

**KARL MARX:**

**BEACON  
FOR OUR  
TIMES**

**by GUS HALL**



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**Foreword by**  
**Henry Winston**



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## Foreword

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At the graveside of Karl Marx in 1883, Frederick Engels observed:

On the fourteenth of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. . . . An immeasurable loss has been sustained both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the departure of this mighty spirit will soon enough make itself felt.

Engels was right about his friend and co-worker, a genius who lived and worked in the pre-imperialist period of capitalist development. That "gap" about which he spoke was soon filled by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who was able to apply, in all its complexities, the scientific, revolutionary truth of Marx to the struggle against capitalism in its imperialist phase. Hence, the science of Marxism-Leninism.

Gus Hall, General Secretary of the Communist Party, USA, is the foremost exponent of Marxist-



Leninist science in our country. For Gus Hall, as for Marx, science is "a historically dynamic, revolutionary force." For Gus Hall, as for Lenin, Marxism is invincible because it is true.

The three speeches in this book were delivered before quite different audiences. The first, to a Sunday morning Forum in a Boston church. The second, to a Karl Marx Conference in New York City. The third, to a celebration of the Marx Centenary in Berlin, German Democratic Republic.

On these occasions, Gus Hall demonstrates (as he has at numerous other events) that revolutionary science is consistent, is applicable and explainable to any audience which is concerned with solutions to our common problems. The objective laws of social development don't change with the political winds or windbags of the moment. The source of capitalist profits and the inner contradictions of the system cannot be wished away, or washed away in a foaming tide of Reaganomics. Most of all, a bright future of peace and socialism awaits us, too, if only the imperialist nuclear fanatics are curbed and defeated. Gus Hall emphasizes how the legacy of Marx is alive and at work today on the side of the working class, of the racially and nationally oppressed, of all movements in struggle for social progress and freedom from nuclear disaster. He pointedly warns of the dire consequences that can result from playing the anti-Soviet game of the warhawks, and of the danger of opportunism whether in the class struggle at home or in the struggle for peace in the world arena.

In fact, the decisive contribution of the Soviet

Union to the defeat of the fascist Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis in World War II cannot be denied by any honest person. Even the arch reactionary, General Douglas MacArthur, declared in February, 1942: "The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest upon the worthy banners of the courageous Russian Army." The vital interests of the Soviet people, then as now, coincided with the vital interests of all peoples fighting for greater democracy and against the fascist menace.

At the present time, President Reagan and his ilk strive mightily to make their anti-Communist crusade appear as a "defense" of democracy. But in the early post-World War II years, the U.S.-Soviet-British agreements unequivocally included Communists within the democratic forces, and just as clearly excluded fascists. Not able to deny this fact, the Reagan-Thatcher circles try to cover it up with "new" slanders against the Soviet Union and its leaders.

As Gus Hall so ably affirms, the "two superpowers" concept is designed to take the heat off the real threat to peace, U.S. imperialism, and to continue the arms buildup.

In regard to this true source of the war danger, it is useful to take a look at a few pages from our own history in which Karl Marx himself played an important role. Marx's concept of a strategic relationship between peace and social advance accounted for the historic contribution he and Engels made to the Union victory in our Civil War, and thereby to the abolition of slavery in the South.



Marx pointed out that this victory "opened a new epoch in the annals of the working class." While it was true that a large section of the British working class suffered hardship from the Northern blockade of trade between the South and England which cost British workers jobs in textile and in commerce, Marx helped rally the British workers to the Union cause and the abolition of slavery. He argued that in the longer view, working class interests were best served by keeping England out of the U.S. Civil War, thus aiding the Union cause as well.

In 1869, Marx sent a letter to the National Labor Union in the United States. In it he reminded U.S. workers that the English working class had saved Europe "from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic." Marx continued, "In the states themselves, an independent working class movement, looked upon with an evil eye by your old parties and their professional politicians, has . . . sprung into life. To fructify, it wants years of peace. To crush it, a war . . . is wanted" by the oppressors.

Another new epoch in the annals of the working class was opened up by the October Revolution. The emergence of the first socialist state offered proof of Marx's observation that while the capitalist class cannot do without the working class, the working class *can* do without the capitalist class.

The first socialist state offered further proof. The October Revolution liberated the nations that were oppressed by czarist imperialism; thus, the peoples

of Africa, Asia and Latin America had evidence that while imperialism cannot live without the profits from neo-colonialist oppression, the oppressed nations *can* live without imperialism. Today's historic reality is that the peoples of these continents are struggling against the neo-colonialism of the transnational corporations. They add new strength to the global struggle to—as Marx put it—"command peace where our would-be masters shout war."

The struggle for peace must become a victorious mass crusade in our country! There is a peace majority in the United States. It has the potential to reverse the nuclear insanity of the monopoly forces allied with the Pentagon and the Reagan administration.

How aptly Marx's analysis applies to President Reagan, who is shouting for war against what he calls a "Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan axis." When he spoke in Miami on May 20th to an audience of Cuban-Americans, Reagan called Fidel Castro a fascist. Reagan has never called General Pinochet of Chile a fascist, nor will he ever do so. The Pinochet dictatorship is included in Reagan's concept of democracy. The Cuban newspaper, *Granma*, responded truly to the Reagan demagoguery: "Never before the arrival in the White House of the ex-Hollywood actor have lies been institutionalized so meticulously as official policy."

The people of Nicaragua and of El Salvador also refuse to submit to the dictates of U.S. imperialism. This is the situation to one degree or another throughout Latin America.



## 12 Foreword

The science of Marxism-Leninism, of the Communist Party of the United States, always seeks to unite the vital interests of our people—beginning with the working class—with that of all people oppressed by imperialism. Today the cause of the people of Central America must become the cause of every trade union, every church, every campus, and must ring out in every legislative hall! This fight, linked with the broad movement for genuine disarmament negotiations on the basis of equality and mutual security as repeatedly proposed by the Soviet Union, is the guarantee of our future—of humanity's future—for peace, social progress and socialism.

Gus Hall's remarks in celebration of the Marx Centenary outline the essence of the obstacles, and the path to victories with exceptional clarity, humanism and revolutionary optimism. I am confident that you will find Gus Hall a worthy friend and ally, and that you will be pleased, through him, to better understand how Karl Marx, too, is on your side. I think that many of you will want to join more firmly and actively with their program, *our* program, as well.

Henry Winston  
*National Chairman, CPUSA*

**KARL MARX  
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OUR TIMES**



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One hundred years after:  
Marx right on target

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The Community Church of Boston, Sunday  
Morning Speakers Forum, March 20, 1983

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It is a great honor to be among the prestigious speakers who have been invited to speak at this well-known and respected church forum. It is indeed a pleasure for me to participate in your unique democratic forum that provides a diversity of speakers on a wide range of subjects with the common theme of social justice, peace and equality.

I am especially appreciative of this opportunity today in light of the totally irresponsible and inflammatory speech President Reagan recently delivered to the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida [March 8, 1983—Ed. note].



It was irresponsible because it was based on falsehoods, distortions and fanaticism. It was dangerous because he may really believe that his policies of military buildup, nuclear confrontation and nuclear superiority are ordained and blessed by God—that he, Ronald Reagan, is doing God's work. It is frightening because in such a state of mind, what prevents him from literally declaring nuclear war in the name of God, or on the assumption that he has God's blessing to blow up the world?

We now have a President who proclaims to the world that if you are not for the nuclear arms race you are not only against Reagan, but you are also against God; and furthermore, that anyone who opposes him is a business agent for the Devil himself.

### *Marxism and religion*

In that same speech Reagan declared that Marxism-Leninism is the epitome of "sin, evil and ungodliness." For a President to declare a holy war against a so-called "evil empire," as Reagan did in Orlando, is itself the greatest evil, and to say the very least, irrational.

Karl Marx would have been somewhat astonished and puzzled to hear a 20th century President declare that the capitalist world can meet the present-day challenge "only if it has as much faith in God as the Communists have faith in man." In a sense, accusing Communists of faith in man is really a backhanded compliment!

Because of the wide publicity Reagan's speech received and because of its provocative hysteria, for

a brief moment I wondered whether your invitation to speak would be withdrawn. Obviously, I owe you an apology. I underestimated your determination to hear all sides of all questions and to maintain the integrity of this forum.

However, I must admit that I also had a different kind of a problem about speaking at your church center. Considering what the CBS program "60 Minutes" alleged about most of the leading churches supporting armed uprisings, revolutions and terrorism around the world, I thought maybe I should be concerned that I will be tagged "guilty" by association with such churches!

However, just to clear the decks, I want to assure you that I do *not* accept the headline story in the *Reader's Digest* as a suitable theme for my remarks. As you know, the article "Karl Marx or Jesus Christ," was featured in a blazing headline. I don't think that reflects today's reality because I don't believe the options are so limited or such direct opposites. At the risk of starting a witch hunt or investigation of Karl Marx or Jesus Christ I believe a more realistic title would be "Karl Marx *and* Jesus Christ," not *or*.

This would be more in keeping with the times because so much has changed in the world since Marx was quoted: "Religion is the opiate of the people."

Knowing Marx's keen dialectical method of observing things—not statically, but in the process of growth and change, seeing things in the framework of specific time, place and circumstance—I am sure that in today's world he would formulate the question differently. Were he alive today, most likely



Marx would be somewhat surprised at the progressive role so many churches and religious institutions are playing.

### *Marxism lives and grows*

I think you will find it interesting how various people reacted to Marx's death and how differently they viewed his life and work.

