



TRIBUTE TO LIBERTY News

Commemorating the Victims of Totalitarian Communism

Volume 2, Issue 1
Winter 2010

Tribute to Liberty is a Canadian organization whose mission is to establish a memorial to the victims of totalitarian communism in the National Capital Region, and to educate the public about Communism's crimes.

Board of Directors:
Alide Forstmanis, Chair
Teresa Berezowski
Christine Chi Dang
Reet Marten Sehr
Gerry Kokodyniak

Honorary Chair:
Charlie Coffey, O.C.

Honorary Patron:
Philip Leong

Founding Partner:
The Open Book Group

Tribute to Liberty News is published four times a year. If you would like to add an email address to our subscriber list please email info@tributetoliberty.ca.



Tribute to Liberty
P.O. Box 84558
2336 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M6S 4Z7
info@tributetoliberty.ca
www.tributetoliberty.ca

Toronto Premiere of “The Soviet Story” a Huge Success!

The Toronto Premiere of the award-winning documentary film “The Soviet Story” was a huge success. The screening, which took place Sunday, January 31st at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre on Christie Street, was attended by an estimated 400 - 500 people.

Edvins Snore, the director and writer of the film, was present at the screening. During a Q&A session after the film many in attendance voiced their gratitude for the work Mr. Snore has done to educate the public about the crimes of Communism by making his film. Mr. Snore met and talked with members of the audience and media at a reception following the Q&A.

After the screening Mr. Snore told us “I am very happy with having met with the Ukrainian and other communities during my visit to Canada, and also very impressed by how large the audience was, and what a positive response there was to the film.”

While in Toronto Mr. Snore met with the Latvian, Chinese and Ukrainian communities at events held in honour of his visit.

Tribute to Liberty Board Chair, Alide Forstmanis, hosted the director during his four day stay in Toronto. Tribute to Liberty is an enthusiastic supporter of “The Soviet Story,” a film that does a phenomenal job of bringing the reality of Communism’s crimes to light.



The screening was sponsored and supported by Tribute to Liberty, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress in Toronto, Kontakt Ukrainian TV Station, the League of Ukrainian Canadians and the League of Ukrainian Canadian Women, and the Ukrainian Student’s Club at York University.

Little known in Canada, the film made huge waves in Europe upon its release in April 2008, and has received critical acclaim in the U.S. The film won the Mass Impact Award at the Boston Film Festival. Economist.com described the documentary as “the most powerful antidote yet to the sanitisation of the past.”

“The Soviet Story” traces the link between the Soviet and Nazi regimes, and exposes the crimes of Communism in graphic detail and an unflinching style.

A new version of “The Soviet Story” is now available—with subtitles in 30 languages—and can be purchased through the film’s web site, www.sovietstory.com, or through www.amazon.com.



Message from Camilla Andersson

Camilla Andersson is the Director and Founder of The Institute For Information on the Crimes of Communism in Stockholm, Sweden.

“Greetings from Stockholm, Sweden and from the members of the 20th Anniversary Alliance members.

Tomorrow's voters and citizens are the young people of today. They form their view of the world from the

information which surrounds them. This basis of knowledge will directly affect the decisions they will take, and the choices they will make, in the world of tomorrow. Those choices won't always be easy ones. Democracy and openness are not easy. They are hard. They demand our knowledge, our attention, our vigilance, and our commitment to values and principles.

Communism was the ideological backbone of a brutal, totalitarian dictatorship, which claimed the lives of millions of innocent people and destroyed the dreams, hopes and loves of countless others. It is a system which has generated Human Rights violations, misery, suffering, poverty, war and mass murder on a scale unparalleled in world history. Yet, somehow, knowledge of these horrific crimes is still not an integral part of the discourse.

The realities of the Holocaust, and the hateful and twisted National Socialist ideology behind it, is with us all—in the faces of the victims, in their names, in their eyes on photographs, in films and books, through memorials and remembrance, and by the respect, emotion, understanding and identification which the stories they have left us fills us with. These were our fellow human beings, and they still talk to us through the distance of time.

