

Countering Communism's Influence

China's Incursion onto US Campuses



In May our China Studies research fellow Peter Mattis published an op-ed in *The Hill*, with Samantha Hoffman of the Mercator Institute for China Studies, exploring how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) manipulates its citizens and exiles. By setting up harmless-sounding “Confucius Institutes” on foreign campuses, he writes, the CCP is able to monitor, and ultimately control, the very people who are most exposed to notions of freedom and who might otherwise speak out. “The very existence of a party branch on a U.S. campus,” he writes, “signals to overseas Chinese that they are still subject to the CCP’s restrictions.”

In Memoriam: Richard Pipes, 1923-2018



Dr. Richard Pipes—scholar of Soviet Russia, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate, and longtime member of our Academic Council—was born to Jewish parents in Poland and escaped to the U.S. in 1940, serving in the US Army Air Corps in World War II. As a professor of Russian history at Harvard, his work was courted by the CIA to assess Soviet military strength, and he served on the National Security Council during the Reagan administration. After Dr. Pipes passed away peacefully in his home on May 18, Marion Smith and Dr. Lee Edwards published obituaries memorializing his life and legacy in *National Review* and *The Daily Signal*.

RECENTLY ON THE BLOG...

Why Was There No Nuremberg For Communism? by Janina Beck



Everyone is familiar with the Nuremberg Trials convened in 1945 to prosecute the crimes of Nazi Germany. Considering how deadly the ideology of communism proved to be in Eastern Europe, Russia, and elsewhere, why has there never been a similar trial for the crimes committed by the communist regime in the Soviet Union? We explore this question and its impact on perceptions of communism today.

Why China's Communists Are Scared Of #MeToo by Lily Wenninger



The #MeToo movement that erupted in early 2018 and spread across the globe changed the face of feminism. Millions of women took their stories to the social media stage, calling for an end to silence on the discrimination and abuse they had suffered because of their gender. It's no wonder a movement of this scale seeped into even the most guarded countries. But in China, the movement was far from welcome.



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER

Cuba Calls Witness Project “Subversive”

Few things could prove our effectiveness better than being denounced by communist autocrats fearful of being exposed. Recently, thanks to efforts enabled by our generous supporters, the Cuban government paid us this honor.

On February 10, we premiered a nine-minute documentary—part of our Witness Project oral history series featuring men and women who experienced communism firsthand—to a packed house at the American Museum of the Cuban Diaspora in Miami.

The episode, since viewed thousands of times on YouTube, tells the story of Oswaldo Payá—the Cuban dissident slain by Castro agents in 2012 for his tireless promotion of democracy in Cuba—through the eyes of his daughter Rosa María Payá, who carries on her father’s fight today through Cuba Decide, a civic organization she founded calling for free elections in Cuba.

Soon afterwards, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX) released a statement on its website denouncing—by name—our Foundation and other human rights and pro-democracy movements as subversive. “I guess they saw the video,” said our executive director Marion Smith.

The Cuban government’s condemnation helped boost our support. We translated the full statement and published it on our website. We shared it in an



Left to Right: Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Rosa María Payá, and Marion Smith, at a premiere of our mini-documentary on Oswaldo Payá in Miami on February 10.

email blast sent out to our supporters, pointing out the absurdity of holding elections in a one-party state.



In a public statement, the Cuban Foreign Ministry denounced our Foundation for telling the story of slain Cuban democracy advocate Oswaldo Payá.

As Smith noted, “MINREX released its condemnation on the eve of Cuban ‘elections’ because the ‘revolution’

always needs an invented enemy. But in reality, the **Cuban ‘elections’ on March 11 were a sham because only the Communist Party of Cuba was on the ballot. The Cuban regime is the real enemy of the Cuban people. The Cuban people deserve better.**”

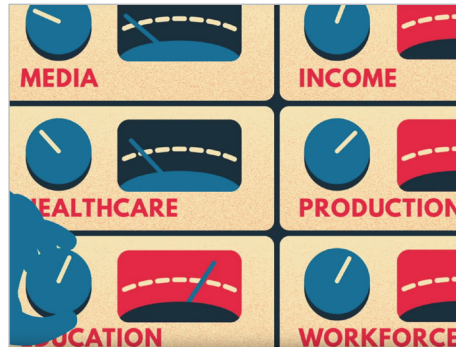
By educating people about communism and boosting dissident truth-telling, our Foundation gives hope to those still living under authoritarian regimes and helps foster the civic strength needed to bring about positive change.