Of interest to you, here in Boston, might be the reaction of one of your leading Boston newspapers, the *Boston Daily Advertiser* (3-17-1883). Its editorial eulogizing Karl Marx, said: "Karl Marx was one of the most remarkable men of our time . . . [He was] a great student and a remarkable organizer" (Foner, 1973, 74). I believe that this editorial judgment still applies in *our times*.

And 50 years ago an Episcopalian Bishop, Montgomery Brown, observed: "Marx, though dead, yet speaketh. He is speaking more widely and persuasively in death than in life" (Brown 1925, 46).

Bishop Brown was very perceptive and had keen foresight; today, more than 100 years after Marx's death, Marxism has become the basis for the most far-reaching, most influential ideological current in the entire history of human societies. Why this is so is one of the most perplexing questions for non-Marxists today, because Marxism has been cussed, castigated and crucified for over one hundred years.

More Marxist books and pamphlets have been burned than any other body of literature—book burnings from Hitler Germany to the one I witnessed in the Leavenworth penitentiary, where I was serv-

ing an eight-year prison sentence for the crime of "thinking Marxist thoughts." To this day, only one U.S. University, the University of Minnesota, has an accredited course in Marxism-Leninism. Marxism has been and still is vilified, illegalized, falsified and revised. Yet Marx's "spectre" still haunts the entire non-socialist world. The question is—why?

Why does Marxism grow in influence, prestige and popularity despite the decades of campaigns and crusades to destroy it?

Why are more than one-half of the world's peoples either building a new socialist society or moving in the direction of socialism?

Why are there no developing countries anywhere in the world moving toward capitalism?

Why is Marxism-Leninism the main ideological current influencing the direction of human society?

Why is Marxism considered enemy number one to the U.S. establishment, the government, the Pentagon and big business?

Why is it that the FBI, CIA, and military intelligence spend most of their time harassing those who believe Marx made some important contributions to the bank of human thought?

Why does Marx, dead over a hundred years, "still speaketh"?

Looking through the eyes of Mother Nature the answer is obvious. Trees and flowers do not grow on concrete pavements or dry deserts. Seeds and acorns take root only when there is a suitable soil and water to nourish them.

Similarly, Marxism prevails as a viable, powerful



force because its roots are sunk deep in the reality of life and therefore nourished by the people.

### *A science for social change*

Marxism explains and deals with real life. It is a science that reveals life's real processes—the social, economic processes as well as the laws of nature.

Marxism is a science that is specifically at the service of people, especially the working people. Marxism is a science of thought, but it is also a science for social change. It helps people in their daily struggles for a better life.

The people of the world react to Karl Marx in two opposing ways, each reflecting the side of the class struggle upon which one makes a living.

On the one hand, the number of Marxism's defenders, advocates and followers keeps growing by leaps and bounds. While on the other hand, its antagonists and enemies become ever more vehement, desperate, extreme and hysterically fanatic. Their slanders, falsehoods and outright lies keep moving ever further away from truth, from any semblance of intellectual integrity. These reactions, both pro and con, are almost inevitable in our world of two opposing classes, reflected in the two main socio-economic systems.

Those who are exploited—the have-nots—see Marxism as the science and philosophy of liberation, the science that explains to them how and why they are exploited. Why, generation after generation, the millions are poor or just about making ends meet. Why a small minority, generation af-

ter generation, keeps accumulating greater and greater wealth.

Contrary to popular myths, hard work as a rule does not make one rich. The secret to getting rich is to have a lot of people working hard for you. The so-called captains of industry and banking amass huge fortunes without ever setting foot on the production line or picking up a tool.

The rich exploiters see Marx as their number one enemy. They see Marx as the spoiler who exposed their nice, neat shell game. They will never forgive Marx for exposing forever their most guarded and sacred secret—the source of all their ill-begotten wealth. For he uncovered and proved for all to see that the wealth—private corporate profits—come from only one source: not from buying and selling, but from exploiting workers.

The advocates and defenders of capitalism are especially anxious. They are worried because Marx proved (by studying the laws of how societies change) that as was the case with slavery and feudalism, capitalism too is now on its way off the stage of history. Furthermore, the truths that Marx uncovered made it possible for Marx and his co-worker, Frederick Engels, to develop the scientific theory of socialism.

They proved that far from being utopian or a fantasy, socialism is the natural outcome of the development of capitalism. They showed that as capitalism develops it digs its own grave, that the inherent flaws and crises in capitalist society make it inevitable that socialism will have to replace it.



Before Marx, all of life—the world and the history of the world—was viewed as one big mishmash of events; incidents and happenings without rhyme or reason. Things happened, events occurred, but there was no sensible, consistent explanation for them. Marx, for the first time, made sense out of human society and history. He revealed the orderly, working principles of social change. He revealed the inner laws of motion of society and history. Marx showed that there are objective laws that operate in social life, just as they do in nature. And, that people can understand and utilize these laws of social development in their own interests.

Most important, Marx proved that there is a direction in which history is irrevocably traveling and that by knowing the laws people can act to advance, influence and accelerate the direction of history.

The folks on Wall Street do not like the direction in which history is moving. They would like to stop or turn back the clock of history. They do not like what they see as the future. They do not like the new system, the new society—existing socialism—because it cuts off their special privileges.

For capitalism, the march of history is like the handwriting on the wall telling them their days are numbered. Ronald Reagan is the most convincing witness to this handwriting on the wall and to the correctness of Karl Marx's predictions. Our President works at it day and night.

### *Monopoly capitalism*

One hundred twenty years ago, on the basis of a thorough study of the laws of capitalism, Marx made a number of scientific projections.

He accurately predicted that the small manufacturing concerns which dominated industry in his time would be devoured by the bigger ones till finally there would be a few big corporate monopolies left that would rule over the economy. Who can deny the accuracy of that projection today? IBM, GM and U.S. Steel all prove how well Marx knew the inner soul of capitalist development.

Marx said that as the corporations grew, they would become less and less socially responsible and less and less patriotic. One need only mention dioxin and the EPA and the transfer of jobs and capital to low-wage, low-tax areas to see where today's corporate social responsibility and patriotism lie.

Who can deny that the U.S. multinational corporations are irresponsible and perfectly willing to sacrifice national interest on the altar of profits? Marx said that old profits flow to wherever the new profits are the highest. Chase Manhattan Bank shut down all of its U.S. operations in Youngstown, Ohio and Birmingham, Alabama and, at the same time—in partnership with other U.S. banks—lent Japanese steel companies over \$1 billion dollars. With this billion dollars the Japanese further modernized their steelmaking operations and exported their steel products back to the United States.

The U.S. steel industry is on its last legs. But the



U.S. banks and steel companies, in their drive for maximum profits, have invested billions in steel production in Brazil, Chile, Mexico and South Korea.

Marx also predicted that as these giant corporations push for markets and raw materials beyond national borders, they would of necessity become more aggressive and warlike. And this, in turn, would drive the government to policies of militarism. Who can deny that for some fifteen years now our government has followed a policy of continuous militarization of the economy, a military buildup costing a trillion dollars in wasted wealth. The United States has ten times more overseas military bases, many of them nuclear bases, than all the other countries of the world combined. The five hundred military bases are not there as protectors of real U.S. national interests, but as gendarmes of U.S. corporate interests.

### *The class struggle*

Based on economic laws, one hundred twenty years ago Marx forecast that because capitalism pushes for ever-increasing production of goods, while restricting the market for them by keeping wages low, the system would develop gluts of unsold goods that would bring on recurring economic crises.

Today, out of a working day of 8 hours, the average worker works 2 hours and 9 minutes for himself and 5 hours and 51 minutes for the boss. That's corporate profits. Or, to put it another way, for the rest of this year the working class (those who are working, that is) will work only for the profits of

the corporations and to pay taxes. The rest of this year the workers will produce goods they cannot buy.

In fact, this is precisely what the corporate publicity material says to lure industries to their areas. For example, New York State boasts "New York's manufacturing workers produce \$4.25 in value over and above every dollar they get in wages." In other words, they produce four times more than the wages they are paid. The state which beats New York is Texas, with \$5 in value over and above every dollar paid in wages, for a grand surplus value of 400 percent. I'm sure Massachusetts, too, is high up on the list.

Then there are the superprofits—the profits from racism. An ad by Puerto Rico boasts "In Puerto Rico, the value over and above each dollar of production payroll averages \$5.58, compared with the U.S. average of \$3.72. Your payroll dollars are 50 percent more productive in Puerto Rico than the total U.S. average." In Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea the rate is 1,000 percent.

Exploitation and super-exploitation of workers is living proof of the correctness of Marx's statement of the irreconcilability of the interests of capital and labor. As Marx said, it follows the law that "profit rises in the same degree in which wages fall; [profit] falls in the same degree in which wages rise" (Marx, 1976, 37).

All the big business arguments that capital and labor are "one big happy family," that "what's good for GM is good for America," that labor and capital form a natural partnership based on class coopera-



tion are so much coverup for the truths that Marx uncovered more than a century ago.

However, Marx didn't just criticize capitalism. He gave credit where credit was due.

In the now famous *Communist Manifesto*, Marx asserted that the capitalist system during its rule of scarce one hundred years, had created more massive and more colossal productive forces than had all preceding generations together. In a sense, it is precisely because of the big monopolies and the vast expansion of the productive forces under capitalism, that it has outgrown itself. Capitalism, because of private ownership and lack of planning in production, has now become an obstacle to the further development and progress of society.

Capitalism was an advance over slavery and feudalism. It was able to use the technology of its day. But now capitalism is increasingly out of step with modern times.

