out to destroy it. They exterminated all leading monks and either murdered or defrocked the lesser ones.

One estimate is that out of 40,000 to 60,000 monks, only 800 to 1,000 survived to carry on their religion. We do know that of 2,680 monks in eight monasteries, only seventy were alive in 1979. As for the Buddhist temples that peppered the landscape of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge destroyed 95 percent of them, and turned the few remaining into warehouses or allocated them for some other degrading use. Amazingly, in the very short span of a year or so, the small gang of Khmer Rouge wiped out the center of Cambodian culture, its spiritual incarnation, its institutions.

This was an act of genocide within the larger Cambodian democide, and it was not the only one. In most if not all of the country, simply being of Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, or Lao ancestry meant death. As part of a planned genocide campaign, the Khmer Rouge sought out and killed other minorities, such as the Moslem Cham. In the district of Kompong Xiem, for example, they demolished five Cham hamlets and reportedly massacred 20,000 people living there; in the district of Koong Neas, only four Cham apparently survived out of some 20,000. The cadre threw the Cham Grand Mufti, their spiritual leader, into boiling water and then hit him on the head with an iron bar. They beat another leader, the First Mufti, to death, tortured and disemboweled the Second Mufti, and imprisoned and murdered by starvation the Chairman of the Islamic Association of Kampuchea (Cambodia). Overall, the Khmer Rouge annihilated nearly half—about 125,000—of all the Cambodian Cham.

The Khmer Rouge also slaughtered about 200,000 ethnic Chinese, almost half of those in Cambodia—a calamity for ethnic Chinese in this part of the world unequalled in modern times. They murdered 3,000 Protestants and 5,000 Catholics, around 150,000 ethnic Vietnamese (over

half), and 12,000 out of 20,000 ethnic Thai. One Cambodian peasant, Heng Chan, whose wife was of Vietnamese descent, lost not only his wife but also five sons, three daughters, three grandchildren, and sixteen of his wife's relatives. In this genocide, the Khmer Rouge probably murdered 541,000 Chinese, Chams, Vietnamese, and other minorities, or about 7 percent of the Cambodian population.

As though this was not enough, by threat of death the Khmer Rouge forced ordinary Cambodians to labor to the point of life-endangering exhaustion, and fed them barely enough to keep them alive while further weakening their bodies through extreme malnutrition. The Khmer Rouge fed their hard laborers an average of 800 to 1,200 calories per day—for even light labor, a worker requires an average minimum of 1,800 calories. Nor did the Khmer Rouge provide them with protection against exposure and disease. Even Pol Pot admitted in 1976 that 80 percent of the peasants had malaria. In many places, people died like fish in a heavily polluted stream. People are not fish. They are thinking, feeling, loving human beings.

As one would expect, in this hell the Khmer Rouge did not spare each other the fear of death either, but often executed their soldiers and cadres for infractions of minor rules. More important, as the Pol Pot gang maneuvered to consolidate its rule over Cambodia, the struggle for power at the top, and the paranoia of top leaders, increased. Not only was there the usual despot's fear of an assassin's knife in the night, there was also an intensifying fear that dissident Khmer Rouge might destroy the communist revolution. Increasingly, the Pol Pot gang saw sabotage, and CIA, KGB, or Vietnamese operatives behind all production failures and project delays.

Purge after purge of high and low Khmer Rouge followed. They increasingly filled the cells of Tuol Sleng, the major security facility in Phnom Penh, with communist officials and cadre members. Pol Pot's gang had these people tortured until they fingered collaborators among higher-ups, who were then executed. Confessions were the aim of most torture, and the gang would even arrest, with all the lethal consequences, interrogators who were so crude as to kill their victims before getting a confession. On the suffering of the tortured, one such interrogator reported, "I questioned this bitch who came back from France; my activity was that I set fire to her ass until it became a burned-out mess, then beat her to the point that she was so turned around I couldn't get any answer out of her; the enemy then croaked, ending her answers" ³⁵

35 Arch Puddington, "The Khmer Rouge File," *The American Spectator* (July 1987): pp. 18–20.

The sheer pile of confessions forced from tortured lips must have further stimulated paranoia at the top. The recorded number of prisoners admitted to Tuol Sleng was about 20,000, suggesting how many were tortured and made such confessions. Only fourteen of them survived this imprisonment—fourteen. And this was only one such torture/execution chamber, albeit the main one in the country.

In summary, the Cambodia of the Khmer Rouge was a giant forced labor and death camp, in which all suffered the torments of hell.

In foreign relations, Pol Pot and his people hated their neighboring communist Vietnamese and felt no fraternal loyalty to them. They saw the Vietnamese as racially inferior, and as the foremost danger to the Khmer Rouge revolution. Even before their victory over Lon Nol, the Khmer Rouge had tried to purge their ranks of those trained in Hanoi, and had carried out the pogrom against ethnic Vietnamese described above. It was not long after their victory that they began to attack Vietnamese territory across the border. In many of these incursions they fought pitched battles with Vietnamese units, attacked and burned Vietnamese villages, and murdered their populations.

These attacks grew in intensity and became, in effect, a war against Vietnam. The Vietnamese first responded vigorously to these attacks; then, apparently to buy time for war preparations, they tried to negotiate Khmer Rouge border complaints, and to find a basis for cooperative relations. This phase lasted until December of 1979, when Vietnam launched a full-scale invasion of Cambodia. Her heavily armed troops, backed with gunships and tanks, easily rolled over the fewer, more lightly armed Khmer Rouge defenders. In the next month, the invading forces occupied Phnom Penh.

As Vietnamese troops approached one village after another, most peasants rebelled against the local Khmer Rouge cadre and troops, killing them with their own weapons, with farm tools, and sometimes with their own hands. Surviving Khmer Rouge, along with possibly 100,000 people they forced to move with them (vengefully killing many on the way), retreated to a mountainous region along the Thai border. From there and from refugee camps they soon controlled in Thailand, they carried out a guerrilla war against the Vietnamese and their puppet Samrin regime, and then against the government Vietnam established when it completely withdrew from the country. Only in the last decade would they finally be defeated.

The human, social, and cultural cost to Cambodia of the Khmer Rouge years is incalculable. In democide alone, the Khmer Rouge probably murdered 600,000 to 3 million Cambodians by execution, torture or other mistreatment, malnutrition, famine, exposure, and dis-

ease. A most prudent estimate is 2 million dead, or about one-third of the 1975 population. Some 352,000 refugees escaped the country.

As wholesale murderers, the Khmer Rouge are in a class with the Rwandan Hutu government. For rapidly killing a high proportion of their population, they have no competitors. Not even Stalin or Mao could come close. Even Hitler might be shamed by the poor performance of his killers compared to Pol Pot's gang or the Hutu government.

And, yes, the Khmer Rouge were racists—they believed in the racial superiority of the dark-skinned Khmer over the Vietnamese, Chinese, Moslem Cham, and others. This racism underlay the genocide they committed against these minorities, but it also played a role in their vicious incursions into Vietnam and the massacre of its citizens.

This being noted, the basic motive behind much of their democide was ideological. The Khmer Rouge were fanatical adherents to a new variant of communism, one that combined the Maoism of the destructive Great Leap Forward and communes, the Stalinism of the Soviet collectivization period in the early 1930s and the later Great Terror (Chapter 23), and an obsessive and deadly nationalism. To create their revolution, the Khmer Rouge were willing to kill millions of Cambodians—even, they said, until no more than a million remained—as long as they were able to do three things in a few short years. One, to totally reconstruct Cambodia; to fully collectivize it and exterminate all class enemies, capitalists, monks, former power-holders, and anything foreign. All others would work and eat communally, and the Khmer Rouge would satisfy their every need. All would be equal; all would be happy.

Two, the Khmer Rouge wanted to immediately create a thoroughly independent and self-sufficient Cambodia. For the Khmer Rouge, the key idea was “independence-sovereignty.” They wanted to end any dependence on other nations for anything, whether food or newsprint or machinery. As crazy as it was—all nations depend on trade—this was a basic, constantly repeated fixation.

And three, they wanted to recover the ancient glory of the Khmer Kingdom. Part of this glory, they felt, lay in the pure soul of the Khmer that existed then, a soul that modern life and Western influence had corrupted. The Khmer Rouge believed that by emptying the cities and ordering the millions of urbanites to work like oxen in the fields to absorb the simple peasant life, they were purifying the people and the nation. During the evacuation of Phnom Penh, a political official explained to the French priest François Ponchaud, “The city is bad, for there is money in the city. People can be reformed, but not

cities. By sweating to clear the land, sowing and harvesting crops, men will learn the real value of things. Man has to know that he is born from a grain of rice!”

Yes, ideas do have consequences, as the Cambodian death toll under these ideologues well attests.

Chapter 23

Death by Marxism II: Stalin's Great Terror

What is so hard to convey about the feeling of Soviet citizens through 1936–38 is the similar long-drawn-out sweat of fear, night after night, that the moment of arrest might arrive before the next dawn . . . [J]ust as in the mud-holes of Verdun and Ypres, anyone at all could feel that he might be the next victim.

– Robert Conquest

Prelude to the Great Terror

Other governments have murdered many more of their citizens than did the Rwandan Hutu government and the Khmer Rouge, but over a longer period and with a much larger population. The most murderous of these have also, like the Khmer Rouge, been communist governments, as I've already shown in Chapters 13 to 15.

Here I will focus on Stalin's democide alone, and Mao's in the next chapter, in order to further illustrate the shocking consequences of their absolute power on human life.

During this period, as I described in Chapter 14, Stalin also forced mass starvation upon Ukrainian peasants as a means to defeat their nationalism and opposition to collectivization, thus murdering around 5 million of them within a couple of years. It is as though the American Federal Government purposely starved to death or killed by associated diseases everyone in Maryland, Minnesota, or Wisconsin. Yet Stalin was not satisfied with this; he also struck at Ukrainian nationalism in other ways, such as directly murdering those who communicated the Ukrainian culture—he ordered shot Ukrainian writers, historians, composers, and even itinerant, blind folksingers. The following, from the memoirs of composer Dmitri Shostakovich, contains its own chilling horror.

Since time immemorial, folk singers have wandered along the roads of the Ukraine . . . they were always blind and defenseless people, but no one ever

touched or hurt them. Hurting a blind man—what could be lower?

And then in the mid thirties the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Lirniki and Banduristy [folk singers] was announced, and all the folk singers had to gather and discuss what to do in the future. “Life is better, life is merrier,” Stalin had said. The blind men believed it. They came to the congress from all over the Ukraine, from tiny, forgotten villages. There were several hundred of them at the congress, they say. It was a living museum, the country’s living history. All its songs, all its music and poetry. And they were almost all shot, almost all those pathetic blind men killed.

Why was this done? . . . Here were these blind men, walking around singing songs of dubious content. The songs weren’t passed by the censors. And what kind of censorship can you have with blind men? You can’t hand a blind man a corrected and approved text and you can’t write him an order either. You have to tell everything to a blind man. That takes too long. And you can’t file away a piece of paper, and there’s no time anyway.

Collectivization. Mechanization. It was easier to shoot them. And so they did.³⁶

The Great Terror

As bad as this democide was, the worst was yet to come. By 1934 the Peasant War was over. But it left an aftertaste. Some activists and

36 Quoted in Oksana Procyk, Leonid Heretz, and James E. Mace, *Famine in the Soviet Ukraine 1932–1933: A Memorial Exhibition*. Widener Library, Harvard University. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986, pp. 53–54.

party officials in the field could not quite accept the horrors of the previous years with ideological equanimity. Shooting children as kulaks? Starving to death helpless old women? Was this what Marxism meant? Moreover, many old Bolsheviks in the Party who could contrast Bolshevik ideals with the present still had the old rebellious spirit. Then there were the top contenders for Stalin's power, each with his own followers, each willing to criticize Stalin's policies and argue alternatives. Stalin ruled, but with an increasingly shaky party beneath him and the real possibility of a palace coup, he did not rule securely. This was underlined in January 1934 at the Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Most delegates had decided to replace Stalin; some wanted as his replacement Sergei Kirov, a popular member of the Politburo, head of the Leningrad Party, and a Russian, unlike Stalin.

Obviously a major purge was needed, and Stalin was a man of action. He met this early challenge by directly confronting his opponents, in effect launching a coup d'état against the Communist Party. First he had Kirov assassinated; then, under the guise of exposing the perpetrators of this abominable deed, he set up special staffs of NKVD in every district executive committee of Leningrad to uncover all those involved in the assassination (which turned out to be almost the whole Leningrad Party, of course). The "conspirators" were shot or sent to labor camps. None could appeal. A quarter of Leningrad was purged—*cleaned out*—in 1934–1935.

This bloody purge was extended to other major cities and eventually to the whole country. It reached its zenith with Stalin's appointment of a supreme headhunter, Nikolai Yezhov, as chief of the NKVD in 1936. Immediately justifying Stalin's faith in him, Yezhov inaugurated his reign by having all the NKVD People's Commissars in the Union republics, and usually their deputies as well, shot. And no NKVD officer who had served under the former head, Yagoda, was safe either. In 1937 alone, 3,000 were shot.

As the murderous purge embraced one Party bureau and then another, one government agency and then another, and one social institution and then another, its nature, extent, and scope began to defy reason and belief. Yet, we can see a rationale in it. Stalin may have wanted to go beyond simply exterminating the opposition, and create a new party in abject fear of him, one that would work in lockstep to achieve his utopia. Now consider these aspects of what came to be called the Great Terror, and see if this is not the only way in which they can be understood.

