

Liberal legislature voted for communism

By Andrea Seastrand

No political philosophy has done more worldwide damage than communism. Since the Bolshevik revolution 100 years ago, the legacy of communism has been tens of millions of people executed, tortured, starved, imprisoned, worked to death in labor camps, impoverished and psychologically scarred for life. Unfortunately, that horrific legacy continues in North Korea, China, Venezuela and Cuba.

Someone would have to be either ignorant, naïve or evil to believe in and champion communism, knowing all of the tragedy it has caused. That's certainly not the type of person you would want to have working for the government, perhaps with power over you, your family and friends.

Which is why it was so strange that a bill allowing communists to work in state government was recently brought to the floor of the California Assembly. Even stranger is that Assembly Bill 22 actually received enough votes from Democratic legislators to pass. It shows how out-of-touch and liberal California's Legislature has become.

Fortunately, the bill's author, Assemblyman Rob Bonta, D-Oakland, withdrew his legislation after receiving complaints from veterans and Vietnamese-Americans.

His bill "brought up real pain for some," acknowledged Bonta in a statement. "I heard compelling stories of how AB 22 caused real distress and hurt for proud and honorable people. For that, I am sorry. I appreciate the candor and heartfelt expressions of concern. As a member of the State Assembly and throughout my career as a public servant, I know that listening is just as important as speaking."

It's too bad Bonta wasn't listening better during the debate on AB22 in the Assembly May 8. He might have heard the words of Assemblyman Travis Allen, R-Huntington Beach, who said, "This bill is blatantly offensive to all Californians. In my district alone we have the Vietnamese-Americans who had to flee a communist regime, which is why they are now in Orange County.

"You take a look at the number of people that communism has killed in the 20th century alone, it's over 90 million. Communism stands for everything that the United States stands against. We're for freedom, we are for justice, we're for democracy, we are for the rule of law. And communism is none of these things. To allow subversives and avowed communists to now work for the state of California is a direct insult to the people of California who paid for that government."

Bonta apparently also wasn't listening to Assemblyman Randy Voepel, R-Santee, who served two tours in Vietnam with the Navy during the war.

"There are 1.9 million veterans in California, many of us fought the communists," said Voepel. "They are still a threat. We have North Korea that wants to do us in. We have China who is a great, great threat to the United States. They are communist regimes. In China the Falun Gong have been rounded up and put in prisons. There are giant labor camps where there is organ harvesting. There are bullets that are charged off to the families of those executed. You get a bill for 20 yuan to pay for the bullet that killed one of your family members. We have great communist threats in the world.

"And I'm not speaking from bitterness because I'm a Vietnam veteran. I came to peace with that years ago. In fact, Vietnam's a pretty neat place. But just last week we had many Vietnamese people here who

were kicked out of their country. They came here for the freedom. So, Assembly members, I ask for a no vote on this issue. The whole concept of opening up communism and Communist Party members to working for the state of California is against everything we stand for on this floor.”

Bonta also did not hear or heed the words of Assemblyman Steven Choi, R-Irvine, who grew up in South Korea during the Korean War.

“As a former military person in South Korea defending South Korean freedom at the DMZ facing North Korean communists, I rise here to protest why in the world we are so generous about Communist Party members,” said Choi. “What do we stand for in our country [if not] defending freedom and liberty? We should be brave enough to stand against our enemies in essence. This country has fought a long time to defend our country’s ideals. I think this is a wrong idea.”

It was a wrong idea. Thankfully, the bill is dead. We can only hope and pray that someday we can say the same about communism.

Conservative columnist Andrea Seastrand is a former representative for the 22nd Congressional District, a longtime grassroots activist and current president of the Central Coast Taxpayers Association. Her column runs in The Tribune every other Sunday, in rotation with liberal columnist Tom Fulks.