### *A system of anarchy*

The scientific and technological revolution is passing it by. The problems of today's world are too complex for a socio-economic system that is at the mercy of individual corporations without concern for people or society.

Capitalism is a system of anarchy. As the process of the bigger corporations swallowing up the smaller ones accelerates (far beyond even Marx's predictions), big business becomes even less concerned about human life and society. As capitalism develops into monopoly capitalism, the anarchy increases on

an even bigger scale and the crises and disasters become more frequent and intense.

Today capitalism in the U.S. careens from one crisis to another, because it is unplanned, chaotic and anarchistic. Its credo is, each dog for himself, and dog-eat-dog. The new advances in science and technology become entangled in the monopolies' singleminded determination to milk all the benefits of production for their private profits. The new technology needs a system that can plan and develop its use and distribute its benefits to society as a whole.

All the talk about "hi-tech" replacing mass production industries, about our society becoming a post-industrial system, is totally unrealistic. The fact is that our old private enterprise system is not set up any longer to utilize the advanced technology. And it certainly is not able to rebuild the steel and auto industries. It is not that our country does not need steel. It can use all the steel we can produce to rebuild the infrastructure of our crumbling cities. The problem is that the steel companies have abandoned these industries to invest their money in more profitable areas overseas.

When capitalism acquires new technology the corporations lay off workers, constantly adding to the vast army of the unemployed. The invasion of the robot army will drive new millions out of the industrial plants and onto the unemployment lines. It is estimated that in the next ten years, for every three thousand jobs "high tech" industries will create, fifty thousand jobs will be lost.



It is one of those ironies of history that U.S. capitalism daily provides proof that Karl Marx was right, absolutely right, and right on target.

Our President, Ronald Reagan, a lifelong anti-communist fanatic, personally does more to prove Marx was on target than hundreds of paid think-tanks combined. More than anyone else, Ronald Reagan and Reaganomics is forcing people to search seriously for a viable alternative, to consider the socialist solution.

### *An economic emergency*

Our country is still in the grip of an economic emergency. While Reagan keeps telling us that our economy is "on the mend," that we are "on the road to recovery," and that "the state of the union is strong," the fact is we are *not* on the road to a solid, stable upturn. As the head of U.S. Steel said recently, "It may be just a little blip."

For the American people it is another "great depression":

Thirty million of our people are partially or totally jobless, hungry or homeless.

Four million Americans have literally taken to the road in search of work.

Soup lines and shelters in many cities are forced to turn away more people than they can care for.

Thirty million people have lost their health insurance.

Whole towns and sections of cities have become disaster areas, while industrial plants continue to shut down and move out.

Joblessness is causing people to lose their homes, their cars, their farms, their personal possessions and increasingly their lives.

One out of every five children goes to sleep hungry. Malnutrition and infant mortality are on the rise. In Detroit, Youngstown and Buffalo these are on the same level as Honduras, one of the poorest countries in the world.

Basic services are being cut to the bone. Programs such as health care, child care, school and summer lunch programs, education, social security are still under the ax. But the government keeps adding billions to the dangerous, wasteful, job-stealing military budget.

Because our country is in such desperate straits, in the midst of another "great depression," the government increasingly becomes an arm of big business to more directly control and dominate society and our lives in their own selfish interests, in their drive for maximum corporate profits. Increasingly, decisions are made and policies put into practice that impoverish the people and enrich the rich.

### *Marxism has the answers*

The burning question is: WHY?

Why does the Reagan Administration and most of Congress relentlessly pursue these cold-blooded, anti-people policies that cause hunger, unemployment, sickness, misery and death—with the constant threat of nuclear war?

Is it that they completely lack human compassion and social conscience? Why cut funds for the im-



munization of children to protect them from disease, knowing many will be struck with crippling and killing diseases that were conquered by medical science years ago?

Why are the oil and chemical monopolies permitted to lace our gas, heating and fuel oil with lead and toxic chemicals? Why are they permitted to dump toxic wastes in areas where people live, knowing full well these actions will poison and kill people—especially children—for the next ten, twenty, even one hundred years?

Engels, co-worker of Marx, wrote about capitalism and ecology a century ago, and today Reagan calls popular concern about this issue “environmental extremism.” Is he not concerned about human life, about our future generations?

Why the deliberate gutting of social security that cuts the only lifelines of the elderly, ill and disabled? Have they no concern for our older generation?

The O'Neill-Reagan social security compromise is a disguise, a criminal hoax on the people. With friends like O'Neill, who needs enemies?

Why the cuts in wages, food stamps, education, rent and housing subsidies, Medicaid, Medicare, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, CETA, tuition loans and almost every single program that meets people's needs and strivings for a measure of comfort, dignity and security?

Why do these planned (with malice aforethought) inhuman policies continue without letup? Is the United States really slipping so far from what used to be the richest country in the world?

Is the United States becoming a nation that can no longer afford to provide even a minimum standard of living, a minimum safety net, for its people? Has the United States really run out of resources and money? From a Marxist viewpoint, that's unadulterated hogwash!

Or, are U.S. products uncompetitive on the world market because U.S. workers are unproductive and lazy? Or live too high off the hog? Such ideas, we believe, are more hogwash! The real answers to all these questions lie deep in the very heart of the capitalist system itself. It is a system that places corporate profits before the interests of the people.

The double-barreled, Reagan-big business offensive against the people has a serious negative cause and effect impact on the economy. Cutting paychecks, unemployment checks, social security checks and food stamps means less money for buying consumer goods. Therefore, less sales in the marketplace; And less sales mean less production and less jobs.

In the last two years the wage cuts and take-backs plus inflation have cut workers' buying power by another two hundred billion dollars. The new five-cent tax on every gallon of gasoline, starting next week, takes away another five billion dollars. The grand total of \$350 billion dollars in cutbacks would have bought an awful lot of cars, homes and groceries, thus creating millions of new jobs. But between 1972 and 1982, the real wages of U.S. workers declined 17%.



That's supply-side Reaganomics. It just keeps pouring more profits into corporate carburetors that are already flooded.

The bottom-line cause for the economic mess our country is in is *the capitalist system itself*. Capitalism is timeworn and worn out. It is overtired, but refuses to give up. Capitalism is deep in the process of decay and decline. As with all phenomena in life, it is the victim of old age and the aging process.

The ever-deepening economic, political, social and moral crises we are going through are not momentary. The decline and contraction of capitalism is the product of an inborn, fixed and law-governed process. In a sense, it is ironic that U.S. developments have followed the classical model Karl Marx projected, including high unemployment, widespread poverty, the emergence and rise of the huge industrial monopolies, the financial galaxies and conglomerates that now dominate, exploit and control every phase of life in the United States.

### *Dialectical laws of development*

Much is known and written about the laws of economic and social development, as well as scientific socialism. Much less is known and appreciated about how much Marx and Engels added to our understanding of the Laws of nature—to natural science.

However, natural scientists are discovering that the more they probe the ways of nature the more they are learning about the dialectical laws that determine and explain all phenomena—nature, society and consciousness.

As Engels often noted, the process of discovering the laws of motion in nature is itself proof of one of the laws of dialectics. That is: There is an evolutionary process of probing and gathering scientific evidence, and then there are periods of explosive revolutionary leaps in scientific discoveries. In many ways, we are in one of those explosive periods in science. We call it the technological revolution, which is the result of great leaps in scientific discoveries.

For example, scientists now have enough knowledge of the laws of living organisms, including genes, to proceed with the splitting of genes in order to create new forms and essence of matter.

The new atom smashing machines are now powerful enough to reveal new kinds of subatomic particles, including a particle with a single magnetic pole of attraction. This would seem to contradict the dialectical law of unity of opposites. On the other hand, it would also alert the scientist to look for a particle with the opposite magnetic pole.

Natural science may now be close to revealing possibly the most basic of all laws—the law of unity between the basic forces of nature—gravity, electromagnetism and nuclear forces.

The world is passing through the most explosive, revolutionary upheaval in all of its history. These revolutionary struggles are not the products of conspiracies, plots or fantastic schemes.

Revolutions cannot be imported or exported. In each country, revolutions are the explosions resulting from a combustion of accumulated frustrations



and anger because of exploitation, injustice and oppression.

You can transplant a rubber tree to Alaska, but it will not take root. You can transplant revolutionary ideas, but unless the political and economic soil is prepared and ready, they will not take root and grow.

This historic moment is so explosive because there are two interrelated worldwide revolutionary processes. There is a revolution that is putting an end to colonialism in all its forms. And there is the historic revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. This is especially explosive because it is so different from all past revolutions.

The transitions from slavery to feudalism and from feudalism to capitalism were revolutions. But they all retained intact the structure of classes of exploiters and exploited. The transition to socialism puts an end to such a structure forever. With socialism, human society proceeds along the path of no class of exploiters or exploited.

Socialism is a truly human and humane society in which there are no private corporations, no monopolies, no corporate profits, no unemployment, no hunger, no homelessness, no racism.

Socialism is a society that (once and for all) will do away with all forms of human exploitation through which a very small, privileged minority became richer and richer by exploiting the labor of the many, the great majority, who became poorer and poorer. Under socialism, for the first time, the people will truly "inherit the earth."

The fact is that this revolutionary process is in-

evitable. It is propelled and dictated by the inner laws of social development.

Karl Marx was a keen observer of our country. He learned much from our American revolutionary traditions. In fact, there were times when Karl Marx sounded very much like Thomas Jefferson. And, when Thomas Jefferson sounded much like Karl Marx.

"Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness] it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." Jefferson also said that it is also "the duty" of the people to so act when necessary (The Declaration of Independence).

The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth, that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few, booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately for the Grace of God. (Foner 1944, 807).

Those were written by Thomas Jefferson. Now, one more quote:

When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch . . .



then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous, pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain. (1979 C. W. 12:222).

That is from Karl Marx.

It was Karl Marx who showed that rebellion and revolution are law-governed, inevitable processes. He was therefore able to explain the factors and forces that motivate and drive the law-governed forward process of history.

That's why Karl Marx, one hundred years after his death, still "speaketh" today—right on target. So, if you want to ride the wave of the future, you should consider jumping aboard the revolutionary bandwagon.

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### The revolutionary legacy of Karl Marx

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A conference on the centenary of the death of  
Karl Marx, "Karl Marx and the Revolutionary  
Movement Today," New York City, March 19, 1983

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Comrade Karl Marx would have greatly appreciated and enjoyed this Conference. He would have noted that it has all the earmarks and ingredients of a law-governed historic event.

Comrade Marx would have recognized the significance of holding this Conference in a capitalist country that more than any other daily proves how correct his theories and conclusions are today.

Comrade Marx would have especially appreciated that we have with us today representatives of the Party from the first land of socialism, the first coun-



try to overthrow capitalism and open the path for a new kind of human society that is on this side of history's dividing line, the great Party of Lenin—The Communist Party of the USSR.

Comrade Marx would have been excited and honored that we have as our guest and participant the leader of a truly heroic Communist Party, a Party that is leading the struggles against the most reactionary, racist, bigoted capitalist country in the world—the General Secretary of the Communist Party of South Africa.

And Karl Marx would have taken special pride and interest in the fact that we were going to have with us a representative of a country building socialism which speaks his mother tongue—the German Democratic Republic. I can only guess what motivates the State Department. It is possible they thought Marx in the original language was too much!

However, if Karl Marx were here with us today there are some things happening that even he would have a hard time coping with. For instance, that our country has a dangerous sinister simpleton as President, who proclaims to the world that if you are not for the nuclear arms race you are not only against Reagan, but also against God, and furthermore, that anyone who opposes this is a business agent for the Devil himself.

Marx would have been somewhat astonished and puzzled to hear a twentieth century president declare that the capitalist world can meet the present-day challenge "only if it has as much faith in God as the Communists have faith in man."

To this backhanded compliment, Marx would have chuckled and replied, "Yes, nothing that is human is alien to me." To make his point Marx would have told the story about the city dweller who said to the farmer, "We should thank God for all the good vegetables." In response the farmer agreed, but added that without his hard work God could never have done it.

In a more serious vein, Marx would have given Reagan his lifelong credo, "I have faith in human beings generally. But I have special faith and confidence in the working class, the revolutionary class that will bring about a truly humane society"—in which, by the way, fanatics like Reagan would have no place.

### *A remarkable man for all times*

When we study, teach, speak and write about the life and work of Karl Marx we tend to concentrate almost exclusively on his intellectual and political side.

We rarely delve into the Karl Marx who was also a devoted husband, a loving family man; a poor, full-time revolutionary who was hounded, harassed, persecuted and exiled most of his life. In fact, the life of Marx and his family was filled with much of the same pain and poverty that millions of Americans are suffering today.

Rejecting the comfortable life of a middle-class lawyer, Karl and Jenny took the path of revolution, hardship and self-sacrifice. Often unable to pay their rent, they were even evicted from their apartment and forced to sell all their belongings to pay their



bills. Marx had a hard time trying to make a living and a harder one holding down a job. He was fired from jobs as a newspaperman and warehouse clerk because his handwriting was so poor.

And although he worked hard at it, he could never have made a living as a poet. In fact, after writing the following verse, Marx wrote to his father that he had come to the sad conclusion that his literary talent was extremely limited. Not being a poet myself, I would say that it could be worse:

Therefore let us always dare,  
Never stopping, never resting,  
Never made so dull with care  
That we've finished with protesting.

Shall we brood and make a pact  
to accept the yoke? No, never.  
For to see, demand and act—  
These remain with us forever.

We should be grateful that Marx was perceptive and objective enough to recognize where his talents were not.

Throughout their lives the Marx family faced poverty, and were it not for their beloved friend and colleague, Frederick Engels, it is unlikely Marx would have been able to make his monumental contributions.

It is important to study Marx the student, the philosopher, a poet, a scientist, a newspaperman; an organizer and revolutionary as well as a family man, friend and comrade—as a total human being—

in the process of development, growth and change.

Marx was a truly universal human being whose greatest passions were people, the working class and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and truth. This rich combination produced a world outlook which has shaken the world to its very foundations.

Acutely aware that Marxism is now the foundation of society for over one-third of the world and the guiding light for millions more fighting for a better life, many capitalist ideologies have given up trying to prove Marx outdated and irrelevant.

But they have not given up! On March 14th, the centenary of Marx's death, the *New York Times* reached into the very bottom of their anti-Marxist offensive and came up with a four-column editorial diatribe, "What Marx Hid." It is a piece of garbage slandering Marx's private life. It is proof of the total ideological bankruptcy of the ruling class in its war against Marxism. It is the ultimate failure of an attempt to destroy the indestructible. For Marxism has become a great, powerful material force that is living and breathing and revolutionizing the world through the working class.

Marxism-Leninism is the theory and method of socialist revolution. And revolution is the "locomotive of history." It has become a law of social development that the further humanity progresses from the age of Marx, the closer it moves toward Marxism-Leninism.

Today there is not a country in the world that does not have an active Marxist-Leninist movement. And, there is nothing the *New York Times* fears more



than this. Yes, the "spectre" hangs ever heavier over the capitalist world.

As the sun was setting on the day Karl Marx died, Frederick Engels, his closest co-worker and dearest friend, penned a most perceptive epitaph: "... Mankind is shorter by a head, and the greatest head of our times, at that" (Foner, 1973, 28).

With keen dialectical insight Engels reflected on the effects Marx's passing would have on the class struggle: "The final victory is certain, but circuitous paths, temporary and local errors—things which even now are so unavoidable—will become more common than ever" (ibid.).

Engels premonition was right on target. As we know, there have been deviations and aberrations, both "temporary and local."

To illustrate the profound impact of Marx's death in 1883, let me quote some typical reactions:

On his passing, the New York Central Labor Council passed a resolution:

The world of workers has lost one of its greatest teachers, one of its warmest friends. . . . Karl Marx was the one who over 30 years ago called upon all workingmen of all countries to unite and organize for the purpose of establishing justice upon this earth. . . . Let us all unite in honoring his memory. . . (ibid., 90).

The present leaders of the New York Central Labor Council would do well to take a new look at what its "greatest teacher" and "warmest friend" advocated.

A leading Boston daily newspaper editorialized:

"Karl Marx . . . was one of the most remarkable men of our time, . . . A great student and a remarkable organizer" (ibid., 74).

After one-hundred years we should add, remarkable for *all* times.

A week after Marx's death, Jose Marti, the great Cuban revolutionary wrote:

Marx . . . showed great insight into the causes of human misery . . . [He was] a man driven by a burning desire to do good. He saw in everyone what he carried in himself: rebellion, highest ideals, struggle (ibid., 108).

And, nearly fifty years later in Ohio, the Episcopalian Bishop, Montgomery Brown, observed:

Marx, though dead, yet speaketh. He is speaking even more widely and more persuasively in death than in life" (Brown 1925, 46).

Of course, another fifty years later, we can add, "Marx still speaketh ever more widely and persuasively." So it has been down through the years—eulogies and tributes in every part of the world. They could fill volumes.

Who would argue today that Karl Marx has not earned these honors, tributes and bouquets to his life and work? Well, the one person who would have objected to all the praise and honors is Karl Marx himself. Marx would have expressed caution and reservation about such personalized praise—even



from his colleague and co-thinker, Frederick Engels.

He would have said, self-consciously, something like "Thank you, my dear comrades; I certainly appreciate your expressions of appreciation and praise. But you must remember that we have to place the contributions of individuals, including myself, into the framework of the dynamics of real life. We must place the individual's contributions within the context of their relationship with the real makers of history—the people."

He would have thoughtfully added: "I may have influenced history. But I did not create it. I did not invent class struggle. I simply explained its role as the prime mover of history."

For more reasons than just his personal modesty, Marx would have been concerned that the honors and bouquets heaped on individuals may give the wrong lead, and would, in fact, appear in contradiction with one of his greatest contributions to human thought—the role of the individual and ideas in history.

### *The Materialist Conception of History*

Marx revealed that in the past the accepted view was that the primary cause for all historic changes was to be found in changing ideas. From this followed the view that individuals—monarchs, feudal lords, statesmen, philosophers, thinkers, politicians—somehow create ideas and then put them into practice. In other words, motivated by personal ambition or desire, love of God and country, etc., great men perform great deeds and thereby make and change history.

Marx, of course, was the first to disprove scientifically the concept that history is the product of the whims of individuals. He viewed ideas and thoughts as reflections of the real world—the substance of life's realities—and not the other way around. He said:

With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought (Bernal 1952, 15).

This most important new premise became the foundation stone of Marx's philosophical studies. Marx observed that the material world was a reality long before the human brain appeared on the scene to reflect that world.

Before Marx, all of life, the world and the history of the world were viewed as a big mishmash of events, as incidents and happenings without rhyme or reason. Things happened, events occurred, but there was no sensible explanation for them.