Throughout the vast country, "top and middle echelons of the Party and government were executed or sent to camps to die. Their replace-

ments, and sometimes even their replacements again, also were subsequently murdered or sent to labor camps. In 1938 in Tbilisi: . . . the Chairman of the City Executive Committee, his first deputy, department chiefs, their assistants, all the chief accountants, all the chief economists were arrested. New ones were appointed in their places. Two months passed, and the arrests began again: the chairman, the deputy, all eleven department chiefs, all the chief accountants, all the chief economists. The only people left at liberty were ordinary accountants, stenographers, charwomen, and messengers”³⁷

Many old Bolsheviks and other top communists were given show trials during which they confessed to spying, “counter-revolutionary” plotting, and other “crimes”; they were sentenced to death. In August 1936, after a dramatic public trial, sixteen top Party leaders, including Lev Kamemev, Ivan Smirnov, and Grigori Zinoviev, were executed as Trotskyites. In January 1937, another public trial of seventeen more top communists, including Karl Radek, was held; all but four were later executed. In March of 1938, more top Party members, among them Nikolai Bukharin, Alexei Rykov, and Genrikh Yagoda, were tried and executed. Many Westerners, including the American ambassador, were completely duped by these trials. They thought them legitimate, and these top Party men guilty; they could not believe that all the confessions of these high officials were false. But they were, as the Soviets in later decades admitted.

The chief of Soviet military intelligence was also shot. Military intelligence agents serving abroad were brought home and shot. Major Soviet officers and diplomats who had played a role in the Spanish Civil War were shot.

The top military echelons of the Red Army and Navy were shot. Marshal M. N. Tukhachevsky, the Chief of Staff, was shot along with seven high-ranking generals for plotting against the country (the marshal was posthumously exonerated in 1956). Overall, about half of those in the Red Army officer corps were shot or imprisoned—35,000 men. These included three of the five marshals, thirteen out of fifteen commanders, all eight admirals, 220 out of 406 brigade commanders, seventy-five out of the eighty sitting on the supreme military council, all military district commanders, and all eleven vice-commissars of war. Heroes of the Soviet Union many were, unto their death. There is no evidence that they plotted against Stalin, Party, or country, or even tried to use their military forces to save themselves.

37 Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation I–II*. Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. New York: Harper & Row, 1973, pp. 68–69.

Not only were the officers, officials, and workers in Party or government executed or sent to labor camps, often with an impossible twenty-five year sentence, but so were their wives, parents, and children, and often, associates and friends.

It was assumed that all those arrested and interrogated had to be part of a plot or conspiracy. NKVD interrogators labored over each prisoner (interrogators themselves could and were arrested for “wrecking” if they seemed insufficiently dedicated) to uncover names and dates, often supplied by the interrogators themselves. But this was a vicious cycle. A prisoner was forced to confess to at least two co-conspirators; these in turn were arrested and each confessed to at least two more, and in turn came more new names. It was a mathematical certainty that the NKVD would eventually interrogate every adult in the Soviet Union except for themselves and Stalin.

The countrywide scope of these arrests, the sheer mass of those raked in, is unimaginable. Even race and ethnicity were bases for arrest. Greeks were arrested throughout the nation in 1937. Chinese were arrested en bloc. National minorities in Russian towns were all but eliminated. All Koreans from the Far East were arrested; all those in Leningrad with Estonian family names were arrested; all Latvian Riflemen and Chekists were arrested.

Sometimes, the NKVD would murder people on no pretext at all—simply to meet a *quota*. This is so incredible to a person born and raised in freedom that I will repeat it. *This communist government—really the Communist Party, which was the de facto government— would set up a quota for the number of people its lower officials had to murder.*

How could this be? Top communists believed that a certain percentage of the population opposed the Communist Party, and therefore had to be eliminated. But in typical communist fashion, this was not something that could be left to the discretion of a low-level cadre. After all, to ensure that lower level cadres were correctly guided in their work, the Party had to put a production quota on iron, steel, pigs, wheat, and virtually everything else of an economic nature. It followed that officials should also be given quotas of people to murder. Furthermore, it was consistent with the communist idea of central planning and control. From Moscow NKVD headquarters, the order would go out to officials or the communist cadre in a village or town to kill so many “enemies of the people,” and soon enough, the NKVD would receive word that it had been done.

That such orders would be given is incredible enough, but that the local official would obey them is also unbelievable. Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov, in their book appropriately titled *Empire of Fear*, ques-

tioned why “quite ordinary decent human beings, with a normal hatred of injustice and cruelty” would carry out these merciless purges and executions. The answer was simple: sweating, trembling, fear. They related what a friend they called M— said of his experience as an NKVD official in a country town in the Novosibirsk region:

The number of victims demanded by Moscow from this town was five hundred. M— went through all the local dossiers, and found nothing but trivial offenses recorded. But Moscow’s requirements were implacable; he was driven to desperate measures. He listed priests and their relatives; he put down anyone who was reported to have spoken critically about conditions in the Soviet Union; he included all former members of Admiral Kolchak’s White Army [an anti-Communist force in the Civil War of 1918 to 1922]. Even though the Soviet Government had decreed that it was not an offense to have served in Kolchak’s Army, since its personnel had been forcibly conscripted, it was more than M—’s life was worth not to fulfill his quota. He made up his list of five hundred enemies of the people, had them quickly charged and executed and reported to Moscow: “Task accomplished in accordance with your instructions.”

M— . . . detested what he had to do. He was by nature a decent, honest, kindly man. He told me the story with savage resentment. Years afterwards its horror and injustice lay heavy on his conscience.

But M— did what he was ordered. Apart from a man’s ordinary desire to remain alive, M— had a mother, a father, a wife, and two children.³⁸

38 Vladimir and Evodkia Petrov, *Empire of Fear*. New York: Praeger, 1956, pp. 75–76.

Indeed, the whole country also came under an *arrest quota*: “Orders were . . . issued to arrest a certain percentage of the entire population.”³⁹ How many were arrested? About 8 million people just between the middle of 1936 and the end of 1938. Possibly as many as 14 million people were under NKVD detention, or about 9 percent of the population. These were not all Party members or officials; most were simple peasants and workers. They had nothing to do with the Party, or with Stalin’s power over the Party and thus the country. They had done nothing wrong. Yet they were arrested by the millions. Why?

Only one answer is plausible. There was a growing labor shortage, and needing more forced laborers for its enterprises, the NKVD had developed a quota system to arrest and collect its slaves. This becomes even more plausible when those whose camp terms were expiring—those who, against the odds, had managed to survive the deadly camp conditions—*were given another ten, fifteen, or twenty-five year sentence*. This, without interrogation or hearing, for nothing the prisoner had done, was disclosed to the prisoners as they stood in brigades called up to the administration building for the purpose, and for which they were even made to sign their names.

The millions and millions of arrests during 1937 and 1938 got out of hand. Interrogators were swamped, prison cells were stuffed with new arrivals, and the system was breaking down by the end of 1938. In some places, faced with finding space for the daily crowd of newly arrested, officials had holes dug in the ground, a roof put over the top, and prisoners herded in. Small prisons teemed with thousands—a prison in Kharkov built for around 800 held about 12,000 prisoners. Not at all unusual, Butyrka Prison in Moscow had 140 men squeezed into a cell for twenty-four.

The Great Terror had to end. His purpose accomplished, Stalin purged Yezhov, the top purger himself, and replaced him with Lavrenti Beria. Yezhov was given a token position and soon disappeared.

Then, arguing that NKVD fascists had been responsible for the terror, and like Yezhov before him, Beria had nearly all senior officers of the NKVD executed, and sent most of the others to the camps (many camp inmates briefly enjoyed seeing their former interrogators and torturers joining them). As told by a former official in the Secretariat of the Politburo, Beria had his own methods:

He invited the Ministers of the Interior of all the republics and all the higher

39 Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *History of Russia*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 559.

Cheka officials who had especially distinguished themselves during the purges to a conference in Moscow. Having been asked to leave their weapons in the cloakroom, they were received in the banqueting hall with lavish hospitality. Everybody was in excellent spirits when Beria appeared. Instead of the expected address he uttered just one sentence: "You are under arrest." They were led from the hall and shot in the cellar the same night.⁴⁰

Executions during the Great Terror were not limited to those purged; there still was an absolute requirement to liquidate "enemies of the people," party members with insufficient revolutionary consciousness, independent thinkers, and the like. Of those arrested, the number executed cannot be known confidently.

While the Great Terror focused on the Party, it still fell hardest on peasants, workers, intellectuals, and the religious. Evidence of this terror was uncovered during the 1943 Nazi occupation of the Ukraine. In Vinnitsa, a mass grave was discovered that contained over 9,000 bodies, more than 13 percent of Vinnitsa's prewar population. The Nazis invited an international commission of medical experts to examine the bodies. Almost all were found to have been shot in the back of the neck, all apparently in 1938. A number of those murdered had been sentenced to forced labor "without the right of correspondence," an apparently normal deception.

The result of the Great Terror was a whole new Communist Party. Of 139 candidates and members of the Party's central committee, 98 were shot. Only 59 of 1,966 delegates to the Party Congress in 1934 were alive to attend the Congress in 1939. In total, the purge eliminated 850,000 members from the Party, or 36 percent. Throughout the country, extravagant adulation of Stalin became common, while the population learned silence and obedience, fear and submission. It was a revolution not in structure, but in personnel. Virtually all the old guard and Party faithful who lived through the Bolshevik Revolution were murdered.

Stalin had liquidated the old Party; the new Party was totally terrorized into obeying his slightest whim or command. Stalin's power was

40 Bernard Roeder, *Katorga: An Aspect of Modern Slavery*. Translated by Lionel Kochan. London: Heinemann, 1958, pp. 205–6.

absolute. He needed to obey no laws, no customs, no tradition. He feared no man under him. With no competing vision, he was free to achieve his own version of utopia, unhindered by any norms, traditions, or ethics.

How many were killed overall during this terror? The probable 1 million people executed does not cover camp and transit deaths. In 1936, the camp population was largely generated by the collectivization campaign. When these camp deaths are included, along with an estimated 65,000 dying from deportation, and with the number shot, the total murdered in the Great Terror years is probably 4,345,000. This is a prudent estimate. The democide could be as high as 10,821,000 or as low as 2,044,000.⁴¹

Even this very conservative, absolute low is not to be taken lightly. If it alone were the only estimate for democide in the Soviet Union in this century, it would still be terribly significant. It is over twice the number of Armenians the Turks probably murdered during World War I; it likely exceeds the number of Cambodians killed by the Khmer Rouge during their brief reign; it is over twice Japan's battle dead in all of World War II, almost twice the overall battle dead in the Vietnam War, and much greater than the total battle dead in the Korean War. Yet, this low is probably too low by over 2 million lives. And even the more likely figure of 4,345,000 is less than *one-third* the probable democide of the previous collectivization period!

41 For my estimates, calculations, and sources on this toll, see Table 5.A in my *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917*. The table is also available on my website at www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/USSR.TAB5A.GIF

Chapter 24

Death by Marxism III: Mao's Cultural Revolution

There is no construction without destruction.

– Mao Tse-tung

I think this is a civil war!

– Mao Tse-tung

The Great Famine that the Chinese Communist Party caused from the late 1950s to the early 1960s that I described in Chapter 15 helped split the Party. Many communists militantly and fervently supported Chairman Mao's desire to continue his Glorious Revolution. Opposed to him were powerful pragmatists, the "capitalist roaders," who wished to liberalize the economy. Mao now wanted to purge his Communist Party as Stalin had in his Great Terror. But when he began the purge, he created one of the most violent civil wars of the last century instead.

Mao's purge began in May 1966, when he launched a written public attack on P'en Chen, mayor of Beijing and member of the Politburo. He put it in the form of a circular of the Central Committee and disseminated it throughout the Party and the army. It concluded that:

The whole Party must follow Comrade Mao Tse-tung's instructions; hold high the great banner of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution; thoroughly expose the reactionary bourgeois stand of those so-called 'academic authorities' who oppose the Party and socialism; thoroughly criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois ideas in the sphere of academic work, education, journalism, literature and art, and publishing; and seize the leadership in these cultural spheres. With this end in view, it is at the same time necessary to criticize and repudiate those

representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the Party, the government, the army, and all spheres of culture, to clear them out or transfer some of them to other positions. Above all, we must not entrust these people with the work of leading the Cultural Revolution. In fact many of them have done and are still doing such work, and this is extremely dangerous.

Those representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the Party, the government, the army, and the various spheres of culture are a bunch of counterrevolutionary revisionists. When conditions are ripe, they would seize power and turn the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Some of them we have already seen through, others we have not. Some we still trust and are training as our successors. There are, for example, people of the Krushchev [sic] brand still nestling in our midst. Party committees at all levels must pay full attention to this matter.⁴²

Many reasons have been offered for Mao's mobilization and unleashing of forces that probably consumed millions of lives in countrywide terror, mass murder, and battles, and almost destroyed the Party. What stands out, however, is that Mao was losing power over the Party and that basic policies he favored were being ignored or overridden. He wanted the commune, forced industrialization, tighter economic controls, more mass movements. The central Party, however, under Liu Shao-ch'i (vice chairman of the Party and since 1956, apparent successor to Mao) was for further dismantling the commune, more decentralization, and some liberalization. An obvious "capitalist roader," as Mao called such pragmatists in comparison to those in favor of his strict communist policies.

⁴² Circular of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, 16 May 1966, Chung Fa no. 267 (66), translated in American Consulate General, Hong Kong. *Current Background*, no. 852.

Mao's purpose in organizing and exciting the Cultural Revolution, therefore, was to discredit and overthrow his party opponents (the "capitalist roaders"), train through struggle a whole new generation of proletarian revolutionaries, and to create an ideological revolution among the masses—to replace old ideas with Mao's thought. It was to be the communist revolution all over again.

Thus aiming to regain supreme power and to put China back on track toward true communism—to again reinforce the Party with the "spirit of the masses"—Mao used the army to promote, direct, and support the idealism and energy of millions of high school and college students in a student rebellion against those who were now treated as Mao's enemies. Massive meetings were held involving millions of "Red Guards," as these students soon became known. They were encouraged to uncover "capitalist roaders" or "counterrevolutionaries," in every organization, to attack and even torture and murder such suspects in and out of the Party.

