



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM  
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



2019 ANNUAL REPORT





Our 12th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony commemorated the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the 70th anniversary of the formation of NATO. We announced a new partnership with the American Cold War Veterans organization to educate young people on the lessons of the Cold War, and we presented our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to Col. Gail S. Halvorsen (known as the "Berlin Candy Bomber"), a retired officer and command pilot in the US Air Force who helped conduct the Berlin Airlift of 1948-49.

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# VISION

A world free from communism.

# MISSION

To educate future generations about the ideology, history, and legacy of communism.

# HISTORY

Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation is an educational, research, and human rights nonprofit organization authorized by a unanimous Act of Congress 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. On June 12, 2007, he dedicated the Victims of Communism Memorial statue in Washington, DC.



## Message from the CHAIRMAN



It has been nearly 30 years since we took up this fight. Late in 1993, Congress unanimously passed a law that authorized the creation of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation. The Foundation was incorporated the following year with a moral mandate to conduct programming “representing all groups that have suffered under communism.”

There was opposition from the start.

Anti-communism was yesterday, they said – didn’t the Berlin Wall fall? China wasn’t communist, they said – look at all those skyscrapers in Beijing and Shanghai. We should drop the economic sanctions on Cuba, they said – what good had they done? Even some anti-communist hawks in Congress were saying let bygones be bygones; even some prominent Americans who had fought against communism in Vietnam willingly traveled to that still-communist country. There were those calling for an end to the National Captive Nations Week Act, though many captive nations still struggled under communist rule. On issue after issue, we were told to move on.

Instead, we stood up. And spoke out.

In early 1994, Dr. Lev Dobriansky joined me to fulfill the mandate set by our Congressional champions, including the conservative Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina and the liberal Congressman Tom Lantos of California. We sought to continue the bipartisan American tradition of opposing tyranny and supporting the millions dominated by the evil ideology of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Kim. We knew that the most murderous ideology in history had not perished. In fact, it still controlled the destinies of more than one billion people at the turn of the 21st Century. We had no intention of ignoring their plight.

Now the victims of communism are more widely known than at any point since 1989 – and this past year, 2019, was our most active yet. It marked the 30th anniversaries of two of the most seminal moments in communist history – the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Tiananmen Square Massacre. As we looked back at those two events – one joyous, one tragic – it can clearly be seen that 1989 was a tale of two cities. Those cities, of course, are Berlin and Beijing.

In Berlin, the free world saw the breakthrough that we had worked so hard for. The triumph of liberty was on full display as East and West Berliners danced on top of the wall and the reunification of a free Germany began. As the wall crumbled, the world saw that communism could be defeated – that man’s longing for freedom could win out in the end.

In Beijing, heart breakingly, that longing for freedom was brutally crushed. The Chinese Communist Party determined not to follow the Soviet Union into a slow decline and whimpering collapse. So it gave the order for Chinese soldiers to open fire on Chinese citizens, killing thousands of peaceful protesters. Thirty years later, the people of Communist China remain deprived of basic rights, suffering under the ever-more-despotic rule of Xi Jinping.

As we reflect on these two events in this anniversary year, one truth is apparent: Communism does not crumble on its own. Victory over that evil ideology requires a sustained commitment from all who cherish freedom.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee".

Lee Edwards, PhD

# A YEAR of ACHIEVEMENTS

## 2019 IN REVIEW

### ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2019, communist regimes from China to Cuba expanded their power across the globe, threatening freedom from Hong Kong to Venezuela. Meanwhile, in America decades of failure to teach young citizens about the evil ideology, brutal history, and lasting legacy of communism revealed itself in American culture and politics.

The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation worked tirelessly in 2019 to teach the truth about the failures of Marxist ideas, seek justice for those still living under communist tyranny, empower citizens to combat communism's malign influence, and honor the more than 100 million victims of communism.

We equipped teachers with tools to educate students about communism's horrible legacy, engaged with lawmakers and dissidents to expose and condemn communist crimes, and convened friends of freedom from dozens of countries to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

## Message from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This year the world marked the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Millions of people the world over celebrated the triumph of liberty and remembered those who labored to bring that joyous day to fruition. But at VOC, we did more than remember. We reminded Americans of the evil that was defeated that day, but not destroyed, and has now risen once more.

When it came to remembrance, we told the stories of those who were made victims behind the iron curtain. We sponsored a temporary exhibit in the Main Hall of Union Station that told the story of those who died trying to escape the wretched conditions of communism.

Ida Siekmann, the wall's first casualty, died jumping out of her fourth floor window while attempting to escape from East Berlin in August 1961. In January, 1973, a young mother named Ingrid hid with her infant son in a crate in the back of a truck crossing from East to West. When the child began to cry at the East Berlin checkpoint, a desperate Ingrid covered his mouth with her hand, not realizing the child had an infection and couldn't breathe through his nose. She made her way to freedom, but in the process suffocated her 15-month-old son. Chris Gueffroy, an East German buoyed by the ease of tensions in the Cold War in early 1989, believed that the shoot-on-sight order for the Berlin Wall had been lifted. He was mistaken. Gueffroy would be the last person shot attempting to flee Communist-occupied East Berlin.

But Gueffroy was far from the last victim of communism. That is the sad reality of which Americans, and free people everywhere, need to be reminded.

Communist parties and socialist regimes still use Marxist logic to justify tyranny, controlling the destinies and shattering the dreams of more than a billion people alive today. From the Cuban doctors forced into slavery, to the Venezuelan citizens eating zoo animals for food, to the mothers forced to drown their own children in North Korean camps, to the Muslim Uighurs, Christians, and Falun Gong practitioners whose organs are harvested by Chinese authorities – every day, Communism causes untold suffering across the globe.

Those who suffer under this yoke deserve nothing less than the full and loud support of those of us in free and democratic nations. The victims of the Soviet Union knew that Americans stood with them; the victims of Communist China have had much more reason to doubt our resolve. The regime that oppresses them knows this. Only in the past year or so has corporate and policy opinion on China started to turn against

the communist regime, perhaps decisively, finally joining a majority of the American public who share unfavorable views of Communist China. At this Foundation, we welcome that overdue development.

Communism—in theory and practice—remains the greatest threat to freedom and well-being in the world. We are doing our part by drawing public attention to the defenders of liberty and to the crimes of communist regimes in our four main program areas: Memory, Education, Human Rights, and Citizen Engagement. In each area, we made measurable steps to expand our influence and inspire more people with our message of hope and freedom.

We presented our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom on four occasions. First, we bestowed the honor on Cardinal Joseph Zen, Bishop emeritus of Hong Kong, who is called the “Conscience of Hong Kong.” He is a strong voice for justice in Hong Kong and China and a tireless opponent of the Communist Party. Then at our Roll Call of Nations ceremony, we honored the American pilot Col. Gail Halvorsen, also known as The Candy Bomber, who flew supplies into communist-blockaded West Berlin during the 1948-49 Berlin Airlift. We marked the 30th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre by presented our Medal of Freedom to the Tiananmen Mothers – the family members of the men and women murdered by the Party in 1989, nearly all of whom are routinely put under house arrest by Chinese state security. Finally, at our annual gala, we honored H.E. Joachim Gauck, the revered dissident pastor from East Germany who went on to serve as the 11th President of a reunified Germany.

As we remember the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and as we remind the world of communism's continued existence and cruelty, we at VOC are grateful for all who support our mission. You are the indispensable muscle and spirit in this battle between collectivist tyranny and individual liberty. At stake is the family, community, culture, and civilization we hold dear. Millions around the world cannot speak the truth. They rely on us to be their voice. And we rely on you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marion". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'M' and a trailing flourish.

Marion Smith



# MEMORY



VOC held a candlelight vigil on June 3 commemorating the students who were murdered at Tiananmen Square 30 years ago.





Left to right: VOC Director of Government Relations Kristina Olney, Co-Chair of the Victims of Communism Congressional Caucus Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), VOC Trustee Randal Teague, VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards, Amb. Sam Brownback, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate Cardinal Joseph Zen, VOC Trustee Don Ritter, ScD, and former Congressman Frank Wolf.

## Honoring Cardinal Joseph Zen, “New Conscience of Hong Kong”

On January 28, more than 200 guests gathered in Washington, DC, to help the Foundation honor Cardinal Joseph Zen, Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong, with the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom. Cardinal Zen is a vocal proponent of human rights in Hong Kong and mainland China. Called the “new conscience of Hong Kong,” he has criticized, among other things, the Vatican’s deal with the Chinese Communist Party to accept Party-approved bishops into the leadership of the Catholic Church in China.

After accepting the Medal from VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards, Cardinal Zen remarked: “I want to remember many of those heroes who are suffering at this moment in China or Hong Kong for voicing their claim for respect of their dignity, for freedom, and democracy—those well-known and those anonymous heroes.”



Left to right: VOC Chief of Staff David Talbot, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureates Chen Guangcheng and Cardinal Joseph Zen, and VOC Executive Director Marion Smith.



VOC and Cardinal Zen briefs Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other policymakers on the grave human rights situation in China.



Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) addresses activists, civil society leaders, and journalists about the hope of a free and democratic future for the Chinese people.



Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi gives remarks at a June 4 rally VOC hosted on Capitol Hill to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre.

## Tiananmen at 30 Draws Top Bipartisan Leadership

In June, VOC hosted a vigil and a rally on Capitol Hill commemorating the 30th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. Top congressional leaders delivered remarks, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and we awarded our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to the Tiananmen Mothers—parents of students killed during the 1989 protests, who continue to openly demand justice despite being routinely put under house arrest, jailed, and forbidden to publicly mourn the loss of their sons and daughters. The announcement of the award was also broadcast to 180,000 people attending another Tiananmen vigil in Hong Kong.

Other speakers included Co-Chair of the Victims of Communism Congressional Caucus Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA), Member of the Commission Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI), Chinese human rights lawyer Chen Guangcheng, Chinese democracy activist and former political prisoner Wei Jingsheng, President of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and VOC Advisory Council Member Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett, President of Women's Rights Without Frontiers Reggie Littlejohn, and Uyghur human rights activist Rushan Abbas.

The June 4 rally was co-hosted by 24 human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, China Aid, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights, and the World Uyghur Congress.

That same day, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith published two op-eds: one in the *Wall Street Journal*, highlighting the Tiananmen Mothers as an archetypical target of the Chinese Communist Party's brutal oppression and historical revisionism, and another in *The Hill*, challenging policymakers to hold the Chinese regime accountable for Tiananmen and ongoing human rights abuses today.

Later that week, Marion Smith spoke on a panel VOC co-hosted with the Hoover Institution to address the legacy of Tiananmen Square and point out pathways that might lead the Chinese regime from brutal oppression to democratic reform. The other panelists were Chinese democracy advocate and former political prisoner Wei Jingsheng, Hoover fellow Michael Auslin, student leader of the 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy movement Wang Dan, and Claremont McKenna College Professor Minxin Pei.

