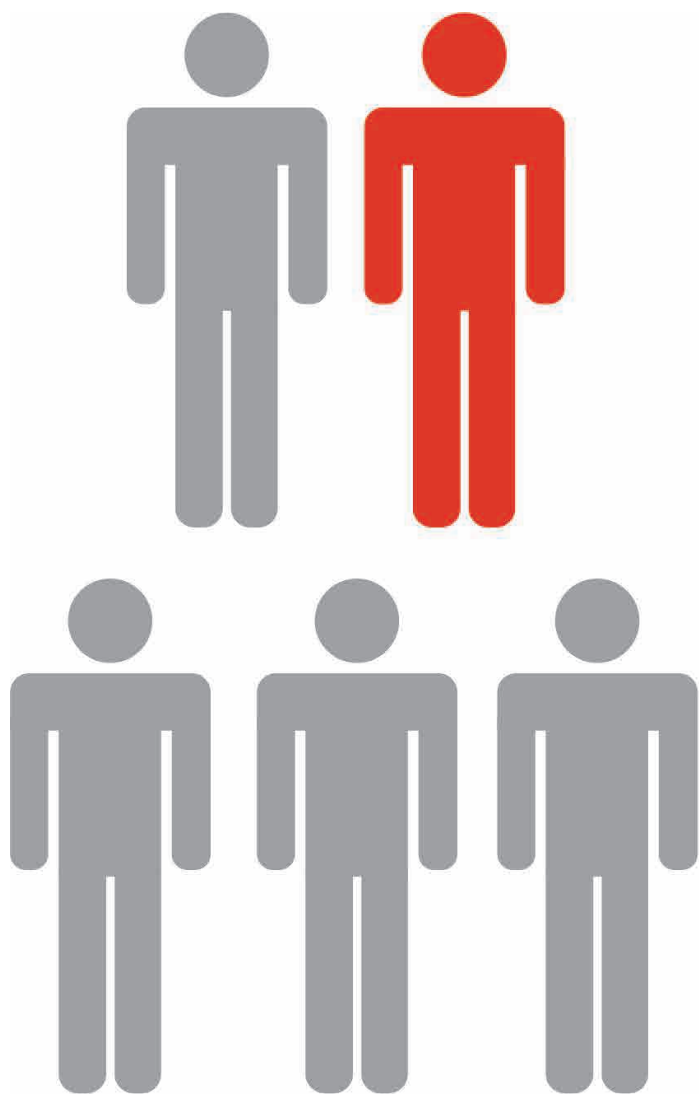


VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM

2016 Annual Report



Victims of Communism
Memorial Foundation



TODAY,
1 *IN* 5
PEOPLE
LIVE UNDER
A COMMUNIST REGIME

VISION

We envision a world free from
the false hope of communism.

MISSION

Our mission is to educate this generation and
future generations about the ideology, history,
and legacy of communism.

HISTORY

Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation is
an educational and human rights nonprofit organization
authorized by a unanimous Congressional Act, which
was signed as Public Law 103-199 by President William
J. Clinton on December 17, 1993. From 2003 to 2009,
President George W. Bush was Honorary Chairman
of the Foundation. On June 12, 2007, he dedicated the
Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington, D.C.

2016 *in* REVIEW

This was the most intense year of growth in our Foundation's history. We kept an ambitious pace in pursuit of three goals: **educate** Americans about the history of failed socialist systems, **boost** dissident truth-telling, and **honor** the victims of communist regimes.

Through convenings of teachers, students, and civic leaders, we countered the rising trend towards socialism. By engaging the media in the cause of pro-democracy advocates and sharing their stories, we showed millions why we must hold Marxist dictators accountable for their crimes. We empowered Millennial Americans and dissidents, and reached more people than ever before with the truth about the collectivist ideologies of communism and socialism.



Message from the **CHAIRMAN**

I never suffered under communism. I never waited for a door knock in the middle of the night by the secret police. I was never banished to the Gulag as “an enemy of the people.” But in the fall of 1956, I was a student in Paris when the Hungarian Revolution broke out. I heard the young people of Hungary joyously yell, “We’re free!” on the radio. Then the Soviet tanks rolled in, and the broadcasts out of Budapest were desperate pleas for America to help. Our answer was silence, and the silence stuck with me my entire life.

I took an oath. I resolved to help those who resisted communism however I could. In the years to come, my anticommunism, inherited from my father, would be reinforced by my political mentors, Dr. Walter Judd and William F. Buckley, Jr., and my political heroes, Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan.

Starting in the late 1930s, my father covered every important congressional hearing about communism, developing a wide network of experts and sources. I met many of these experts—most of them former communists. I never tired of their stories of how they were first attracted to communism but rejected it when they realized it was a web of lies.

I was strongly influenced by the writing of Buckley, who agreed with Whittaker Chambers that in communism, America faced a transcendent crisis not merely of politics or economics but of faith.

I was privileged to work with Dr. Judd, whose insights into communism—especially that it was doomed to fail because it believed that communists could create a new man without regard for human nature and natural law—profoundly affected my understanding of the “ism” responsible for the deaths of more than 100 million people.

Wherever they came to power, communists killed: in the Gulag of the Soviet Union; in the laogai of Maoist China; in the “killing fields” of Cambodia; in the “reeducation” camps of Vietnam; with the famines that decimated North Korea.

The communists found their justification in Lenin, who, in the words of the late Russian historian Alexander Yakovlev, created a system “based on the ideology of violence.”

The truth about communism must be recorded and passed on. That is the mission of Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation: to educate this generation and future generations about the history, ideology, and legacy of communism.

In their many different languages, the victims keep saying, “Remember us, remember us.” To which we respond—we will never forget you!

And we will never stop telling the truth about communism knowing that the truth will make us free.

May God bless you,

Lee Edwards, Ph.D.



Message from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

This year, “living in truth”—as Czech dissident Václav Havel famously challenged us to do—required us to condemn foreign governments, U.S. educational institutions, and publishing houses for historical revisionism. They are whitewashing the brutal record of communist party rule in some 40 countries and obscuring the many atrocities committed in the name of the world’s deadliest ideology: communism.