Marx made sense out of human society and history. He revealed the orderly, working principles of change. He revealed the inner laws of motion of society and history; that objective laws and order operate in social life, that people can understand and utilize these laws of social development in their own interests. Most important, Marx proved that there is a direction in which history is irrevocably moving and that by knowing the laws of its motions people can act to advance, influence and accelerate the direction.



This was a great contribution to the working class. Marxism is the theoretical-scientific expression of the vital interests of the working class. Armed with Marxism-Leninism, the working class influences, advances and accelerates the direction of history. Marxism is a guide to action; it charts the course of the working class and peoples of the world.

Applying Marx's conception of society and history, Lenin wrote:

The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in views on history and politics were replaced by a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism (Lenin, 19:25).

Of course, the capitalist class rejects all concepts of law-governed processes because they expose the brutal, anti-human nature of capitalism and show that just as capitalism grew out of feudalism, capitalism is now on its way off the stage of history to make way for "another and higher system"—socialism.

So you see, Marx's caution about praising individuals would have come directly from his own work. Marx would have argued that no matter how brilliant his thoughts and contributions, they were not byproducts of his instincts, insights, intuitions or revelations. They were solid, scientific conclusions based on an intense, exhaustive study of accurate,

in-depth observations of reality, society and the accumulated knowledge of all humanity. His theories, concepts and conclusions were based on the study of the laws—the inner, objective workings present in all things.

### *Appearance and essence*

In the process of his exhaustive studies Marx created a new way of studying, a new approach to probing questions, a new method of observing all things. He showed why it was always necessary to penetrate, to get beneath the surface or veneer and not to accept the appearance of a thing as the real thing.

Just as you really cannot tell a book by its cover, so you cannot know social and economic processes by how they appear to the naked eye. Marx observed on many occasions the importance of scientific investigation and held that science would be unnecessary if the outward appearances and inner essence of things directly coincided.

In other words, if the inner essence and the appearance were in harmony, then all one would have to do is look at it, or take a picture. This is important because the appearances, in most cases, are not only different from the essence but they can be very misleading. For instance, to many it appears that the A&P supermarket is in business to feed the people; that General Motors wants all the people to have new cars; that Reagan and the Pentagon really want to help the people of El Salvador. But the essence of what they are all really after does not correspond to the appearance.



To find the essence in society one must look for the class and economic interests behind all actions, politics, principles, institutions and policies.

### *Laws of motion*

Here Marxism comes to a very fundamental question. In order to study the essence of things, in depth and in general, it is necessary to know the laws of motion. This simply means to study the laws of the essence of things. Since everything in reality is in constant motion, continually changing in law-governed ways, therefore one does not study something that may or may not happen, not something that is accidental, but a constantly developing process.

A study of the essence, the substance, the essential qualities of things is a study of the laws, a study of how and why all processes develop and change.

This is necessary because one cannot really comprehend the essence of anything without some knowledge of its inner laws. To know the laws is to know the present. But even more important, the only way one can gain knowledge about what is coming in the future is to know about the laws that bring about all change. This enables one to predict scientifically.

Over one-hundred years ago, based on his knowledge of the laws of capitalist development, Marx saw the inevitable development of big monopolies. And, if you know in advance what's coming, including what your opponent is going to do, you have a big advantage.

Today, for instance, based on the inner laws of

imperialism and monopolies (as revealed by Lenin), we know how U.S. capitalism *must* operate, *must* fall into and out of constant crises, *must* maximize profits, and *must* ultimately be replaced by socialism. Thus we also know the role of the class that will bring about the revolutionary change to socialism and we have the tools to develop tactics toward this inevitable change. All this knowledge is based on our understanding of the objective laws of motion and social development.

Now, there are also some laws about how laws themselves operate. They can help us in our understanding. For instance: A law operates without any exception to the rule. A law operates objectively; that is, regardless of what people think or want. For example, all bodies possessing a mass (matter) are subject to the laws of gravity. The pull of the fingers of gravity makes no exceptions. Gravity tugs at the coattails of everything, no matter what people think or do.

Or another example: No matter how classes and class relations may change in the capitalist system, as long as there exist exploiters and exploited, there will always be class struggle between them. That is a law. It is important for the working class to understand why and how this law operates.

Or another: As long as there are imperialist powers, imperialist exploitation and plunder—as in Africa, Asia, Central and South America—there will be anti-imperialist struggles against them. That is a law.

One of Marx's outstanding contributions was that



he not only advocated getting to the essence of things, but stressed that this knowledge should be used to change things. He was not simply for knowledge for the sake of knowledge, which many before him had advocated. In his explanations of the role of the working class, of class struggle, of the laws of social development, Marx revealed to the workers of the world their own philosophy and science as an all-powerful weapon that is guiding our class to victories worldwide. Marxism-Leninism is the material force that is the essence of the world revolutionary process.

As Marx would say today—Engels, Lenin and he were able to influence history because they were able to uncover the objective laws of social and economic processes. They were able to reveal what makes all societies tick.

### *Dialectical laws of nature*

Much is known and written about the laws of economic and social development, as well as scientific socialism. Much less is known and appreciated about how much Marx and Engels added to our understanding of the laws of nature, to natural science.

However, natural scientists are discovering that the more they probe the ways of nature, the more they learn about the dialectical laws that determine and explain all phenomena—nature, society and consciousness.

As Engels often noted, the process of discovering the laws of motion in nature is itself proof of one of the laws of dialectics. That is: There is an evolu-

tionary process of probing and gathering scientific evidence, and then there are periods of explosive revolutionary leaps in scientific discoveries.

In many ways, we are in one of those explosive periods in science. We call it the technological revolution, which is the result of great leaps in scientific discoveries. For example, scientists now have enough knowledge of the laws of living organisms, including genes, to proceed with the splitting of genes in order to create new forms and essence of matter.

The new atom-smashing machines are now powerful enough to reveal new kinds of sub-atomic particles, including a particle with a single magnetic pole of attraction. This would seem to contradict the dialectical law of the unity of opposites. But on the other hand, it would tell the scientist to look for a particle with the opposite magnetic pole.

Natural science may now be close to revealing possibly the most basic of all laws, the law of unity between the basic forces of nature: gravity, electromagnetism and nuclear forces. These are ever deeper insights into the essence of nature, but the dialectical laws hold up.

### *Why Marx still lives*

It becomes clear why the ruling class rage against Marx has never subsided. They are angry, puzzled and frustrated because they cannot comprehend why, after so many years and so many resources poured into the ideological war, Marxism still lives. Why, after decades of campaigns and crusades to destroy it, does Marxism grow in influence, prestige and popularity?



- Why is Marxism timeless?
- Why does Marx, dead over one hundred years, “still speaketh?”
- Why are more than one-half of the world’s peoples either building socialism or moving in the direction of socialism, guided and inspired by the science of Marxism-Leninism; or, by members of political parties and movements who use this science?
- Why is Marxism-Leninism the main ideological current influencing the direction of human society?

These are very pertinent questions. Certainly the answer is not because Marx called for the workers of the world to unite, although this slogan still expresses proletarian internationalism.

The answer does not lie in Marx’s credo: “If one chooses to be an ox one can of course turn one’s back on the agonies of mankind and only look after one’s own skin,” although this is still a viable, humane concept.

As we know, history’s archives are chock full of social and economic theories, concepts, ideas and philosophies. But they all gather dust, except for the great body of thought and action—Marxism-Leninism. To really answer the question as to why Marx is still so vitally alive *today*, we must go back to the fundamental idea that Marxism-Leninism is a science that deals with the laws of all processes in life—social and economic processes, the laws of nature.

The inner laws of capitalism that Karl Marx revealed so long ago have not basically changed today.

In fact, as the contradictions in the capitalist system become sharper, as its parts wear out, as it becomes increasingly obsolete, many of the inner laws operate more openly, more directly. Therefore, they are much easier to see and understand.

### *The law of surplus value*

“Driven by a burning desire to do good,” to struggle against injustice and exploitation, Marx, Engels and Lenin focused their penetrating studies, energies and organizing skills on the human society on the stage of history—capitalism.

The three volumes of *Capital* by Marx and Engels and the volumes by Lenin lay bare the inner, inherent laws, the ugly essence, of capitalism.

*Capital* is a burning exposé of an anti-human, brutal social system based on exploitation of the working class. It is a searing indictment of the law of the drive for maximum private corporate profits.

The three volumes of *Capital* make up a comprehensive handbook on how to fight the inhumanity and injustices of a system motivated solely by the greed of a small capitalist minority. It is Marx and Engels’ great gift and legacy to the workers of the world.

Because it is absolutely indispensable to the working class, the law of surplus value (or the law of corporate profits) is worth taking a closer look at.

Because it exposes the source of corporate profits, thousands of volumes have been written in an attempt to complicate, to distort, to cover up this law.

When Marx proved that nothing is added to the



value of products in the process of buying and selling and this, therefore, cannot be the source of profits, the question sharply emerged: what then is the source of corporate profits?

The exploiting ruling class has never forgiven Marx for exposing forever their most guarded and sacred secret—the source of their ill-begotten wealth.

Marx pointed out and scientifically proved that the profits of the capitalists can come only from the labor of the workers they hire to work in their plants and factories.

The law of surplus value operates very simply. The corporation pays the workers just enough so that they can continue living and working. The workers never get rich. Their savings are very small. But the workers produce much more than the value of the wages they get. This is the source of all profits. That is how the rich get richer and the workers get poorer. The workers produce all the wealth and the capitalists get wealthy.