"In honor of all those who died for democracy in Tiananmen Square and around the world, we pledge to preserve their memory and continue their fight." – *Speaker Nancy Pelosi*





We awarded our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to the Tiananmen Mothers—parents of students killed during the 1989 protests, who continue to openly demand justice despite being routinely put under house arrest, jailed, and forbidden to publicly mourn the loss of their sons and daughters.



On June 6, VOC co-hosted a panel with the Hoover Institution on the legacy of Tiananmen Square and the possibilities for reform in China.



Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) delivers remarks at our rally on Capitol Hill.



Our award of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to the Tiananmen Mothers was announced at a vigil in Hong Kong on June 4 attended by over 180,000 people.

## VOC RALLY CO-HOSTS



VOC's Tiananmen Rally was co-hosted by 24 human rights organizations.



# 12th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony & Presentation of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom

On June 14, a record 19 embassies, 4 delegations, and representatives from 48 ethnic and human rights organizations joined VOC for the 12th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony & Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Presentation at the Victims of Communism Memorial Statue on Capitol Hill. The purpose was to honor the memory of the more than 100 million victims of communism, celebrate liberty where it has triumphed, and further our pursuit of a world free from communism.

This year, on the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and 70th anniversary of the formation of NATO, we announced an exciting new partnership with the American Cold War Veterans. We aim to educate young people on the lessons of the Cold War and acquaint them with the sacrifices veterans made for nearly five decades to liberate and protect nations from communism. VOC has begun advocating for the establishment of a long-overdue official service medal for our Cold War veterans.

We presented our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to Colonel Gail S. Halvorsen, a retired officer and command pilot in the US Air Force known as the "Berlin Candy Bomber." He was part of the Berlin Airlift, which transported vital supplies to the Soviet communist-blockaded city of West Berlin after the Second World War.

During the 15-month airlift, American and British pilots delivered more than 2 million tons of supplies to those trapped in West Berlin. But it was Colonel Halvorsen's decision to airdrop candy to the children that endeared him forever to a free West Berlin.

Colonel Halvorsen offered the following statement: "I commend the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation for their commitment to the legacy of America's Cold War veterans who stood their watch faithfully. I am grateful for all those who have helped with the cause of freedom throughout the world. We hope and pray that future generations will continue to value freedom and pay the price for it."



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



Mr. Boris Ruge, Germany's Deputy Chief of Mission, lays a wreath for German victims of communism.



Left to right: Col. James R. Fisher, Executive Director of the Korean War Veterans Association; Michel AuBuchon of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation; Dr. Paul Cunningham, President of the Korean War Veterans Association.



The Very Rev. Charles H. Nalls, CH (Col.) (Ret.) lays a wreath on behalf of the American Cold War Veterans.







A record 19 embassies, 4 delegations, and representatives from 48 ethnic and human rights organizations gathered at the Victims of Communism Memorial Statue in Washington, DC, on June 14 to lay wreaths in honor of the more than 100 million victims of communism.



Col. Gail S. Halvorsen, USAF (Ret.), known as the "Berlin Candy Bomber," was a pilot during the Berlin Airlift.



Left to right: Chairman of the American Cold War Veterans The Very Rev. Charles H. Nalls, CH (Col.) (Ret.), VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards, Mike Halvorsen (accepting the award on his father's behalf), and VOC Executive Director Marion Smith.



Left to right: Staff of the Interim Embassy of Venezuela, Gabriel Lugo, Gustavo Marciano, Francisco Marquez, and Brian Fincheltub.



# NATO at 70: Forging Bonds to Strengthen a Key Alliance

On April 4, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation partnered with the Atlantic Council, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and the Munich Security Conference to convene “NATO Engages: The Alliance at 70” in Washington, DC.

The event commemorated the 70th anniversary of the formation of NATO, bringing together members of Congress, foreign dignitaries, US policy experts, leading business representatives, and other key international leaders, including Vice President Mike Pence and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, to discuss NATO’s history, current challenges, and future.

Panels featured discussions on the need to adapt to new threats in the 21st century, NATO’s expansion into eastern Europe and the Balkans, and its aid for the U.S. mission in Afghanistan following the 9/11 terror attacks.

Vice President Pence’s speech reaffirmed America’s commitment to the alliance and quoted President Trump’s Warsaw speech: “Our freedom, our civilization, and our survival depend on these bonds of history, culture, and memory.”

Stoltenberg extolled the alliance as the most successful in history, describing how its members are cooperating more than ever, increasing their strength on NATO’s eastern flank, and committing to spend \$100 billion more on collective defense. He also praised President Trump’s push to make NATO’s European members spend more on defense, citing the president’s statement that “to be a strong alliance, NATO must be a fair alliance.”

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spoke of her experience growing up in Czechoslovakia, escaping Nazi tyranny, and watching her country fall to communist control in 1948. She said the communist takeover awakened the world to the need to found an alliance of democratic states, and that throughout the Cold War, NATO “preserved hope in the West while keeping hope alive in the East.”



Vice President Mike Pence highlights NATO’s track record as a force for good, standing firm as a bulwark against communism throughout the Cold War.



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg chronicles the alliance’s successful history and outlines its future endeavors to strengthen eastern Europe and commit more to collective defense.



VOC’s Director of Government Relations Kristina Olney with Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, prior to her speech describing her childhood in former Czechoslovakia, escaping Nazi tyranny, and watching her country fall to communist control in 1948.

## Event Partners



# Watch Witness Project Episodes on YouTube:

## [youtube.com/vocvideos](https://youtube.com/vocvideos)

Witness Project is an award-winning video series telling the stories of men and women who have seen the brutal effects of communism firsthand. These short documentaries give a human face to the staggering number of victims—more than 100

million in 100 years—and help viewers grasp the human cost of socialism and communism. Witness episodes have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times on social media and screened at dozens of public events across the US and internationally.

### David Smolansky

Country - Venezuela

Release Date - May 1, 2019

Smolansky is the former mayor of El Hatillo, a municipality of Caracas, and a third-generation victim of communism. His grandparents fled the Soviet Union for Cuba in 1927, his father fled to Venezuela in 1970, and now he has had to flee his home. Smolansky's successful efforts as mayor to reduce crime earned him an invitation to an official forum on security led by Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, where Smolansky called for the release of political prisoners from El Hatillo. In retribution against Smolansky, who refused to suppress riots in his constituency, the regime stripped him of his mayoral office. Soon after, the regime's political police pursued Smolansky, who had already fled to the US. He continues to advocate for a free Venezuela and was recognized by President Trump in February 2019 at a rally in Miami, FL.



### Daniel Novacovici

Country - Romania

Release Date - October 17, 2019

Growing up during the transition between the royalist and communist governments, Novacovici, inspired by Radio Free Europe, started an underground group with his brother and friends, distributing anticommunist leaflets and supporting dissidents with supplies. He was arrested in 1959 and sentenced to five years of hard labor in the rice fields of Romania on a "floating gulag" on the Danube, where he suffered routine torture and beatings. He and his family eventually fled to France as political refugees in 1980. In exile, he formed an organization to expose oppression and human rights abuses in Romania. He continues to advocate against communism here from America.



### Ji Seong-ho

Country - North Korea

Release Date - November 1, 2019

As a child during a famine in 1996 caused by the North Korean regime's devastating economic mismanagement, Ji was trying to steal coal to sell and buy food for his family when he fainted from malnourishment, fell, and was crushed by a train. He underwent a three-hour surgery without anesthetics to remove his left leg and hand. Facing discrimination for his disability, he defected with his brother. They escaped into China, where Ji trekked over 6,000 miles to Thailand with nothing but the wooden crutches his father had made for him. After he reunited with his brother in Thailand, the South Korean embassy flew both of them to Seoul.





# Allies Mark 30th Anniversary of ‘Baltic Way’ Protest

On a rainy August 23, VOC joined with Baltic diaspora leaders to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Baltic Way—the day in 1989 when two million Balts joined hands in a 370-mile-long human chain to protest Soviet occupation. The event’s partners included the embassies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; the Delegation of the European Union to the United States; the Estonian American National Council; the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC); and the Lithuanian American Council.

Speakers included VOC Executive Director Marion Smith; the State Department’s Director of Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic Security Affairs Erika Olson; Estonian Ambassador Jonatan Vseio; the Latvian Embassy’s Third Secretary Artūrs Saburovs; JBANC Managing Director and former VOC Trustee Karl Altai; and Counselor of the Lithuanian Embassy Kęstutis Vaškelevičius. A statement of support was read from Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), a member of the Victims of Communism Congressional Caucus.



VOC Executive Director Marion Smith delivers remarks at the 30th anniversary re-enactment of the Baltic Way protest.



Hundreds of people gathered, despite the rain, in front of Capitol Hill on August 23 to re-enact the iconic Baltic Way protest of 1989, when two million Balts joined hands in a 370-mile-long human chain between the capitals of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in protest against Soviet occupation.



Estonian Ambassador Jonatan Vseiov gives remarks commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Baltic Way.





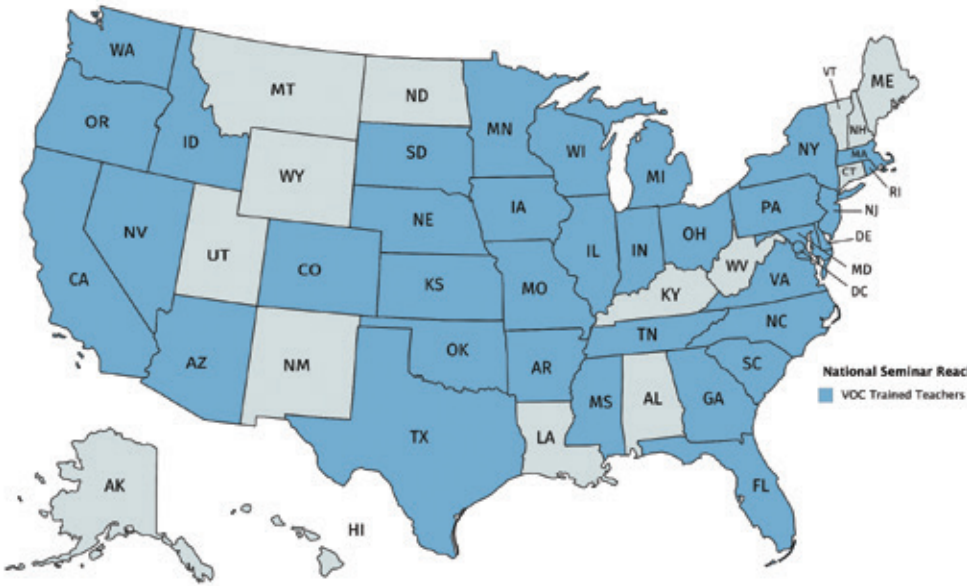


Former Vietnamese political prisoner and Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate Dr. Đoàn Việt Hoạt recounts his life under a communist regime.

