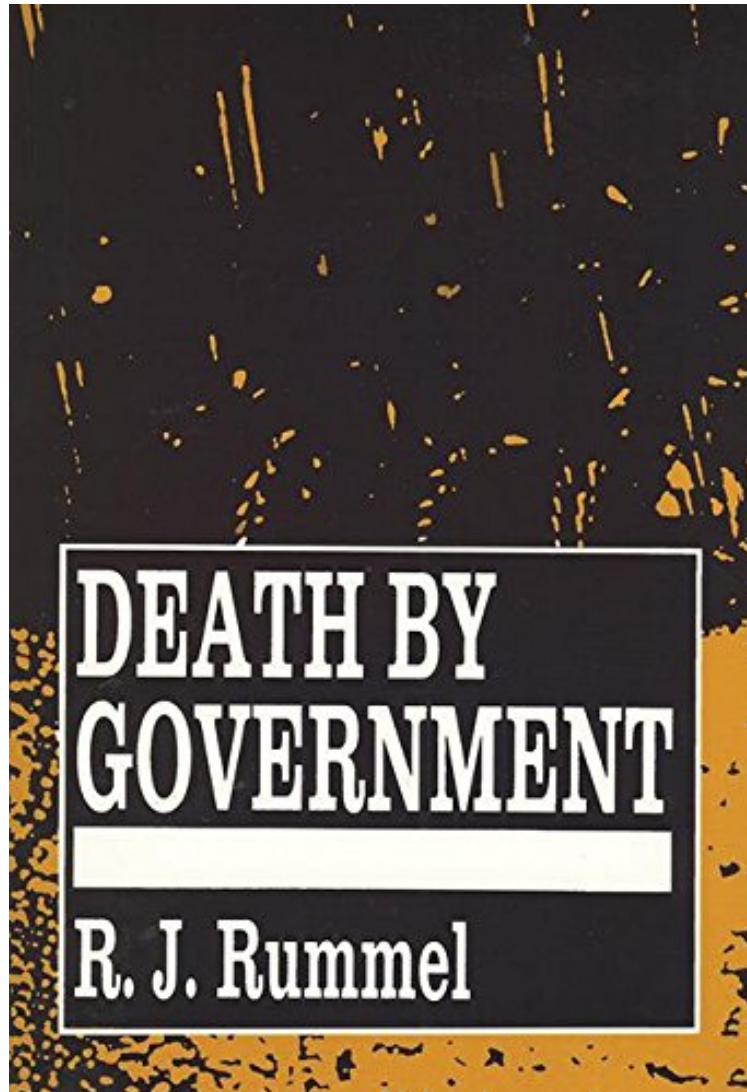


## Death by Government: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900

*R. J. Rummel*

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**R. J. Rummel : Death by Government: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death by Government: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Governments Do Kill. And not Just in War.By Nikolay AltankovAn excellent presentation of events that have been with us for ages, certainly for the past one thousand years. Governments after acquiring the monopoly on violence rarely hesitate to use it on their own citizens, Excuses and reasons could be found easily: ethnic hatred, political persecution, dictators' whims...Professor Rummel convincingly

shows the chilling picture of mass murder throughout past centuries. Close to two hundred million lives have been lost through democide just in the last century, and this number does not include the war victims! An impressive work which also proves that democracies do not engage in mass murder qualified as democide. 16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Why Powerful government is a killing machine By Thomas Wikman R.J. Rummel has spent his career assembling data on genocide, politicide and other government mass murder (studying more than 8,200 reports with estimates). He introduced a concept he calls "democide" which includes genocide, politicide, mass murder, and indiscriminate killing of civilians. It does not include battle deaths or collateral damage. He is using a scientific methodology that he applies consistently to come up with consistent mid-range estimates for democide. His findings are horrifying. 170 million people were murdered in the 20th century alone. Later he revised this number to 262 million. For comparison, it is estimated that 70 million people died from famine in the 20th century, 25 million has died from AIDS, 250 million died from Malaria in the 20th century, and 300 million from small pox. In conclusion democide killed considerably more people than war, famine, and AIDS and as much people as the two worst 20th century diseases. It should also be noted that previous centuries were just as democidal. Rummel's book "Statistics of Democide" presents his findings in great detail (very long lists of statistics), and additional information can be found on his web site. This book "Death by Government" gives some statistics on the topic, but the focus of the book is not on the statistics but descriptions of the democides and the regimes that perpetrated them. Therefore this book is easier to read and perhaps a bit more interesting (but just as gruesome) compared to "Statistics of Democide". However, "Statistics of Democide" is a better factoid resource. In this book he describes the following murder regimes and their democides in more detail: Soviet Gulag State (62M), Chinese Communist Anthill (35M later revised to 78M), The Nazi Genocide State (21M mostly genocide), The Depraved Nationalist Regime, KMT (10M), Japans Savage Military (6M), The Hell State Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge (2M), Turkeys Genocidal Purges (1.9M), The Vietnamese War State (Vietcong) (1.7M), Poland's Ethnic Cleansing after the war (1.6M), The Pakistani Cutthroat state (1.5M), Titos Slaughter House (1.1M), Orwellian North Korea (1.7M), Barbarous Mexico (1.4M), Feudal Russia (1.1M). M=million killed. The descriptions of the democides are horrific and very sad. The big questions are how can these things happen? People can be very cruel and brutal towards each other that is for sure, but regimes that hold a lot of power over their citizens are the regimes that will commit these crimes. To quote from Rummel's web site: "Why do dictators kill and make war? Is it for glory; for things, for beliefs, for hatred, for power? Yes, but more, because they can". Regimes that can't do it won't. Democratic regimes, especially liberal democracies commit very little democide. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not for the squeamish! By Alan Phillips I am not being fatuous or facile. It is an extremely thought-provoking, disturbing and absolutely necessary book. It exposes the dark recesses of man's inhumanity to man. It reminds me of the question asked by the protagonist in 'Sophie's Choice' regarding the concentration camps, 'Where was God?' to be answered by 'Where was man?'