Subversive, indeed.

Correcting the Record of Socialism on May Day



As the world continues to suffer the effects of inequality



Many gravitate towards a hope they see in socialism



Yet the complexity of central planning delivers injustice



Vast redistribution necessitates vast state control



Liberty and human rights become inconveniences



One group rules the rest, making inequality much worse.

May Day was once an innocuous holiday celebrating workers. Today, it has been hijacked as an occasion for collectivism to rear its ugly head in public, with tub-thumping rallies praising socialist ideas. But do Americans even know what socialism is? In VOC's widely-cited "Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes Toward Socialism" one-third of respondents confused it with fascism—and sadly, most Millennials associate socialism with equality and fairness, oblivious to the long history of atrocities committed in its name.

On May Day's eve executive director Marion Smith wrote an op-ed published in the *New Hampshire Union Leader* showing how Marxist ideology

has corrupted labor movements founded to fight for workers rights but which now serve socialist masters: "Far from ushering in a more equitable society, socialist movements that subscribed to Marxist ideology

who rightly take offense at the greed and inhumanity sometimes exhibited by global corporations must remember that workers' rights have not improved thanks to international socialism," he wrote. "Workers are only truly empowered in a free society because employers and employees are able to negotiate with each other equally under the law."

Alongside the op-ed, we released a new "Socialism is Slavery" video to help

alert Millennials to the truth about socialism. The video reveals how socialism's pursuit of "equality" leads to ugly state overlordship.

As Smith concluded: **"If May 1 really is about workers, then don't celebrate socialism. Celebrate free enterprise that allows workers to thrive."**

NEW HAMPSHIRE UNION LEADER

On May 1, remember that socialism is slavery

Marion Smith's May Day op-ed unpacks the Marxist ideology behind some labor movements.

engendered a new form of slavery in the modern world."

To those dazzled by its utopian vision, Smith shows how actual socialism—state control of the means of production—has been awful for workers everywhere it's been tried. "Millennial Americans

Congressional Caucus Rebukes Junker for Celebrating Marx



A bi-partisan letter to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker urged him not to participate in the unveiling of a Beijing-funded statue of Karl Marx in Germany.

On May 5, 2018, the bicentennial of Karl Marx's birth, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker spoke at the unveiling of a colossal statue of Marx in the German city of Trier, the communist ideologue's birthplace.

Town locals didn't necessarily want the statue—which in revealing symbolism stands a towering 18 feet high—but the city government accepted it anyway. Shockingly, the monument to Marx was a gift of the People's Republic of China, one of the world's most ruthless communist-totalitarian governments.

This could not go unanswered. Ahead of the statue's unveiling, co-chairs of our bipartisan Congressional Caucus—

Representatives Chris Smith (R-NJ), Dan Lipinski (D-IL), Dennis Ross (R-FL), and Marcy Kaptur (D-OH)—sent a letter to President Juncker urging him

The letter condemned Marx, noting his 1849 article calling for terrorizing and murdering political opponents, and linked such incitement to the

atrocities of regimes hailing his ideas. The letter noted, **"Marxism is a toxic ideology that has led to mass death, torture, and enslavement wherever it has been applied... Violence and Marxism go hand in hand."**



President Juncker claimed there was no link between Marx's ideas and the atrocities they inspired, though the Congressional Caucus letter pointed to an explicit call to violence in Marx's own writings.

The letter was referenced by major media outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Breitbart*, *The Express*, and *The Sun*. Alarming, Juncker's remarks tried to sever the link between

not to speak at the statue's unveiling: or if he did, not to honor Marx in any way, but rather honor the victims of Marxist regimes.

Marx's ideas and the atrocities they inspired, ignoring well-known historical facts about the call to violence embedded in Marx's thought.

Capitol Hill Briefing: The Socialist Crisis in Venezuela



(Back, left to right) panelists Francisco Marquez, former political prisoner in Venezuela and founder of Vision Democratica; Dr. Robert Kahn of American University; Juan Gonzalez, deputy assistant secretary of state under President Obama; and Marion Smith, with Wuilly Arteaga and Kristina Olney at our Capitol Hill briefing on March 9.

