

Paul Kengor Commentary

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Bio: **Paul Kengor is professor of political science and director of the Center for Vision & Values at Grove City College in Grove City, Pennsylvania. He is author of several books, including God and Ronald Reagan, God and George W. Bush, and The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism. He lives in Grove City with his wife and five children.**

Call it another Twilight Zone moment: The National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia has erected a statue of ... Joseph Stalin. No, I'm not kidding.

I know about this travesty thanks to the vigilant work of a group called the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, which has the heroic goal of trying to educate Americans about the forgotten holocaust committed by communists in the 20th century, which exceeded 100 million deaths, double the combined death toll of the two world wars. The group has created a website (www.stalinstatue.com) to call attention to this moral-historical slander. The site features a petition to remove the statue, with thousands of signatures from every state and over 40 countries, including some really upset folks from the former Soviet empire. Addressed to the National D-Day Memorial Foundation and to President Obama's secretary of the interior, Ken Salazar, the petition demands that the "true history of World War II must be protected from distortion and misinformation."

Among the misinformation, as the petition notes: "neither Joseph Stalin nor Soviet forces played any part in the D-Day landing at Normandy."

Indeed, worse than that, it was Stalin, via the Hitler-Stalin Pact, who helped launch World War II in the first place, ultimately leading to D-Day—and the horrible deaths suffered by all those American boys on those beaches in France.

Ironically, such disinformation was once the crass domain of Kremlin propagandists. Stalin had his in-house stooges retroactively invent him a gallant wartime role. Imagine that his

arch-rival from the Cold War—the United States of America—would earnestly pick up that charge, under no threat of execution or imprisonment by the long-dead tyrant. Stalin is surely howling from his tomb.

If you'd like a fitting monument to Stalin, it was already built—by Stalin himself.

Consider:

For years, Russians reveled in their glorious Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Stalin, however, hated the church, which glorified something far greater than himself.

He envisioned morphing the historic cathedral into a museum, maybe a museum to atheism, as had been done with many Russian churches by the communists. So, in December 1931, Stalin had the ornate structure dynamited. The demolition was not simple: it took more than one blast and even more diligence to find a construction worker willing to push the button. Rumors abounded in Moscow that Stalin himself happily pushed the button, perhaps consummating a search for the most unholy man in Russia to do the dirty deed.

Whoever the culprit, Stalin hastened to replace the majestic structure with a monument to himself and his ideology. In its place, the communists would erect a sacred Palace of Soviets. Predictably, however, the incompetence of central planning—or perhaps an act of God—delayed construction, as the site was flooded with water from the nearby river. Ultimately, the mess was converted into a large municipal swimming pool.

Now that's a fitting monument to Stalin, built himself, through his own evil. Let's not honor him here in America, especially through bad history.

“That's my view, and I'm Paul Kengor for Moody Radio.”