Telling the truth about communism meant confronting policies and statements of leading U.S. politicians, both Republican and Democrat. It meant calling out major media companies for spreading propaganda as news or refusing to mention the persecuted subjects of communist party-states today in China, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam.

There were moments this year when our work felt like living “through the looking glass.” In March, during President Obama’s trip to Cuba, it was surreal to watch the administration deny that prisoners of conscience were being beaten and tortured in Castro’s prisons. Surreal to watch thousands of dissidents and peaceful protestors being rounded up (including 300 arrested the day President Obama landed in Havana). Infuriating that our Cuban friend Sirley Ávila León’s left hand had been chopped off in a regime-directed machete attack because she wanted to keep her local school open.

It was all true. It was all ignored by the White House, by the media, and by sleek travel ads. We led the charge to get a list of political prisoners into the media coverage, including during the Obama-Castro press conference. We brought Sirley to Washington where she testified before Congress. We had the honor of meeting, supporting, and boosting the truth-telling of dissidents, including the exiled Uyghur leader Dolkun Isa, Chinese human rights advocate Anastasia Lin, and Sayli Navarro, a leader of Cuba’s Las Damas de Blanco (Ladies in White), who walk the streets of Cuba each Sunday wearing white in memory of their loved ones who have been killed or imprisoned by the Cuban regime. We have been honored to recognize and support the work of these and other dissidents who fight for freedom and human rights every day.

Why do I care? Standing against the deadly totalitarian ideology of communism at home and abroad is part of being a patriotic American citizen. We are not just standing against Marxism. We are working to keep our liberty.

I’m inspired and challenged by that former dissident and freedom-fighter George Washington, who believed that “the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.”

This is why we were disturbed by the findings of our first Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes towards Socialism. A majority of Millennials believe the U.S. economic system works against them. Forty-one percent of Americans under 35 don’t think communism is a problem. Nearly one-third believe George W. Bush killed more people than Joseph Stalin. The highest number on record (46 percent) indicated they would vote for a socialist for president.

Faced with the growing ignorance of our citizenry, I recall the warning of Abraham Lincoln: “Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors.”

Our new educational programs launched this year cultivate this spirit in young Americans who must contend with the legacy of 100 years of failed Marxist experiments that—in the name of equality—introduced a new form of slavery to the modern world.

This year we faced our challenges head-on so that the American experiment in liberty may continue.

Everything we accomplish is because of the generosity of our supporters. Thank you for your confidence in our work and for joining us to help make our world free from the false hope of collectivism.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Marion".

Marion Smith

EDUCATE AMERICANS



On June 1, the Alexander Hamilton Institute's national security program met with Director of Academic Programs, Dr. Murray Bessette.

Most Millennials don't have a living memory of bomb shelter drills or sledgehammers smashing the Berlin Wall. What's fresh is their experience of the 2008 recession and the Occupy Wall Street movement. And because most schools are not teaching essential 20th century history, more and more Americans are placing their hopes in the false promises of socialism. They do not know that socialism is historically and intellectually intertwined with communism.

In response to this alarming trend, we launched major high school and college programing and published a second edition of our curriculum on communism. These efforts equipped students and teachers with the tools to spread the truth about the collectivist ideologies of communism and socialism.

Our public events and programs introduced hundreds of thousands of Americans to the truth about communism. To ensure a world where all nations and peoples are free and independent, we know we have to start at home by producing what makes our free society work: well-educated citizens.

EQUIPPING TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOM

National Seminars for High School Educators

In July, 40 teachers from public and private schools—representing 18 states plus D.C.—completed our first two National Seminars for High School Educators. The teachers we equipped in turn reach approximately 6,000 students every school year. Five outstanding teachers put the tools we gave them to work by presenting lessons on communism to teachers at state history conferences in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina throughout the 2016-2017 school year.

During each seminar, our expert faculty covered subjects including Karl Marx and Adam Smith, the nature and character of totalitarian regimes, the Cold War, Mao's China, and Castro's Cuba, as well as led group exercises to practice classroom application. We also screened our Witness Project videos, took teachers to visit nearby memorials, and hosted an evening reception where they heard from Tiananmen Square Massacre survivors. Teachers left the seminar not only with new knowledge, but also with a network of educators equally dedicated to teaching their students the truth.

“I can use virtually everything we covered in this seminar with my students. The balance of content and pedagogy was excellent. The Witness Project episodes are so powerful. My students will really be moved by these amazing, heroic, real-life stories.

—Diane Van Wyk, Valley High School, Iowa



The Foundation's first seminar class of high school teachers.