# EDUCATION



## VOC Teachers Across the Country



Copies of our curriculum *Communism, Its Ideology, Its History, and Its Legacy* and other important works on communism are given to teachers for their participation in the two-week seminar.

## National Teachers Seminar

On July 13-20, VOC convened our fourth annual National Seminar for Middle & High School Educators at the Elliott School of International Affairs in Washington, DC. Our expert faculty trained 50 new teachers from 38 states on the history

and legacy of communism, blending scholarly lectures, peer discussions, and pedagogical sessions with our Witness Project videos and in-person testimonials from dissidents and witnesses of communist tyranny.



Participants of our fourth annual National Seminar for Middle & High School Educators.

# Educating Future Generations on the Perils of Communism

## University of Georgia: Student Lecture

On February 23, Dr. Murray Bessette spoke to the University of Georgia chapter of Young Americans for Liberty in a talk called “So You Think You’re a Socialist?,” explaining the gap between socialism’s false promises and its grim realities.

## Oakcrest School: Merita McCormack

At the request of two alumni of our National Teacher Seminars, Cecelia Escobar and Kathleen Ouyang, VOC organized a talk by local ally and witness Merita McCormack for the Oakcrest School for girls on March 25, in Vienna, Virginia, describing what life was like growing up in communist Albania.

## Harvard University: Teacher Workshop

On June 8, VOC hosted a teacher workshop and screening of the film *Ashes in the Snow* in Harvard’s Tsai Auditorium, in partnership with Harvard University’s Davis Center for Russia and Eurasian Studies and with Dr. Mark Kramer, editor of *The Black Book of Communism* and member of VOC’s Academic Council. Dr. Murray Bessette and Dr. Włodzimierz Batóg, VOC Senior Research Fellow in Polish Studies, presented our new curriculum focused on the Baltic deportations and lectured on the impacts of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The engaged audience of teachers and community members requested we screen the film for students next academic year.

## Clemson University: Lecture on Socialism’s Flaws

On September 20, VOC Director of Academic Programs Dr. Murray Bessette delivered “Why Not Socialism?” to the Clemson Institute for the Study of Capitalism’s inaugural Family Weekend Lecture revealing the chasm between socialism’s promises and its realities.

## University of Kentucky: Discussing Venezuela’s Future

On October 24, Dr. Murray Bessette moderated a panel to discuss the struggle for freedom in Venezuela. Panelists included VOC Director of Latin America Programs Dr. Carlos Ponce, Venezuelan dissident Daniel Di Martino, and Venezuelan lawyer and political activist Francisco Marquez Lara.

## Princeton University: Exposing the Plight of the Uyghurs

On November 20, VOC hosted a panel providing an overview of the current status of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, separating cold facts from Chinese Communist Party lies. Panelists included VOC Senior Fellow in China Studies Dr. Adrian Zenz, Co-Director of the Woodrow Wilson School’s Center for International Security Studies Dr. Aaron Friedberg, Uyghur human rights activist Rushan Abbas, and VOC Academic Council Member Dr. Flagg Taylor.

## Great Bay Community College: Witness to Mao’s China Shares Her Story

On December 6, at Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, VOC ally and witness Lily Tang Williams shared her personal story of growing up in Maoist China. The students in the China’s Modern History class were transfixed by the harrowing details of her story, and many remained after class to ask more questions. There have already been requests to have her return to give a similar talk next semester.



Dr. Murray Bessette explains the pitfalls of socialist ideology to students at the University of Georgia.



Merita McCormack describes her life growing up in communist Albania to students at Oakcrest School.



Dr. Murray Bessette and Dr. Włodzimierz Batóg hosted a teacher workshop and screening of the film *Ashes in the Snow* at Harvard University.





Dr. Murray Bessette delivers the Family Weekend Lecture at Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism.



Left to right: Venezuelan dissident Daniel Di Martino, Venezuelan lawyer and political activist Francisco Marquez Lara, VOC Director of Latin America Programs Dr. Carlos Ponce, and Dr. Murray Bessette after a panel at the University of Kentucky discussing Venezuela's future.



On November 20, VOC hosted a panel providing an overview of the current status of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, separating cold facts from Chinese Communist Party lies.



VOC faculty and witness to Mao's China Lily Tang Williams shares her story with students at Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth, NH.



Bestselling author Ruta Sepetys fields questions from high school teachers after a screening of her book-turned-movie, *Ashes in the Snow*, in Nashville, Tennessee.

## Curriculum Module Based on Best Selling Story

Through our partnership with bestselling author Ruta Sepetys, in early 2019, VOC piloted a new content module for our flagship curriculum, focused on the Soviet deportations of the Baltic region. This module is centered around Sepetys' novel-turned-feature-film *Ashes in the Snow*, which tells the story of a 16-year-old artist and her family being deported from Lithuania to Siberia amid Stalin's brutal dismantling of the Baltic region.

Throughout 2019 we hosted numerous professional development workshops for middle and high school teachers across the country featuring this module. Each workshop included a private screening of the film, a discussion with the author, and custom materials to accompany VOC's curriculum, *Communism: Its Ideology, Its History, Its Legacy*. The workshops reached more than 200 teachers in Nashville, Denver, Los Angeles, and St. Louis.

In November 2019, we took our film tour to Capitol Hill. Partnering with the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC), we co-hosted a screening of *Ashes in the Snow*. Following the screening was a panel discussion on the experience of Baltic victims of the Soviet and Nazi regimes. Panelists were Co-Chair of the House Baltic Caucus Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), *Ashes in the Snow* film director Marius Markevicius, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith, and JBANC Managing Director Karl Altau.



Rep. John Shimkus, director Marius Markevicius, Marion Smith, and Karl Altau convene a panel on Capitol Hill following a screening of *Ashes in the Snow*.



# VOC Senior Fellow Breaks Explosive ‘China Cables’ Story

In October 2019, Dr. Adrian Zenz, a leading expert on Beijing's minority policies in Tibet and Xinjiang, joined VOC as a Senior Research Fellow in China Studies. That same month, he testified on the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) mass internment camps and use of forced labor in Xinjiang, at a public hearing for the Congressional-Executive Commission on China—the official government entity tasked with monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses in China. Then, on November 24, Dr. Zenz published an op-ed in *The New York Times* revealing explosive new details about the CCP's systematic campaign of cultural genocide against the Uyghur people.

Dr. Zenz also testified on December 10 before the US House Foreign Affairs Committee. That morning, VOC partnered with the Uyghur Human Rights Project to host a Policy Forum on Capitol Hill. Dr. Zenz released his latest groundbreaking research detailing the extent of forced labor practices in Xinjiang and the CCP's long-term strategy to subdue an entire people. Other panelists were renowned Uyghur poet and film director Tahir Hamut, George Washington University professor Dr. Sean Roberts, and Uyghur human rights advocate Nury Turkel.

Since joining VOC, Dr. Zenz has been mentioned over 240 times in over 120 media outlets, including the *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and the *BBC*, and has conducted broadcast interviews with NPR, Bloomberg, and CNN, as well as top German newswires Deutsche Welle and Tagesschau.



Dr. Adrian Zenz was interviewed by the BBC regarding his research of forced labor in Xinjiang, China.



WALL STREET JOURNAL  
The New York Times



Bloomberg



Süddeutsche Zeitung



tagesschau<sup>1</sup>

“Thanks to these new document disclosures, we now have hard evidence that in addition to implementing a vast internment program in Xinjiang, the Chinese Communist Party is deliberately breaking up families and forcing them into poverty and a form of indentured labor. For all its efforts at secrecy, the Chinese government can no longer hide the extent of its campaign of repression in Xinjiang.” – *Dr. Adrian Zenz*

Dr. Zenz's groundbreaking research on CCP human rights abuses in Xinjiang was featured in the New York Times on November 24, 2019.



# Polish Studies Conference Explores Post-Cold War Transition to Freedom

On May 2-3 at the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago, VOC hosted a conference called “Towards Freedom: Celebrating Central and Eastern European Independence.” The conference highlighted episodes in Polish history to show how competing totalitarian movements sought to crush the free individual and how free government can be re-established in their wake. Topics included

political prisoners in communist Poland, civil society’s role in bringing down the Iron Curtain, and daily life under communism. Keynote speakers were Dr. Padraic Kenney, professor of history at Indiana University, and Dr. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Program at Harvard University’s Davis Center and editor of *The Black Book of Communism*.



Partnering with the Polish National Foundation, VOC hosted a two-day conference in Chicago highlighting episodes in Polish history to show how competing totalitarian movements sought to crush the free individual and how free government can be reestablished in their wake.



Left to right: Polish National Foundation's Maciej Swirski, VOC's Senior Polish Studies Fellow Dr. Włodzimierz Batóg, and VOC's Director of Academic Programs Dr. Murray Bessette.



Speakers at the conference discussed political prisoners in communist Poland, civil society’s role in bringing down the Iron Curtain, and daily life under communism. Noted speakers were Dr. Padraic Kenney, professor of history at Indiana University, and Dr. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Program at Harvard University’s Davis Center and editor of *The Black Book of Communism*.



# Polish Fellows Conduct New Research, Expand High School Curriculum

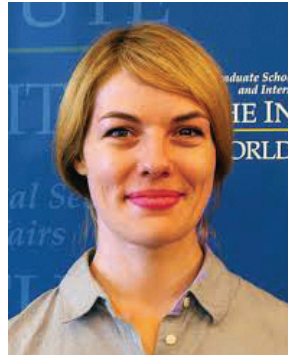


**Dr. Jakub Tyszkiewicz**

**Education** – PhD, University of Wrocław

**Research Project** – US policy toward the Catholic Church in Poland during 1945-1989

**Of Note** – Dr. Tyszkiewicz has been a Professor of History at the University of Wrocław for 17 years and has lectured across the globe, in Poland, Israel, Italy, and the United States.

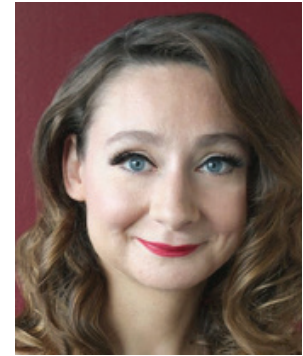


**Maria Juczevska**

**Education** – MA, Institute of World Politics

**Research Project** – Adapted her research on Polish Intelligence hero Witold Pilecki into a middle and high school curriculum module.

**Of Note** – Before joining VOC, Maria was the Kosciuszko Chair Associate Director at the Institute of World Politics, where she helped design international seminars and scholarly exchange programs centered on Central and Eastern European affairs.



**Dr. Anna Draniewicz**

**Education** – PhD, University of Bradford

**Research Project** – How Polish cult films helped overthrow communism in Poland.

**Of Note** – Dr. Draniewicz is an experienced producer and curator of film events, specializing in European and World Cinema.