Throughout August and September of 1966, Red Guards conducted a reign of terror. People thought to be bourgeois or counterrevolutionaries were beaten, in homes and on the street; houses were invaded at will and ransacked; belongings that Red Guards thought unnecessary for a proletarian family were destroyed or confiscated. Having Western books, records, or goods was sufficient to be accused of spying. And as Chou En-lai later admitted, "the police and soldiers were under orders not to interfere."⁴³

Even Central Committee members, mayors, and other prestigious officials were not exempt. The China News Agency admitted that there "was a special prison [apparently Qin Ching] outside of Peking where thirty-four senior leaders were tortured to death, twenty maimed, and sixty went insane during the Cultural Revolution."⁴⁴ It secretly held at one time about five hundred of China's leaders, each isolated in a small cell, forbidden to talk to anyone, and known to guards only by a number. No word was allowed out about their imprisonment, even to families.

Soon this revolution deteriorated into the murder of anyone who disagreed with how one faction or another defined Mao's thought or policies. Red Guard fought Red Guard, "leftist" military units fought "leftist" military units, and "conservative" workers and peasants fought both. According to a report by Minister of Security Hsieh Fu-chih, dur-

43 Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, p. 257.

44 Fox Butterfield, *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*. New York: Times Books, 1982, p. 354.

ing the first ten days of May 1967, Beijing saw 130 “bloody incidents” involving 63,000 people.⁴⁵

Throughout China many such “incidents” went well beyond fists and knives. There were savage pitched battles with machine guns, grenades, and mortars. In fact:

Serious clashes, and in some places heavy fighting, reportedly broke out, during July and August [1967], in every one of China’s twenty-six provinces and autonomous regions

In Szechwan, possibly in consequence of a split within the armed forces stationed in the province, heavy fighting broke out in which even gunboats, tanks and artillery were involved.⁴⁶

Parts of cities and even whole towns and villages were destroyed. In Wuhan in July 1967, a unit of the army mutinied, occupied key points, and led an “anti-left” uprising. In the wake of this, struggles broke out in Canton and spread to other parts of the military region and were fought with great violence. One large wall poster put up in Canton in 1974 claimed that in “Guangdong Province alone nearly 40,000 revolutionary masses and cadres were massacred and more than a million were imprisoned, put under ‘control’ and struggled against.”⁴⁷

Fighting continued intermittently throughout the year and into the next, and then broke out with renewed ferocity in the spring of 1968. There were “very serious” engagements, with army units involved on both sides of the battling factions. The deputy commander of the Wuhan Military Region declared “that the ammunition they had fired within the preceding several days would have sufficed ‘to fight several battles in the war against Japan.’”⁴⁸ From the first comprehensive account of this period published in China, we learn that elsewhere

45 Jyrge Domes, *The Internal Politics of China 1949–1972*. Translated by Rüdiger Machetzki. New York: Praeger, 1973, p. 183.

46 Edward E. Rice, *Mao’s Way*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, p. 408.

47 Quoted in Roger Garside, *Coming Alive: China After Mao*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981 p. 104.

48 Edward E. Rice, *Mao’s Way*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, p. 450.

several tens of thousands of militia troops surrounded Wuzhou and took the city after three weeks. Both sides suffered untold casualties; some areas were razed to the ground. The “Allied Command” took up to a thousand prisoners among the “April 22” faction, whom they treated with inhuman cruelty. For instance, they would randomly pick out prisoners on forced marches to shoot on the spot. Family members, including children of prisoners, were mercilessly slaughtered. The brutality matched the Japanese massacre in Nanjing. Liuzhou and Guilin were subject to similar holocausts, except that the latter, being the stronghold of “April 22” power, never fell to the “Allied Command.”

In some localities on the island of Hainan, whole villages had joined the “Banner” faction. These localities were designated as “bandit areas” where military troops were sent to reduce them to a shambles. Survivors described massacres as “worse than the time of the Japanese invasion.”⁴⁹

In the countryside and the major cities of Kwangsi Province, violent battles went on for weeks, and even involved tanks, artillery, and anti-aircraft guns. Large urban areas were destroyed, and “gas shells or explosives were used to flush out those who were fighting from sewer ducts.”⁵⁰ This also happened in other provinces. In the cities of Suchou and Liuchou there were over 50,000 battle dead from military-like clashes between Red Guards and the army.

Such revolutionary engagements went on for a third year. In the spring of 1969 there was a resurgence of violence in Szechwan, Kweichow, Shansi, Sinkiang, Tibet, and elsewhere. A July Central

49 Liu Guokai. *A Brief Analysis of the Cultural Revolution*. New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1987, pp. 121, 123. This analysis of the Cultural Revolution was originally published in China.

50 Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, p. 451.

Committee directive claimed that in Shansi “a small handful of class enemies and evil people, . . . had ‘infiltrated’ mass organizations, staged armed attacks on units of the [army] and seized their arms; destroyed railways, roads, and bridges and carried out armed seizures of trains; forcefully occupied state banks and warehouses; and used armed force to occupy territory and set up bases for counterrevolutionary purposes.”⁵¹

All these battles, clashes, and military-like operations notwithstanding, it would be a misunderstanding of the Cultural Revolution to conceive of its violence only or mainly in terms of violent engagements. The violence against the individual by one fanatical faction or another continued everywhere. Incarceration, torture, and death were readily meted out to supposedly rich peasants, landlords, counterrevolutionaries, rightists, leftists, spies, or alleged sympathizers of opposing factions. For example, the minister of Public Security in 1968 cited what the leaders of production brigades in one rural county alone had done about people with “bad” personal or family backgrounds—in ten brigades, he said, all “the landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists and their children, including babies, were killed in one day.”⁵²

According to an authorized book on the Cultural Revolution, the so-called “East-Hebei Wrong Case” in Tangshan accounted for 84,000 people purged, 2,955 of them to death; in Yunan Province during the 1968 “Zhao Jianmin Wrong Case,” 14,000 people were purged and killed.⁵³

In this regard, the official, post-Cultural Revolution indictment of the “Gang of Four” (Mao’s wife and three other top leaders during this period) is revealing. They were accused of being personally responsible for wrongfully persecuting 750,000 people, of whom 34,380 died or were killed, including six mayors or deputy mayors of Beijing and Shanghai. In one case, over 346,000 cadres and others had been wrongfully accused of membership in a secret party—16,222 of them were then killed. The “Gang of Four” were also accused of persecuting 142,000 cadres and teachers of the Ministry of Education, 53,000 scientists and technicians of the Academy of Sciences, and over 500 of 674 professors in China’s medical schools, some of whom subsequently died. During the trial of the “Gang of Four” it came out that in a forty-day wave of terror

51 Ibid., p. 473.

52 Ibid., p. 460.

53 Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *The Ten Year History of the Cultural Revolution*. [in Chinese] Tianjin: People’s Republic of China, 1986, p. 287. Translated for the author by Hua Shipping

in Beijing in 1966 started by the minister of Public Security, “1,700 people were beaten to death, 33,600 households were searched and ransacked, and 85,000 people were driven out of the capital.”⁵⁴

Just two personal examples of the fate suffered by millions should suffice.

Three reporters of the New China News Agency related that “a contingent of government officials went to the Shanghai home of the mother of a young woman named Lin Zhao, who had been jailed for keeping a diary critical of the Party. The officials told Lin’s mother that her daughter had been executed three days earlier as a counterrevolutionary. But the money spent on the execution had been a waste, the officials added sardonically, and they demanded that the mother pay five fen—a little more than three cents—to cover the cost of the bullet they had put through the back of her daughter’s head.”⁵⁵

Then there is the story of Yu Luoke, whose parents were called rightists. He

tried to offer a reasoned refutation of the so-called “theory of the blood line” that decreed him, because his parents were counterrevolutionaries, a rotten egg Yu Luoke argued that the connection between the class from which an individual was descended and an individual’s political behavior was minimal, that the influence exerted on young people by the social environment far outweighed the influence of the family. Yu Luoke thought the children of rightists should be treated the same as children of parents from “good” class backgrounds.

In the summer of 1967, Yu Luoke was arrested for those views. During the nearly three years he spent in prison, Yu Luoke was given the opportunity to repudiate the opinions he had earlier expressed, offered a chance to confess that the argument he had made was a crime. Yu Luoke refused.

54 Quoted in Fox Butterfield, *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*. New York: Times Books, 1982, p. 349.

55 *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

On March 5, 1970, at the age of twenty-eight, because he continued to refuse to recant [i]n Peking's Workers' Stadium, before a crowd of tens of thousands, little red books waving, revolutionary slogans filling the air, Yu Luoke was shot.⁵⁶

As indicated in the above indictment of the "Gang of Four," intellectuals and scientists, the educated and talented were also victims. At least in the Soviet Union under Stalin's bloody fist, science, learning, and expertise were not attacked per se. But, as in Cambodia under the murderous Khmer Rouge, those Chinese intellectuals "who survived or escaped physical torment, were, at best, forced into a state of intellectual suspension or paralysis."

No intellectual or scientist of any sort was to be trusted, especially in governing any organization. Instead, it was customary in these years to put fanatical radicals, regardless of their lack of experience or poor knowledge of their job, in charge of universities, schools, scientific institutes, hospitals, and intellectual associations. Consider the following experience related by a Chinese scientist when Shan Guizhang, a fanatic and ignorant radical, was appointed to head one of most prestigious of China's institutes, the Institute of Optics and Precision Instruments in Changchun.

Shan had read *Tales of the Plum Flower Society*, a spy thriller about an entirely fictional effort to break a Kuomintang espionage network in the Academy of Sciences. The chief Kuomintang agent was named Peng Jiamu, a name, unfortunately, that also belonged to a real scientist working at the institute. Incredibly, Shan believed that scientist Peng was, in fact, the real-life version of the spy in the book. So, it being fully understandable in the context of the Cultural Revolution, Shan had 166 scientists at the Institute arrested as spies, along with local accountants, policemen, workers, and even nursery attendants. Some were beaten to death; others committed suicide. The existence of a radio or camera at home or the ability of a person to speak a foreign language was considered sufficient proof of spying. Shan was eventually promoted to a provincial Party committee.

And then there were the peasants. They had survived the Great Famine and were now confronted with civil anarchy and bloodshed. They

56 Anne F. Thurston, *Enemies of the People*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987, p. 111.

were harangued by different factions, often caught in the factional cross fire, and watched their sons and daughters marching to one drummer or another, sometimes to battle and death. And they rebelled. During 1967 alone, there were peasant uprisings in twenty-one provinces.

Tibet as well saw several revolts. Tibet had suffered severely from the Great Famine, and now the Cultural Revolution had also been exported to the colony. Fighting between Red Guard factions disrupted “Tibet’s delicate system of food distribution [that] abruptly fell apart. By the end of January [1968], subsistence conditions—which had prevailed since the easing of the famine in 1963—gave way; once more, starvation reappeared. This time, it was not to depart for a full five years—until 1973—with isolated regions thereafter continuing to experience famine until 1980.”⁵⁷

Caught in the Cultural Revolution, Tibetans were subject to a ruthless terror. One report claimed that over seventeen days in 1966, in and around Lhasa, 69,000 people were executed.⁵⁸ This seems much too high an estimate, but there are other reports of “tens of thousands” killed and imprisoned in 1966. By the end of 1968, a number of revolts forced Chinese troops to concentrate their forces in the capital, leaving isolated garrisons in the countryside with their communications cut. In 1970, rebels in southwestern Tibet killed over 1,000 Chinese soldiers and continued fighting into 1972. The largest revolt during these years covered sixty of seventy-one districts, and cost 12,000 Tibetan lives.

During the Cultural Revolution in China itself, the Party was being destroyed at the center and the very authority and power of communist rule was endangered. By 1969, seven out of seventeen members of the Politburo were kicked out and declared enemies of the Party; also purged were fifty-three of ninety-seven members of the Communist Party’s Central Committee, four out of six regional first party secretaries, and twenty-three out of twenty-nine provincial first party secretaries. In the country as a whole, claimed Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang, from 1957 to the end of the Cultural Revolution, 100 million people were persecuted, politically harassed, or ended up victims.⁵⁹ (By 1980, 2.9 million of them had been officially rehabili-

57 John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984, p. 299.

58 Phuntsog Wangyal, “Tibet: A Case of Eradication of Religion Leading to Genocide” in Israel W. Charny (Ed.), *Toward the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide: Proceedings of the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1984, pp. 119–126 p. 123.

59 Fox Butterfield, *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*. New York: Times Books, 1982, p. 349.

tated; by 1981, over 300,000 of the 1.2 million cases formally tried and through which people had been sentenced were officially declared “unjust,” “frame-ups,” or “wrong.”⁶⁰)

But Mao had won the battle; opposing party leaders had been destroyed or shaken out of power. Having destroyed the “right,” he could now move on the “left” that was out of control in many areas. He called upon loyal army units to restore order. The country was gradually brought under control, at the cost of much greater military involvement and dictation in Party affairs and decisions.

Scholars agree that the revolution ended in April of 1969, with the Ninth Party Congress. While scattered bloody clashes and local anarchy were soon eliminated, reconstruction of the Party, cleansing of residual Party “rightists” and “leftists,” and dampening the violent, chanting enthusiasm of Red Guard factions preoccupied Mao until his death in 1976. About 17 million youths were sent to the countryside after 1967 to be disciplined, and by about 1975, it was conservatively estimated that a total of 70 million educated youth were deported to labor in the countryside and border regions. Moreover, executions continued apace. For example, those assigned to work in the countryside who returned to the city without permission were executed; so were those helping refugees to escape the country.

But ultimately, Mao failed. For after his death, in a “right-wing” coup, the “Gang of Four” were arrested and imprisoned. Deng Xiaoping, the “capitalist roader” who had been maltreated and dragged from power by the Red Guards, eventually took over the Party and country. During the following years, economic and social pragmatism and liberalization—the line that Mao fought against so bloodily—was pursued and institutionalized. And Mao’s “revolutionary masses” hardly remained so after his death, if they existed at all. Indeed, judging from the massive Beijing Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1976 and especially in 1989, rather than becoming infused with communist revolutionary spirit, the masses increasingly demanded bourgeois democracy, Mao’s *bête noire*. Mao won the revolution, all right, and lost the hearts and minds of China.

