



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on July 21, 2015

## Prosecute the Nazis, But What About Communist Criminals?

During the years 1942 to 1944, Oskar Gröning served the Nazi regime at Auschwitz, the most notorious of Hitler's numerous death camps. Assigned the task of seizing valuables from arriving prisoners, he did his job well. At age 94, however, Gröning was convicted of "complicity" in the subsequent deaths of those prisoners, all of whom were themselves guilty of no crime whatsoever.



Gröning never killed anyone. But his willingness to serve alongside those who did the killing was enough to bring him to justice. During his trial, he acknowledged the role he played at the Nazi camp and said, "I am truly sorry." Sentenced to four years in prison, he will likely pass into eternity before serving those years.

The process of rounding up and punishing ex-Nazis who in any way and at any rank served at a Nazi death camp has been meticulously thorough. But it will soon end because most who served during World War II are now deceased, and death will soon have claimed all.

The crimes committed by the Nazi regime were real, painful, and a stain against humanity. Unfortunately, the Nazis were not the only terror regime that killed millions. Similar or worse atrocities were carried out by various Communist regimes. The lives of tens of millions were snuffed out in Communist China, Communist Soviet Union, and numerous Soviet satellite nations. However, none of the criminals who murdered these millions has faced trial and prosecution.

Instead, men such as Russia's former leader Mikhail Gorbachev have been feted in the West, [particularly in the United States](#). Gorbachev spent all of his adult life climbing into powerful leadership positions while government-created gulags were filled and millions were murdered. He is guilty of far worse crimes than many who served as minor functionaries in Nazi prison camps. The same can be said of Communist China's leaders and those who presided over the many Soviet satellite nations. Each of those arch criminals maintained power through implementation of policies that resulted in indiscriminate terror and widespread murder for Poles, Estonians, Hungarian, East Germans, and those who lived in a dozen more captive nations. In each of those unhappy lands, Soviet-style horror reigned for decades after the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The treatment accorded Oskar Gröning and others like him is the polar opposite of what Communist murderers receive. Why? Part of the reason has to be that the Nazis lost their war and the Communists were never defeated. Instead, Russian and Chinese Communist "dignitaries" everyone knows to have been complicit in mass murder are now considered political equals who must be treated with respect, and even honored. At the very least, they should be shunned. But incredibly deficient leadership of our own nation has America begging the Chinese for loans and negotiating with Russia's criminals as if they were totally innocent of any past crimes.

"Crime unpunished is crime rewarded," contends a seemingly forgotten maxim. But history indicates



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that if crime remains unpunished or at least isn't honored, it will occur again. Ignoring arch criminals is an intellectual crime, and many of today's leaders are surely guilty of exactly that depravity.

*John F. McManus is president of [The John Birch Society](#) and publisher of The New American. This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.*



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