The socialist policies of dictator Hugo Chávez—and his successor-tyrant, Nicolás Maduro—have caused a horrific humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. Inflation is set to hit 1,000,000%, long-dormant diseases like malaria have surged, and food is so scarce the average Venezuelan has lost 24 pounds. The dictator Maduro has essentially dissolved the legitimately elected National Assembly and is responsible for the murder of over 150 peaceful protestors.

On March 9, 2018 we convened a panel of experts on Capitol Hill to discuss this growing crisis, and steps the United States can take to restore democracy and protect human rights in Venezuela. Venezuelan dissident and accomplished musician Wuilly Arteaga opened the talk with a violin performance, and spoke stirring about the prospect for freedom in his country.

Among the distinguished panelists were Juan Gonzalez, former deputy assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere Affairs; Dr. Robert Kahn, adjunct professor at American University; and our executive director Marion Smith, who held an intense discussion on the dire situation on the ground, and how state sanctions might be applied to pressure the Maduro regime to reverse its bloody course.

SAVE THE DATE



Triumph of Liberty Conference & Gala Dinner

November 14, 2018
Washington, D.C.

www.triumphofliberty.com

Launch of New Transatlantic Forum for Human Rights



Aaron Rhodes, former head of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights; Pavel Telička, Vice President of the European Parliament; Hon. Martin Palouš, former Czech ambassador to the U.S.; Congressman Paul Cook (R-CA), chair of the House Foreign Affairs Western Hemisphere Subcommittee; Rosa María Payá, Cuban democracy advocate and founder of Cuba Decide; Marion Smith, executive director of VOC; and Carlos Vecchio, exiled leader of Venezuela's opposition party Voluntad Popular.

On May 18, VOC co-hosted a forum on Capitol Hill with the Vaclav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy organization to discuss democracy and human rights in Cuba and Venezuela. The meeting, “A Transatlantic Forum for Freedom in Cuba and Venezuela,” brought freedom advocacy leaders from both countries together with regional experts and representatives from the U.S. and E.U. governments, to chart a path forward for freedom in the Western Hemisphere.

Participants included pro-democracy leaders—11 from Cuba and 5 from Venezuela—11 staffers involved in U.S. and E.U. lawmaking, and 8 representatives of democracy and human rights organizations. The conversation was so productive that all the leaders agreed to join us in a new regular event series to be hosted by our Foundation called “A Transatlantic Forum for Human Rights.” The next conference is scheduled to be held in Brussels on October 16, 2018.

Marion Smith in Lima: End the Castro Doctrine



VOC fellow Enrique Altamari, executive director Marion Smith, Cuban civic leader Rosa María Payá, director of development David Talbot, and Cuban artist El Sexto.

Leading up to the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru in April, we hosted a “Cuba’s Free Future” event with Freedom House and the Latin American Youth Network for Democracy to draw attention to the dire state of political repression in Cuba and the urgent need to press for greater freedom.

The event drew nearly 100 people with a strong showing of VIPs, including Carlos Trujillo, U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS), and OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro, who gave remarks as did Marion Smith and former presidents of Bolivia and Costa Rica, Jorge Ramírez and Miguel Echeverría. In his remarks, Smith said:

“The Revolution of Fidel and Che has failed the people of Cuba. And yet the Castros keep trying to export their failed model to other countries in this region, through propaganda, corruption, and violent coercion. It’s time for this Castro Doctrine in Latin America to end.”

11th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony &

On the morning of June 8, under a clear blue sky, we convened our 11th annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony and Presentation of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom at our memorial statue in Washington, D.C. at the corner of Massachusetts and New Jersey Avenues near our nation's capitol.

The solemn gathering—dedicated to honoring the victims, celebrating liberty where it has triumphed, and furthering our pursuit of a world free from communism—was attended by a broad array of representatives from 16 embassies, 4 official government delegations, 39 ethnic and human rights organizations, as well as scores of activists and lovers of freedom.

In his remarks, executive director Marion Smith said: **"If you want to know what the real legacy of Marxism is, it is this ceremony."** It is dozens of countries represented here by those who will lay wreaths to commemorate the lives of those killed in some 40 communist countries since 1917, more than 100 million people killed."