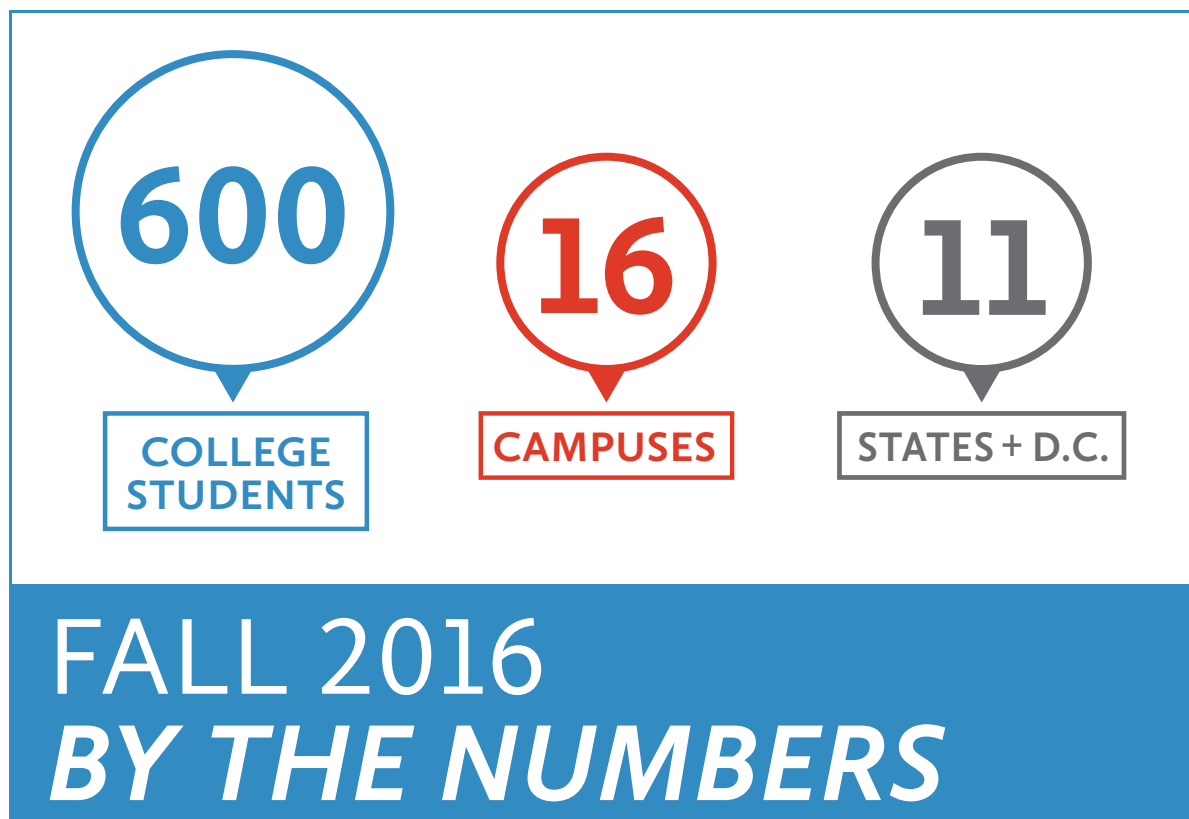
Seminar alumnae Jennifer Jolley, Mary McCullagh, and Elizabeth Rasmussen lead a workshop at the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources conference at the University of Central Florida.

SPEAKING TRUTH ON CAMPUSES

COLLEGE PROGRAMS LAUNCH

We launched our college programs this 2016-2017 academic year to test students' appetite for the truth about collectivist ideas. We discovered that students are excited to learn the facts and promote ideas that truly make countries free and prosperous. In the first semester of our brand new program, we engaged over 600 students at 16 campuses in 11 states plus D.C. We partnered with faculty and student groups to teach the history of communist regimes and expose the false promises of socialist ideals.

We organized film screenings and hosted speakers from communist and post-communist states whose personal witness stories shed light on communism, such as Dr. John Lukacs, a renowned historian who witnessed the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and Virginia Prodan, a lawyer who defended religious liberty in Ceaușescu's Romania. Our college network is growing across America as we partner with faculty and student groups to hold impactful events.





College Programs Manager Ashlee Moody connects with students at Mississippi State University.



Anastasia Lin tells her story in our latest Witness Project episode, now available on YouTube.

WHY IS CHINA SO SCARED OF A BEAUTY QUEEN?

Witness Project

Actress, beauty queen, and Chinese human rights advocate Anastasia Lin is the subject of our third Witness Project series. Her Miss World pageant platform and her film *The Bleeding Edge* focus on the forced organ harvesting of political and religious dissidents in China.

Anastasia's Witness episode is our most popular one to date. It had 180,000 views on Facebook and YouTube in November and December 2016 alone. We also put her photo on a billboard in Times Square, invited her to participate in our China Forum, and sponsored her to speak at college campuses.

When Beijing pressured the Miss World Organization to prevent Anastasia from speaking to the press and from attending our U.S. premiere of *The Bleeding Edge* in December 2016, we helped fan a media storm that exposed Miss World Organization's clampdown on free speech about human rights in China. Thirty-seven major news outlets covered the story, leading to one of our best-ever weeks of media engagement. We overcame the long arm of Chinese soft power to ensure Anastasia could share her message with millions.

The New York Times

**"Pageant Silences Beauty Queen,
A Critic of China, at US Contest"**

The Boston Globe

**"Is Miss World Silencing
Anastasia Lin?"**

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

**"A Beauty Queen Donald Trump
Should Meet"**

THE Hollywood REPORTER

**"Miss World Contestant
Anastasia Lin to Attend
US Premiere"**

BRINGING STORIES TO THE BIG SCREEN

Freedom Film Series

We screened six films in 2016 to share stories about what communist regimes do to ordinary people. These films, paired with previews of our Witness Project videos, demonstrate the resilience of the human spirit in pursuit of freedom.



THE KILLING FIELDS

Addresses the lack of justice for victims of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge.



CONDEMNED TO LIVE

Tells the stories of four Hungarian dissidents who survived imprisonment in Kisfogház, a notorious prison.



RUSSIAN WOODPECKER

Explores the aftermath of Chernobyl and searches for a cause behind the disaster.



HIGH TECH, LOW LIFE

Follows China's first citizen reporters as they document injustice under China's communist regime.



HAVANA MOTOR CLUB

Depicts the absurd obstacles standing in the way of Cubans civic organization.



THE BLEEDING EDGE

Exposes the brutal practice of forced human organ harvesting in China.

"I THINK PEOPLE SHOULD
KNOW ABOUT IT. My story
is just the tip of the iceberg."
-Anastasia Lin

CHINA

#co

uni

ills

OUTFRONT PRIME

TODAY IN CHINA IT IS
ILLEGAL TO MENTION
THE 1989 TIANANMEN
SQUARE MASSACRE

Paid for by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation

OUTFRONT PRIME

COMMUNISM
KILLS

100 MILLION & COUNTING

Paid for by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation



*Putting Faces
and Hard Facts*
IN TIMES SQUARE

DALLAS
BBQ
CATERING

DALLAS
BBQ
RESTAURANT



COMMUNISM KILLS CAMPAIGN

In October 2016, we installed seven educational billboard ads in Times Square with the theme "Communism Kills."