## Excerpts from a Presentation by VOC Polish Studies Fellow Maria Juczevska



The 20th-century history of Poland is the story of freedom's suppression by the forces of Nazism and communism, both of which systematically carved Poland in half after the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which allowed the Soviets and Nazis to partition and seize Poland.



Polish intelligence operative Witold Pilecki was a distinguished military hero during the early 20th century who sought to document German atrocities at Auschwitz and was later killed by the Soviets during a show trial for "working for foreign imperialists."



On July 18, thousands of protesters gathered on the US Capitol West Lawn to mark the 20th anniversary of the CCP's Campaign to Eradicate the Falun Gong—a state-sanctioned human rights atrocity that continues to this day.



HUMAN  
RIGHTS





## President Hosts VOC Dissidents in Oval Office

On November 7, 2019, in concert with President Trump's third annual Presidential Message on the National Day for the Victims of Communism, VOC organized a delegation of victims and dissidents to meet with the president in the Oval Office. They included Grace Jo, a North Korean defector and the Vice President of North Korean Refugees in the USA; Sirley Ávila León, a Cuban activist who suffered a machete-attack for her criticism of the Castro regime; Nguyễn Ngọc Như Quỳnh, a Vietnamese blogger who was imprisoned by the communist regime for her online activism; and Daniel Di Martino, a college student from Venezuela who has firsthand experience living under the brutal Maduro regime. The visit concluded with brief remarks by VOC Executive Director Marion Smith, Vice Chairman of our Board of Trustees Amb. Aldona Wos, and each of the dissidents.



Left to right: VOC Board Vice Chairman Amb. Aldona Wos, Vietnamese dissident blogger Nguyễn Ngọc Như Quỳnh, North Korean defector and Vice President of North Korean Refugees in the USA Grace Jo, President Donald Trump, Cuban human rights activist Sirley Ávila León, and Venezuelan college student Daniel Di Martino.

“On this National Day for the Victims of Communism, we remember the more than 100 million people who have died as a result of communist oppression. Today, we renew our commitment to helping secure for all people a future of peace and prosperity founded on the core tenets of democracy—liberty, justice, and a deep respect for the value of every human life.” – *President Donald Trump*

## Taiwan Gathers Champions of Freedom in China

From May 29 to June 1, VOC Director of Government Relations Kristina Olney represented VOC in Taiwan as co-host of the Taiwan International Religious Freedom Forum, an annual gathering of more than 80 parliamentarians, religious leaders, and human rights advocates from 27 countries to promote religious freedom around the world—and in particular, China. Other co-hosts included China Aid, Freedom House, The Heritage Foundation, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, and the Taiwan Association for China Human Rights. Olney spoke on a panel about religious persecution and oppression of Tibetans and Uyghur Muslims. Other speakers included Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwanese Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom Pusin Tali, US Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback, and prominent human rights lawyer Kenneth Starr. Attendees discussed ways to promote religious freedom and human rights across the globe, issued a joint declaration condemning the persecution of Uyghur Muslims, and called on all governments and the international human rights community to respond.



Left to right: Pastor Bob Fu (China Aid), Dr. Yang Sen-hong (Taiwan Association for China Human Rights), Greg Mitchell (International Religious Freedom Roundtable), Chiu Ling-yao (Taiwan Association for China Human Rights), Kristina Olney (VOC), Olivia Enos (Heritage Foundation), Doug Robison (China Aid), Travis Weber (Family Research Council), Rev. Lyim Hong-Tiong (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan).



## Against the Persecution of Falun Gong: Rally and Forum

On July 18, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith spoke at a rally on the US Capitol West Lawn, where thousands gathered to mark the 20th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party's Campaign to Eradicate the Falun Gong—a state-sanctioned human rights atrocity that continues to this day. Other speakers included Reps. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) and Steve Chabot (R-OH) and former Canadian Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) David Kilgour.

On April 25, VOC Director of Academic Programs Dr. Murray Bessette spoke at a forum on Capitol Hill to mark the 20th anniversary of the Falun Gong Appeal—the day when 10,000 Chinese citizens held a peaceful sit-in at Communist Party headquarters in Beijing to protest the beating and jailing of dozens of Falun Gong practitioners. Other speakers included Gary L. Bauer, US Commissioner on International Religious Freedom, and Chen Guangcheng, a renowned Chinese human rights lawyer and laureate of VOC's Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom.







On September 30, VOC co-hosted a seminar on Capitol Hill to remember the more than 80 million people killed during the 70 years of Chinese Communist Party rule.

## Highlighting 70 Years of Chinese Communist Crimes

On September 30, the 70th anniversary of Chinese Communist Party rule in China, VOC co-hosted a seminar on Capitol Hill with the Wei Jingsheng Foundation, European Parliament Liaison Office, International Campaign for Tibet, World Uyghur Congress, Uyghur Human Rights Project, and Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) to remember the more than 80 million people killed by the Chinese communist regime. CECC Commissioner Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and CECC Co-Chair Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) both delivered statements.

Other speakers included Chinese democracy advocate and former political prisoner Wei Jingsheng, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith, retired U.S. intelligence official Robert Suettinger, Vice President of the International Campaign for Tibet Bhuchung Tsering, human rights activist Dimon Liu, and Executive Director of Uyghur Human Rights Project Omer Kanat. Following the seminar, event attendees and human rights groups held a demonstration outside the White House, calling for democracy and greater respect for human rights in China.

### Event Partners



# Photo Exhibit Premieres at Organization of American States

On July 8, in partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the arts-based human rights organization Un Mundo Sin Mordaza, VOC co-hosted a photography exhibit called *Victims of Venezuela's Dictatorship* at the OAS Main Building in Washington, DC. The exhibit exposed the human cost of socialism in Venezuela for top policy makers and leaders of the human rights community. It featured 50 photos by award-winning Venezuelan photographers, laying bare the horrors of Nicolás Maduro's regime, including food shortages, malnutrition, the migration crisis, torture of dissidents, and police brutality against protesters. Speakers included:

OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro, Venezuelan Special Representative to the OAS Amb. Gustavo Tarre, and VOC Executive Director Marion Smith.

A few days earlier, on June 24-28, the exhibit was displayed in Latin America as part of the 49th regular session of the OAS General Assembly at the Plaza Mayor Convention and Exhibition Center in Medellín, Colombia. More than 2,000 people saw the exhibit, which was widely covered in international media, including EFE, Telemundo, *La Vanguardia*, *El Nacional*, and *Venezuela Al Día*.



OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro delivers remarks in the atrium of the Organization of American States Main Building in Washington, DC.



OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro (left) delivers remarks ahead of Amb. Gustavo Tarre, Venezuelan Special Representative to the OAS (right).



The exhibit featured 50 photos by award-winning Venezuelan photographers, lays bare the horrors of Nicolás Maduro's socialist regime, including food shortages, malnutrition, the migration crisis, torture of dissidents, and police brutality against protesters.



VOC Executive Director Marion Smith describes the need for the United States to support the Venezuelan people in their struggle against the socialist Maduro regime.



# Exposing Human Trafficking In Cuba's Medical Missions

On December 18, in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Organization of American States (OAS), VOC hosted an event called "The Dark Reality behind the Cuban Medical Missions." The program exposed vast corruption and human rights violations that underpin the Cuban regime's so-called medical diplomacy—its practice of sending thousands of doctors overseas on "healthcare missions," supposedly to foster international goodwill. In fact, a growing body of evidence and testimonies demonstrate that the program systematically exploits Cuban doctors in a manner consistent with human trafficking—and earns Havana a neat \$11 billion a year.

Held at the OAS Main Building in Washington, DC, the event convened top experts, human rights leaders, government officials, and Cuban dissidents to expose and counter this mass oppression scheme. The event also featured harrowing personal testimony by two brave witnesses, Dania Cao Quintero and Ramona Matos, who defected from the Cuban doctor program to tell their stories to the world.

Other speakers included Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS; Marion Smith, VOC's Executive Director; Carrie Filipetti, the State Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cuba and Venezuela; Amb. Carlos Trujillo, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS; Dr. Carlos Ponce, VOC's Director of Latin America Programs; John Barsa, Assistant Administrator of USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean; Javier Larrondo, President of Prisoners Defenders, a human rights nonprofit run by Cuban exiles; Sam Dubbin, a litigant in the US case against the Pan American Health Organization; and Maria Werlau, Executive Director of human rights outfit Cuba Archive.



OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro



USAID Acting Administrator John Barsa



US Permanent Representative to the OAS Amb. Carlos Trujillo



We convened top experts, human rights leaders, government officials, and Cuban dissidents to expose and counter the vast corruption and human rights violations that underpin the Cuban regime's practice of sending thousands of doctors overseas on "healthcare missions," supposedly to foster international good will.

## Cuba's Medical Missions

### QUICK FACTS:

- Began in 1963 with first mission to Algeria
- Developed during Cold War to break Cuba's political isolation
- Now has over 50,000 doctors active in more than 60 countries
- Touted by Havana as "humanitarian aid" and "good will"
- Often praised by western politicians, such as Bernie Sanders
- Is the regime's largest source of revenue, at over \$11 billion

### THE DARK REALITY:

- Cuban regime pockets up to 90% of doctors' salaries
- Participating doctors coerced by authorities to join
- Many not shown their contract or told where they will be sent
- Forced to attend communist political indoctrination sessions
- Nearly 50% have their passports seized on arrival
- Forced to work 64 hours per week for three years
- Housed in cramped quarters; strict curfew enforced at dusk
- Separated from spouse and children; family visits banned
- Leaving the mission punishable by eight-year jail sentence
- Allowed to communicate only via state-monitored devices
- Constantly threatened by officials; families hosted in Cuba
- Forced to spy on each other, report any sign of escape plans
- Coerced to falsify official work statistics in host countries

### RECENT COUNTERACTIONS:

- State Department declared the scheme "human trafficking"
- Brazil cancelled its Cuban medical mission as "slave labor"
- Defectors filed federal lawsuit against enabler entity PAHO
- Detailed claim filed with the International Criminal Court

# National 'Captive Nations' Summit Launches on Capitol Hill

Each July, VOC leads national efforts to mark Captive Nations Week, in fulfillment of the 1959 congressional resolution adopted during the Eisenhower administration to show American solidarity with nations subjugated by communism. This year, we hosted our first Captive Nations Week Summit on Capitol Hill, conferred our Human Rights Award, hosted our National Seminar for Middle & High School Educators, published op-eds in major news outlets, and welcomed President Trump's Proclamation on Captive Nations Week.

