

# Communism marx and friedrich engels (marxism, 11).



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Communism has long been heralded in capitalist countries as the root of all evil. However, as with all phobias, this intrinsic fear of communism comes from a lack of knowledge rather than sound reasoning. It is that same fear that gave the world the Cold War and McCarthy's Red Scare. The purpose of this paper is neither to support communism over capitalism nor the reverse of that.

Rather, it is to inform the reader of communism's migration through time and hopefully assist the regression of such fear. The ideology of communism came out of the minds of two men, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Marxism, 11). (Due to Marx being the more widely known influence, he will be the one most often referred to.) It was his belief that private property was the cause of the poverty and degradation of the proletariat. Therefore, he came to settle on the idea that no one person should have control over production of good, ownership of land, and management of funds. In that same token then, no one class should be allowed to have control over these things.

He went onto comment that the exploitation of the working class must come to an end. That end would be achieved through revolution. Once this was achieved, everybody would work according to their abilities and then be paid accordingly (Capital, 586-617). Soon after, however, technical innovations would create such abundance of goods that "everyone works according to his abilities and receives according to his needs." Soon thereafter, money would have no place in society.

People would be able to take what they want and would be lacking nothing. Marx then believed that the pleasure of seeing the fruits of labor would be

enough to cause man to work (Communism, 56-62). Countries and people were soon to catch on to this ideology.

The two most known of which are Russia and China. Of the two, Russia was the first to adopt the communist beliefs. Russia already had a long history of peasant insurrection. Most of these uprisings though, were leaderless and highly unorganized. The motives of the rebels were vague and often confused.

By the time the government did anything to please the peasants, it was too late. In 1917, due to the breakdown of administration and military order, the peasants moved to carry out their own revolution. They tore down any form of legal and territorial authority and distributed the land in a rough equal fashion. During this time, a man by the name of Georgi V. Plekhanov had smuggled into Russia. Once there, these books influenced young students who saw the revolution dependent on the proletariat, not the peasant class. One of the people influenced by Plekhanov was a man going by the name Nikolai Lenin.

His revolutionary ardor was strong. Lenin went on to form a group called the Bolsheviks that would go on to create a revolution (Communism, 63-70). It began on March 6, 1917 when bread riots erupted in Petrograd, Russia and didn't end until the U. S. S.

R. was organized on December 30, 1922. Then on January 21, 1924, Lenin died. This only complicated matters since two other people were interested in Lenin's position. A power struggle between Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky

began (Soviet, xi). Stalin became the Bolshevik party general secretary in 1922.

In 1925 Stalin offered a more attractive solution to the Russian people than Trotsky did (Communism, 73-74). Thus in 1927, Stalin scored the first major victory for himself when the Fifteenth All-Union Congress of the Communist party denounced all deviations of the Stalinist line. Trotsky and any ally of his were banished to the Russian provinces. Here Stalin's ruthless nature begins to show. He completely expelled Trotsky from the Soviet Union (Russia, 246). Fear of Trotskiest ideas forced Stalin to have Trotsky assassinated in 1940.

However, those fears never completely dissipated. Stalin went on to establish his dictatorship, crushing any opposing voices within his party and his country. He wouldn't stop there though. Still being enough of a Marxist, Stalin wanted to see the realization of the ultimate goal of world socialist revolution. He and many other Soviet leaders would look toward this ultimate goal.

They would hold the furtherance of world revolution above the preservation of the dictatorship. It remained an important goal through the leadership of Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko. However, this came to a head during the leadership of Gorbachev. Gorbachev had a country that was falling apart dumped in to his lap. Dissension was widespread.

In an effort to bring the country back to it's former glory, Gorbachev implemented a program known as Perestroika, or restructuring. It's aim was to make good on the promises of socialism or else it would sink to the status  
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of a third world country. One part of Perestroika was particularly odd. It was called Glasnost. The purpose of it was to hear constructive criticism, much different from Stalin's views, and possibly implement it in an effort to help the country.