These billboards, which were up through February 2017, introduced approximately 1.1 million people to important faces and facts, including:

- "Today, one in five people live under communism"
- "Today in China it is illegal to mention the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre"
- "Over 6,000 Cubans were jailed in 2015 for criticizing the Castro regime"
- Photos of dissidents Sirley Ávila León and Anastasia Lin with their names and quotes
- A list by region of the 100 million victims of communism in the last 100 years

MILLENNIALS TRENDING TOWARDS SOCIALISM



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes towards Socialism

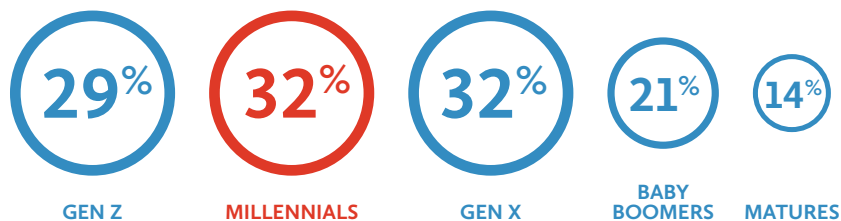
YouGov[®]

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT ON U.S. ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIALISM

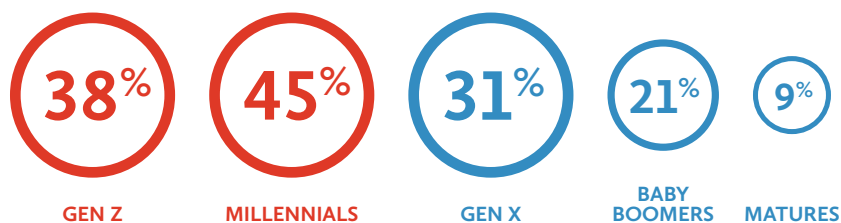
We partnered with the polling research firm YouGov to conduct a survey measuring generational perceptions of socialism and communism, and on October 17, released our first “Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes towards Socialism.” The findings reached over eight million people in print and TV media and sparked a national discussion of millennials’ rising support of socialism and ignorance of communism.

Executive Director Marion Smith explained the findings to 3 million viewers in an October 21 interview on *The O’Reilly Factor*. The report was also featured on Fox News *On the Record with Brit Hume*, in *USA Today* contributor Cal Thomas’ column, and in *The Wall Street Journal* op-ed “Is Communism Cool? Ask a Millennial.” In total, more than 35 major news outlets and 20 blogs ran stories about the results, including *The New York Times*.

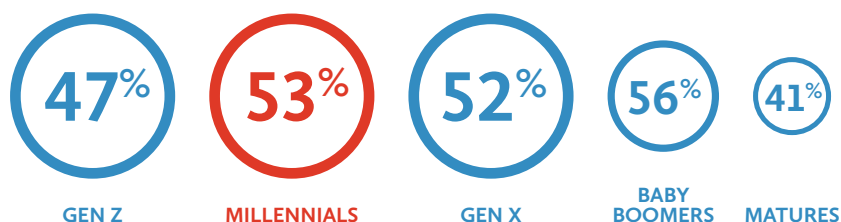
THE NUMBER OF MILLENNIALS WHO ANSWERED “TRUE” WHEN ASKED IF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH KILLED MORE PEOPLE THAN JOSEPH STALIN.



AMERICANS UNDER 35 WHO DON'T THINK COMMUNISM IS, OR EVER WAS, A PROBLEM.



THE NUMBER OF MILLENNIALS WHO THINK AMERICA'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM WORKS AGAINST THEM.



CONVENINGS



SYMPOSIUM ON SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, AND THE WELFARE STATE

We convened a Symposium on Socialism, Communism, and the Welfare State on November 19 for scholars of different disciplines and political persuasions. Thirteen university professors, as well as Bhaskar Sunkara, founder of the nation's leading socialist magazine, *Jacobin*, participated in our effort to determine if and how socialism differs from a welfare state, and to define the relationship between socialism and communism.



INVESTING IN FUTURE BALTIC LEADERS

On August 4, we briefed 38 students attending the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation Summer Leadership Academy on how to defend freedom in post-communist Europe.



BREAKING NORTH KOREA'S INFORMATION BARRIER

On December 12, we hosted a conversation with Kang Chol-hwan, a North Korean defector and author of *The Aquariums of Pyongyang*. Kang spent 10 years in Yodok concentration camp before he escaped to South Korea in 1992. Since then, he has worked to send more than 60,000 DVDs, 12,000 radio sets, and 18,000 USBs into North Korea.

ON THE BLOG

In 2016, we published 124 original articles on our blog, *Dissident*. People came to us to read up on Cuba during Obama's visit to Havana, North Korea during the Olympics, and China during the Miss World pageant. Since the blog's 2015 launch, we've grown our readership to over 83,000.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Remembering the 1949 Soviet Mass Deportations of the Baltics
Dissident

More than 200,000 people were deported from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania between 1940 and 1953, a criminal legacy of Soviet rule that today is considered a crime against humanity. We remember the victims of Soviet deportation—men, women, and children—and honor their sacrifices.



OUR LADY IN HAVANA

What Did Cubans Think of Castro?
Katarina Hall

Fidel Castro died last weekend, 57 years after he turned one of Latin America's most prosperous countries into a brutal dictatorship. World leaders have already weighed in, with some offering praise and condolences and others condemnation. But this leaves many wondering, what do the Cuban people think about Fidel?



AT THE OLYMPICS

Why Do Athletes Flee Communism?
Naphtali Rivkin

Olympians and athletes regularly defect from repressive socialist countries. In 1956, about half of the Hungarian Olympic delegation defected when the Soviet Union invaded their homeland. Today, North Korea gives its athletes the choice between refrigerators for winners and labor camps for losers. Leaving the country entirely is a better prize.



CAPTIVE NATIONS REPORT

Laos in 2016
Bounchanh Senthavong

Laos, given its location and small size, finds itself at the center of Southeast Asia's geopolitical conflicts. Bringing independence and democratic reforms to this country, which has too long suffered under a repressive regime, would help improve the stability of the entire region, as Laos is inevitably pulled into the affairs of its neighbors.

MEDIA HITS

Our media engagement more than doubled from 2015 to 2016, with 114 print and online articles, 34 blogs, eight television appearances, eight radio interviews, and one op-ed.