This is R. J. Rummel's fourth book in a series devoted to genocide and government mass murder, or what he calls democide. He presents the primary results, in tables and figures, as well as a historical sketch of the major cases of democide, those in which one million or more people were killed by a regime. In *Death by Government*, Rummel does not aim to describe democide itself, but to determine its nature and scope in order to test the theory that democracies are inherently nonviolent. Rummel discusses genocide in China, Nazi Germany, Japan, Cambodia, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Pakistan. He also writes about areas of suspected genocide: North Korea, Mexico, and feudal Russia. His results clearly and decisively show that democracies commit less democide than other regimes. The underlying principle is that the less freedom people have, the greater the violence; the more freedom, the less the violence. Thus, as Rummel says, "The problem is power. The solution is democracy. The course of action is to foster freedom." *Death by Government* is a compelling look at the horrors that occur in modern societies. It depicts how democide has been very much a part of human history. Among other examples, the book includes the massacre of Europeans during the Thirty Years' War, the relatively unknown genocide of the French Revolution, and the slaughtering of American Indians by colonists in the New World. This riveting account is an essential tool for historians, political scientists, and scholars interested in the study of genocide.

\* Named an Outstanding Academic Title by Choice! "[*Death by Government*] is a compelling study of what the author calls democide the intentional killing by governments through genocide, politicide, massacre, and terror. . . . A product of eight years of research by a distinguished political scientist, this is an unrivaled magnum opus with dozens of tables, figures, copious notes, and a massive bibliography. Essential reading for historians, political scientists, and readers interested in genocide." R. H. Dekmejian, *Choice* *Death by Government* should be read in history classes not just across America, but around the world. The problem of power, as Rummel terms it, remains with us today. . . . Only if we learn from the past can we ever hope to end state-sanctioned murder. The case for human liberty and limited government has never been made more effectively than by this fearsome book. Doug Bandow, *Cato Institute* *Death by Government* is a good introduction to the general phenomena of state-sponsored mass murder or democide (Rummel's concept). The numerous case studies are a mixture of carefully wrought description of the horrendous suffering of

peoples under mainly authoritarian political systems, with just the right dose of personal horror stories to make the book a memorable study of human deprivation and misery. For this effort, Rummel ought to be applauded. Barbara Harff, *the Journal of Interdisciplinary History* With this volume, Rummel has completed his magnum opus on genocide and government mass murder, in short what Rummel calls democide. . . . Rummel's methodology is based on averaging figures from a large number of sources, rather than historical source criticism or demographic estimates. This is a controversial method, yet it is clearly documented and well argued. . . . This work is a major achievement and will provide a reference point which no future systematic work on democide can ignore. Nils Petter Gleditsch, *Journal of Peace Research* Governments have murdered about 169 million people in the twentieth century, according to Rummel's estimate. . . . Yet mass murder by governments has been largely ignored by political science. Rummel argues that, to rectify this omission, a reconceptualization of government and politics is required. To this end he proposes the concept of democide, which he defines as the intentional killing by a government of unarmed people. . . . Rummel draws our attention to facts that are often ignored and should not be. Michael Freeman, *the Slavonic and East European Review*

R. J. Rummel was professor emeritus of political science at the University of Hawaii. He is the author of over one hundred scholarly articles and two dozen books, including *Power Kills*, *China's Bloody Century*, and *The Miracle That Is Freedom*. In addition, he has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and been the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Conflict Processes Section of the American Political Science Association and the International Association of Genocide Scholars Award for Distinguished Lifetime Contribution to the Field of Genocide and Democide Studies and Prevention.