At what human cost? As mentioned, the Party itself admits that some 100 million human beings—one out of every eight Chinese!—suffered some kind of harassment or persecution during the revolution. This does not even count their loved ones, relatives, and friends who shared their pain and suffering, and grieved over their death or imprisonment.

60 *China: Violations of Human Rights: Prisoners of Conscience and the Death Penalty in the People's Republic of China*. London: Amnesty International Publications, 1984, p. 6.

But leaving this inestimable misery aside, what was the revolution's death toll? Estimates vary widely, and there can be no sure accounting after such a chaotic revolution. On the high side, estimates exceed 10 million killed. One estimate of 18.1 million dead (which includes those killed in the so-called "Four Cleanup" Movement) is based on sources collected by the Republic of China. A communist "restricted internal publication."⁶¹ reported an estimate of 20 million unnatural deaths during those years. Still another estimate claims 15 million were killed.⁶²

In evaluating these and many other estimates in *China's Bloody Century*,⁶³ I calculated it most likely that both sides in the revolution murdered about 7,731,000, including those who died from mistreatment and malnutrition in prisons and concentration camps, "leftists" and "rightists," "counterrevolutionaries," the "bourgeoisie," "spies," Party officials and cadres, government officials and workers, and the more successful peasants, scientists, writers, teachers, students, and those unlucky enough to be around—and, of course, sometimes their husbands and wives, and even children. In addition, nearly 563,000 army troops, members of Red Guard factions, and rebelling peasants may have died in battle. Then there also was a famine aggravated by the revolution that killed around 1 million people.

Adding it all together, this revolution cost about 9,292,000 million lives, more than the cost in lives of World War I. All in one nation. And all to determine one thing: which dictators would rule.

61 Richard L. Walker, *The Human Cost Of Communism In China*. A study of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1971, p. 16.

62 Maria Hsia Chang [Professor of Political Science, University of Nevada-Reno], Speech to the Ethics and Public Policy Panel on "China in Transition." Washington, D.C., May 22, 1989.

63 See Appendix II in the book. Appendix II is also available in two parts on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TABIIA.1.GIF; and www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CHINA.TABIIA.2.GIF

Chapter 25

Power Kills

Power gradually extirpates for the mind every humane and gentle virtue.

– Edmund Burke

Deadly Communism

Few would deny any longer what the previous bloody examples attest: communism—Marxism-Leninism and its variants—meant in practice bloody terrorism, deadly purges, lethal prison camps and forced labor, fatal deportations, man-made famines, extrajudicial executions and show trials, outright mass murder, and genocide. In total, as Table 25.1 shows,⁶² communist (Marxist-Leninist) regimes murdered nearly 110 million people from 1917 to 1987. For perspective on this incredible toll, note that all domestic and foreign wars during the twentieth century killed in combat around 35 million.

Communists, when in control of a nation, have murdered over three times the number that have been killed in combat in all wars, including the world wars.

And what did this greatest of human social experiments, communism, achieve for its poor citizens at this most bloody cost in lives? Nothing. It left in its wake an economic, environmental, social, and cultural disaster.

The Khmer Rouge example provides insight into why communists believed it necessary and moral to massacre so many of their fellow humans. Their absolutist ideology was married to absolute power. They believed without a shred of doubt that they knew the truth, that they would bring about the greatest human welfare and happiness, and that to realize this utopia, they had to mercilessly tear down the old feudal

62 See my “How Many Did Communist Regimes Murder?” on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/COM.ART.HTM

or capitalist order and culture and then totally rebuild a communist society. Nothing could be allowed to stand in the way of this achievement. Government—the Communist Party—was above any law. All other institutions, religions, cultural norms, traditions, and sentiments were expendable.

The communists saw the construction of this utopia as a war on poverty, exploitation, imperialism, and inequality—and as in a real war, noncombatants would unfortunately get caught in the battle, and there were necessary enemy casualties: the clergy, bourgeoisie, capital-

TABLE 25.1
Communist Democide 1900-87

Government	Years	Democide 000	Annual rate %
Afghanistan	1978-87	228	.157
Albania	1944-87	100	.118
Angola	1975-87	125	.302
Bulgaria	1944-87	222	.062
Cambodia (K. Rouge)	1975-79	2,035	8.161
Cambodia (Samrin)	1979-87	230	.398
China	1949-87	35,236	.12
Cuba	1959-87	73	.028
Czechoslovakia	1948-68	65	.024
Ethiopia	1974-87	725	.162
Germany (East)	1948-87	70	.011
Grenada (Coup)	1983	0.106	NA
Hungary	1948-87	27	.007
Korea, North	1948-87	1,663	.25
Laos (PDR)	1975-87	56	.124
Mongolia	1926-87	100	.187
Mozambique	1975-87	198	.123
Nicaragua (Sand.)	1979-87	5	.02
Poland	1948-87	22	.002
Rumania	1948-87	435	.055
USSR	1917-87	61,911	.422
Vietnam (Hanoi)	1945-87	1,670	.105
Yemen, South	1967-87	1	.002
Yugoslavia	1944-87	1,072	.118
SUBTOTAL	1900-87	106,267	.477 [1]
COM. GUERRILLAS	1900-87	4,019	NA
COMMUNIST TOTAL	1900-87	110,286	.477 [1]
WORLD TOTAL	1900-87	169,199	.235 [1]

1. Average

ists, “wreckers,” intellectuals, counterrevolutionaries, rightists, tyrants, the rich, and landlords. In a war millions may die, but these deaths may well be justified by the end, as in the defeat of Hitler in World War II. To many communists, the goal of a communist utopia was enough to justify all the deaths.

The irony of this is that communism in practice, even after decades of total control, did not improve the lot of the average person, but usually made living conditions worse than before the revolution. As we’ve seen, it is not by chance that the greatest famines have happened within the Soviet Union (about 5 million dead from 1921–23 and 7 million from 1932–3, including 2 million outside Ukraine) and communist China (about 30 million dead from 1959–61). Overall, in the last century almost 55 million people died in various communist famines and associated epidemics—a little over 10 million of them were intentionally starved to death, and the rest died as an unintended result of communist collectivization and agricultural policies. This is as though the whole population of the American New England and middle Atlantic states, or California and Texas, had been wiped out. And that around 35 million people escaped communist countries as refugees was an unequaled vote against communist utopian pretensions. Its equivalent would be everyone fleeing California, emptying it of all human beings.

There is a supremely important lesson for human life and welfare to be learned from this horrendous sacrifice to one ideology:

*No one can be trusted with unlimited power.
The more power a government has to impose the
beliefs of an ideological or religious elite or de-
cree the whims of a dictator, the more likely
human lives and welfare will be sacrificed.*

Other Mega- and Kilo- Mass Murderers

Certainly, communism does not stand alone in such megamurders (see the list in Table 20.1 of Chapter 20). We have the example of totalitarian-socialist Nazi Germany, which exterminated some 21 million Jews, Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, Yugoslavs, Frenchmen, Germans, and other nationalities.⁶⁴ Then there is the fascist Nationalist government of

⁶⁴ See my *Democide: Nazi Genocide and Mass Murder* (1993). A summary chapter and most of the statistics are on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE3.HTM

China under Chiang Kai-shek, which murdered nearly 10 million Chinese from 1928 to 1949,⁶⁵ and the fascist Japanese militarists who murdered almost 6 million Chinese, Indonesians, Indochinese, Koreans, Filipinos, and others during World War II.⁶⁶ There also are the 1 million or more Bengalis and Hindus murdered in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971 by the fascist Pakistan military.⁶⁷ Nor should we forget the mass expulsion of ethnic Germans and German citizens from eastern Europe at or after the end of World War II, particularly by the authoritarian, pre-communist Polish government, which murdered perhaps over a million of them⁶⁸ as it seized the German Eastern Territories.⁶⁹

In Chapter 17, I outlined the democide before and during the Mexican Revolution, and I mentioned the democide by the governments of Burma and Sudan in Chapter 1. I could go on to detail various kinds of noncommunist democide, as I did in *Death By Government*, and more comprehensively in *Statistics of Democide*.

The Unifying Cause of Democide: Power

What connects all these cases of democide is this: as a government's power is more unrestrained, as its power reaches into all corners of culture and society, the more likely it is to kill its own citizens. As a governing elite has the power to do whatever it wants, whether to satisfy its most personal wishes, or to pursue what it believes is right and true, it may do so whatever the cost in lives. Here, power is the necessary condition for mass murder. Once an elite has full authority, other causes and conditions can operate to bring about the immediate genocide, terrorism, massacres, or whatever killing the members of an elite feel is warranted.

65 See my *China's Bloody Century: China's Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900* (1991). A summary chapter and most of the statistics are on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE2.HTM

66 See my chapter on Japanese democide in my *Statistics of Democide* (1994) on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP3.HTM

67 See my chapter on Pakistan's democide in my *Statistics of Democide* (1994) on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP8.HTM

68 See my chapter on Poland's ethnic cleansing in my *Statistics of Democide* (1994) and on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP7.HTM. Some Poles have written me irate emails about this chapter. My response is at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP7.ADDENDA.HTM

69 The total number of Reichdeutsch and Ethnic Germans murdered in these expulsions from Eastern Europe at or after the end of the war is about 1,863,000 out of about 15 million expelled.

All this provides a solid, life oriented argument for freedom:

Freedom preserves and secures life.

That which preserves and protects human life is a moral good. And, as I have shown, freedom is already a moral good for promoting human welfare and minimizing internal political violence. I now will add to this list the moral good of saving human lives.

I have saved a discussion of another moral good until the next chapter. It may be even more surprising than the life-preserving aspect I have described here.

PART 6

On Freedom's Moral Goods: Eliminating War

Although it is sometimes the lesser evil, as in the war against Hitler, war is always a horror. It consumes human lives and property with the most savage appetite. Humanists, idealists, and pacifists have focused on it as the supreme human problem that mankind must solve. Stacks of library books provide histories of war, analyses of its causes and conditions, and solutions. Now, finally, a well researched, well studied solution is at hand. It is practical. It is much desired for itself. It is consistent with human rights. It is supported by clear theory. It is based on two facts: democracies throughout history have never, or virtually never, made war on each other. And the odds of this fact being a matter of chance are millions to one. The solution, therefore, is to *spread democracy throughout the world*.

Histories, and often analyses of war, are dry discussions or descriptions of what generals, commanders, and national leaders or rulers did, the mechanics, strategies, and tactics of battles, and the consequences of lost lives, territory, and equipment. They are too often removed from the human side of it—from the slogging misery, pain, and death in combat for the soldier. In Chapter 26, I try to provide some understanding of what war can be like for the soldier in just one battle, for just one side, in just one war.

With that understanding, we'll move on to discuss the nature of the *democratic peace*, the idea that democracy is a solution to war and violence, and its sources. This is not an either-or solution, but the degree to which nations are democratic also makes a difference in the severity of their wars.

Why is democracy so potent in preventing war? *Democracies share their institutions and culture, and are bonded by the governmental, societal, and economic threads that sew them together.*

Chapter 26

Battle of the Somme

From its beginning in 1914 to its end in 1918, World War I combat ate up about 5,500 lives per day, to total by its end at least 9 million combat dead—both men and women.

July 1 had finally come. Now, at 7:25 a.m., an incredible, all-out bombardment was ending the weeklong shelling of German trenches. The roar of continuous explosions sent fountains of rock and soil, and sometimes whole tree trunks, into the air. What few trees remained were little more than shredded trunks.

Some 50,000 British and French artillery gunners had shot 1.5 million shells—21,000 tons of explosive material of all descriptions—onto the Germans. They even fired some gas shells at them, sending a cloud of gas seeping downward into the German trenches, all the way to the lowest bunkers. The British and French commanding generals were confident that this shelling would leave few of the enemy capable of fighting in their front trenches, and would destroy much of the barrier of barbed wire protecting them.

The noise had been deafening but reassuring to the young British volunteers waiting in their trenches to attack the Germans. Fresh from home and hardly trained, they were apprehensive, nervous, feeling the suspense after waiting over a week for the battle. They had prayed, made out their wills, written home, and shaken hands with their friends. Some were sweating; some were slightly intoxicated, or drunk outright on army-issue rum.

Above all, they were optimistic. They knew they were going to win a great victory. After all, they were the volunteer regiments—the British “Pals” who had enthusiastically enlisted with their friends, coworkers, and neighbors to be formed with those same fellows into regiments. Clerks and workers from a single commercial company composed whole platoons. And their officers had told them how easy it would be. In any case, they had been hearing the thunderous shelling from their own artillery for seven days, and watching the stupendous explosions just a thousand or more yards in front of them.

Finally, it was 7:30 a.m. The shelling stopped. Utter silence engulfed the front. Suddenly the British officers blew their whistles, waved their polished sticks—many thought it beneath them to carry guns or to personally kill—and yelled for their troops to follow them. Along a front twenty miles long, nearly 100,000 young men crowded up the trench ladders and across the parapet in the first wave of this mighty offensive. Shoulder to shoulder, they walked in the morning light toward what remained of the German trenches, redoubts, and fortified villages. They could not run if they wanted to, since each carried sixty-six to ninety pounds of ammunition and equipment. Besides, several days of heavy rain had turned the clay soil into deep and slippery mud; in some areas, it was marshland.

In many places along the line, the advancing soldiers were preceded by a walking barrage of friendly shells timed to keep German troops hunkered down in their trenches. Since the gunners had a strict rate of advance for their shells, however, the barrages were often too far ahead of the men.

These soldiers did not know they were marching 1,000 to 2,000 yards toward their death; most would not reach the parapet of the German trenches. The Germans had survived the barrage deep within their trenches, sometimes thirty or forty feet down, within well-fortified dugouts; some were actually concrete bunkers. Few of the shells that exploded above or around them had been the type of heavy artillery that could reach or bury their fortifications.