TELEVISION



Al Jazeera
Forgotten 51 Campaign
February 19



CNN
Forgotten 51 Campaign
March 21



Fox News
Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes
Towards Socialism
October 21

PRINT AND ONLINE



"Advocates List Cuba's Political Prisoners After Castro Says There Are None"
March 21

REUTERS

"China Angered at Rights Award For Exiled Xinjiang Leader"
April 1

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

"Obama Betrayed Cuba's Dissidents"
August 14



Ambassador Teikmanis on Symbols of Freedom
September 21

The Washington Times

"George W. Bush Viewed By One-Third Of Millennials As Bigger Killer Than Stalin: Poll"
October 17

The New York Times

"Pageant Silences Beauty Queen, A Critic Of China, At US Contest"
December 13

“The fact that the Chinese Communist Party is so threatened by a Canadian beauty queen that they would subvert the operations of an international organization supposedly dedicated to greater global understanding and the free exchange of views is very disappointing.
—Marion Smith

OP-ED

POLITICO

"How Did America Forget What 'Socialist' Means?"

by Marion Smith

March 22

“Socialism is not roads, welfare, and free education. Socialism has always had a more ominous goal and shares close historical and ideological connections with more reviled terms: Marxism and communism.
—Marion Smith

SOCIAL MEDIA

We increased our presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to connect our audience, especially young Americans, to our events, publications, and dissident stories, as well as share relevant news.



#CommunismKills Campaign

23,307 views



What Happened In Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989?

3,657 views



Fall of the Berlin Wall Anniversary

23,570 views



AIRPORT ADVERTISEMENTS

We launched our first airport ads to educate the public about the tensions between free enterprise and socialist systems. These ads were seen by thousands of travelers in major airports, including Baltimore-Washington, Boston, JFK, LaGuardia, LAX, Miami, Washington Dulles, and Reagan National.

Our 'What is Socialism?' advertisement appears in Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

**FREE ENTERPRISE
VS. SOCIALISM.
WHERE ON THE SCALE
DO WE MAXIMIZE
LIBERTY + PROSPERITY
FOR ALL?**

Get the Facts at
WhatIsSocialism.org



Victims of Communism
Memorial Foundation



COURTE
PHONI

BOOST DISSIDENT TRUTH-TELLING



Sirley Ávila León signs "L" for *Libertad* (Liberty). She lost her left hand in a Castro regime-sanctioned attack in May 2015.

In 2016, we saw China grow increasingly belligerent in the South China Sea and actively undermine international rule of law through economic espionage and cyberwarfare. It leveraged Hollywood and Confucius Institutes to buy influence in the U.S. Meanwhile, the Party ostracized, imprisoned, or disappeared those who criticized its human and civil rights abuses.

Similarly, in Cuba, diplomatic normalization has not improved the lives of ordinary people. Ahead of President Obama's trip to Havana and ahead of Fidel Castro's funeral, hundreds of political dissidents were rounded up and arrested. By the end of 2016, more than 9,000 people had been arbitrarily detained. Most Cubans remain the victims of failed socialist economic policies and a brutal police state while the influx of new U.S. cash props up the regime.

We helped our allies speak freely about how communist regimes abuse their people. These world-shaping conversations with dissidents and thought leaders from China and Cuba, as well as post-communist countries, showed Americans why we must support ordinary people's aspirations for freedom—instead of falling prey to propaganda and false promises.



Chen Guangcheng gives remarks at the second annual China Forum.



China Forum panelists discuss Beijing's restriction of free speech in the free world.



Dolkun Isa meets with Uyghur leaders in the D.C. area.



Speakers and participants gather for the "Exploring the Contested History of the Tiananmen Square Massacre" conference.

CHINA

Daring to anger the Chinese Communist Party

We dare to anger the Chinese Communist Party. In 2016, we earned their ire for our efforts to educate Americans about the true nature of China's totalitarian regime. On March 30, Xi Jinping was in D.C. meeting with President Obama. That same day, we gave Dolkun Isa, a political leader-in-exile of the Uyghurs, a Human Rights Award. The Chinese Foreign Ministry demarched the State Department and released a statement denouncing Dolkun Isa and our Foundation, referring to us as the "relevant organization in Washington."

For the 27th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, we co-hosted a conference at The Pew Charitable Trusts called "Exploring the Contested History of Tiananmen Square." The CCP was so afraid of our truth-telling that they cyberattacked us relentlessly for a week. In October, we hosted the second annual China Forum. Thought leaders and dissidents convened in D.C. to examine three major issue areas: foreign policy and security, trade and economics, and human rights and political development.

Our China initiatives culminated in our December 14 premiere of *The Bleeding Edge* with Anastasia Lin and film director Leon Lee. When Miss World bowed to Chinese pressure and attempted to silence Anastasia, we helped her tell the truth. Thirty-seven outlets covered the story, including *Associated Press*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*. One *Times* reporter described us as "an organization with obvious enmity for China's authoritarian government."



President Obama poses in front of the famous Che Guevara mural in Havana.



Sirley Ávila León testifies before a Congressional subcommittee.



Honoring the Cuban victims of communism on the day of Fidel's funeral.



Sayli Navarro of the Ladies in White at our “Cuba After Castro” roundtable.

CUBA

Fidel is gone—good riddance

Our informational campaigns helped educate key decision makers and, through TV and print media, more than 7 million Americans about the worsening human and civil rights situation in Cuba.

During President Obama’s March trip to Cuba, we released a partial list of current confirmed Cuban political prisoners we dubbed the “Forgotten 51” and published an open letter to President Obama, drawing national attention to the plight of Cuba’s jailed dissidents. Executive Director Marion Smith was interviewed on *Fox News*, *CNN*, and *Al Jazeera*, and our Foundation was cited in more than 35 news articles.

Cuba was the focus of our Captive Nations Week in July. We filmed and produced a video featuring Cuban dissident Sirley Ávila León and facilitated her testimony at a Congressional hearing entitled “The Castro Regime’s Ongoing Violations of Civil and Political Rights.” Later that month, we hosted a “Cuba After Castro” roundtable between leading Cuban dissidents and Central European officials to discuss strategies for peaceful democratization.