When western criticism said that Perestroika was slowing down, Glasnost went ahead at full speed, revealing not only the crimes of the Stalin era, but also the full horrifying dimensions of the contemporary crisis. In foreign affairs, not only was there great progress on arms control, but Soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan. Most spectacular of all, in 1989, Gorbachev allowed Soviet control over Eastern Europe to evaporate, as communism was overthrown and independent governments were established in one satellite country after another. In 1991, Gorbachev changed course as he came to realize that his only chance to preserve the union was to work with the leaders of the republics and not against them. For many loyal members of the party and the security forces, as well as managers of industry and collective farms, the country as they had known it was on the brink of falling apart. The last stand of the old guard was an attempted coup in August 1991.

It was easy for the plotters to take over the central government, but they found it impossible to topple Yeltsin and the Russian Federation government. The coup collapsed within days, and the Communist party was outlawed. The fate of the August coup showed how little vitality was left in the Soviet Union's central government, and it was not long before appropriate conclusions were drawn. In another quieter coup in December, the leaders of

Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus declared that a Commonwealth of Independent States would replace the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

This declaration only ratified the reality of republican independence.

Gorbachev bowed to the inevitable and resigned at the end of the year. The 74-year-old history of the Soviet Union had come to an end (Grolier). After Russia, China was the next major country to adopt to the communist system of beliefs. It was on October 1, 1949 that Mao Tsetung pronounced the establishment of the new Chinese Communist state: the People's Republic of China.

It was for this reason that Mao and over 10, 000 people set off on what was to be called The Long March. They began in the Jiangxi province where their ranks rapidly grew and became known as the Fourth Red Army. It was comprised of peasants and soldiers who were in favor of a Communist regime, or were in opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist views. Mao's army never numbered more than 85, 000 peasants, while Chiang's forces, the Kuomintang, numbered 200, 000 well-equipped troops. The odds were definitely against Mao. It was for this reason that he favored guerrilla warfare. Mao described these tactics in his Little Red Book: When the enemy advanced, we retreat.

When he camps, we harass. When he tires, we attack. When he retires, we pursue. Our weapons are supplied us by the enemy. In 1934, Chiang encircled the Jiangxi province in which Mao was camped.

It was then decided within the communist camp that they must break through Chiang's blockade lines. The 85, 000 plus another 15, 000 peasants  
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poured through the breach that had been made. Within forty-eight hours, most of the people had gone through.

None really knew what laid ahead though over 6, 000 miles, icy rivers, swampy marshes, and Kuomintang forces would leave only a handful alive at the end. The Long March had begun. It would end in 1949, the same time the People's Republic of China was formed. Mao had come out on top through extraordinary means. However, the civil war was not quite over. While living in Taiwan, Chiang was still getting backing from the United States and again took the title of President in 1950. Mao recognized, however, that he would need to set up a government immediately in order to support the close to a billion people living in China.

He then turned to the Soviet Union for financial help. Mao went on to create the Great Cultural Revolution: an effort to get China up to the status a major world power. This was a major motivating force for Mao until his death in 1976 (Long March, 22-165). Deng Xiaoping eventually emerged as the paramount leader in 1978, and promptly launched his economic reform program. One of the most significant developments in recent history was the death of Deng, on February 19, 1997.

While he has not been active in politics for some time and has not appeared in public for more than three years, the deaths of senior leaders has always had an unsettling impact on Chinese politics (China). On the other hand, Deng retired in 1989 and he placed Jiang Zemin in the powerful post of chairman of the Central Military Commission. In 1993 Jiang was named president of China. Jiang's policy, like that of his mentor, is to effect market

reforms while keeping the country politically and socially conservative(Profiles).

That is going to be difficult though with Hong Kong having been returned to China on June 1, 1997. President Jiang Zemin himself will preside as the motherland reclaims a piece of itself, instantly replacing the councils and crown symbols of British rule with the new authority of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. If only it were that simple.

The people of Hong Kong embrace neither of these extremes. They share pride in the reunification of China, and they harbor some misgivings about their new landlords, but they're ready to give their new system a chance. The west is casting a skeptical eye, however. But if Beijing wants to be welcomed into the community of nations with the stature its size and wealth ought to command, China will have to convince the west that it is ready and able to live by the world's new rules (Handover). With the Soviet Union no longer in existence, the world's countries are turning their attention to the last major communist nation that has influence.

China will have to tread lightly, especially now with the return of a valuable port that was the refuge for millions of democratic citizens. China has promised a "one country, two systems" policy, but that is only drawing more criticism. Communism can no longer grow, it can only mature. However, the maturing process is turning it into more of a capitalist country.

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