Once the shelling stopped and the Germans heard the British whistles, they scrambled for what remained of the parapet of their trenches. Physically, the Germans were in sad shape. They had been under a continuous rain of shells. Day after day, they'd faced the prospect of being blown up or entombed in their trenches. They'd had little sleep; they were mentally exhausted by the bombardment and a week's wait; they were scared. They knew they were going to be attacked and possibly shot or bayoneted. Still, many were first to the top, with time to set up their machine guns and arrange themselves along the parapet. They couldn't believe what they saw. Walking toward them shoulder to shoulder were thousands of British men, often with their unarmed officers in front.

German soldiers opened fire with their rifles. Machine gunners triggered the lethal chatter of their guns, not aiming but simply moving their barrels left to right, right to left, spraying bullets back and forth into the line of oncoming men. Then the German artillery opened up. They'd known weeks before that an attack was coming, though they had thought, because the preparations were so clearly visible from the high

ground they held, it could only be a diversion, and not a full-scale attack. So German headquarters had not reinforced them. Nonetheless, they had sighted their artillery beforehand, and now their shells fell among the advancing British soldiers. The explosions flattened whole sections of the oncoming wall, throwing men violently aside or heaving them up in the air in a fountain of mud—full bodies here, parts of bodies there.

The air was a maelstrom of whizzing bullets, buzzing shrapnel, exploding shells. British officers could not make their commands heard above the noise, nor could their men hear the yells or cries of pain from a friend only three feet away. Miraculously, some reached the wire in front of the German trenches, but shelling had done little to destroy it. Those who tried to go over it were caught in the barbs, becoming easy targets for the Germans only feet away. Soon the bodies of British soldiers hanging at all angles along miles of wire formed a grotesque line.

Other British soldiers found the few openings the shelling had cut in the wire, but as they funneled through, the Germans found a concentrated target, and slaughtered them. Some of the attackers who did reach the German trenches were burned to death with flamethrowers

Within minutes, no-man's land was a dead man's land of human bodies, body parts, scraps of uniform, helmets, destroyed equipment, metal fragments, shrapnel, shredded wood, and shell holes. Before the morning was over, the body count of British soldiers had mounted to nearly 20,000 dead and 38,000 wounded or missing.

Nor was this the end of it for the wounded. Since the German soldiers could not risk someone crawling up to throw a grenade into their trench, they shot any wounded that moved. Enemy shelling had partly buried some British wounded in the mud, and some had fallen or been blown into slippery-sided shell holes, soon to die of their wounds or drown in the sludge at the bottom. Many bodies were so deeply buried in the mud, or so badly disintegrated, they were never found.

At 10:00 a.m., despite the carnage, the general order came down from British Army Headquarters to continue the attack. This only threw many more lives away. By noon, the trenches from which the British soldiers had launched the offensive were in chaos. They were full of dead, wounded, and the terrified and exhausted men of the first waves who had managed to make it back to the trenches. Mingling with them were horror-stricken soldiers fresh from the rear, ordered forward by their officers. But there was a blessing to this confusion: further efforts to breach the German trenches died away as local officers became increasingly reluctant to send more men to their deaths.

Meanwhile, the British soldiers' initial exuberance and confidence had sunk to a dull expectation of death. At best, they hoped for a wound

that would take them to the rear—a shot through the hand, a shredded leg, even a lost arm would do, if they could then escape the almost certain death of no man’s land. Some even wounded themselves to avoid battle. Some—but not as many as one would think—tried to run away. The British army had positioned soldiers behind front trenches for just this possibility, and these “battle police” either turned these men around to return to battle and probable death, or shot them then and there.

Reported British Lieutenant Alfred Bundy on his part in leading this first day’s attack:

Went over top at 7.30 a.m. after what seemed an interminable period of terrible apprehension. Our artillery seemed to increase in intensity and the German guns opened up on No Man’s Land. The din was deafening, the fumes choking and visibility limited owing to the dust and clouds caused by exploding shells. It was a veritable inferno. I was momentarily expecting to be blown to pieces. My platoon continued to advance in good order without many casualties and until we had reached nearly half way to the [German] front line. I saw no sign of life there. Suddenly however an appalling rifle and machine-gun fire opened against us and my men commenced to fall. I shouted “down” but most of those that were still not hit had already taken what cover they could find. I dropped in a shell hole and occasionally attempted to move to my right and left but bullets were forming an impenetrable barrier and exposure of the head meant certain death. None of our men was visible but in all directions came pitiful groans and cries of pain I finally decided to wait till dusk and about 9.30 I started to crawl flat on my stomach. At times I made short wild dashes and finally came to our wire. The [Germans] were still traversing our front line trenches and as I lay waiting for strength to rush

the final few yards sparks flew from the wire continuously as it was struck by bullets. At last the firing ceased and after tearing my clothes and flesh on the wire I reached the parapet and fell over in our trench now full of dead and wounded. I found a few of my men but the majority were still out and most were dead. Came across my Company Commander Hunt who was almost insane. Took charge of 'C' company of about 30 men.^{69a}

Throughout the night, the cries and groans of the British wounded never stopped. Sometimes someone would cry for his mother. Wounded and unwounded managed to walk or crawl back to their trenches, and stretcher-bearers brought in what casualties they could find. In the rear medical stations, nurses made those wounded sure to die as comfortable as possible, while those standing a chance of survival were rushed to hospitals in the rear for immediate treatment.

Clare Tisdall, who worked as a British nurse at a Casualty Clearing Station during the battle, described her experience.

[W]e practically never stopped. I was up for seventeen nights before I had a night in bed. A lot of the boys had legs blown off, or hastily amputated at the front-line. These boys were the ones who were in the greatest pain, and I very often used to have to hold the stump up in the ambulance for the whole journey, so that it wouldn't bump on the stretcher.

The worst case I saw—and it still haunts me—was of a man being carried past us. It was at night, and in the dim light I thought that his face was covered with a black cloth. But as he came nearer, I was horrified to realize that the whole lower half of his face had been completely blown off and what had appeared

69a Malcolm Brown, *The Imperial War Museum Book of the Somme*. Trans-Atlantic Publications, 1997.

to be a black cloth was a huge gaping hole. It was the only time I nearly fainted.⁷⁰

This was war, and luck and the natural variations in geography, leadership, weapons, and experience assured different outcomes from one section of the front to another. In a few places, German trenches were overrun; in other places, the British bombardment destroyed German trenches—yet attacking the second line of trenches was often no less deadly than attacking the first line had been in other places.

Why did the British commanding generals order these men to walk across no man's land toward the higher German trenches, in full daylight, putting them for five to six minutes in easy range of machine gunners, snipers and riflemen, and artillery? Simple—since British Pal battalions of “citizen soldiers” were poorly trained and lacked combat experience, the battle plan gave them the easiest and strictest of commands: “Go up the ladder, stand up, hold your rifle across your breast pointed at the sky (so that no one would be accidentally shot), walk in a line abreast to the Germans’ trenches, shoot or bayonet any Germans in the trench, and occupy it.” They gave no room for initiative; the battle plan was rigid and finely detailed in pages of orders given to the front line officers.

Above all, the British commanding generals believed in the ability of massed artillery to conquer infantry. They thought the artillery would more than compensate for the lack of surprise and the vulnerability of their men. They had planned on a massive six-day bombardment (extended to seven days because of rain) that would be so devastating it would destroy the German trenches and fortifications and cut the frontal barbed wire. Then the British soldiers need only stroll to the Germans’ wrecked trenches and occupy them. In other words, these generals did not understand the limits of their artillery and the resources of the Germans to strengthen their trenches against the rain of shells. Not only did they spread the shelling evenly across the whole front, despite the variations in fortifications their soldiers faced, they did not understand the killing power of the machine gun. And they did not have any contingency plans for failure.

Nor did the first day's military catastrophe deter the British generals. They saw it as only a setback, not a defeat. After all, their reasoning went, the offensive had weakened the Germans. So they turned the battle into one of attrition, intending to make the Germans lose so

70 From www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWcasualties.htm

many lives and so much material, they must finally retreat. No matter the dead, the British launched offensive after offensive and chewed up more human lives.

Four months later, the British finally ended the battle after an unbelievable 1,120,000 casualties: 620,000 on their side, and 500,000 Germans. And the winnings? The offensives had gained at most sixteen miles of moonscape littered with the debris of battle, all of which the Germans soon recovered in later battles anyway.

As for those British soldiers who day after day climbed the trench ladder and, as though moving against a stiff wind or rain, walked toward the Germans through a hail of bullets and shells, one might wonder how they could do this. The usual characterizations come to mind. Patriotism, duty, hatred of the enemy—all surely played a role. Mostly, however, it was loyalty to fellow soldiers, friendship, the desire not to let anyone down—even the inspiring heroism of their officers. The latter were often the first up and over the parapet, unarmed yet standing up fearlessly, knowing they would likely die, and still leading their men onward.

Then why did the British officers do what they did? Unlike their men, who had just joined the service and were from the working classes, the officers had attended the finest schools, and had usually been acculturated into a military role that they accepted without question. They were “gentlemen.” They looked after their men, helped them with their problems, and showed them compassion—but also tough discipline. Their job was to lead men into battle and to win the objective, and to do so calmly and fearlessly. As a result, their life expectancy was no more than a few weeks, compared to a few months for their men.

This battle was the Battle of the Somme in World War I, an engagement named after a French river that flowed to the south. The British Expeditionary Force in France launched this battle in 1916 against the German front lines. The French, far more experienced and much better trained for this type of warfare, manned the southern part of the front. By making better use of their artillery, the French largely achieved their first day’s objectives against weaker German fortifications.

The French commander-in-chief, Joseph Jacques Cèsaire Joffre, conceived the offensive, which Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, newly appointed commander of the British Expeditionary Force, then put into action. Joffre hoped the offensive would break through German defenses, create chaos in the rear, and enable the encircling of the Germans in northern France. At the very least, Joffre wanted to take German pressure off French troops holding fast against the Ger-

man offensive at Verdun 150 miles away, but by the time the Battle of the Somme was launched, the Germans had already been defeated at Verdun—another bloody meat grinder that created some 1.2 million casualties for the two sides before it ended.

Not only was the Battle of the Somme a military failure and a human disaster, but also, not launching it could have saved Russia from defeat. Had the British and French transferred the guns and ammunition used in the Somme to help the Russians, they might have defeated the Germans and thereby forestalled or prevented the Russian Revolution that turned Russia into a communist state in 1917, which then withdrew from the war.

British support for war has not been as robust and enthusiastic as before the toll and nature of the Battle of the Somme became public. Those killed in just the first day of this battle exceeded that of any other day of war in British history, before or since. Even during the first day of the D-Day invasion of Normandy twenty-eight years later, the English and Canadians suffered only 4,000 casualties, compared to the 58,000 for the first day of the Somme offensive. Since the British army kept those enlisting from a neighborhood or town together, whole communities were devastated by the death of most of their young men. In the first hours of the offensive, for example, the Ulster division from Northern Ireland lost 5,600 men, all from a relatively small community.

For the British, this battle became symbolic of the horrors and uselessness of war, and decades later, when the threat of Hitler was clear, the British people and especially British intellectuals recoiled from the thought of rearmament and another war. No one could forget the useless death of Britain's best and brightest in the Battle of the Somme.

Yet, as bloody and stupid as this battle was, it was only one in the war. From its beginning in 1914 to its end in 1918, World War I combat ate up about 5,500 lives per day, to total by its end at least 9 million combat dead—both men and women.

Of all the soldiers' correspondence I have read, one exchange touched me most deeply, and shows the misery and horror of war not only for the soldiers in combat, but for their loved ones as well. This letter is from Private William Martin to his fiancée Emily Chitticks, written while he was fighting in France with the Devonshire Regiment. It is dated March 24, 1917.

My dearest Emily

Just a few lines dear to tell you I am still in the land of the living and keeping well, trusting you are the same dear. I

have just received your letter dear and was very pleased to get it. It came rather more punctual this time for it only took five days. We are not in the same place dear, in fact we don't stay in the same place very long we are having very nice weather at present dear and I hope it continues Fondest love and kisses from your loving Sweetheart

Will

Martin was killed in action three days after writing it. Unaware of this, Emily continued to write, even when receiving no reply. Finally, the army returned five of her letters with "killed in action" marked on them. This March 29, 1917 letter was one of those returned.

My Dearest Will

I was so delighted to get your letter this morning and know you are quite alright. I am pleased to say I am alright myself and hope dear this will find you the same. I was so pleased to hear darling that you had such a nice enjoyable evening, It was quite a treat I am sure. I don't suppose you do get much amusement.

I am glad you are getting my letters dear, I am not waiting until I get your letters dear now before I write because it would make it so long for you to wait for a letter, and I guess you are pleased to get as many as possible.

I can understand darling your not being able to write as frequently. I shall get used to waiting for your letters soon I guess, but at first it seems so strange after being used to having them so regularly.

Well darling I don't know any more to say now and I am feeling sleepy. Oh I wish you were here darling, but its no good wishing.

Fondest love and lots of kisses from
your ever-loving little girl
Emily.⁷¹

William Martin's grave was never found. Emily was so heartbroken by his death that she never married. When she died in 1974, Martin's letters were buried with her, as she requested.

71 From an October 1998 British Broadcasting Corporation Special Report on World War I.

Chapter 27

The Democratic Peace

The absence of war between democracies comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations.

— Jack Levy

What can we do about war? Most wars, like World War I, should never have been fought. It was the result of flagrant political and diplomatic errors. The lesson so many learned from this war, however, was not that avoiding such errors would prevent future conflicts, but that we must never fight another war, and that armaments and arms races cause wars. This was the wrong lesson, and it led to World War II. When Great Britain and France could have stopped Hitler cheaply—when a strong military showing by them would have avoided World War II—the awful memory of the bloody cost of the battles of the Somme and Verdun proved too strong. Finally, Great Britain and France drew the line against Hitler in Poland in 1939, but it was too late to avoid a war. And with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and Hitler's declaration of war against the formerly neutral United States, it more truly became a world war.