Finally on December 4, the day of Fidel Castro’s funeral, we held a candlelight vigil to honor the victims of the Castro regime. We read a statement by the Cuban artist El Sexto—one of the many dissidents rounded up and imprisoned by the regime following the dictator’s death—and expressed our hope that Cuba will one day be free.

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD



“ The Uyghur people stand firmly with the democratic peoples of the world who seek an end to the poverty and cruelty of communist repression.
—Dolkun Isa

DOLKUN ISA

Dolkun Isa is a political leader-in-exile of the Uyghurs, a peaceful Muslim ethnic minority in East Turkestan (China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region). He first experienced a political awakening as a student protest leader at Xinjiang University in 1984. After being forced to flee China, he eventually helped establish the World Uyghur Congress, an organization dedicated to advocating freedom for the Uyghur people. Beijing has tried to discredit Isa by labeling him a terrorist, but that has not stopped him from becoming a world-renowned advocate of Uyghur human rights issues and a peaceful solution to end the persecution of his people.



“ I ask only that the government of the United States, international human rights organizations, and the governments of the free world not abandon the people of Cuba in their struggle for freedom.
—Sirley Ávila León

SIRLEY ÁVILA LÉON

Sirley Ávila León is a courageous champion of human and civil rights in rural Cuba. As a delegate to her local Municipal Assembly of People's Power, she represented the interests of the farmers and schoolchildren in her community, until she was expelled for trying to reopen the school in her village. After publicly denouncing the Castro regime's human rights violations on Radio Martí in 2012, she became a target of the state. On May 24, 2015, Sirley was machete-attacked by a paroled criminal sent by state security services. She lived not only to tell her story, but to continue her fight for freedom on behalf of the Cuban people.

HONOR THE VICTIMS

The free world never demanded a moral reckoning for the crimes of communist regimes. We honor the memory of the more than 100 million victims by partnering with embassies and ethnic and human rights organizations throughout the year to reflect on the past, celebrate liberty where it has triumphed, and further our pursuit of a world free from communism.

On June 9-10, we hosted the 9th Annual Roll Call of Nations Ceremony at the Victims of Communism Memorial. We awarded our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to historian Paul Goble and our Human Rights Award to Sirley Ávila León.

During the ceremony, 20 embassies and 27 human rights and ethnic organizations laid wreaths in tribute to those killed by communist regimes. The hundreds gathered at the Commemoration were a testament to the successful efforts of VOC and our allies to stand for freedom and against tyranny.



Roll Call of Nation attendees pose at the Victims of Communism Memorial.



TRUMAN-REAGAN MEDAL OF FREEDOM



PAUL A. GOBLE

2016 LAUREATE

On June 10, we awarded Paul Goble our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom in recognition of his lifelong commitment to freedom and democracy and opposition to communism and all other forms of tyranny. Goble is a longtime specialist on ethnic and religious questions in Eurasia. He teaches at the Institute of World Politics, and serves on our Foundation's National Advisory Council. He has led a distinguished career in academia, in addition to working at the U.S. State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the International Broadcasting Bureau. He has been decorated by the governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania for his work on promoting Baltic independence. He holds a B.A. from Miami University and an M.A. from the University of Chicago.

Upon receiving the medal, Goble delivered a keynote speech on the “10 Reasons Why We Must Remain Anti-Communists,” published in full on our blog *Dissident*. He remarked, “I am an anticommunist because I value freedom, not because the people who suppress such freedoms call themselves communists. If we are truly anticommunists, we must recognize and communicate to others that the victory over communism will be possible only if there is a victory over all the forms of human oppression.”

“The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died. We must keep that hope alive.
—President Harry S. Truman

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.
—President Ronald Reagan

TRUMAN-REAGAN MEDAL OF FREEDOM LAUREATES

YEAR	MEDAL LAUREATES		
2016	Paul A. Goble	2003	H.E. Václav Havel National Endowment for Democracy Michael Novak
2015	Chen Guangcheng Guillermo Fariñas Alexander Podrabinek	2002	Sen. Joseph Lieberman Hon. Philip M. Crane H.E. Viktor Orbán Hon. Hae Yung Chung
2014	Myroslav Marynovych Mustafa Dzhemilev	2001	Vladimir Bukovsky Sen. Jesse Helms
2013	Fr. Thadeus Nguyen Văn Lý H.E. Václav Klaus Yang Jianli, Ph.D.	2000	Wei Jingsheng Youk Chhang Col. John McKone, USAF (Ret.) Đoàn Viet Hoat Col. Lewis Millett, USA (Ret.) Hon. Orson Swindle Gen. Paik Sun-yup, ROKA (Ret.)
2012	H.E. Stanislau Shushkevich Hon. Donald Rumsfeld	1999	Elena Bonner Lane Kirkland H.E. Vytautas Landsbergis H.E. Philip Dimitrov
2011	Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen H.E. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga John C. Whitehead		
2010	Robert Conquest Harry Wu Hon. Emanuelis Zingeris Hon. Armando Valladares		
2009	Rep. Steny Hoyer Hon. Jack Kemp Hon. Bishop László Tőkés Hon. Edwin Meese III Richard Pipes, Ph.D.		
2008	Hon. Kateryna Yushchenko Hon. Paula J. Dobriansky Midge Decter Hon. Tom Lantos		
2007	William F. Buckley, Jr. Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson Tran Văn Bá Hon. János Horváth Rep. Dana Rohrabacher		
2006	H.E. Lech Wałęsa Hon. Milada Horáková Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., Ph.D.		
2005	Lt. Gen. Edward L. Rowny, USA (Ret.) Pope Saint John Paul II Solidarity Free Trade Union of 1980 Anna Walentynowicz Hon. Lev E. Dobriansky		
2004	Rep. John Shimkus Maj. Gen. John Singlaub, USA (Ret.) Lockheed Martin Corporation		

DISCERNING THE LEGACY OF COMMUNISM

During the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, we led a three-day reflection on the history of Hungary's resistance to communism. Our panels and exhibits on the Revolution honored the lives lost and helped build a greater understanding of how 1956 has shaped Hungarian political development.