A colorful array of embassies, delegations, and ethnic and human rights organizations gathered to lay wreaths in honor of the

**“Socialism has never worked anywhere
in the 100 years of its existence.”**

- Dr. Lee Edwards



Amb. Rolandas Kriščiūnas lays a wreath for Lithuania.



Amb. Andris Teikmanis lays a wreath for Latvia.



Amb. Tihomir Stoytchev lays a wreath for Bulgaria.

Presentation of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom



Victims and the heroes at our Memorial statue on the anniversary of its dedication on June 8.

**“Freedom is going to come soon to Cuba, because we haven’t lost our hope.”
- Rosa María Payá**

VOC chairman Dr. Lee Edwards and Marion Smith presented the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom posthumously to Oswaldo Payá, the Cuban dissident slain by Castro agents in 2012 for leading pro-democracy efforts in Cuba. The award was accepted by his widow Ofelia Acevedo and his daughter Rosa María Payá, herself a civic leader, who spoke about what her father’s struggle for freedom means for the Cuban people.

The Medal of Freedom is awarded to those individuals and institutions who have demonstrated a lifelong commitment to freedom and democracy and opposition to communism and all other forms of tyranny.

This year’s ceremony and award centered on prospects for freedom in Cuba and the Latin America region, in the hope that old and new tyranny in places such as Cuba and Venezuela will be reversed and help ensure the triumph of liberty in the Western Hemisphere.



Marion Smith delivers remarks ahead of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom presentation.



Oswaldo Payá’s widow and daughter, Ofelia Acevedo and Rosa María Payá, accept the award on his behalf.



Father Charles Nalls lays a wreath for the American Cold War Veterans group.

Maryland Public School Teachers Adopt VOC Curriculum



Dr. Murray Bessette introduces our curriculum to 75 public school teachers at a workshop in Harford County, Maryland in March on how to reach students effectively.

On March 29 our director of academic programs, Dr. Murray Bessette, joined Dr. Guy Burnett of Hampden-Sydney College to deliver our first in-service professional development workshops to 76 teachers in Harford County Public Schools in Maryland.

Modeled on our National Seminar offering, the sessions drew on materials from our curriculum *Communism: its Ideology, its History, and its Legacy* aimed at educating young students. The presenters

taught on subjects such as free market vs. communist political economy, the Cold War, and communism as ideology, sending off a cohort of teachers equipped to bring the truth about communism to America's youth.

The need for this is clear. Last year, VOC's widely-respected "Annual Report on U.S. Attitudes Toward Socialism" by polling firm YouGov showed more Americans under age 35 would prefer to live in a socialist country (44%) or even a communist

one (7%) than in a capitalist one (42%).

The share of Millennials who prefer socialism to free enterprise is a full ten points higher than in the general population. Yet six in ten Americans were unfamiliar with socialist dictators like Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro.

Such news is alarming, but not hopeless. Young Americans simply have not been taught in the classroom the history of communist enslavement and the horrible bloodshed perpetrated by this deadly ideology.

TO OUR SUPPORTERS...

Thank you! Every event, every meeting, every counter-challenge we make to communism's baleful influence, every boost to dissident truth-telling—every word of VOC's work and mission as reported in our newsletter—was made possible only by men and women who contribute their time and resources to advancing VOC's mission: To educate an uninformed generation and remind a forgetful world of the atrocities and failures of communism. We are grateful for your support.

Advancing a Critical Mission Across the Globe

Florida International University: The Long Night of the Watchman



On the evening of February 13, we sponsored a talk at Florida International University in Washington, DC, on *The Long Night of the Watchman*, a recently published collection of essays by the Czech anti-Communist dissident Václav Benda. An early signatory of the Charter 77 dissident group in former Czechoslovakia, Benda spoke out against communism and writes powerfully about life under totalitarian rule behind the Iron Curtain, for which he served a four-year prison sentence. Our speakers panel included the book's editor, Professor Flagg Taylor of Skidmore College who is on our Academic Council; the Honorable Martin Palouš, Czech statesman and Charter 77 signatory; and Benda's widow, Kamila Bendová.

Universities of Ottawa & Texas: Campus Talks on Communism



On February 16, Dr. Murray Bessette spoke to students of Dr. Robert Koons at the University of Texas at Austin on how the false hopes of socialism continue to appeal to young Americans, leading to a lively discussion during which he met with a survivor of communism in Romania. On March 1 Dr. Bessette also addressed a student event at Canada's University of Ottawa, co-sponsored by the Institute for Liberal Studies, which centered on the failure of socialism in Venezuela. Among attendees were several young Venezuelan refugees who are deeply concerned with the political and economic disintegration back home.

