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## Reds Are Natives

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**I**f we had sent an army into Indochina (Vice President Nixon once suggested that we should), its immediate objective would have been to kill Indochinese, so as to intimidate those we did not kill. Of course, the dead would have died because they were communists, and the intimidated would have been intimidated for the same reason. But regardless of their ideology, our chosen targets would have been natives. There is no way of getting away from that fact. The same would have been true if we had intervened militarily in the Guatemalan affair, and it is a certainty that we mowed down many thousands of natives in Korea.

The point is self-proving. When two nations make war, whatever their reasons, the purpose of each is to subdue the nationals of the other. The only point at issue is the validity of the reason advanced by each side trying to subjugate the other.

The historic reason for slaughtering natives is conquest: to grab land so as to be able to collect taxes from those who inhabit and use it. Currently, however, the reason advanced by many Americans is that the natives carry an ideological germ that threatens our way of life. We must destroy them and their culture before it destroys ours.

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*This was one of Chodorov's editorials in the August 1954 issue of The Freeman.*

Granted the premise, the question is, will the desired end be achieved by the slaughter of communist natives all over the world? There is no historic support for that belief. The Norman conquerors of England did not impose their culture on the natives they did not kill, but rather made their adjustment to what they found, and the traditional culture of the Jews managed to outlive the paganism of the Roman legions. The evidence of history is that ideas are impervious to weapons.

That our culture—the body of ideas, habits, and traditions indigenous to America—is under severe attack there is no doubt. But can we save it by killing off or subjugating the communist natives of other lands? And by the way, if that is the effective cure of communism, why not try it on our own natives infected with the disease? We harbor quite a few of them in our midst, and, far from slaughtering them, we grant them the protection of the American culture they aim to destroy, and even put them in positions of public trust.

Communism is not a person, it is an idea. True, communism without communists is an imaginative notion, just as sin without sinners simply cannot be. But you cannot get rid of the idea that has possessed the communist by killing him, because the idea may have spread and you cannot destroy every carrier of it. It is better, therefore, to attack the idea than to attack the natives.

Without going into a discussion of the idea of communism as a whole, let us get to its essence, and what we find is simply the notion that the individual would be better off if he were deprived of the right to own property; since property must be owned, the method of communism is to vest all property right in those who wield political power, the state. That, then, is the idea that we who believe in the American tradition should try to kill, and let all natives live.