On November 3, we partnered with George Washington University's Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies to host an exhibit and panel. Historian Dr. John Lukacs delivered keynote remarks. He was then joined by Márton Baranyi of Brain Bar Budapest and Dr. Réka Földváryné Kiss of the Hungarian Committee of National Remembrance to discuss Hungary's political development since 1956. Guests had the opportunity to view an exhibit of images of the Kossuth Square Massacre, sponsored by the National Office of Public Collections and Directorate of Public Education of the Hungarian Parliament.



We held a second exhibit and panel at our office on November 4 to delve deeper into the history of 1956. Márton Baranyi moderated the discussion between Dr. Réka Földváryné Kiss and Dr. Charles Gati of Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Gati reflected, "The best part about the Revolution was that it was a time when ten million Hungarians of different views could get along...They wanted reformed social democracy, they wanted to be part of Europe, and they wanted the Soviets out."



We also partnered with the Catholic University of America to teach students about religious persecution under communism by organizing an exhibit on the life of Bishop Áron Márton on November 7. In 1949, Romania's communist regime presented the bishop with an agreement that would have given his Hungarian church over to the atheistic state. He refused to sign. For this courageous act, Bishop Márton was incarcerated until his death on September 29, 1980. Dr. Réka Földvárné Kiss, Dr. Arpad von Klimo of Catholic University, and Mr. Gergely Gaal, Chairman of the Committee for the Memorial Year of Márton Áron offered remarks.



On June 9, Dr. Bruce Cole, Senior Fellow, Ethics and Public Policy Center; Dr. Hope Harrison, Associate Professor of History and International Affairs, The George Washington University; and Dr. Mackubin Owens, Dean of Academic Affairs, The Institute of World Politics, joined Dr. Murray Bessette, our Director of Academic Programs, to discuss "Educating Americans about the History of Communist Regimes."

BRINGING LIGHT BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

On November 21, Sir Roger Scruton delivered a lecture on Eastern Europe's civil society movement. In the 1980s, Sir Roger helped organize Czechoslovakia's underground university network to energize the intellects and imaginations of young people the communist regime worked to stifle. He explained that the real evil of communism was its destruction of civil society and national identity.

Eastern Europe's civil society movement serves as a model for nonviolent resistance to totalitarianism. Sir Roger warned that the totalitarian impulse is taking hold of our educational institutions today as partisans strive to control public opinion. To preserve free society, it is crucial for high schools and universities to teach knowledge, not prejudice.



Sir Roger Scruton lectures on Eastern Europe's civil society movement.



If you would like a copy of Sir Roger's remarks, please email your request to info@victimsofcommunism.org.

“There is a link, in the end, between humane education, focused on what is intrinsically valuable, and the consciousness of identity—of what I am and to what I belong.
—Sir Roger Scruton



SOVIET PLUNDER LEGALIZED IN U.S.

When the Soviet Union fell, the art stolen by the Red Army from families and museums across Eastern Europe became property of the new Russian Federation. The Foreign Cultural Exchange Jurisdictional Immunity Clarification Act, passed in Congress in December 2016, denies the original owners of plundered art the right of reclamation if Russia exhibits it in the U.S. Because of our expertise, our Foundation was invited to weigh in on the implications of this bill. We conducted an informational call on September 14 and a panel discussion at Georgetown Law on November 4, which featured: attorney Pierre Ciric, whose firm specializes in art law; Marc Masurovsky, co-founder of the Holocaust Art Restitution Project; and Eric Sundby, President of the Holocaust Remembrance and Restitution Foundation. The discussion helped Americans understand the importance of urging their representatives in Congress to confront the legacy not just of Nazi crimes, but Soviet crimes as well.



BLACK RIBBON DAY

On August 23, we hosted, along with the Joint Baltic-American National Committee (JBANC), a Black Ribbon Day ceremony on the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which cleared the way for Hitler and Stalin to invade Poland. The program included remarks from: Latvian Ambassador Andris Teikmanis; representatives from the Estonian and Lithuanian embassies; Karl Altai, JBANC Managing Director and VOC board member; and David Talbot, VOC Director of Development. The embassies of Hungary and the Czech Republic, as well as ethnic organizations representing Ukraine, including Crimea, were also in attendance.



MEMORIALIZING THE VICTIMS OF BALTIC DEPORTATION

Under Soviet rule, mass deportations displaced hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children. One of the largest deportations saw some 20,000 Estonians exiled from their home country. Estonian Ambassador Eerik Marmei joined us and community supporters at the Memorial on March 25 to remember the innocent citizens of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania who were arrested and deported to the Soviet Union in March 1949, and victims from Belarus, who celebrate their National Day at the same time.



ALLIES AGAINST OPPRESSION

Polish Minister Anna Maria Anders, who also serves as President of the Council for Protection of Memory About Struggle and Martyrdom, delivered a luncheon talk on June 21. To be allies against oppression, she emphasized Americans must be educated about the legacy of communism that endures in Eastern Europe today. Too few Americans know the history of communist crimes against Poland. During her visit to the United States, Minister Anders hoped to help change that.



A DAY TO REMEMBER CRIMEA

Every May, and this year on May 18, Ukraine calls on the international community to remember the quarter of a million Crimean Tartars who suffered genocide and deportation under Stalin's Soviet regime. VOC and Ukrainian Americans joined Ukrainian Ambassador Valeriy Chaly and Deputy Minister of Information Tetiana Poplova to observe the Day of Remembrance and honor the Ukraine victims of political oppression.



FROM THE FRONT LINES IN CUBA

On June 9, Mauricio Claver-Carone, Executive Director, Cuba Democracy Advocates; Julio M. Shiling, Author and Director, *Patria de Martí*; and John Suarez, International Secretary, Cuban Democratic Directorate, discussed the reality on the ground in Cuba.

FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Checking and cash equivalents	\$ 958,379
Prepaid assets	17,801
Total current assets	976,180
Property and Equipment, net	1,071,564
Other Assets	
Security deposits	18,750
Total assets	\$ 2,066,494

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 39,697
Accrued expenses	6,585
Total current liabilities	46,282
Net assets	
Unrestricted net assets	579,795
Temporarily restricted net assets	1,440,417
Total net assets	2,020,212
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 2,066,494

Change in net assets from operations	(2,788,078)
Net realized loss on investments	(1,107,346)
Change in net assets	(3,895,424)
Net assets, December 31, 2015	5,915,636
Net assets, December 31, 2016	\$ 2,020,212

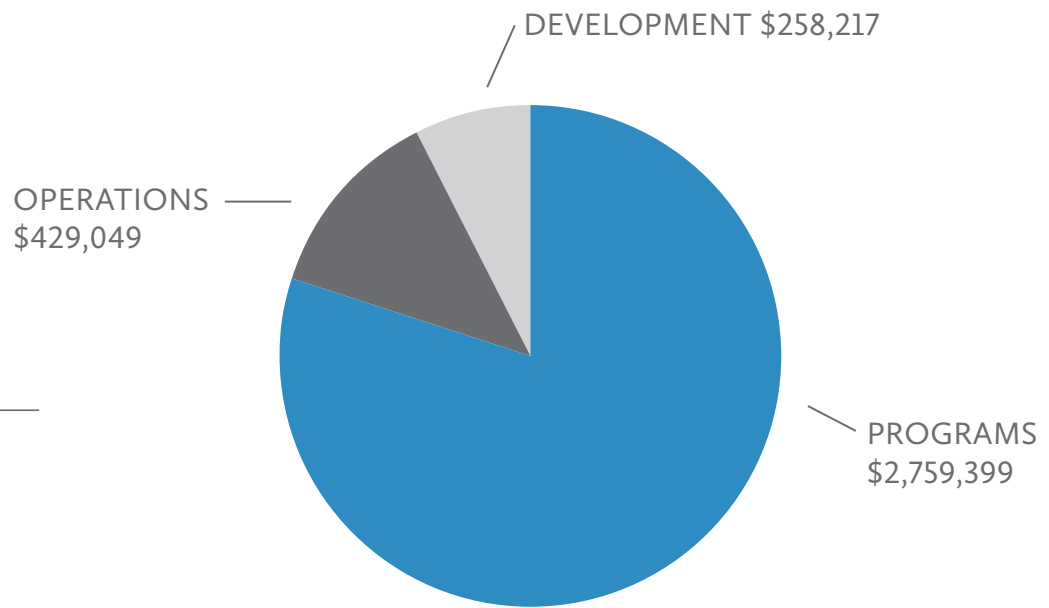
Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation's financial position is based on an independent auditor's report for the fiscal year January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016.

In December 2015, the Foundation received a transformational \$5 million gift. In compliance with GAAP accounting conventions, the gift was recognized as revenue in 2015 though it was designated to cover expenses incurred in 2016 and in 2017 related to new and expanded programs.

The Foundation is very grateful to its community of stakeholders who believe in our mission to educate Americans about communism.

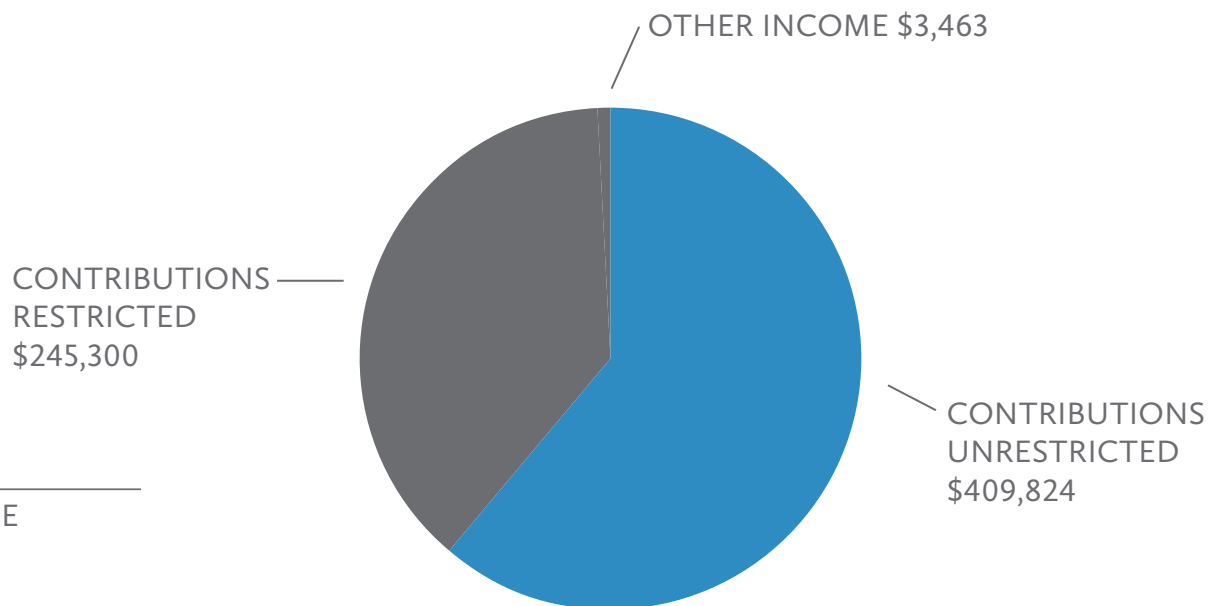
\$3,446,665

TOTAL EXPENSES



\$658,587

TOTAL REVENUE



**“The lessons must be learnt,
and the Victims of Communism
Memorial Foundation will
serve as a constant education.
—Robert Conquest, 1917 - 2015**

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LOOKING
FORWARD



Save the Date
November 7-9, 2017
Washington, D.C.

November 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which gave the world its first communist regime. Since then, over 100 million people have been killed by communism. To honor the memories of the victims and ensure the world never forgets the heavy human cost of communism, we will lead the world's reflection on the history and legacy of the Soviet Union.

centennial.victimsofcommunism.org

*Your support helps us educate
Americans, boost dissident
truth-telling, and honor the
victims of communism.*

Thank you.



**TRUTH
JUSTICE
MEMORY**



Victims of Communism
M e m o r i a l F o u n d a t i o n

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