


Would MLK approve?

This is old news but it's still worth a mention.

Besides, the dedication of the Martin Luther King Memorial this past Sunday makes it somewhat timely.

The overwhelming majority agrees it is a beautiful and fitting memorial. The 30' granite monument on the National Mall is situated between the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials. But while most agree the memorial is beautiful and fitting, there has been some criticism.

The Martin Luther King Memorial was sculpted by a Chinese artist using 159 pieces of point Chinese granite.

The fact this country's most recent national monument was made in China' prompts the expected sneers and criticism. Certainly there must be a sculptor in the United States capable of producing work to properly honor Martin Luther King.

But it's more than that.

The Christian Science Monitor said it best: "The creator is a state artist who has made dozens of heroic depictions of Mao Zedong, the brutal founder of Communist China. Seen this way, the statue is a corruption of King's liberation message and a PR coup for the Chinese government. . . . Concerns have also been raised about the antiquated and dangerous working conditions of Chinese quarries where the MLK Monument stone was unearthed, the muscular Socialist Realist style that mirrors landmarks more common in totalitarian countries, and Lei's lifetime pension from the Chinese government in a regime that continues to take a hard line against dissenters."

While we can agree the monument is a beautiful piece of work, given its origins, one wonders if Martin Luther King would have approved? n Dan Hammes