As hellish and bloody as war is, I believe that we had to fight this war. Just think of what it would mean in lives and misery if the Nazis had controlled all of Europe, including Great Britain and Russia. Add to this the control of all of Asia and the western Pacific by the Japanese military. The butchery that these murderers would have unleashed on both sides of the world would undoubtedly far exceed the human cost of World War II. Even before their defeat in 1945, remember, the Nazis already had murdered about 21 million people—many more than the 15 million killed in battle in all of World War II for all countries involved. The Japanese militarists murdered an additional 6 million people. Dictators of all kinds have killed several times more people than has combat in all the wars, foreign and domestic. As horrible as it was, *the Hutu rulers of Rwanda killed more people in four months than did the Battle of the Somme during the same length of time.* And this was only one murderous government in a fairly small country.

Virtually all proposals to prevent war have suffered from this defect: *they ignore how dictators and dictatorships differ from democratic leaders and democracies.* There have always been those who, when they inherit or seize power, forcefully fill their army with unwilling soldiers, and then grind them to death in a war to grab more power and control over others. The rogues' gallery of these murderers and aggressors is long, and surely at the top would be, for the twentieth century alone, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Ilich Lenin, Mao Tse-tung, Chiang Kai-shek, Tojo Hideki, and Pol Pot. When there are such people controlling large armies, the solutions to war, such as pacifism, unilateral disarmament, or disarmament treaties, do not work. Worse, these solutions weaken or disarm democracies and make the world safe only for such tyrants.

Now, finally, we have the proven knowledge to avoid both wars and the aggression of dictators. This solution was proposed in the latter part of the eighteenth century and recent social science research has shown its veracity. In his *Perpetual Peace*, written in 1795, the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant argued that the way to universal peace lay in creating republics, or what today we would call representative democracies. Kant wrote, "The republican constitution, besides the purity of its origin (having sprung from the pure source of the concept of law), also gives a favorable prospect for the desired consequence, i.e., perpetual peace. The reason is this: if the consent of the citizens is required in order to decide that war should be declared (and in this constitution it cannot but be the case), nothing is more natural than that they would be very cautious in commencing such a poor game, decreeing for themselves all the calamities of war."⁷²

Note two things about this solution. First is that, where people have equal rights and freely participate in their governance, they will be unlikely to promote a war in which they or their loved ones might die and their property be destroyed. And second, where leaders are responsible to their people as voters, they will be unwilling to fight. Then when both leaders of two nations are so restrained, war between them should not occur.

The idea that democracies are therefore inherently peaceful was not lost to others. It became part of a more general philosophy of governance that Kant shared with liberals of the time, a system of belief we now call *classical liberalism*, which I dealt with in Chapter 6 with regard to democracy and in Chapter 11 on the free market. Adam Smith,

72 Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*. Translated by Lewis White Beck. New York: The Library of Liberal Arts, Bobbs-Merrill, 1957, pp. 12–13. It is online at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm>

John Stewart Mill, and John Locke, among other influential thinkers of the time, argued for the maximum freedom of the individual. They believed in minimal government. They also supported free trade between nations and a free market within. Such freedom, they argued, would create a harmony among nations, and promote peace. As Thomas Paine—who like most of America’s founding fathers was a classical liberal—wrote in his influential *Rights of Man* in 1791–1792, “Government on the old system is an assumption of power, for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new [republican form of government as just established in the United States], a delegation of power for the common benefit of society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promises a system of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation.”⁷³

Full proof of this point had to wait, however, until scientists such as Bruce Russett, Zeev Maoz, James Lee Ray, and I could develop research methods to document it.⁷⁴ We did related research throughout the 1970s, thanks in part to the growth of new statistical models made possible by the advent of the computer, and in the 1980s we, and scholars who followed our lead, proved Kant correct. By then we had collected data on all wars that had occurred over the last several centuries, and by applying various statistical analyses to these data, we established that there never (or virtually never) has been a war between well-established democracies. Moreover, through these techniques, we also proved that there was not a hidden factor accounting for this, such as a lack of common borders, or geographic distance between democracies. Nor was this democratic peace attributable to the wealth of democracies, or their international power, education levels, technology, resources, religion, or population density. Our findings are straightforward:

Well-established democracies do not make war on each other.

Table 27.1 provides some evidence on this.⁷⁵ It gives a simple count of wars between democracies, wars between democracies and non-democracies, and those between nondemocracies from 1816 to 1991. As the table shows, in all the wars during this period, 353 nations fought

73 Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1978, p. 29.

74 For links to such work on the Internet, see the link page on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/LINKS.HTM. For much of my research results on this, see my theme page at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/MIRACLE.HTM

75 This is Table 1.1 in my *Death By Government* at www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DBG.TAB1.1.GIF

TABLE 27.1
Democratic Versus
Nondemocratic Wars, 1816–1991

Dyads [1]	Wars [2]
democracies vs. democracies	0
democracies vs. nondemocracies	155
nondemocracies vs nondemocracies	198
Total	353

1. Stable democracies. This only excludes the war between an ephemeral republican France and republican Rome in 1849.
2. Defined as any military action in which at least 1,000 are killed.

each other. The numbers refer to pairs of nations (dyads) violently engaged in war against each other. For example, in the brief 1979 war between Cambodia and Vietnam, there was only one pair of nations at war. In the Six Day War of 1967, Israel fought Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, thus making it three pairs at war (Israel vs. Egypt, Israel vs. Jordan, and Israel vs. Syria). The table presents the result of adding all pairs at war for all wars from 1816 to 1991. In no case did a democracy clearly fight another democracy, which is also true since 1991. There never has been a Battle of the Somme between free people. No battle has come even close. In fact, there has been no lethal military action between *liberal* democracies, as they are defined in Chapter 6, ever.

But one might still ask whether this is owed to chance. Since in the twentieth century democracies were a minority among nations, and in previous centuries there were only a handful of democracies at any given time, is not it likely that this lack of war is by chance—luck? Statistical analysis enables us to calculate the probability of such events taking place. True, statistics can be misused and have been, but this is true of any scientific method. Virtually all the medical drugs deemed safe for us to take today are based on statistical tests, not unlike those used to test whether democracies not making war on each other is a chance occurrence. If we are going to be cynical about statistics, then we should also be very wary of taking any modern drugs for an illness or disease. This issue is really not about statistics but how well they have been applied, and whether the data meet the assumptions of the statistical model used.

Different researchers have tested the lack of war between democracies in different ways for different years, the definitions of democracy, and the ways of defining war, and in those studies using tests of significance, the positive result has been statistically significant in each case.⁷⁶ Thus, the overall significance of this absence of war is really a multiple (or function, if some of these studies are not independent) of these different significant probabilities, which would make the overall probability (subjectively estimated) of the results occurring by chance alone surely at least a million to one.⁷⁷

76 An annotated bibliography on the earlier work on the democratic peace is at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/MTF.ANNOTBIBLIO.HTM. See also the “Democracy and War” links at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/LINKS.HTM

77 Readers may have many other questions about this lack of relationship between democracy and war, often called the democratic peace. I have tried to answer a number of them in an Appendix Q&A to my *Power Kills*. The appendix is on my website at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/PK.APPEN1.1.HTM. See also my article on “What is the Democratic Peace?” at: http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DP.IS_WHAT.HTM

Chapter 28

The Freer The People, the Greater the Peace

There is a near perfect correlation between the lack of freedom in two nations and the number killed in wars between them.

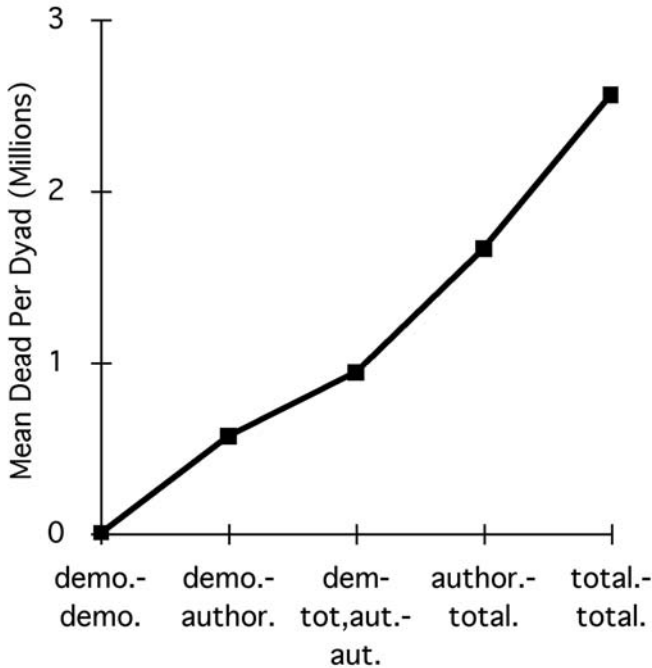
It is not just a free, democratic populace that inhibits war, but also the *degree* to which people are free. To understand this, we must stop thinking about war as a single event that happens or does not happen. Rather, we should think of war as embodying different amounts of killing, just as a yardstick embodies different degrees of length. A war may be as vast in scope as World War I or World War II, in which the fighting between Germany and the Soviet Union alone took more than 7.5 million lives. But the severity of a war may only be in hundreds killed, not millions—as was the war between India and China in 1962, at a cost to each of around 500 dead, or the Gulf War, when the United States lost 148 people from battle and 35 from friendly fire. All are wars, but the relevant distinction among them here is one of magnitude.

Imagine a yardstick of freedom, with at one end democracies like Canada, New Zealand, and Sweden, and at the other end the least free countries like North Korea, Sudan, Burma, Cuba, and Laos. Toward the middle would be such authoritarian countries as Egypt, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Then, for any two countries, the closer the government of each is to the democratic end of the yardstick, the more likely it is that there will be fewer killed in any war between them. Thus we can establish a correlation between the degree of freedom and the degree of intensity in war.

Figure 28.1 graphs this correlation for governments divided into democratic, authoritarian (people are partly free), and totalitarian (people have no freedom) subgroups.⁷⁷ This shows a near-perfect correlation between nonfreedom and war dead over the years 1900–1980. At one end of this correlation we have two nations that are both democratically free

⁷⁷ This is from Figure 3.1 in my *Power Kills* (1997) at www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/PK.FIG3.1.GIF

FIGURE 28.1
The Less Democratic Two
Regimes,
the More Severe Their Wars.



demo. = democracy author. = authoritarian
 total. = totalitarian

(labeled “demo” in the figure) that have fought no wars and have experienced, if any at all, very minor violence between the most marginal (electoral) of the democracies. At the other end, we have nations in which there are no civil rights and political liberties, and a dictator commands all politically relevant activity and groups. Such totalitarian governments (labeled “tot” or “total”), as the figure illustrates, are most likely to have the bloodiest wars.

The part of World War II involving totalitarian Germany and the Soviet Union is a case in point. In fighting against each other, the Soviet Union lost 7.5 million in battle, and Nazi Germany lost most of its 3.5 million battle dead. No two nations have ever, before or since, inflicted such massive bloodshed on each other.

Authoritarian nations (labeled “aut” or “author”) are between democratic and totalitarian ones in their degree of freedom and, as should be true empirically, their violence is more or less, depending on whether they fight against democracies or totalitarian nations.

To the iron law that democracies do not make war on each other, we can now add:

The less democratically free any two nations are, the more likely is severe violence between them.

There are many other kinds of international violence besides war. There is violence short of war, such as American jets shooting down Iraqi fighter planes that violated the United Nations-defined no-fly zone over southern Iraq in the late 1990s; the blowing up of a South Korean passenger jet by North Korean agents; or military action by Cuban forces against Somalia during the Ethiopia-Somalia War over the Ogaden (1976–1983). And despite this absence of violence *between* democracies, democracies overall can be violent and aggressive.

Democracies direct violence only at non-democracies.

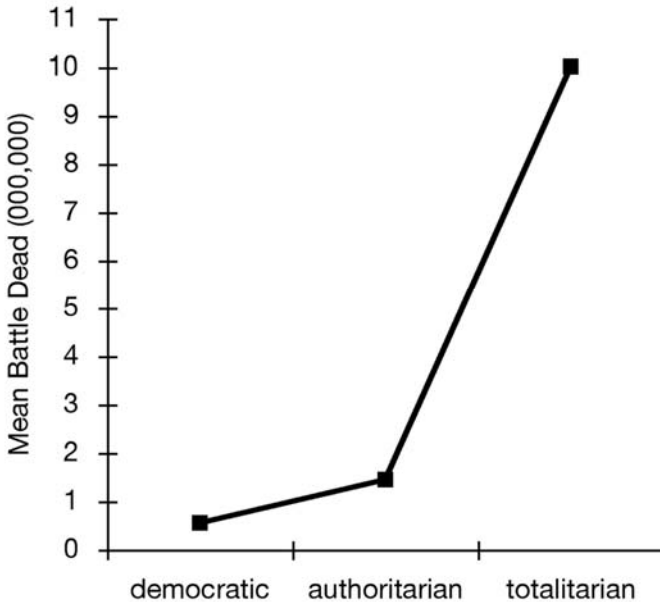
However, when one considers the explanation for why democracies are peaceful—that democratic peoples are acculturated into negotiation and compromise over violence—one should expect that democracies overall would have the least severe foreign violence and war, the least dead in all their violence fighting other countries. Another way of putting this is that, the more freedom a nation has, the less its leaders squander the lives of their people in foreign violence and war. And this is true, as I show in Figure 28.2.⁷⁹

The less democratic a country is, the more intense its foreign violence.