Our first Captive Nations Summit was held on July 15 in the U.S. Senate Building, in conjunction with the second annual Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom hosted by the US

State Department. At the summit, policymakers and human rights advocates heard firsthand of human suffering under communism from witnesses of the captive nations of China, Cuba, Hong Kong, Laos, Nicaragua, North Korea, Venezuela, and Vietnam. Speakers included Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX); Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC), co-chair of the Victims of Communism Congressional Caucus; Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Vietnam; Luis Almagro, secretary general of the Organization of American States; Venezuelan Amb. Carlos Vecchio of the US-recognized interim government of Juan Guaidó; Amb. Paula Dobriansky, VOC Trustee; Benedict Rogers, chairman of Hong Kong Watch; and exiled Vietnamese blogger Mother Mushroom.



VOC Trustee Amb. Paula Dobriansky speaks on the legacy of her father, who authored the Captive Nations Week Resolution signed into law by President Eisenhower in July 1959.



Carlos Vecchio, Ambassador of Venezuela to the United States of the US-recognized interim government of Juan Guaidó, delivers remarks at the Captive Nations Week Summit.



Benedict Rogers, Chairman of Hong Kong Watch, delivers keynote remarks on the systematic human rights abuses in China.



Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Vietnam, gives keynote remarks.



## Venezuelan Crisis Photography Exhibit

The Captive Nations Summit included a special VOC photography exhibit documenting the human cost of socialism in Venezuela. It featured 50 photos by award-winning Venezuelan photographers, laying bare the horrors of Nicolás Maduro's regime, including food shortages, malnutrition, the migration crisis, torture of dissidents, and police brutality against protesters.



## Mother Mushroom Honored

This year we gave our Victims of Communism Human Rights Award to Nguyễn Ngọc Nhu Quỳnh, known as “Mother Mushroom,” for her brave advocacy for human rights in Vietnam. Quỳnh began blogging about social issues in Vietnam in 2006 and was soon targeted by communist authorities for exposing corruption and human rights abuses. Arrested and then released in 2009, she defied the authorities and continued to write. In late 2016 she was given a 10-year jail sentence for “propagandizing against the state.” Denied legal representation, she went on a hunger strike. On October 17, 2018, after a two-year campaign of international pressure, she was released to the United States, where she was reunited with her two children and elderly mother.



## Publications

VOC Executive Director Marion Smith published op-eds highlighting the importance of Captive Nations Week and bringing greater public attention to nations still held captive by collectivist regimes such as Cuba, North Korea, and Venezuela.

**Communism Is Making a Comeback;  
So Should Captive Nations Week**

*Miami Herald* • July 12, 2019

**This Captive Nations Week, America Must Stand  
with Those Struggling for Freedom**

*National Review* • July 15, 2019

**The Miami Herald**

**NATIONAL REVIEW**

## Presidential Proclamation

Every year the President issues a proclamation on the third week of July to mark Captive Nations Week, a tradition dating back to 1959 under President Eisenhower.



“During Captive Nations Week, we reaffirm our Nation’s unwavering support for those who strive to be free from oppression. We condemn repressive regimes that deny people their God-given rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” – *President Donald Trump*

# Working on Capitol Hill for a Free Hong Kong

On September 18, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation hosted the Hong Kong Human Rights Forum on Capitol Hill in support of those fighting to maintain the city's freedoms. The Forum gathered policymakers, human rights advocates, and congressional staffers to hear a diverse group of voices from Hong Kong, including student leaders, journalists, social workers, and artists sharing their experiences on the front line.

Speakers included Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), sponsor of the Cruz-Markey Hong Kong Policy Reevaluation Act of 2019; Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), co-sponsor of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act; Badiucao, a Chinese-Australian political cartoonist, artist, and rights activist; Dr. Dan Garrett, an author, photographer, and political scientist focusing on Chinese security politics; and activists from the front lines of the Hong Kong protests.

Rep. Sherman announced, "We have legislation [The Stand Up for Hong Kong Resolution, The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019, PROTECT Hong Kong Act] pending in Congress. I expect it will be passed soon." It was passed two weeks later.



Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) delivers keynote remarks recounting his own family's struggle to escape tyranny in Cuba.



Exiled Hong Kong dissident artist Badiucao unveils a flag he designed for the protests.



Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) announces legislation to support the people of Hong Kong.



VOC's Director of Public Relations Ashlee Davis (left) and Director of Government Relations Kristina Olney (center) stand with Hong Kong protesters. The protesters remained masked to conceal their identity and prevent repercussions by the Communist Party.



"We have legislation [The Stand Up for Hong Kong Resolution, The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019, PROTECT Hong Kong Act] pending in Congress. I expect it will be passed soon." – *Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA)*



# T-Shirt Campaign Shames NBA Leadership for Censorship

On October 4, Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey tweeted “Fight For Freedom. Stand With Hong Kong” in support of the city’s pro-democracy protests. Beijing responded by cancelling millions of dollars in NBA revenue from Chinese sponsorships and TV fees, and by threatening to end all business dealings with the NBA. Morey buckled under pressure from NBA leadership, recanted, and deleted his tweet within three days—a chilling example of the NBA’s and many American businesses’ willingness to appease China’s totalitarian communist leaders.

In response, just hours before the NBA’s October 9 preseason game between the Washington Wizards and the Chinese team Guangzhou Long-Lions, VOC designed and printed 1,000 “Free Hong Kong” t-shirts. Ahead of the game, our

staff positioned themselves outside the Capital One Arena and passed out the shirts to hundreds of fans, who wore them at the game to defy NBA self-censorship and show support for the human rights and democratic freedoms of Hong Kong’s citizens.

Our campaign was mentioned in over 58 media outlets—print, TV, and radio—and quickly gained massive attention on social media. It was promoted by many Members of Congress, including Reps. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) and Sens. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Ted Cruz (R-TX). After we made the t-shirts available online, we found ourselves shipping thousands of orders across the country to lovers of basketball and freedom, who replicated our campaign in other cities, including Los Angeles and New York City.



VOC’s t-shirts were worn at NBA games across the country, including Los Angeles, Washington, DC, and New York City.



A hero in Hong Kong is arrested for protesting peacefully for freedom while wearing VOC’s t-shirt.



Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL).



Hong Kong politician Nathan Law (left) and Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL) (right).



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA).

# Fifth Annual China Forum Conference in US Capitol Exposing How US Dollars Fund Oppression in China



Kyle Bass, founder of Hayman Capital Management, explains how China depends on foreign investment to keep its economy afloat and oppress its own people.

On September 26, we held our fifth annual China Forum in Washington, DC, convening prominent scholars, experts, journalists, policymakers, and human rights advocates to help Americans better understand the nature of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and key issues in US-China relations.

The public day featured three expert panels. The first explored how to hold the CCP accountable for its egregious human rights violations by targeting “enabler” private companies, both Chinese and American, whose support for Beijing’s actions makes these atrocities possible. The second panel detailed the CCP’s policies of brutal oppression and expansionism in the periphery of “Greater China,” including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang. The final panel addressed the CCP’s systematic efforts to reshape the global order to favor authoritarianism over democratic values, by expanding its neo-imperialist Belt and Road Initiative, building garrisons in the South China Sea, buying up hard assets in Africa, and fostering corruption and dictatorship in Latin America.



Bill Browder, Founder and CEO of Hermitage Capital Management discusses sanctions and other tools free countries can use to hold human rights abusers accountable.

Sen. Tex Cruz (R-TX) gave keynote remarks on the similarities between the Soviet Union and Communist China today, the brutal persecution of Uyghurs and Tibetans, and the moral bankruptcy of communist ideology. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) also gave remarks highlighting the CCP’s horrific ongoing human rights violations and the need to counter them with concrete actions. The private day featured two off-the-record panels, one assessing how the CCP’s absolute power at home affects its long-term competition with the United States, and one addressing how Beijing’s ambitions in outer space might threaten US national security.



Dan Tobin, member of the China Studies faculty at the National Intelligence University unpacks the ideological origins of the CCP’s suppression of freedom.



Ian Easton, Senior Director at the Project 2049 Institute details the CCP’s long-held plans to take over Taiwan.



VOC’s Senior Research Fellow Dr. Adrian Zenz presents his research exposing CCP human rights abuses against Uyghurs in Xinjiang.



Thank you to our event sponsors,  
especially:



TAIWAN FOUNDATION  
for DEMOCRACY  
財團法人  
臺灣民主基金會



Kyle Bass, Bill Browder, and Marion Smith discuss the risks run by American and Chinese businesses indirectly funding China's human rights abuses.

“We’ve been in a Cold War with China for the last twenty-some-odd years, and we just realized it a couple of years ago. . . . Our country has just woken up to the various ways China has been fighting and using our own tools against us.” – *Kyle Bass, Founder of Hayman Capital Management*



VOC's Director of Latin America Programs, Dr. Carlos Ponce, explains the CCP's use of “debt diplomacy” in Latin America to manipulate developing countries into supporting its geopolitical agenda, including de-recognizing Taiwanese sovereignty.



Right: Hong Kong politician and activist Nathan Law.



# CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT



VOC's t-shirt campaign won instant support from hundreds of NBA fans.



# Countering Communist Propaganda in the Media

In 2019, VOC experts produced 52 op-eds. VOC research was cited over 470 times in media outlets such as *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *CNN*, *Associated Press*, *Axios*, *Politico*, and *Fox News*. Our annual poll on *Attitudes Toward Socialism, Communism, and Collectivism* was cited over 100 times. VOC

experts participated in over 40 radio appearances and 16 TV appearances on shows such as *CNN Newsroom*, *C-SPAN's Washington Journal Report*, *Bloomberg Markets*, and *Fox Business's Varney & Co.*



On March 7, Marion Smith appeared on *Varney & Co.* to discuss the rising popularity of socialism among millennials and the socialist crisis in Venezuela.



Dr. Adrian Zenz, VOC Senior Research Fellow in China Studies, joined CNN's *Connect the World* to discuss leaked Chinese government documents detailing brutal human rights violations in Xinjiang.



**52**  
Op-Eds



**40**  
Radio Appearances



**480**  
Citations for Media Outlets



**16**  
TV Appearances



On December 2, Dr. Adrian Zenz was featured on Al Jazeera's *The Listening Post* to discuss leaked documents from the CCP that detail the systemic internment of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.



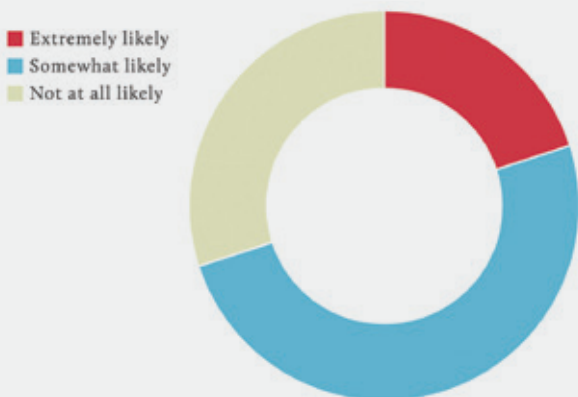
On August 15, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith appeared on Fox Business's *Varney & Co.* for the second time to discuss the police crackdown on protesters in Hong Kong and the threat that the Chinese Communist Party poses to the city's fledgling democracy.

