Here is an interesting article I found in the July 7 th 1986 Wall Street
Journal, page 10. It's title is
                  War Isn't This Century's Biggest Killer by R.J.Rummel
    Our century is noted for its bloody wars.   WW1 saw 9   million people
killed in battle, an incredible record that was surpassed within a few decades
by the 15 million battle deaths of WW2.   Even the numbers killed in
20th century revolutions and civil wars have set historical records. In
total, about 35,654,000 people have died in this century's international and
domestic wars, revolutions, and violent conflicts.
    Yet, even more unbeliveable than these vast numbers killed in war is a
shocking fact.   The number of people killed by totalitarian or extreme
authoritarina governments already exceeds that for all wars, civil an
international.   Indeed, this number already approximates the number that might
be killed in a nuclear war.
    The table provides the relvent totals and classifies them by type of
government (definitions provided by Freedom House, a New York based
human-rights group) and war.   By "killed" is meant the direct or indirect
killing by government officials, or government acquiesence in the killing
by others. Excluded from the totals are those people executed for what are
conventionally considered criminal acts (murder, rape, spying, treason, and
the like). Those included in the totals were killed apart from the pursuit
of any continuing military action or campaign, or as part of any conflict.
The Jews that Hitler slaughtered during WW2 are counted, since their
merciless and systematic extermination was unrelated to and actually
conflicted with Hitler's pursuit of the war.
    UNDERESTIMATION POSSIBLE
    The totals in the table are based on a nation-by-nation assessment and
areminimum figures that may underestime the true total by 10% or more.
Moreover, they do not even include the 1921-1922 Soviet famine and the
1958-1961 Chinese famine, which caused about 4 million and 27 million deaths,
respectively. The Soviet famine was mainly due to the imposition of a
command argicultura economy and forced requistions of food by the government;
the latter was sholly caused by Mao's destructive collectivization of agriculture.
    However, the table does include the Soviet government's planned starvation
of the Ukraine that was begun in 1932 as a way of destroying Ukranian
nationalism and breaking peasant opposition to collectivization. As many as 10

million may have been starved to death or succumbed to to famine-related
disease; I estimate eight million died. Had these people all been shot, the
Soviet government's moral responsibility would have been no greater.
    The table lists 831,000 people killed by free democratic
governments, a fact that should startle most readers. This figure includes the French
massacres in Algeria before and during the Algerian War (36,000 killed
minimum), and those Eastern Europeans killed by the Soviets. after the Western
democracies forcibly repatriated them during and after WW2.
    It is apalling that the democracies, particularly Britian and the U.S.,
turned over to Soviet authorities more than 2,250,000 Soviet citizens,
prisoners of war, and Soviet exiles (who were not Soviet citizens) found in the
Allied zones of occupation in Europe. Most of these people were terrrified of
returning and refused to cooperate; often whole families preferred suicide. An
estimated 795,000 of those repatriated were executed or died in or traveling to
slave-labor camps.
    If a government is held to be held responsible for those prisoners who die
in frieght cars or in camps from privation, surely those democratic governments
that turned helpless people over to totalitarin rulers with the foreknowledge
of their peril also should be held responsible.
    It is sad that hundreds of thousands of people can be killed by
governments with hardly an international murmur, while a war killing several
thousand people can cause an immediate world outcry and global reaction.
Contrast the international focus on the relatively minor 1982 war between
Britian and Argentina with the widescale lack of interest in Burundi's killing
or acquiesence in the killing of some 100,000 Hutu in 1972, of Indonesia
slaughtering a likely 600,000 people accused of being "communists" in 1965 and
of Pakistan's eventual killing of from 1 to 3 million Bengalis in 1971.
    A most noteworthy example of this double standard is the Vietnam war. The
international community was outraged ar the U.S. efforts to prevent North
Vietnam from taking over South Vietnam and ultimately Laos and Cambodia. "stop
the killing" was the cry, and eventually the pressure of forgeign and domestic
opposition forced an American withdrawl. The overall number killed in the
Vietnam War on all sides was about 1.2 million people.

South Vietnam was eventually conquered by the North, and Cambodia was
taken over by the communist Khmer Rouge, who in trying to recreate a primitive
communist agricultural society slaughtered from 1 to 3 million Cambodians. If
we take 2 million as the best estimate, then in four years the government of
this small nation of seven million alone killed 64% more people than died in
the 10-year Vietnam War. Overall, the best estimate of those killed by the
victorious communists in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia is 2,270,000. And the
killing still goes on.

To view the double standard from another perspective, both world wars cost
24 million battle deaths. But from 1918 to 1953, the soviet government
executed, slaughtered, starved, beat or tortured to death, or otherwise
killed some 39.5 million of its own people (estimates vary from between 20
to 83 million). In China under Mao Tse-Tung, the communist government
eliminated, as an average figure between estimates 45 million people. The
number killed in just these two nations is about 84.5 million, or a lethality
of 252% more than both world wars together. Yet, have the world community
and intellectuals generally shown anything like the same horror or outrage
over there Soviet and Chinese megakillings as has been directed at the much
less deadly world wars?

However, as large as the number of people killed by communist governments
is, it is nearly the same as for other non-free governments. This is due to the
masacres and widescale killing in the very small country of East Timor, where
since 1975 Indonesia has eliminated (aside from the guerrilla war and
associated violence) an estimated 100,000 Timorians of of a poplulation of
600,000. Omittin the country alone would reduce the average killed by
non-communist, non-free governments to 397 per 10,000, or signicantly less than
the 477 per 10,000 for communist countries.

In any case, we can still see from the table that the more freedom in a
nation, the fewer people killed by government. Freedom serves as a brake on a
governing elite's power over life and death.

DEADLIEST SCOURGE

This principle appeared to be violated in the two special cases mentioned
above. One was the French government's mass killings in the colony of Algeria.
There the Algerians were considered second-class citizens and lacked the right

to vote in French elections. In the other case the Allied democracies acted
during and just after wartime, under a regime of strict secrecy, to turn over
foreigners to the Soviet Union. These foreigners, of course, had no rights as
citizens that would protect them in the democracies. In no case have I found a
democratic government carrying out maddacres, genocide and mass executions of
its own citizens; nor have I found a case where such a government's policies
have knowingly and directly resulted in the large-scale deaths of its people
though privation, torture, beatings and the like.
    Absolutist governments (those that Freedom House would classify as not
free) are not only many times deadlier that than war, but are themselves the
major factor causing war and other forms of violent conflict. They are a major
cause of militarism. Indeed, absolutism, not war, is mankind's deadliest
scourge of all.
    In light of all this, the peaceful, nonviolent fostering of civil
liberties and political rights must be made mankind's highest humanitarian
goal. Not simply to give the grestest number the greatest happiness, not simply
to obey the moral imperative of individual rights, but because freedom
preserves peace and life.

    Mr. Rummel is a professor of political science at the University of
Hawaii at Manoa.

20TH CENTURY KILLED, BY CAUSE

CAUSE	TOTALS (in millions)	AVERAGES PER 10,000 POPULATION
GOVERNMENT	119.4	349
Communist	95.2	477
Other non-free	20.3	495
" " omitting Indonesia		397
Partially free	3.1	48
Free	.8	22
WAR	35.7	22
International	29.7	17
Civil	6.0	26

  Note: all figures are rounded
  Source: Various historical materials