Center for Strategic and International Studies: Expert Panel



How can nice people praise an ideology that has murdered millions? To address this, on February 23 executive director Marion Smith joined a panel discussion hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. called "The Dangers of Forgetting: Communism as Anti-Development." The talk centered on man's bloodsoaked experiment with communism in the 20th century, and how correcting misperceptions about this killer idea can forestall its appeal. The panel included Laura Nicolae, a Harvard undergraduate whose recent op-ed went viral for its bold stance against professors who casually dismiss communism's legacy.

Oslo Freedom Forum: Witness Project in Norway



On May 27 at the Oslo Freedom Forum in Norway, we screened our Witness Project oral history video series. The event showcased our five most recent episodes telling powerful stories of those who suffered under or resisted communism. We then held a roundtable discussion with two witnesses featured in our films—Rosa María Payá and Anastasia Lin—alongside the director Adam "Hawk" Jensen and our Venezuela research fellow Enrique Altimari. Discussions centered on what it means to be a witness of communism, to testify against communism, and ultimately to help bring communism to justice.

Zheng Receives Human Rights Award on Tiananmen Anniversary



Fang Zheng, who was among the peaceful protesters overrun by army tanks during the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, spoke at our annual commemoration vigil in June.

A picture is worth a thousand words, but what if it is the wrong picture? The iconic image of “tank man” standing down armored vehicles in Tiananmen Square—long seared into public memories of June 1989—serves the Chinese Communist Party just fine: tidy images numb the memory of blood and gore unleashed during Beijing’s vicious crackdown on peaceful protesters. The truth is, not all tanks stopped.

We highlighted this on June 4, during our annual Tiananmen vigil at our Memorial statue in Washington, D.C., by honoring the hero Fang Zheng, who was among the students cruelly overrun by army tanks during the protests of 1989. After he pushed a young female student to safety, a tank crushed both his legs and he lost consciousness. He recovered after both of his legs were amputated, only to have Chinese authorities deny him a passport in an attempt to silence him about what happened.

To counter CCP’s Orwellian whitewashing of history, dozens of survivors attended to light candles and hear Zheng testify to an atrocity the Chinese government still denies ever happened. The next day we held a panel discussion on Capitol Hill called “Exploring the Contested History of Tiananmen Square” moderated by VOC research fellow Peter Mattis, featuring Robert Suetinger, former director of the State Department’s bureau for East Asia and the Pacific, award-winning journalist Natalie Liu, and Dr. Janli Yang of Initiatives for China.

Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), co-chair of our bipartisan Congressional Caucus, also gave remarks in which he announced he was introducing a bill requiring intelligence agencies to report regularly on Confucius Institutes, the shadowy propaganda units Beijing has set up on U.S. campuses by the hundreds to burnish China’s image abroad. We then presented our human rights award to Zheng for his bravery.



Memories of Tiananmen live on among survivors and their families, despite Beijing’s push for amnesia.



Attendees lit candles after remarks by Marion Smith and Tiananmen survivors Fang Zheng and Janli Yang.



Peter Mattis, Marion Smith, Rep. Chris Smith, Fang Zheng, Dr. Janli Yang, Natalie Liu, Dr. Robert Suettinger.

Rallying, Honoring, and Standing with the Persecuted



Kristina Olney, VOC's Director of Government Relations, addresses a rally of thousands on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol in solidarity with the Falun Gong, a peaceful spiritual group which the Chinese government has brutally persecuted and dehumanized since 1999.



Marion Smith and Estonian Defense Minister Jüri Luik lay a wreath at our Memorial statue on March 9 during Luik's visit to Washington, D.C.



Marion Smith gave remarks at a commemoration of Vietnam Human Rights Day on May 11 alongside Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA).



Caucus Co-Chair Marcy Kaptur speaks at a commemoration of the 1848 Hungarian War of Independence co-hosted in March by VOC and the American Hungarian Federation.



On March 10 staff members marched with freedom advocates in New York City to commemorate the 1959 peaceful protests against China's repressive policies in Tibet.