# 4th Annual Poll: 70 percent of Millennials likely to vote socialist

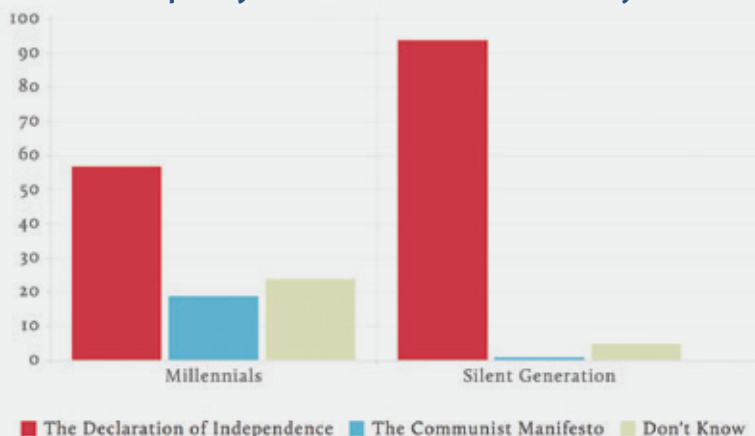
On October 29, VOC released its fourth annual report on generational attitudes toward socialism, communism, and collectivism in partnership with YouGov. This year's study showed increased support for communism (36%) among Millennials compared to 2018. Positive opinions of capitalism took a steep decline from 2018 to 2019, with only one-in-two

millennials (ages 23-38) and Gen Z (ages 16-22) having a favorable opinion of capitalism. Meanwhile, some 70% of Millennials say they are likely to vote socialist. Our poll was cited in over 80 media publications including Axios, Forbes, USA Today, Fox News, *The Washington Times*, and *The Hill*.

**70% of Millennials say they are likely to vote socialist.**



**Only 57% of Millennials believe the Declaration of Independence better "guarantees freedom and equality" over *The Communist Manifesto*.**



## From the Headlines

**AXIOS**

**70% of millennials say they'd vote for a socialist**  
Oct. 28, 2019

**The Washington Times**

**Millennials: 7-in-10 say socialism, not capitalism**  
Oct. 28, 2019

**Newsweek**

**Trump is bigger threat to world peace than Kim Jong-un and Vladimir Putin, quarter of Americans say in new poll**  
Oct. 28, 2019

**FOX BUSINESS**

**Most millennials would vote for a socialist over a capitalist, poll finds**  
Oct. 29, 2019

**USA TODAY**

**I was born as the Berlin Wall fell. 'Socialist' millennials should learn about the USSR.**  
Nov. 9, 2019

**MarketWatch**

**Millennials these days: Socialism and communism are hot, capitalism is not**  
Oct. 28, 2019

**BUSINESS INSIDER**

**70% of millennials say they'd vote for a socialist. 5 facts about their debt-saddled economic situation tell you why.**  
Nov. 1, 2019





In October 2019, St. Louis became the first city to establish a VOC Local Commission.

## First Local Commission Launched in St. Louis

On October 3, VOC officially launched its first Local Commission in St. Louis, Missouri (VOC-STL), as part of a new initiative to bring our national mission directly to local communities. Through these commissions, VOC partners with community leaders including public officials, teachers, civic organizers, business leaders, veterans, and ethnic community leaders to help educate their fellow citizens about the perils of communism and combat Marxist misinformation at the local level. Available educational activities include media campaigns, public events, professional development for teachers, and public commemorations.

As a city with a long history of welcoming immigrants, particularly political refugees from Eastern Europe and

Southeast Asia, St. Louis was chosen as an ideal location to establish VOC's first local commission. Unfortunately, the city also has a substantial constituency of hard-left Marxists who are well organized and determined to infiltrate local government, spread misinformation, and agitate for communist-style governance, including through acts of intimidation and violence (see next story). VOC has named Kim McGrath, a Democratic Central Committeewoman of the City of St. Louis, as director of the commission to lead VOC-STL with an able and growing team of volunteers and concerned citizens.

"The St. Louis commission is a significant development, and VOC is a sophisticated operation with a history of success and a distinguished leadership team." – *Kim McGrath, Director of VOC-STL*



VOC-STL Director Kim McGrath.

# Countering Marxist Activism through Citizen Education

## Communists Infiltrate City Government

In early February, at the invitation of Kim McGrath, VOC's Executive Director Marion Smith and a staff delegation flew to St. Louis, Missouri, to investigate concerns about the growing presence of communists in local politics. Once there, VOC met with a group of local business owners, union leaders, veterans, and Democratic Party officials who briefed them on the aggressive activities of a far-left Marxist activist group called the Workers Education Society. The Marxist group had infiltrated their party, and its president, Tony Pecinovsky, was running for the Board of Aldermen (city legislature).



demanding she remove an American flag from her storefront, then smashed her store window with a brick—tied to a threatening note displaying the hammer-and-sickle and words “Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.” The incident made national news, including on Fox Business. Pecinovsky eventually lost the primary but, frighteningly, managed to gain 48% of the vote.



After refusing to take down the flag, a store owner finds her storefront window smashed in with a brick—tied to a threatening note displaying the hammer-and-sickle and words “Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.”

Pecinovsky—a member of the National Board of the Communist Party USA—had rallied local communist sympathizers and was polling within striking distance of the well-loved Democratic incumbent, Carol Howard. Communist agitators had also sent hate mail to a local antique-store owner,

## VOC Local Commission Organizes to Push Back

In response, VOC was invited to convene a special meeting of community leaders and legislators in St. Louis on March 30 to address this growing threat. Prominent participants included Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), Missouri House Representatives Tony Lovasco and Lacy Clay, and Board of Aldermen President Lewis Reed. In tandem, VOC hosted a professional development workshop for over 200 middle and high school teachers as well as a public screening of *Ashes in the Snow*, a film about Soviet deportations of Lithuanians

based on the bestselling novel by Ruta Sepetys, a VOC advisor. That evening, Marion Smith gave remarks on the perils of communism at the Lithuanian Independence Celebration hosted by the Lithuanian American Community of Greater St. Louis. Other speakers included Mantvydas Bekešius, consul general of the Republic of Lithuania in Chicago, and Daiva Navarrette, honorary consul of Lithuania and co-founder of the Lithuanian World Arts Council.



Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL) speaks to high school teachers on the importance of knowing the story of the Soviet deportations in the Baltic States.



Members of the St. Louis community discuss ways to counter rising communist popularity in their community at the inaugural meeting of VOC-STL.





VOC-STL ran a billboard campaign exposing the truth about communism in strategic locations along high-traffic highways.

## VOC Launches Public Education Initiative

During the spring and summer, VOC worked with Kim McGrath and other local leaders to plan and launch an official VOC- STL Local Commission. In Autumn, the commission ran a high-impact billboard campaign putting hard facts about communism in strategic locations along main highways and commuter routes in St. Louis. The project leveraged

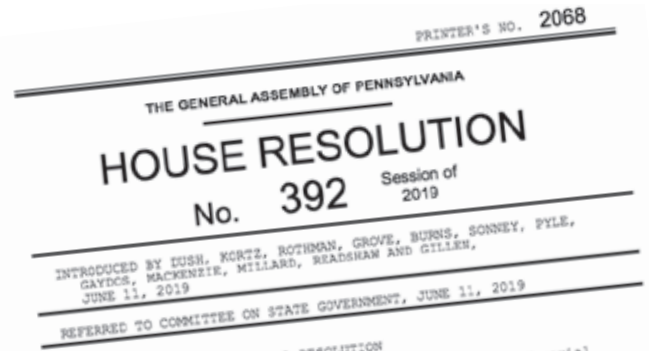
ad images already developed for VOC's #CommunismKills billboard campaign in New York's Times Square in 2016-17, which brought the truth about communism to over 1.1 million people. These images have now likely been seen multiple times by most of St. Louis's population, delivering a stark reminder of communism's horrific track record.



On March 30, at the first meeting of VOC's St. Louis Local Commission, community leaders and local legislators discuss ways to counter a groundswell of collectivist activity driven by radical activists in their city.

# Four States Adopt Official VOC Day in 2019

On October 28, VOC Director of Government Relations Kristina Olney traveled to the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg, PA, to witness a floor vote on a bill to commemorate November 7 as Victims of Communism Memorial Day, which passed by a vote of 167-30. VOC met with multiple backers of the bill, including original sponsor Rep. Cris Dush (R), to discuss the legislation and the Foundation's other initiatives. Pennsylvania is one of 11 states that have either introduced or passed VOC Memorial Days in their legislatures, including Alabama, Illinois, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.



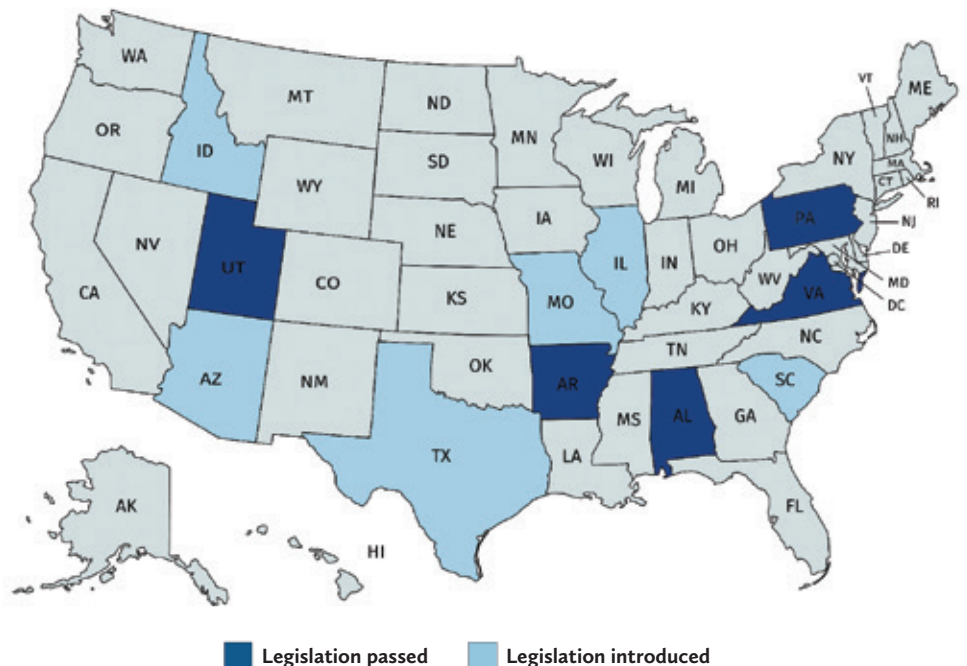
Uyghur Human Rights Project Executive Director Omer Kanat addresses media after the signing of the VOC Memorial Day Bill in the Pennsylvania Statehouse.