Well, let us say it requires four hours of labor for the worker to produce what he needs to live and work. However, in most cases the worker works an eight-hour day. Thus, the capitalist uses the worker's labor power (ability to work) for the full eight hours, which means he gets four hours clear profit from the labor of the worker.

We can see how important this law is when we translate hours into dollars to measure surplus value or profit. If a worker produces \$24 worth of goods in an hour, the value of an hour of labor is \$24. If the worker is paid only \$8 per hour, the extra going

to the boss is \$16 and the rate of surplus value or profit is 200%.

In terms of hours, if the worker is working 9 hours, she/she is working 3 hours for himself/herself and 6 hours for the boss.

Surplus value is, therefore, the gross profit of the capitalist class. It is profit before dividing it up among the stockholders, the banks, landlords and corporate brass. Understanding this key law of where corporate profits come from is critical because U.S. monopoly capitalists have surpassed all other exploiting classes in history in raising the rate of surplus value—in increasing, brutally, the rate of exploitation of labor.

Today, out of a working day of 8 hours, the average worker works 2 hours and 9 minutes for himself and 5 hours and 51 minutes for the boss. Or to put it another way, for the rest of this year the working class—those who are working, that is—will work only for the profits of the corporations and to pay taxes.

As Marx said, labor power is a commodity that is “a source not only of value, but of more value than it has itself” (Marx 1967, 1:193).

Among themselves, the capitalists are very conscious of surplus value as the key to their profits. In fact, this is emphasized in the publicity material put out to lure industries to their areas.

For example, New York state boasts, “New York's manufacturing workers produce \$4.25 in value over every dollar they get in wages.” In other words, four times more than the wages they are paid. The state



which beats New York is Texas, with \$5 in value over every dollar of wages, for a surplus value of 400 percent.

And to uncover superexploitation—superprofits from racism—an ad by Puerto Rico boasts “In Puerto Rico, the value over and above each dollar of production payroll averages \$5.58, compared with the U.S. average of \$3.72. Your payroll dollars are 50 percent more productive in Puerto Rico than the total U.S. average.”

The soaring rate of surplus value in the U.S. and in the countries U.S. imperialism is plundering is the basic cause of declining real wages, declining living standards of the masses of U.S. workers as well as workers laboring under the heel of U.S. imperialism.

They are living proof of the correctness of Marx’s statement of the irreconcilability of the interests of capital and labor and the law that “profit rises in the same degree in which wages fall; it falls in the same degree in which wages rise” (Marx 1976, 37).

As you saw in this morning’s *New York Times* [3-19-83], the great promise of high-tech is going down the drain of surplus value (profit): i.e., high-tech and high profits at a wage of 50¢ an hour in Taiwan, Malaysia and South Korea. For every new 3,000 high-tech jobs, 50,000 other jobs are lost.

All the bourgeois arguments that capital and labor are one big happy family, that “what’s good for GM is good for America,” that labor and capital form a natural partnership based on class cooperation are

so much coverup for the truth that Marx uncovered 130 years ago.

In uncovering the law of surplus value, Marx also helped to reveal the law of class struggle between the capitalists and the workers, which gives the ultimate lie to all class-collaboration concepts.

The ultimate truth inherent in these laws made it possible for Marx and Engels to develop the theory of scientific socialism. They proved that far from being utopian or a fantasy, socialism is the natural outcome of the development of capitalist society. They showed that as capitalism develops, it digs its own grave. They brought to light the epoch-making role of the working class and drew the logical conclusion that the road to the new society lies in overthrowing capitalism.

### *Capitalist economics*

For instance, today 30 million Americans who are either partially or totally jobless, hungry and homeless are the direct victims of some of the laws of capitalist economics.

One hundred and twenty years ago, on the basis of the laws of capitalist economics, Marx concluded:

The ultimate reason for all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as opposed to the drive of capitalist production to develop the productive forces as though only the absolute consuming power of society constituted their limit (Marx 1967, 3:484).



The law of the drive for maximum profits leads to contradiction and to recurring economic crises. It relentlessly drives every corporation to constantly expand production, without limits, without planning, in total anarchy without any knowledge of the market, while simultaneously paying the workers less and less of the value of the products they produce.

Basically, the demand for consumer goods can be only as great as the sum total of wages paid to the workers. Workers are the consumers and consumer demand is not determined by workers' whims, or tastes or fads, but by their buying power—their wages. Therefore, if corporations keep producing more while actually restricting the market by cutting wages, it is logical that the economy will go off balance, into crisis, another crisis and gridlock crises.

The wage cuts suffered by steel and auto workers will show up in the showrooms of the car dealers: the workers will not be able to buy the cars. It is as simple as that. The corporate ideologues like to call this "overproduction." And it does *appear* as if just too much was produced for the market. This is an example of a misleading appearance. In other words, they claim that products are produced over and above what the people need or can consume, when, in truth, it is simply a matter of a pile-up of unsold goods because workers are not paid enough wages to buy them.

This basic law of capitalist economics has not changed. Steel, auto, electrical workers, miners, and most workers are also up against a number of other laws of capitalist exploitation.

They are up against the hidden law of surplus value, already discussed. They are up against the law that the interests of the working class and the capitalist class will remain irreconcilable, antagonistic, in opposition to the very end of capitalism.

Karl Marx proved over a century ago that the capitalist always strives to obtain maximum profits. That is, he wants to reduce wages down to their physical minimum and to extend the working day to its physical maximum. Actually, however, both are established "by the continuous struggle between capital and labor. . . . The question resolves itself into a question of the respective power of the combatants" (Marx 1976, 58).

The giveback concessions of the auto and steel worker not only adds surplus value (profits) for the bosses, but also restricts and reduces the fighting power of the working class against capitalist exploitation.

It was also over 100 years ago that Marx made a very keen observation that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin, where in the black it is branded" (Marx 1967, 1:301). Today this has all the force of a law in the struggle against racist oppression. This truth remains a prime prerequisite for both working-class unity and for building an all-people's front against Reaganism. As ironic as it may seem, Ronald Reagan is the most effective witness to the genius of Karl Marx. Reagan's actions and policies are day-by-day proof of the correctness of Marx's concepts.



*Role of state monopoly capitalism*

One hundred and twenty years ago, Marx came to the conclusion that in time the capitalist economy would approach the limit beyond which the production process could not go without increasing the participation and intervention of the state (government). In other words, increasingly the government apparatus and institutions (basically controlled by the monopolies) must play a more direct role in order to guarantee that the corporations can pursue their drive for maximum profits. The tax laws and loopholes, the capital depreciation allowances, the government strikebreaking actions are all prime examples of the role of the state. This is state monopoly capitalism.

Some call this Reaganomics. Others call it the military-industrial complex. Engels said: "The official representative of capitalist society—the state—will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production" (Engels 1969, 66).

Lenin explained the process by which capitalist monopolies had developed. He observed further: "The concentration and internationalization of capital are making gigantic strides; monopoly capitalism is developing into state monopoly capitalism" (Lenin 24:309). Each day, with every move, Reagan proves all of them (Marx, Engels, Lenin) were right.

As a science and study of the laws of capitalist development, Marxism has made it possible to foresee the growth of monopolies and the increased role of the government, which has developed into the stage of state monopoly capitalism.

The Reagan policies for shifting the tax burden onto the backs of the workers and non-monopoly sectors of the population, the policy of letting corporations write off the cost of new equipment and plants in five years or less are exactly what Marx had in mind when he said that Capital foists expenses onto the people by way of the state.

The trillion dollar military budget is also foisted onto the backs of the people. The militarization of the economy not only adds to the economic gridlock, but seriously increases the danger of a nuclear war.

*Handwriting on the capitalist wall*

Perhaps more than anything else, what sticks in the craw of the defenders of capitalism is Marx's discovery of the objective laws of the march of history.

For capitalism, it is like the funeral march. It is the handwriting on the wall that tells them their days are numbered. The law-governed march of history clearly proclaims: "You are the next to go—your ugly system is outmoded, outdated, and out-of-step."

What especially scares the bourgeois ideologists is Marxism's proof that socio-economic systems throughout human history have made their appearance on the stage of history, and in due time, have been pushed aside to make way for the new. It frightens them that there is a law-governed process of history pushing capitalism aside, that capitalism is now on the slippery skids. They especially try to hide all this from the people. They want the people to believe that capitalism is here forever.



They also don't like what they see as the future. They do not like the new system, the new society, that has made its appearance. And that is understandable because the new system cuts off their special privileges, their source of personal wealth. As Marx said, when the socialist revolution takes place "the expropriators become expropriated," and the laws of capitalism become null and void.

The laws of socio-economic systems, and specifically the laws of capitalist development, are of great political significance today, because when we become aware of these laws, we come to understand the pivotal role of the class struggle in an exploitive society. When we are conscious of the economic laws we then inevitably conclude that the working class is the only truly revolutionary class. Then we come to see that the laws of capitalist exploitation mold and compel the working class to be the main gravediggers of capitalism. By the law-governed process the working class has become the main force for social change. Not to see the leading role of the working class is not to see the direction of history, the direction of progress and social change.

This does not in any way minimize or supplant the importance of broader mass movements. However, it is most important to see that these movements will be strengthened by the special role of the working class.

Quite understandably, the ruling class rejects all concepts of laws because all objective laws are proof that they are the force holding back social progress, that history is leaving them behind, that capitalism

is the old and socialism is replacing it with the new—including a whole new set of social and economic laws.