In contrast, the tens of millions of victims of Communism are faceless—marked only by their absence and by silence—their untold suffering still literally untold.

We need to make the millions of silent victims of Communism come alive. We must let them speak to us, and we must listen and learn. We must allow them to, finally, tell us their stories. We must learn from their terrible fates, and we must understand how this, one of the greatest atrocities in human history, could come to pass, in order to better identify and recognize the poison of totalitarianism, and to better be able to safeguard our future.

It has now been twenty years since the fall of Iron Curtain, and of the liberation of Baltic, Eastern and Central Europe from Communist dictatorship and occupation.

In order to create a democratic world which can look to a different, brighter future, we cannot condemn one evil totalitarian system, National Socialism, whilst simultaneously allowing the millions of victims of another, Communism, to remain unrecognized and unmentioned. Doing so strips us of the dignity and civilization we aspire to have achieved.

Also, we must not forget that Communist rule is not entirely a future threat or a thing of the past. More than one billion people are still being forced to live in countries controlled by Communist parties, in countries like Vietnam, China, Tibet, North Korea and Cuba. We must use our freedom to help them achieve theirs.

We wish you the best of luck in your efforts to make the victims of Communism recognized in Canada, and for joining us in our effort to make this year a special and inspirational year in the international fight for liberty.”

Tribute to Liberty is a partner of the 1989-2009 20th Anniversary Alliance, founded by Camilla Andersson and Anders Hjemdahl. For more information about the Alliance visit www.1989-2009.org.

Land Allocation Update

Tribute to Liberty is working with the National Capital Commission to find the right piece of land for the memorial. As soon as there is concrete information to share an announcement will be made.

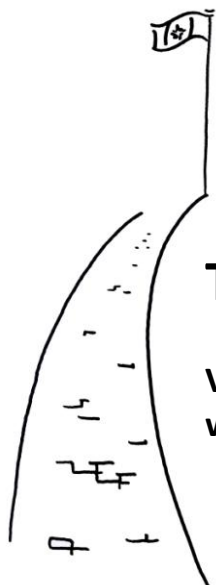
The Pathway to Liberty is Growing!

In October 2009 Tribute to Liberty launched its grassroots fundraising campaign, *The Pathway to Liberty*.

The campaign is designed to allow for donor recognition, as it is the policy of the National Capital Commission not to include donor recognition as part of the commemorative site.

The Pathway to Liberty is a virtual path on Tribute to Liberty’s web site. Each \$100 brick is the story of a victim of Communism, or a message or dedication, contributed in the name of the donor or someone the donor wishes to honour. The donated bricks build the pathway that leads to liberty—and it is liberty that the memorial to victims of totalitarian Communism represents.

For more information on the campaign or to donate please visit www.tributetoliberty.ca.



Tell Your Story!

**View the Pathway at
www.tributetoliberty.ca**

Charitable Status Update

Tribute to Liberty is in the process of applying for charitable status and is awaiting news about its application with Canada Revenue.

History Unhidden: Yugoslavia’s Communist Crimes Must Not be Ignored

While atrocities committed under dictators like Stalin and the former Soviet Union’s regime have gained more recognition since that country fell, many writers and historians still refuse to acknowledge the crimes committed by Yugoslav tyrant and ardent Communist Josip Broz Tito.

It has not helped that Tito is still regarded as a savvy, cosmopolitan leader who “kept the wild Balkan people united,” while holding foreign dignitaries and Hollywood starlets alike in his thrall.



Tito was certainly no fool, and played Western and Eastern powers against one another while amassing untold personal riches and an unassailable grip on power that lasted until his death. Detractors were neutralized to such an extent that few people outside Yugoslavia were aware of atrocities committed against thousands of citizens of Yugoslavia in the name of maintaining that power.

Unfortunately, that remains the case today.

Tito’s faithfulness to Communist ideology predates the Second World War. He made several trips to the former Soviet Union, and was a member of the Soviet Communist Party as well as the secret police, NKVD. He applied this training in leading his guerrilla troops, the Partisans, who began slaughtering civilians on the territory of Yugoslavia in 1941.