This is not to say that democracies are generally pacifist. They have engaged in bloody wars, usually to fight aggression and defend themselves and other democracies. And certainly democracies have also been the aggressors, as was the United States in the Spanish-American

79 This is from Figure 4.2 in *Power Kills* (1997).

FIGURE 28.2
The Less Democratic a
Regime,
The More Severe Its Foreign



War, the Philippine-American War of 1899–1902, the Grenada and Panama interventions, and the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions. On the average, however, democratic leaders are more careful about the lives of their citizens and, therefore, they fight less severe wars. There also are exceptions to this, as in the Battle of the Somme during which the British commanding generals continued to throw troops into battle even after its bloody losses and lack of success. However, it should be pointed out again that the repercussions of this on British public opinion were so great as to make British foreign policy naively pacifist for a full generation. Totalitarian regimes have no such negative feedback. Their dictators can, time after time, in war after war, use their people as mass instruments of war, like bullets and shells, throwing them at the enemy in human waves, for whatever purpose.

As a species, we have been killing ourselves by the millions in war after war throughout history. Now, finally, we have the power of knowledge to end forever—or at the very least drastically reduce—all this human slaughter. Freedom gives us the answer.

We must foster democratic freedom for all humanity to end this bloody scourge.

Until all people everywhere enjoy this freedom, we must foster at least some freedom where none exists to lessen the mass killing by war. War is an evil, and the fact that it has necessarily been fought by free people to preserve their freedom makes it no less so. What would eliminate this evil must be a moral good. *Therefore, lessening and potentially ending war is another moral good of freedom.*

Chapter 29

Why the Democratic Peace?

[Democracies] have other means of resolving conflicts between them and therefore do not need to fight each other . . . and . . . they perceive that democracies should not fight each other . . . By this reasoning, the more democracies there are in the world, the fewer potential adversaries we and other democracies will have and the wider the zone of peace.

– Bruce Russett

Why is it that free and democratic peoples do not make war on each other? Remember Immanuel Kant's hypothesis that, since people generally do not want to bear the cost of war, they would, if they could, restrain their leaders. On the surface, this seems a good explanation, and it does help to explain why democracies do not make war on each other. Yet democratic people have also been jingoistic. They have favored war and encouraged their leaders to fight. For instance, the public outcry in 1898 over the explosion aboard the American battleship *Maine* in a Cuban harbor and its sinking with a loss of 260 men pressured Congress and President McKinley into intervening militarily in Cuba. Spain then reluctantly declared war on the United States. American public opinion also strongly favored President Truman's commitment of American troops to the defense of South Korea against the North Korean invasion in 1950, and similarly favored President Johnson's request to Congress for a blank check—the Tonkin Gulf resolution of 1964—to come to the defense of South Vietnam, then near collapse under the weight of North Vietnam's aggression.

Clearly, then, there is something much deeper than simply a democratic people's fear of death and destruction at work in preventing wars among democracies. This peacekeeping factor is analogous to what inhibits democratic nations from internal political violence, as I described it in Chapter 19. Where democratic freedom flourishes in two countries, where there are free markets and freedom of religion, association, ideas, and speech, then societies of mutual interest such as corporations, partnerships, associations, societies, churches, schools, and clubs proliferate in and between the countries. Examples of these are the

the Boy Scouts, and the Association of Tennis Professionals. These cross-national groups become separate pyramids of power, competing with each other and with governments. As a result, both democratic nations then are sewn together into one society, one crosscut by these multifold groups, with multiple bonds between them.

Moreover, between democratic governments there are many official and unofficial connections and linkages made to achieve similar functions and satisfy mutual interests. Their militaries freely coordinate strategies, and may even share equipment in line with their mutual defense arrangements and perceived common dangers. An example is nuclear weapons and military equipment shared by Great Britain and the United States. Intelligence services will share some secrets and even sometimes agents. Health services will coordinate their studies, undertake common projects, and provide health supplies when needed. Such multiple shared interests bond these societies together.

Politicians, leaders, and groups, therefore, have a common interest in keeping the peace. And where conflict might escalate into violence, such as over some trade issue or fishing rights, interests are so cross-pressured by different groups and ties that the depth of feeling and single-minded devotion to the interest at stake is simply not there. Keep in mind that for democratic leaders to choose to make the huge jump to war against another country, there must be almost fanatical dedication to the interests—the stakes—involved, almost to the exclusion of all else.

There is also something about democracies that is even more important than these links, bonds, and cross-pressures. This is their *democratic culture*. Democratic peoples see one another as willing to compromise and negotiate issues rather than fighting violently over them. More important, they see one another as the same kind—part of one's in-group, one's moral universe. They each share not only socially, in overlapping groups, functions, and linkages, but also in political culture. Americans and Canadians, for example, have no expectation of fighting each other over trade restrictions and disputes. Both see each other as similarly free, democratic, and willing to bargain. And therefore, they have a totally unarmed 5,525-mile border between them. Similarly, with the development of a solid liberal democracy in Japan since the end of World War II, there is now no expectation of war between Japan and any other democracy, including the United States and democratic South Korea.

Finally, credit should be given to the *ideology of democratic liberalism* itself. Democratic liberals believe in the right of people to make their voices heard, to have a role in government, and to be free. Such liberals, who in domestic policy may be conservative, progressive, so-

cial democrat, Democrat, or Republican, greatly oppose any violence against other democracies. Even if those in power would consider such actions, democratic liberals—who compose the vast majority of intellectuals, journalists, and politicians—would arouse a storm of protest against them.

To summarize, there is no war between democracies because their people are free. This freedom creates a multitude of groups that produce diverse linkages across borders and cross-pressured interests, and make for an exchange culture of negotiation and compromise. Free people see each other as being of the same kind, as morally similar, as negotiators instead of aggressors, and therefore have no expectation of war; and there is a prevalent ideology of democratic liberalism that believes in democratic freedom and opposes violence between democracies.

Then why do nondemocracies—or rather, the dictators who control them, since by definition the people have little say—make war on each other? Do the dictators not see each other as being of the same kind, sharing the same coercive culture? Yes, and that is exactly the problem for them. They live by coercion and force. Their guns keep them in power. They depend on a controlled populace manipulated through propaganda, deceit, and fear. Commands and decrees are the working routine of dictators; negotiations are a battleground in which one wins through lies, subterfuge, misinformation, stalling, and manipulation. A dictator's international relations are no different. They see them as war fought by other means. They will only truly negotiate in the face of bigger and better guns, and they will only keep their promises as long as those guns remain pointed at them. This is also how one dictator sees another—and, incidentally, how they see democracies.

This is not to say that war *necessarily will* happen between two countries if one or both is not democratic. They may be too far away from each other, too weak, or too inhibited by the greater power of a third country. It is only to say that the governments of such countries lack the social and cultural inhibitions that would prevent armed conflict between them, and that their dictatorial governments inherently encourage war. War may not happen, but it can, and the more undemocratic the governments, the more likely it will.

There are two beliefs about democracy as a possible solution to war that I should address. One is the belief that what we have always done throughout our history is an inevitable force of our nature. Since we always have had war, we always will. Note, however, that down through the ages, almost all the world lived under absolute monarchs, be they kings, queens, emperors, czars, or whatever. Monarchs inherited their rule and commanded without question. There were exceptions for his-

torically brief periods, such as in the classical Greek city-states, ancient Rome, and Switzerland during the Middle Ages. But so dominant was monarchism that just three centuries ago, in most of the world, it would have seemed natural to our species, unchangeable. Now, absolute hereditary rule only exists in a few small countries such as Saudi Arabia, and should be gone entirely within a generation or so.

Another example of an institution that once seemed inevitable was the ownership of slaves. Slavery was even more universally accepted and practiced than absolute monarchies. Yet now it is virtually ended except in some small backwater countries like Sudan, and there only as an adjunct to its civil war. As a species we may kill and murder each other, but also as a species we have the mental freedom, will, and creativity to eliminate that which we collectively despise or which endangers us. We need only the knowledge to do so, and we now have this knowledge about war.

The second belief that inhibits accepting freedom as a solution to war is its simplicity. My social science colleagues often rave about this. “The social world is too complex,” they say, unaware that this statement itself is not a proven truth, but only a hypothesis. “You can’t reduce human behavior to one variable like this,” they say. “War must be the result of many factors interacting in complex ways—diplomatic, political, military, social, cultural, and so on. I cannot believe you would simply reduce all this to freedom. How can you ignore the balance of power, historical grievances, religious conflict, territorial conflicts, and the like?”

I do not. In relations between democratic and nondemocratic nations, or among nondemocratic nations themselves, all these complex factors beloved of the historian and political scientist may indeed cause war. It is just that the less freedom the people of these countries have, the more likely it is that war will result. Only between democracies does freedom create the conditions to override these factors.

PART 7

Conclusion

In the last sentence in the final Volume 5 of my *Understanding Conflict and War* (1981), I wrote what could as well sum up this book:

*To eliminate war, to restrain violence, to nurture universal peace and justice, is to foster freedom.*⁸⁰

⁸⁰ These books are also on my website. The page with the quote is at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/TJP.CHAP13.HTM

Chapter 30

Freedom is a Right and Creates Human Security

We have identified power with greatness, thugs with statesmen, and propaganda with results; we have let moral and cultural relativism silence our outrage, while conceding the moral high ground to the utopian dreamers; we have refused to recognize evil as evil; and we have ignored the catastrophic human cost of such confusions, and the natural and moral right to freedom.

The best way to sum up this book is by reference to Table 30.1. In Table 30.1a at the top, we can clearly see the difference that freedom makes in the wealth and prosperity of a people. The greater their freedom, the more their purchasing power compared to other nations, the less their poverty, and the greater their human development. In short, freedom is the way to economic and social human security.

There is more to human security than wealth and prosperity. There is also the security of knowing that one's life and the lives of loved ones are safe from lethal repression, genocide and mass murder, and deadly famines. Here Table 30.1b could not be more consistent—the more freedom people have, the fewer their deaths due to famine, genocide and mass murder, and international and civil war.

From this table and the analyses and statistical tests done elsewhere,⁸⁰ I can assert with considerable confidence that freedom is in fact what it appears to be in Table 30.1, and what I have claimed for it in the previous chapters, which is that:

80 Because of the technical nature of the appendix to my online *Saving Lives*, I have omitted it from this revision. It tests the relationship of freedom to human security (a people's wealth, prosperity, health and the absence of a threat to their lives by genocide and mass murder, war, and political turmoil and instability) for 190 nations over 70 variables through the use of factor analysis, analysis of variance, and multiple and curvilinear regression. The results further confirm the conclusions of this book. The appendix is at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM

TABLE 30.1a
Wealth and Prosperity For 190 Nations
by Level of Freedom, 1997—1998

Characteristic	Free	Partly free	Unfree
Average freedom level [1]	13	8	3
Average PPP per person \$ [2]	11,918	4,285	3,733
Average Hum. Pov. Index [3]	14	26	34
Average Hum. Dev. Index [4]	0.8	0.63	0.58

TABLE 30.1b
Deaths by Cause and Freedom Rating, 1900—1987

Cause	Deaths (000)			
	Free	Partly free	Unfree	Total
Famine	0	14,374	>60,080	>74,454
Democide [5]	157	26,092	103,194	129,443
Internat'l war [6]	2,306	19,171	34,000	55,477
Civil war [7]	481	4,673	5,981	11,135
Total	2,944	64,310	>203,356	>270,509

Notes

1. Combined rating of Freedom House on civil liberties and political rights, which varies from a rating of 2 to 14. For this table, free = ratings of 11-14, Partly Free = 6-10, Unfree = 2-5. Data from the Table A.1 at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM.

2. PPP = purchasing power parity per person, or the average person's ability in \$ to purchase goods comparable to what can be purchased by those living in other states. This is a good measure of comparable average wealth. Data for 1998 and from Table A.7 at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM

3. Hum. Pov. Index = Human Poverty Index (HPI). Source is the United Nations Development Program. See Table A.5 at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WF.APPENDIX.HTM. Data for 1998.

4. Hum. Dev. Index = Human Development Index (HDI). The index comprises life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, gross primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment, GNP per capita in purchasing power parity. For source, see note 3. Data for 1998.

5. Domestic genocide and mass murder from Table 16A.1 of Statistics of Democide at: www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.TAB16A.1.GIF. Includes nation-state and quasi-state regimes.

6. Includes combat dead and other civilian war dead. Excludes wartime democide. From diverse sources, including that for democide.

7. For 141 state level regimes. Excludes democide. Source same as for democide.

The freedom of a people is the cause of their greater wealth and prosperity, of human development, and of security from violence.

But as important as such statistics are, they are still only statistics; they miss the sheer misery, pain, and horror of the unfree. They can only imperfectly reflect what is a wretched and bloody hell: in the world today, billions of human beings are still subject to absolute privation, exposure, starvation, disease, torture, rape, beatings, forced labor, genocide, mass murder, executions, deportations, political violence, and war. These billions live in fear for their lives, and for those of their loved ones. They have no human rights, no liberties. These people are only pieces on a playing board for the armed thugs and gangs that oppress their nations, raping them, looting them, exploiting them, and murdering them. We hide the identity of the gangs—we sanctify them—with the benign concept of “government,” as in the “government” of Khmer Rouge Cambodia, Stalin’s Soviet Union, or Hitler’s Germany.

The gangs that control these so-called governments oppress whole nations under cover of international law. They are like a gang that captures a group of hikers and then does with them what it wills, robbing all, torturing and murdering some because gang members don’t like them or they are “disobedient,” and raping others. Nonetheless, the thugs that rule nations “govern” by the right of sovereignty: the community of nations explicitly grants them the right by international law to govern a nation when they show that they effectively control the national government, and this right carries with it the promise that other nations will not intervene in their internal affairs.

International law now recognizes that if these gangs go to extremes, such as massive ethnic cleansing or genocide, then the international community has a countervailing right to stop them. However, this area of international law is still developing, and as we saw in the current examples of Sudan, Burma, North Korea, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, and China (and one could include Cuba, Pakistan, Iran, and Syria, among others), the thugs still largely have their way with their victims.