### *Violating the laws is costly*

Many communists and revolutionary parties have at times deviated from the path of class struggle, as Engels pointed out. In each case, they have either ignored or "revised" the basic laws of capitalist development.

The two big mistakes (as Bill Foster called them, "the big ones") were also related to ignoring and distorting the laws of capitalist development.

In the earlier years, some of our Party leaders decided that the laws Karl Marx discovered applied to capitalism in general, but that U.S. capitalism was the exception to the rule. They developed the concept that U.S. capitalism was too powerful and resourceful to be influenced by the internal contradictions based on the laws of its development. Specifically, they said that U.S. capitalism could avoid the cyclical economic crises inherent in other capitalist countries. In 1929, when the stock market came tumbling down, so did the theories of "American exceptionalism." The law of economic crises, as Marx said, "works with iron necessity towards inevitable results."

Later, Earl Browder also decided that U.S. capitalism was different. Therefore, he said, the laws of surplus value and the class struggle did not apply and could be discarded and forgotten. He theorized that the world had changed because of the anti-fascist alliance and therefore, U.S. monopoly capitalism had learned a lesson. He argued that in the



interest of world cooperation and peace, as well as its own national interests, the United States capitalists would give up some of their greedy capitalist class interests.

Every opportunist policy is always proclaimed in the name of applying Marxism-Leninism to the "new, unique" situation. Browder argued that his opportunism was a further development of the science of Marxism-Leninism within the "new realities" in the United States.

He tried to overcome the laws of capitalist development and bypass Marxism-Leninism by declaring:

It does not apply. For the first time we are meeting and solving problems for which there are no precedents in history, no formulas [or laws] from the classics which give us the answer (*The Communist*, Feb. 1944).

Hitting the bottom of the barrel, Browder finally renounced the class struggle:

Here we are, in the United States, we who are proud to consider ourselves disciples of Lenin, are, in practice, collaborating with capital, and firmly denouncing those who advocate a class war against capital in the U.S. (*Political Affairs*, Jan. 1945).

But Truman's declaration of cold war quickly punctured that illusion. As was to be expected, the law of maximum corporate profits and the class struggle prevailed.

All serious movements, including the working-

class political parties, must work within the reality of the day, taking into account the levels of mass thought patterns that are reflections of the law-governed processes.

Policies, tactics, strategic concepts, to have any real meaning and effect, cannot be subjective reactions. They must be geared to using the laws and their effects to influence and affect mass thought patterns.

### *Opportunism a dead-end road*

Opportunism, both the Left and Right varieties, is in fact a negation of the Marxist concept of law-governed processes. Opportunism is a negation of the objective laws that sustain the class struggle on center stage—where it will remain as long as capitalism exists. All opportunism is a negation of the advanced role of the working class.

It is a negation of the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism. It is a negation of workingclass partisanship to replace it with concepts of class collaboration and class partisanship.

As we know, Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma. It is a growing, developing science. However, there are objective truths which are revealed by applying the science. These truths are reflections of the laws of the real world, And they are not negotiable. They cannot be changed or molded to fit anyone's subjective ideas or concepts of reality. There are objective truths of the capitalist system based on the objective laws which are constant, stable and unalterable.

Attempting to bypass, ignore or retreat from the objective truth that the class struggle is the inner



nature, the primary essence of capitalism is, therefore, to take the path of opportunism. Opportunism, in its essence, is nothing but an attempt (in one way or another) to do away with the class struggle. It is a no-win, dead-end road.

It is in violation of the objective laws, and it is also betrayal of the working class. To attempt in any way to water down or push into the background the special role that the laws of social and economic development have assigned to the working class is to ignore reality and to move along the path of opportunism, of class betrayal. And it follows that not to see and approach workers as a single class, determined by their place in the system of production, is to be blind to the concept of the existence of classes in general.

### *The revolutionary class*

It is an objective truth that the working class is the only revolutionary class, and is the decisive force in all fields of struggle. Because of its critical position in the production process, the working class is the key element in the struggle for democracy and against monopoly oppression. As it becomes increasingly conscious of its status and role as a class—class consciousness—the working class becomes a critical force in the struggle against all bourgeois ideological currents.

Because as Marxist-Leninists we have confidence in the working class, we therefore have confidence that we can win against racism. In the United States, and in all countries where racism is an instrument of superprofits, the working class is a key force. Our

confidence in the working class is not fatalistic or romantic. It is determined by our basic understanding of the laws and processes of capitalism.

There is a clear dialectical relationship between the struggles against class exploitation and the struggles against exploitation and oppression based on and fed by racism, directed in the first place against the Afro-American community. Therefore, for us in the United States the alliance between the working class, which is itself multi-racial and multi-national, and the some fifty million racially and nationally oppressed peoples is a key ingredient in all fields of struggle—economic, political and ideological.

The developing, growing working-class consciousness is therefore a critical ingredient for plowing under all ideological currents that are designed to support every type of exploitation and oppression. Because this class consciousness is based on real class interests it tends to overcome all alien class ideological influences. Therefore, any underestimation or undermining of the critical role assigned to the working class is not only opportunistic, but weakens every area of struggle. These are objective truths. They are true not only for ceremonial purposes, for speeches, articles or resolutions. They are the solid, indestructible Marxist-Leninist framework into which all questions, tactics, policies and strategic concepts must be placed and dealt with.

### *The revolutionary outlook*

There are some who opportunistically retreat from these objective truths by eliminating the word Leninism; others by discarding both Marxism and



Leninism. But there are also some who discard these basic truths in the name of Marxism-Leninism, class struggle and the working class.

And this brings us back to the concept and laws of appearance and essence. For instance, one can appear to uphold the laws, but in essence betray them or ignore them. Maoism for years repeated high-sounding phrases and clichés about the class struggle and the working class, while in practice it was following the most consistently non-working class, petty bourgeois, nationalistic, class collaborationist policies, both internally and in foreign affairs.

In the world arena generally opportunism leads to concepts of the so-called "two superpowers," a big lie campaign which was led by Maoism. Placing the blame for the danger of war or nuclear disaster equally on the "two superpowers" is a coverup for imperialism and a slanderous big lie about the Soviet Union.

It is a coverup of the basic law of the inherent drive for maximum corporate profits that leads to policies of imperialist aggression and war. It is a vicious slander against the opposite, opposing set of inherent laws that motivate the socialist system toward policies of peace, support for movements of national liberation and social progress.

There are no non-Marxist-Leninist short cuts to victory. Opportunism may appear as if it is realistic, as if it corresponds to reality. But in fact, it denies and gives up the class struggle and with it reality itself.

Marxism-Leninism is the philosophy and world outlook of the working class because it is a philoso-

phy of social progress. Therefore, of necessity it is integrated with the force that is the main propellant of social progress—the working class. The working class is the only sector of society that can—in fact is compelled—to ignite, organize and carry out the social revolution and the transition to socialism which will end exploitation forever.

The process of revolutionary change is inevitable and never-ending. But the speed of the process is determined by the people, by the working class, by their consciousness and their will to act. The actions of the people are determined by how well they understand what the laws of the processes are all about.

How well they understand is determined by what help they can get, what leadership is available. Of course this brings us back to the working class science of Marxism-Leninism. And, Marxism-Leninism, in turn, brings us to the fact that the Communist Party has become a historic necessity, an indispensable factor in this whole process.



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## Karl Marx in our time

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An international conference on the theme  
 "Karl Marx in Our Time—the Struggle for  
 Peace and Social Progress," Berlin,  
 German Democratic Republic, April 12, 1983.

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It is a pleasure and an honor to be here on this proud occasion. I bring you the warm fraternal greetings of the Communist Party, U.S.A., and I want to express the deep appreciation of the Central Committee of our Party for your invitation to participate in this unique international gathering celebrating the centenary of Karl Marx. We want to thank the Socialist Unity Party and the people of the GDR for your splendid initiative, for your warm welcome and hospitality and for making our stay in your great socialist country both enjoyable and productive.



The true value of any science is constantly weighed and tested as to whether it is a living, growing, expanding, deepening body of thought. Does it continue to be a true reflection and expression of the ever-changing essence of reality? In the deepest sense, the revolutionary science to which Karl Marx gave birth, that Frederick Engels enlarged and Vladimir I. Lenin so creatively extended and developed, meets the most critical test of a science for our lives and times.

Because the class struggle is the eye of the hurricane created by class-divided society, it is no surprise, therefore, that the struggle between the two main classes even determines how the centenary year of Karl Marx is being observed.

As is to be expected, one class is commemorating, and the other is commiserating about, the life and work of Karl Marx, expressing the viewpoints of their opposite class interests. One class sees Marx as its great liberator, who gave it the weapons for victorious class struggle.

The other sees him as public enemy number one. As the date of the Marx centenary anniversary approached, monopoly mouthpieces in the United States began pouring out scathing scandal stories about Karl Marx. Big business and government spokesmen began wailing and flailing that the "spectre" of Marx still stalks the capitalist world.

Speaking for U.S. monopoly capital, President Ronald Reagan is leading the pack of ideological hyenas. He took to the stump and the pulpit to denounce, to slander, to lie and villify, (most of all,

to try to bury) the spectre that is more than ever haunting the corporate board rooms, the executive suites on Wall Street, the editorial offices of the newspapers, the newsrooms of radio and TV.

We are marking the centenary of Marx's passing, but it seems that U.S. monopoly capital is lamenting the *living* Marx, who they hate and fear because he is more alive today than 100 years ago. Reagan—with no earthly, reasonable arguments to defend his insane doomsday policies, and devoid of any intelligent or even logical-sounding charges against Marxism-Leninism and real socialism—has taken the road of last resort. It is the road of all political and ideological scoundrels and charlatans. It is "the big lie" hoax to hoodwink people on emotional and religious levels. Reagan has declared an all-out, hell-and-brimstone holy war against Marxism-Leninism and existing socialism.