State Rep. Cris Dush (R) discusses the importance of memorializing those who suffered under communism.

## VOC Day Update

Each year of his presidency, Donald Trump has declared November 7 the Victims of Communism Memorial Day. In tandem with the President, VOC has been spearheading an initiative to have VOC Day recognized by state legislatures in all 50 states. In 2018, Virginia became the first state to adopt such a resolution, with Alabama, Arkansas, Pennsylvania, and Utah joining its ranks in 2019. Similar resolutions have also been introduced in Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Missouri, South Carolina, and Texas.





# VOC Experts Deliver Congressional Testimony



VOC China Studies Research Fellow Peter Mattis.

## COMMITTEE

House Foreign Affairs  
Subcommittee on  
Asia and the Pacific

## TOPIC

Chinese communist  
propaganda and global  
interference operations

## DATE

May 9, 2019



VOC China Studies Fellow Dr. Samantha Hoffman.

## COMMITTEE

House Foreign Affairs  
Subcommittee on the  
Western Hemisphere

## TOPIC

China's tech-enhanced author-  
itarianism, global surveillance,  
and methods of social coercion

## DATE

May 16, 2019

"The [Chinese Communist] Party's view of 'threat' ... includes freedom of press, freedom of association, academic freedom, rule of law, and constitutionalism." – *Peter Mattis*

"The United States and other liberal democracies have massively underestimated what China would do with its vision to use technology to augment its authoritarianism." – *Samantha Hoffman*



VOC Director of Latin America Programs Dr. Carlos Ponce.

## COMMITTEE

House Foreign Affairs  
Subcommittee on the  
Western Hemisphere

## TOPIC

The socialist crisis in  
Nicaragua; Ortega regime's  
persecution of dissidents

## DATE

June 11, 2019



VOC Senior Research Fellow in China Studies Dr. Adrian Zenz.

## COMMITTEE

Congressional-Executive  
Commission on China

## TOPIC

CCP use of forced labor in  
Xinjiang as part of its mass  
internment campaign

## DATE

October 17, 2019

"[Nicaraguan socialist dictator] Daniel Ortega just crushed the demonstrations and began to kill, using his militias and the police to directly engage in violence in the rest of the country." – *Carlos Ponce*

"In 2017, China's Xinjiang region embarked on probably the largest incarceration of an ethno-religious minority since the Holocaust." – *Adrian Zenz*



TRIUMPH  
OF  
LIBERTY  
ANNUAL  
GALA  
2019







On November 8, hundreds gathered in Union Station's historic Main Hall to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.



# Triumph of Liberty Conference



On November 8, we convened a two-panel conference gathering 14 renowned scholars, dissidents, journalists, and policymakers to discuss the legacy of the events of 1989 and the ways in which the governments and peoples of Russia, China, Germany, and Eastern Europe have sought to come to terms with their histories.



Conference attendee asks question during a panel discussing two contrasting historic events of 1989: the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Tiananmen Square Massacre.



Wei Jingsheng, Chinese human rights and democracy activist.



Dr. Hope Harrison, Associate Professor of History and International Affairs at The George Washington University.



Dr. A. Wess Mitchell, Former Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs at the US State Department.



Mark Kramer, Program Director for the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and editor of *The Black Book of Communism*.



Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, senior reporter at the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.



Roger Robinson, President and CEO of the RWR Advisory Group.



Sven Kraemer, Distinguished Fellow in National Security Affairs at the American Foreign Policy Council.

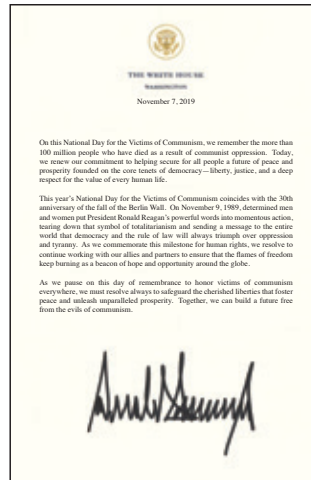


# Triumph of Liberty Gala Dinner



Triumph of Liberty Symphony Orchestra

We assembled the first Triumph of Liberty Symphony Orchestra to perform “Ode to Freedom,” based on Leonard Bernstein’s 1989 performance of the Finale of Symphony No. 9 by Ludwig van Beethoven. We were pleased to feature Janice Chandler-Eteme, soprano; Kimberly Sogioka, mezzo; Won Whi Choi, tenor; Kevin Short, bass-baritone; the National Philharmonic Chorale & George Mason University Singers with conductor Dr. Stan Engebretson; and the Triumph of Liberty Symphony Orchestra directed by Simeone Tartaglione.



## Presidential Message

For the third year in a row, President Donald Trump issued a message declaring November 7 National Day for the Victims of Communism. Vice President Mike Pence also sent us a personal letter, joining us in celebrating this landmark anniversary, congratulating Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate Joachim Gauck, and commending the work of VOC and our many supporters.



Berlin Wall Exhibit in Union Station

We produced a special exhibit featuring the stories of 10 victims of communism who died trying to cross the Berlin Wall. The exhibit debuted in Washington, DC's Union Station, from November 6-12, where it was seen by 150,000 people. Afterward, it was displayed for several weeks at the main entrance of The Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this event possible, especially:

### PRESENTERS

Mr. Thomas Peterffy

Louis DeJoy and Aldona Wos Family Foundation

### SUPPORTERS

Dr. and Mrs. Lee and Anne Edwards

Mr. Peter Forgach

Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Maggie Hamilton

Edith K. and John N. † Lauer

Mrs. Kristina Ritter Loverro

Mr. Jaden Lam Phan

The Hon. Don Ritter, ScD

Mr. and Mrs. David and Jenna Talbot

Mr. and Mrs. Keith and Kristen Urbahn

Drs. Omar and Josefina Vento

Mr. Ryan P. Williams



# Triumph of Liberty Gala: 30th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall



Over 600 guests gathered in DC's historic Union Station to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Eleventh President of Germany and dissident pastor Joachim Gauck makes a gesture of unity after accepting his Medal of Freedom.



Guests were able to view our special Berlin Wall exhibit featuring the stories of 10 victims of communism who died trying to cross the Berlin Wall.





Left to right: H.E. Joachim Gauck and Luke Cacic, the winner of our high school essay competition, a senior at Northport High School in Northport, NY.



Left to right: VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards, H.E. Joachim Gauck, VOC Executive Director Marion Smith, and VOC Board Vice Chairman Amb. Aldona Wos.



H.E. Joachim Gauck and Marion Smith pose with Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate and human rights activist Chen Guangcheng.



North Korean and Venezuelan dissidents Grace Jo and Daniel Di Martino were part of a special delegation invited to the White House to help commemorate the third National Day for the Victims of Communism.



Over 200 musicians and singers delivered the Triumph of Liberty Symphony Orchestra performance recreating Leonard Bernstein's famous 1989 rendition of Beethoven's 9th Symphony after the fall of the Berlin Wall.



VOC Chariman Dr. Lee Edwards welcomes guests.





VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards (left) and Executive Director Marion Smith (right) present 11th President of Germany and dissident pastor H.E. Joachim Gauck with the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom.



Guests mingle during the dessert reception.



Jon Utley and his wife Ana attend the private Host Committee Reception prior to our Gala Dinner.



VOC Senior Research Fellow in China Studies Dr. Adrian Zenz and his wife Rachel.



Left to right: Dr. Elida Dakoli, Albanian pianist and dissident; H.E. Joachim Gauck, former President of Germany; Eqrem Dakoli, Elida's father; Marion Smith, VOC Executive Director.





VOC Vice Chairman Amb. Aldona Vos (center left, blue dress), H.E. Joachim Gauck and his partner Daniela Schadt (center, purple dress), Louis DeJoy, and their White House Fellows guests.



Over 150 singers helped recreate Leonard Bernstein's famous "Ode to Freedom" concert in 1989, where Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 was performed after the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Honorary guests, VOC-STL director Kim McGrath and her husband Dan Powell.



Joachim Gauck, the Very Rev. Charles H. Nalls, CH (Col.) (Ret.), and Nalls's wife Elizabeth Carroll.



Estonia's Deputy Chief of Mission Marko Koplmaa and Claire O'Shea.





Capitol Hill staffers at VOC's "Berlin Wall 30" exhibit during the after-dinner reception.



Lithuanian Ambassador Rolandas and Mrs. Žilvė Kriščiūnas.



Bass-baritone Kevin Short sings Beethoven's "Ode to Freedom."



Hon. Emily Haber, German Ambassador to the US (center, in green jacket) with H.E. Joachim (right) and Arvid Enders and Anja Malcherek-Gassel of the German Embassy.



President Joachim Gauck listens reverently to the 9th Symphony.



Left to right: Cuban dissident Sirley Ávila León, VOC Director of Public Relations Ashlee Davis, Center for a Free Cuba Executive Director John Suarez, Executive Director of the Republican State Leadership Committee's Future Majority Project Neri Martinez.



# Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom

## Cardinal Joseph Zen

Joseph Zen is a retired cardinal of the Catholic Church and a vocal proponent of human rights in Hong Kong and China. Called the “New Conscience of Hong Kong,” he has criticized the Communist Party’s crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 and the brutal treatment of the Falun Gong spiritualist movement. Zen remains an influential voice for freedom in China and has led pro-democracy protests and demonstrations in Hong Kong since 2002. He received his licentiate of theology and doctorate of philosophy at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.

Having fled to Hong Kong at the end of the Chinese Civil War, Cardinal Zen was ordained in 1961 and has come to be known as “the new conscience of Hong Kong.” He condemned the Vatican’s 2018 agreement with China, in which the Vatican recognized seven bishops appointed by the Chinese Communist Party. Cardinal Zen called the agreement a “surrender” and a “sell out,” and stated: “a church enslaved by the government is no real Catholic Church.” He has also published a series of lectures entitled, “For Love of My People I Will Not Remain Silent,” detailing the current state of the Church in China.



Cardinal Zen is greeted by Pope Francis during a general audience at the Vatican in January 2018.



Cardinal Joseph Zen receiving our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom in January 2019.



Cardinal Zen takes part in a demonstration to demand religious freedom in China outside the China Liaison Office in Hong Kong in 2012.



Cardinal Zen joins leading pro-democracy activists during the 2015 Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong.