The Partisans were supported by Allied airdrops, since they were said to be fighting the Axis forces. Whether or not elements of the Allied forces knew that Tito’s Partisans

were killing civilians is a point of contention. The killing continued throughout the War and reached a pinnacle 65 years ago this May, when more than 300,000 civilians and soldiers (Croatian, Bosnian, Slovene and others) fled Communist forces to the border of what was then called Yugoslavia (today it is Slovenia) and Austria. Commonly known as the *Bleiburg Massacres*, named after the town where many fled, this massive group was assured they would be able to surrender under the terms of the Geneva Convention.

As was mentioned in the Winter 2009 issue of *Tribute to Liberty News*, some managed to be saved or flee to refugee camps in Europe. However, others were forcibly repatriated and handed over to Tito's Partisans, where they were summarily tortured and executed. Thousands more were forced on death marches across Yugoslavia, denied food, water and rest. It is unknown how many thousands died along the route. The few survivors were forced into labour camps.

As the rest of the world celebrated the end of the War, thousands of civilians were being tortured and killed in Tito's newly established Communist utopia—Yugoslavia.

While authors such as Nikolai Tolstoy, John Corsellis, C. Michael McAdams and Ivan Prcela have written about these tragic events, many people still refuse to believe that Yugoslavia was murdering its own civilians. Even English writer Evelyn Waugh, who served for a military/diplomatic mission to Yugoslavia in the 1940s, wrote about Communist leader Tito's persecution of Croatia's Catholics and specifically their clergy.

Tito and his Communists had a particular aversion to all things Croatian and Catholic. On February 7, 1945, Tito's Partisans captured the southern Bosnian-Herzegovinian town of Siroki Brijeg and began destroying its cultural and religious monuments. At the town's historic Catholic monastery, 30 Franciscan Friars refused to deny their faith and were summarily executed by Communist Partisan troops. These 30 were a mere fraction of the more than 600 Catholic clergy who were killed by the Communists in Yugoslavia.

The most famous clergyman to suffer under Tito's Communist regime was Blessed Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac. Refusing Tito's demand that he sever ties with the Holy See, Stepinac went on trial in 1946 on trumped up charges of collaborating with the Nazis. He was found guilty and sentenced to 16 years hard labour.

At the time, individuals such as Louis Breier, past president of the American Association of Jews, came to the Cardinal's defense. "Stepinac has always been a sincere friend of Jews, and was not hiding this even in times of cruel persecutions under the regime of Hitler and his followers," he said of the Cardinal.

Catholics around the world also protested the trial's injustice. In New York, the Knights of Columbus

organized parades, with over 100,000 Catholics participating. In Dublin, Catholics turned out in equal numbers. The United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations passed a resolution demanding that the U.S. seek Stepinac's release through the United Nations.

It was all to no avail. Cardinal Stepinac would eventually succumb to death from poisoning while under house arrest in 1960. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1998.

While Stepinac's martyrdom is well known, thousands of others suffered in anonymity for refusing to pledge allegiance to Tito's Communist state. In labour camps such as Gradiska, Goli Otok, and KPD Zenica, they were tortured, starved, and beaten. Hundreds of Croatian dissidents outside Yugoslavia who dared to speak out against Tito's regime were tracked down and murdered by members of the UBDA, the Yugoslav secret police. The most famous of these, academic Bruno Busic, met such a fate outside his home in Paris.



The façade of the Communist Yugoslavian "brotherhood and unity" state was carefully built and ruthlessly maintained by Josip Broz Tito. During his life, tragically few in the West were aware of the cost this state exacted in terms of human suffering. To continue to ignore the true extent of the crimes of Communist Yugoslavia is to continue to deny justice to its victims.

Submitted by Erica Zlomislac

A Quote to Remember

"Justice is always naive and self-confident; believing that it will immediately win once recognized. That is the reason why the forces of Justice are so poorly organized. On the other hand, the Evil is cynic, sly and fantastically organized. It never ever has the illusion of the ability to stand on its own feet and to win in a fair competition. That is why it is ready to use any kind of means without hesitation. And of course it does—under the banners of the most noble ideas."

-Vladimir Bukovsky