This is unconscionable. As I showed in Chapter 2, citizens of all countries—a Chinese peasant, a Sudanese black, a Saudi Arabian woman, a Burmese Karen, and all of the 6 billion other people—have the right to freedom of speech, religion, organization, and a fair trial, among other rights, and all these civil and political rights are sub-

sumed by one overarching right to be free. This right overrules sovereignty, which is *granted* according to tradition based on a system of international treaties, not natural law. Freedom, by contrast, is not something others grant. It is a right due every human being. It can only be taken from a people and denied them by force of arms, by power.

For too many intellectuals, however, it is not enough to point out that a people have a right to be free. They will counter by arguing that freedom is desirable, but first people must be made equal, given food to eat, work, and health care. Freedom must be limited as a means to good ends, such as the public welfare, prosperity, peace, ethnic unity, or national honor. Sometimes the intellectuals who go about creating such justifications for denying people their freedom are so persuasive that even reasonable people will accept their convoluted arguments. Need I mention the works of Marx and Lenin, for example, who provided “scientific” excuses for the tyranny of such thugs as Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot? There even were many now-forgotten, or now-excused, intellectuals and other influential figures who praised the economic efficiency and progressiveness of Hitler and Mussolini before World War II. And one should not ignore the large number of Western intellectuals, academics, and students who fell in love with Mao Tse-tung, some even carrying around his *Red Book* of Mao quotations, while this absolute, tyrannical dictator murdered millions of people, created the world’s greatest famine through his policies, and caused a civil war—the Cultural Revolution, among the bloodiest in history.

To many compassionate people, such intellectuals, arguing that freedom must be sacrificed for a better life, have had the best of the argument and the moral high ground. These intellectuals have tried to show that freedom empowers greed, barbaric competition, inefficiency, inequality, the debasement of morals, the weakening of ethnic or racial identity, and so on. In spite of the international certification of freedom as a human right by the United Nations, and treaties and agreements among nations, those defending freedom often feel guilty, as though they somehow lack sympathy for the poor and oppressed. For example, some say of communist Castro’s barbaric rule over the Cuban people, “After all, the Cubans have free medical care, a good educational system, and a right to work.” Never mind that Castro is responsible for the murder of tens of thousands of Cubans, the torture and beating of many more, and the imprisonment of vast numbers of those who have only protested their lack of rights.

To be defensive about freedom in the face of such justifications is morally wrong-headed. No moral code or civil law allows that a gang

leader and his followers can murder, torture, and repress some at will as long as the thugs provide others with a good life. But even were it accepted that under the cover of government authority, a ruler can murder and repress his people so long as it promotes human betterment, the burden of proof is on those who argue that therefore those people will be better off.

There is no such proof. Quite the opposite: in the twentieth century, we have had the most costly and extensive tests of such arguments, involving billions of people. The Nazis, Italian fascists under Mussolini, Japanese militarists, and Chinese Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek have tested fascist promises of a better life. Likewise, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot have tested the utopian promises of communism, to mention the most prominent communist experiments; and Burma, Iraq, and Syria, among others, have also tested state socialism. All these vast social experiments have failed, utterly and miserably, and they have done so at the vast human cost that has included global social upheaval, the displacement of millions, the impoverishment of billions, and the death of tens of millions from famine, extreme internal violence, and the most destructive wars—not to mention the many tens of millions more murdered outright.

These social experiments carried out by force against billions of people have produced a vast nation of the dead which, if it were a sovereign country, would be among the world's top ten in population.

In sharp contrast, there are the arguments for freedom, which is, as I have shown in previous chapters, not only a right, but *a supreme moral good in itself*. The very fact of a people's freedom creates a better life for all, as shown in Table 30.1.

Free people create a wealthy and prosperous society.

When people are free to go about their own business, they put their ingenuity and creativity in the service of all. They search for ways to satisfy the needs, desires, and wants of others. The true utopia lies not in some state-sponsored tyranny, but the free market in goods, ideas, and services, whose operating principle is that success depends on satisfying others. As described in Chapter 10, Bill Gates of Microsoft did not become a billionaire by stealing people's money, looting

their possessions, taxing them and secreting money away in Switzerland, or by using public funds to build himself mansions. No one *had* to buy Gates' products or invest in his company. He became the world's richest man by providing people with computer software that they wanted, that made their life or work easier.

People rarely do things for others because they are completely selfless—we set apart and admire those rare Mother Therasas who are. Rather, almost all act out of self-interest, and it is therefore better to create a society in which self-interest leads to mutual betterment, rather than one in which a small coterie of fanatics exert their own self-interest at the expense of the lives and welfare of others.

What underlines this moral good of freedom even more is the independence and incentives farmers have to best use their land to produce crops and food that people need to live. The result is that, in a democratically free country like the United States, farmers produce a surplus of food that the government then buys, stores, and grants in aid to poor countries. At the same time, in many of those countries where the rulers have denied their farmers any freedom in order to achieve some utopian future, where they order farmers what to grow, where, and how, and at what prices to sell the resulting crops, famines have killed tens of millions of people. The roll call of these famines is long, but must include the Soviet Union, China, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Cambodia, and North Korea. It is not by chance, as shown in Table 30.1, that:

No democratically free people have suffered from mass famine.

It is extraordinary, how little known this is. There are plenty of hunger projects and plans to increase food aid for the starving millions, all of which is good enough in the short run. A starving person will die before the people can kick out their rulers or make them reform their policies. Yet simply feeding the starving today is not enough. They also have to be fed tomorrow and every day thereafter. However, free these people from their rulers' commands over their farming, and soon they will be able to feed themselves and others as well. There is an adage that applies to this: "Give a starving person a fish to eat and you feed him only for one day; teach him how to fish, and he feeds himself forever." Yet teaching is no good alone, if people are not free to apply their new knowledge—yes, teach them how to fish, but also promote the freedom they need to do so.

Surprisingly, the incredible economic productivity and wealth produced by a free people and their freedom from famines are not the only moral goods of freedom, nor, perhaps, even the most important moral

goods. When people are free, they comprise a spontaneous society the characteristics of which *strongly inhibit society-wide political violence*, as shown in Table 30.1. Freedom greatly reduces the possibility of revolutions, civil war, rebellions, guerrilla warfare, coups, violent riots, and the like. Most of the violence within nations occurs where thugs rule with absolute power. There is a continuum here:

The more power the rulers have, and the less free their people, the more internal violence these people will suffer.

Keep in mind that throughout the world, people are essentially the same. It is not that the people of any culture, civilization, or nation are by nature any more bloodthirsty, barbaric, power-hungry, or violent than those of another. What makes for peace within a nation is not national character, but social conditions that reduce tension and hostility between people, lessen the stakes of conflict, cross-pressure interests, and promote negotiation, tolerance, and compromise. Such are the conditions created by democratic freedom. The more a people are free, the greater such conditions inhibit internal violence.

Surely that which protects people against internal violence, that which so saves human lives, is a moral good. And this is freedom.

Then there is mass democide, the most destructive means of ending human lives of any form of violence. Except in the case of the Nazi Holocaust of European Jews, few people know how murderous the dictators of this world have been, and could be. Virtually unknown is the fact that the number of non-Jewish Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Frenchmen, Germans, and others murdered by Hitler surpasses by two or three times the Jews he killed.

Then there are the shocking tens of millions murdered by Stalin and Mao, and the other millions wiped out by Pol Pot, Ho Chi Minh, Kim Il-sung, and their kind. Just omitting foreigners, who are most often murdered during a war, such thugs murdered about 123 million of their own people from 1900 to 1987. Adding foreigners and including the whole twentieth century raises the toll they have killed to an incredible nearly 174 million.

Even now, in the twenty-first century, these mass murders still go on in Burma, Sudan, North Korea, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Congo, just to mention the most glaring examples.

It should be clear, then, why I refer to the rulers of these murderous regimes as *thugs*. I am not a diplomat or a government official and do not have to worry about the delicate sensitivities of these rulers. I can call these thugs the thugs they are. As should be clear from this book, they often murder people by carefully thought-out plans, they set up a bureaucracy to do so, they train people for this purpose, and then they order the killing. Sometimes they murder people because of their race, ethnicity, or religion; sometimes for their parents' or other relative's political activities or beliefs or speech; sometimes for their lack of proper enthusiasm for their glorious rulers. Sometimes they establish a murder quota to fill, or kill people randomly to set an example. While we can approximate how many these thugs have killed, we cannot even guess at the heartbreak and misery these deaths have caused their surviving loved ones, and how many of these poor people have died of a broken heart or committed suicide.

Moreover, the term murder hardly carries the full weight of the pain and misery of the victims. Some lucky ones died quickly with a shot to the back of the head, or by decapitation. Most died quite wretchedly, in pain from torture or beatings, by drowning or being buried or burned alive, or in agony from wounds. Many died from intentionally administered starvation, thirst, exposure, or disease. Some died horribly as the result of repeated human medical experiments. We have no pain/misery index to measure all this except for the incredible pile of corpses these thugs have created in one century. We must assume that a penumbra of pain and misery, of love and hope squashed, of a future stolen surrounds each of these millions of corpses.

What is true about freedom and internal violence is also so for this mass democide:

The more freedom a people have, the less likely their rulers are to murder them. The more power the thugs have, the more likely they are to murder their people.

Could there be a greater moral good than to end or minimize such mass murder? This is what freedom does and for this it is, emphatically, a moral good.

There is still more to say about freedom's value. While we now know that the world's ruling thugs generally kill several times more of their subjects than do wars, it is war on which moralists and pacifists generally focus their hatred, and devote their resources to ending or moderating. This singular concentration is understandable, given the hor-

ror and human costs, and the vital political significance of war. Yet it should be clear by now that war is a symptom of freedom's denial, and that freedom is the cure. Three points bear repeating from Chapter 27. First:

Democratically free people do not make war on each other.

This is so important that some scientists have made this historical fact the subject of whole books, such as Bruce Russett's *Grasping the Democratic Peace*, James Lee Ray's *Democracy and International Conflict*, and Spencer R. Weart's *Never At War*.

Chapter 29 gives a very good explanation for why democracies do not make war on each other, and it is the same as that for why there is by far the least internal violence and democide within democracies. The diverse groups, cross-national bonds, social links, and shared values of democratic peoples sew them together; and shared liberal values dispose them toward peaceful negotiation and compromise with each other. It is as though the people of democratic nations were one society.

This truth that democracies do not make war on each other provides a solution for eliminating war from the world: globalize democratic freedom.

This solution is far in the future, however. It may only kick in when most nations are democratized. Therefore the second point:

The less free the people within any two nations are, the bloodier and more destructive the wars between them; the greater their freedom, the less likely such wars become.

And third, as seen in Table 30.1:

The more freedom the people of a nation have, the less bloody and destructive their wars.

What this means is that we do not have to wait for all, or almost all nations to become liberal democracies to reduce the severity of war. As we promote freedom, as the people of more and more nations gain greater human rights and political liberties, as those people with-

out any freedom become partly free, we will decrease the bloodiness of the world's wars. In short:

Increasing freedom in the world decreases the death toll of its wars. Surely, whatever reduces and then finally ends the scourge of war in our history, without causing a greater evil, must be a moral good. And this is freedom.

The implications of this for foreign policy and international activism are profound. Since peace, national security, and national welfare are the paramount concerns of a democratic nation's foreign policy, clearly the overriding goal should be to peacefully promote human rights and democratic freedom. This should be the bottom line of international negotiations, treaties, foreign aid, and military action (if necessary for defense or humanitarian reasons, as in Kosovo or Bosnia). As to defense policy, military planning is based on assessments of intentions and capability. What is clear is that the less free the people of a nation are, the more we should beware of the intentions of their rulers. In other words, it is not the democracies of the world that we need to defend against.

Moreover, think about what the peace-creating power of freedom means for nuclear weapons. Many people are justly worried about the ultimate danger to humanity—nuclear war. They protest and demonstrate against nuclear weapons. Some cross the line into illegal activities, such as destroying military property, and risk prison to draw public attention to the danger of such weapons. Were these dedicated people to spend even half this effort on promoting freedom and human rights for the people of the most powerful dictatorships that have or may soon have such weapons—for instance, China, North Korea, and Iran—they would be striking at the *root cause* for the risk of nuclear attack.

The power of freedom to end war, minimize violence within nations, and eradicate genocide and mass murder almost seems magical. It is as though we have a single-drug cure for cancer. Had I not actually done much of the research myself over more than forty years, I would have doubted all this. Yet, my work and that of other social scientists and scholars have proven it true.

Our knowledge of the peace-creating and peacemaking effects of freedom now gives us a nonviolent way to promote a nonviolent world. As should now be clear:

Democratic freedom is a method of nonviolence.

Enhancing, spreading, and promoting human rights and democracy are the way to enhance, spread, and promote nonviolence. Proponents of nonviolence have worked out many peaceful tactics for opposing dictators, such as sit-down strikes, general strikes, mass demonstrations, refusal to pay taxes, underground newspapers, sabotage by excessive obedience to the rules, and the like. Much thought has gone into how a people can nonviolently promote human rights. Overall, however, nonviolence works best among a free people. And:

Freedom itself promotes a nonviolent solution to social problems and conflicts.

In conclusion, then, we have wondrous human freedom as a moral force for the good. *Freedom produces social justice, creates wealth and prosperity, minimizes violence, saves human lives, and is a solution to war.* In two words, it creates *human security*. Moreover, and most important:

People should not be free only because it is good for them. They should be free because it is their right as human beings.

In opposition to freedom is power, its antagonist. While freedom is a right, the power to govern is a privilege granted by a people to those they elect and hold responsible for its use. Too often, however, thugs seize control of a people with their guns and use them to make their power total and absolute. Where freedom produces wealth and prosperity, such absolute power causes impoverishment and famine. Where freedom minimizes internal violence, eliminates genocide and mass murder, and solves the problem of war, such absolute power unleashes internal violence, murders millions, and produces the bloodiest wars. In short, power kills; absolute power kills absolutely.

Now, to summarize this whole book, why freedom?

Because it is every person's right. And it is a moral good—it promotes wealth and prosperity, social justice, and nonviolence, and preserves human life.