## Tiananmen Mothers

The Tiananmen Mothers are a group of Chinese democracy activists promoting a change in the Chinese Communist Party's position over the suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. It is led by Ding Zilin, a retired university professor whose teenage son was shot and killed by government troops during the protests. The group is made up of the parents, friends, and relatives of victims of the massacre. It was formed in September 1989, when Ding and her husband met another mother whose 19-year-old son was also killed on June 4, 1989. Along with campaigning to recognize the atrocity and promote healing and reform, the group also disseminates information about the massacre to the public, including through the internet. Currently the group consists of relatives of 125 individuals killed during the protests. For her efforts, Ding has been hailed as an "advocate for the dead." A few dozen families meet regularly on every anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, despite government intimidation. Authorities have occasionally detained Ding and other members for their brave actions.



At a 30th anniversary commemoration in March 2019, parents of those murdered by the CCP in Tiananmen Square in 1989 toasted their deceased children.



Mi Ling Tsui of Human Rights in China accepts the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom on behalf of the Tiananmen Mothers.



From April to June 1989, hundreds of thousands of students, factory workers, and freedom fighters gathered in Tiananmen Square calling for democracy, free speech, and greater freedom of the press in China.



The Tiananmen Mothers continue to demand justice despite being routinely jailed, harassed, and forbidden to publicly mourn the loss of their sons and daughters.



## Col. Gail S. Halvorsen



Col. Gail S. Halvorsen received our Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom in June 2019.



During the Berlin Airlift, Halvorsen decided to airdrop candy to the children of Berlin, clinching an ideological battle and earning him the lasting affection of the city.



Halvorsen, also known as “Uncle Wiggly Wings,” after his maneuver to signal to the children of Berlin that he was about to drop candy from his bomber, shares some gum with children in East Berlin.

Col. Gail S. Halvorsen is a retired pilot best known as the “Berlin Candy Bomber” for dropping candy to German children during the Berlin Airlift from 1948 to 1949. As America geared up for the looming world war, Halvorsen was awestruck with the planes he saw flying while working on his father’s farm in Tremonton, Utah. The attack on Pearl Harbor prompted him to join the Army Air Corps. After the war, in June 1948, Halvorsen was flying C-47 Globemasters and C-54 Skymasters out of Mobile, Alabama, when word came that the Soviets had blockaded West Berlin. During the 15-month airlift (Operation Vittles), American and British pilots delivered more than 2 million tons of supplies to those trapped in West Berlin. Halvorsen’s operation dropped more than 23 tons of candy. In an interview, Halvorsen recalled German children telling him, “Don’t give up on us. If we lose our freedom, we’ll never get it back,” and at that point he knew “that American-style freedom was their dream. Hitler’s past and Stalin’s future was their nightmare.” After the Berlin Airlift, Halvorsen performed similar candy drops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Japan, Guam, and Iraq. In his professional career, he helped develop a reusable manned aircraft at the Directorate of Space and Technology and served as commander of Berlin Tempelhof Airport. He retired in August 1974 after logging over 8,000 flying hours and 31 years of military service. Among Col. Halvorsen’s medals are the Congressional Gold Medal and the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel greets Col. Halvorsen in 2013, who is wearing his Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the country’s highest award.

## H.E. Joachim Gauck



In his acceptance speech Gauck said: "Freedom, human rights, and the dignity of the individual are not exclusively Western values but values for which people all over the world yearn."

Joachim Gauck was born in Rostock, Germany, in 1940. After earning his Abitur (university entrance qualification) he studied theology and became a pastor, serving in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mecklenburg from 1965 to 1990. From an early age, he became involved in opposing the communist regime in East Germany, helping initiate popular resistance and leading weekly prayers for peace that gave rise to the 1989 protest demonstrations. That year, he co-founded the New Forum opposition movement, and in March 1990, Gauck entered the first freely elected East German parliament as a member of the grassroots group Alliance 90. He was chosen to oversee the dissolution of the Ministry of State Security. On October 3, he was appointed federal commissioner of the Stasi Records Agency by President Richard von Weizsäcker, an office he held for 10 years. On March 18, 2012, Gauck was elected the 11th President of Germany, serving a five-year term. Since 2017, he has served as honorary chairman of the German organization "Gegen Vergessen – Für Demokratie" (Against Oblivion – For Democracy) devoted to promoting democratic principles and countering political extremism.



Gauck leads a peace prayer in the 1980s, a weekly event that helped initiate popular resistance to the communist regime.



A poster from Gauck's 1990 election campaign declaring "Freedom: we wanted it, we'll shape it."



Gauck is widely revered as a hero of the post-communist transition and reunification of East & West Germany.



# Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Laureates

**2019**

Cardinal Joseph Zen  
Tiananmen Mothers  
Col. Gail Halvorsen  
H.E. Joachim Gauck

**2018**

Oswaldo Payá  
H.E. Valdas Adamkus  
H.E. Sandra Kalniete  
H.E. Tunne Kelam

**2017**

H.E. Mart Laar, PhD  
Memorial Society  
Hon. Natan Sharansky

**2016**

Paul A. Goble

**2015**

Chen Guangcheng  
Guillermo Fariñas  
Alexander Podrabinek

**2014**

Mustafa Dzhemilev  
Myroslav Marynovych

**2013**

H.E. Václav Klaus, PhD  
Fr. Thadeus Nguyễn Văn Lý  
Yang Jianli, PhD

**2012**

Hon. Donald Rumsfeld  
H.E. Stanislau Shushkevich

**2011**

Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
H.E. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga  
John C. Whitehead

**2010**

Robert Conquest  
Hon. Armando Valladares  
Harry Wu  
H.E. Emanuelis Zingeris

**2009**

Rep. Steny Hoyer  
Hon. Jack Kemp  
Hon. Edwin Meese III  
Richard Pipes, PhD  
Hon. Bishop László Tőkés

**2008**

Midge Decter  
Hon. Paula J. Dobriansky, PhD  
Hon. Tom Lantos  
Hon. Kateryna Yushchenko

**2007**

William F. Buckley, Jr.  
Hon. János Horváth  
Hon. Henry “Scoop” Jackson  
Rep. Dana Rohrabacher  
Trần Văn Bá

**2006**

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., PhD  
Hon. Milada Horáková  
H.E. Lech Wałęsa

**2005**

Pope Saint John Paul II  
Hon. Lev E. Dobriansky  
Lt. Gen. Edward L. Rowny, USA (Ret.)  
Solidarity Free Trade Union of 1980  
Anna Walentynowicz

**2004**

Lockheed Martin Corporation  
Rep. John Shimkus  
Maj. Gen. John Singlaub, USA (Ret.)

**2003**

H.E. Václav Havel  
National Endowment for  
Democracy  
Michael Novak

**2002**

Hon. Philip M. Crane  
Hon. Hae Yung Chung  
Hon. Joseph Lieberman  
H.E. Viktor Orbán

**2001**

Vladimir Bukovsky  
Hon. Jesse Helms

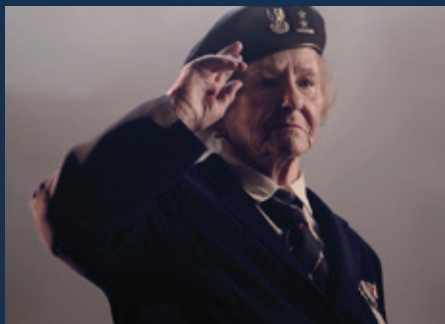
**2000**

Đoàn Viết Hoạt, PhD  
Col. John McKone, USAF (Ret.)  
Col. Lewis Millett, USA (Ret.)  
Hon. Orson Swindle  
Gen. Paik Sun-yup†, ROKA (Ret.)  
Wei Jingsheng  
Youk Chhang

**1999**

Elena Bonner  
Lane Kirkland  
H.E. Vytautas Landsbergis, PhD  
H.E. Philip Dimitrov

## In Memoriam



Wanda Wos Lorenc  
(1928-2019)

Polish freedom fighter, featured in our Witness Project video series, friend of VOC.



The Hon. Jay Katzen  
(1937-2020)

Foreign Service Officer, Virginia State Legislator, former President and Trustee of VOC (right).



Dr. Richard Pipes  
(1923-2018)

Scholar of Soviet Russia, author, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate and VOC Academic Council member.



Vladimir Bukovsky  
(1942-2019)

Human rights activist, Soviet dissident, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom laureate and former Advisory Council member of VOC.



Jon Basil Utley  
(1934-2020)

Writer, businessman, former member of VOC's Advisory Council.



Michael B. Ryan  
(1940-2020)

Lawyer, former Chairman of the National Captive Nations Committee, former Vice-Chairman of VOC.



# Leadership

## Board of Trustees

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Harvey Klehr, PhD

Mark Kramer

A. James McAdams, PhD

Sean McMeekin, PhD

Aaron Rhodes, PhD

David Satter

F. Flagg Taylor IV, PhD

George Weigel

# Financial Position

## FY2019

### ASSETS

Total current assets	\$	8,736,192
Property and equipment, net	\$	1,665,149
Other assets	\$	6,129,629
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,530,970</b>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities		
Current liabilities	\$	214,116
Deferred rent	\$	34,912
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>249,028</b>

Net assets		
Without donor restrictions	\$	2,424,204
With donor restrictions	\$	13,857,738
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,281,942</b>

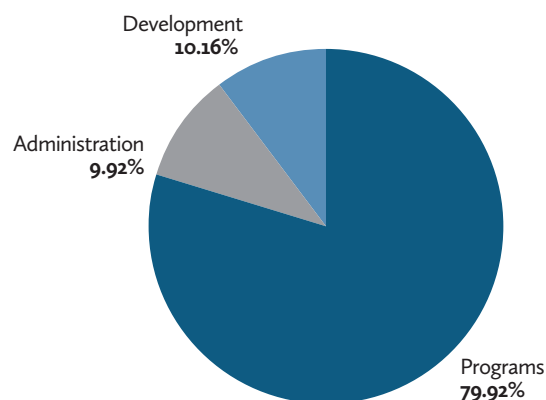
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,530,970</b>
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Total revenues and support	\$	11,964,697
Total expenses and losses	\$	6,396,712

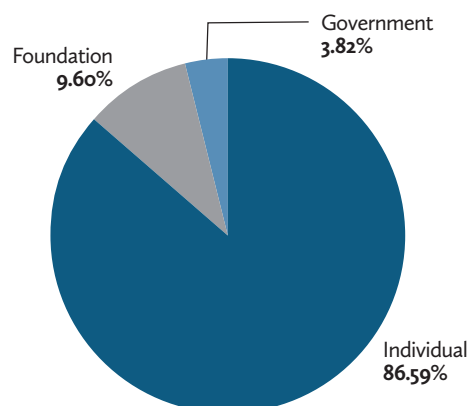
Change in net assets	\$	5,567,985
Net assets, December 31, 2018	\$	10,713,957

Net assets, December 31, 2019	\$	16,281,942
-------------------------------	----	------------

### Total Expenses \$6,396,712



### Total Revenue \$11,953,267



*Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation's financial position is based on an independent audit for the fiscal year January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. The Foundation is grateful for the generosity of its stakeholders.*





# TRUTH JUSTICE MEMORY



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM  
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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