Hypocritically and demagogically, Reagan has evangelically proclaimed that Marxism-Leninism is the root of all "sin and evil in the world." That the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are the "focus of evil in the modern world;" that they are "evil empires." Reagan has embarked on an anti-communist crusade with the fanaticism of an inquisition. With libelous litanies couched in cold war overtones, Reagan is attempting to cover up his policies of all-out imperialist aggression, nuclear confrontation and nuclear superiority. He is criminally gambling with the lives of the whole human family and the world—all in the name of God. Standing history on its head, truth upside down,



whistling in the capitalist graveyard, Reagan has pronounced that "communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history."

Under the spell of this conjured up anti-communist obsession, Reagan rants that the capitalist world can meet the present challenge "only if it has as much faith in God as the Communists have faith in man."

If Karl Marx were here with us today he would have given an appreciative chuckle and replied, "Yes, nothing that is human is alien to me." Placing the *real* challenge, Marx would have said, "Yes, I have faith in human beings. And I have a special faith and confidence in the working class, the truly revolutionary class that will bring about a truly humane society."

The Reagans may rant and rave. While Wall Street will keep denying it, and monopoly capital will keep covering it up, the stubborn reality is that our U.S. capitalist society is undeviatingly developing along the lines foreseen by Marx. This is so because U.S. capitalism is the product of the very law-governed processes uncovered by Marx. As ironic as it may seem, Wall Street and its corporate galaxies (and now Ronald Reagan) provide the most convincing testimony to the perceptive genius of Karl Marx in focusing his keen insight on the class struggle. For Karl Marx, in the overall scheme of things, the class struggle is the axis around which all other processes in society revolve.

The class struggle in the socio-economic sphere can be likened to the critical mass in nature which

influences everything and is, in turn, influenced by everything. What nuclear fields of force are to nature, the class struggle is to class-divided human societies. Were they alive today, Marx, Engels and Lenin would not be the least surprised about U.S. developments. They would see the deterioration and the crises as the results of the inevitable by-products of the law-governed processes they probed and clarified.

### *The U.S. economy*

The U.S. economy is suffering from a mixture of continually recurring, short-range cyclical crises imposed on a long-range chronic decline and contraction of the overall structural framework. It is suffering from a declining, stagnating industrial complex and a fast-decaying urban infrastructure. Translated into human suffering, it means our country is still in the gridlock grip of an economic emergency.

While Reagan keeps repeating that our economy is "on the mend," that we are "on the road to recovery," the fact is the U.S. economy is *not* on the road to any solid, stable upturn. In fact, for the American people it is another continuing great depression. As hard-won economic cushions like unemployment, welfare and social security checks run out, millions are being thrown into the streets, on souplines and in shelters for the homeless and hungry.

Thirty million of our people are partially or totally jobless.

Four million Americans have literally taken to the road in a fruitless search for work.



Souplines and shelters are forced to turn away more hungry and homeless people than they can care for.

Whole towns and sections of cities have become economic disaster areas, while industrial plants continue to shut down and move out. Basic smokestack industries are sick and literally dying.

Joblessness is causing people to lose their homes, their cars, their farms, their personal possessions and increasingly their sanity and their lives.

Corporate poisoning of the environment, of homes, rivers and lakes is adding frightening hardships and serious health hazards to the economic burdens.

One out of every five children goes to sleep hungry. Malnutrition and infant mortality are on the rise. In some economically depressed cities, the infant mortality rate is on the same level as Honduras, one of the poorest countries in the world. Basic services such as education, health and child care have been cut to the bone. Programs such as social security are being crippled, while expenditures for nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction are rising by two trillion every five years.

These anti-human developments are fully in keeping with the capitalist pattern so brilliantly exposed and laid out by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

### ***State monopoly capitalism***

In keeping with Lenin's far-reaching projections of state monopoly capitalism, the U.S. government increasingly becomes the crushing arm of big busi-

ness. The state more and more directly controls and dominates society in every area of life in their own selfish interests, in their mad drive for maximum corporate profits. Here again the United States is a showcase example of how the state becomes directly involved in the attempt to overcome the special effects of the general crisis of world capitalism which Lenin so clearly explained.

The ever-deepening general economic, political, social and moral crisis we are going through is not momentary. It is a chronic condition which is the direct result of the long-range decaying structural crisis of capitalism.

The decline and contraction of capitalism is the product of an inborn, fixed and law-governed inevitable process.

U.S. developments have followed the classical model Karl Marx projected: high unemployment, widespread poverty, emergence and rise of huge industrial monopolies, the financial galaxies and conglomerates that now dominate, exploit and control every area of life in the United States.

U.S. capitalism is suffering from the processes that Lenin so aptly called the law of uneven development of capitalism.

### ***The rising class***

Karl Marx would also not have been surprised at the growing, militant movements and struggles of the working class and the people of the United States. The sentiment is overwhelmingly against the Reagan policy of confrontation. The support to



freeze all nuclear activities is now over 80 percent.

The working-class and trade union movement are now in a militant, fighting mood and in struggle against the Reagan economic policies.

Karl Marx described the class struggle as "working with iron necessity towards inevitable results." In laying bare this "iron necessity" Marx also concluded that therefore, there is no way anyone (that is, anyone who remains faithful to the truth) can evade, bypass or ignore this critical law of objective reality.

The futile attempts to revise Marxist-Leninist theories have not changed the law-governed processes that give rise to and sustain the reality of class struggle.

The ruthless rate of exploitation by U.S. monopoly capital guarantees that we in the United States can never forget the class struggle.

Marx correctly concluded that if the class struggle is the axis, then the working class is the dynamo, the moving force, the pivotal power bloc to which all movements and struggles must relate. This is true because the working class is the only class molded and steeled in struggle; it is the direct victim of exploitation and oppression. Therefore it is, of necessity, the class which will lead all society in the revolutionary transition to freedom from exploitation and oppression.

This is the foundation for the revolutionary, working class essence of Marxism-Leninism.

### *Class partisanship*

This is the objective framework for the ingrained, unyielding, fierce, fighting working-class partisanship of Karl Marx. It is a partisanship based on the objective, law-governed reality of capitalism.

The theory and concept of the class struggle and the working-class component is as essential today as it was in Marx's time. Perhaps even more so as capitalism decays, the working class expands and the struggle grows even sharper and more intense.

The class partisanship of Karl Marx and of Marxism-Leninism is not a subjective matter. It is a reflection of objective truth. Therefore it is not partisanship toward a class in the abstract.

It is a partisanship toward the law-governed direction of history in which the working class has a special task assigned to it by history itself.

It is a partisan attitude about the revolutionary role of the working class.

It is a partisan attitude that emerges from the Leninist concept that there can be no impartial social science in a society based on class struggle.

It is a partisanship that is not limited or restricted within the boundaries of nations.

It is a partisanship of proletarian internationalism.

It is a partisanship that includes the total spectrum of working-class activities and interests.

It is the partisanship of an advocate of working-class ideology, of socialism.

It is a partisanship in all economic struggles and movements in the interest of working people. It is a



partisanship that extends from strikes and picket lines to working-class power.

It is a partisanship in defense and promotion of working-class culture.

It is a partisanship that is inescapable and all-encompassing, if one is to be on the winning side of history, of the real world revolutionary process.

In today's world, to follow in the path of Marx, Engels and Lenin, a true working-class partisanship must include a partisan attitude toward real, existing socialism.

The starting point for such a partisan attitude—which corresponds to the truth—is to reject all the slanders, the big lie, about socialism. It means to deal with problems and weaknesses in the context of the direction of history and the place of socialism in it.

Working-class partisanship and just simple truth rejects all concepts of the so-called "two superpowers."

On the face of it, this slander is a rejection and betrayal of working-class partisanship. To in any way give the impression that the war danger, the threat of a nuclear holocaust, emanates equally from the "two superpowers" is to deal in total falsehoods, to feed the big lie.

Participating in or not challenging this vicious big lie about the Soviet Union is a coverup for U.S. imperialism.

It serves as a coverup of the basic imperialist law of maximum corporate profits that leads to policies of imperialist aggression and war.

The "two superpowers" big lie is a distortion of

the inherent laws of socialism that motivate the socialist system toward policies of peace and support for all movements of national liberation and social progress. To use the "two superpowers" label, in form or content, is even more dangerous today because of the new level of the Reagan big lie propaganda campaign.

Never before in history has a U.S. administration been so saturated with top officials, spokesmen, speech writers and think-tanks who are not in any way restricted or even bothered by respect for truth, ethics, integrity, responsibility, principles, morality or simple scruples about right and wrong.

To view the Soviet Union as in any way to blame for the war danger and the nuclear arms race is *objectively* to cover up for the crimes and brutality of U.S. imperialism. And, it is also a cover up for Reagan's so-called "interim peace proposal" hoax.

### *The missile fraud*

The zero option and interim proposal is the biggest fraud in all of history. They are based on the absurdity that the *only* nuclear missiles in all of Europe today are *Soviet* missiles. And that therefore the United States would then agree to deploy only an equal number of new Pershing and cruise missiles to equal the Soviet missiles.

*If* there were only Soviet missiles in all of Europe, this would sound like a reasonable proposal.

But the U.S. proposal *totally ignores* the 162 U.S.-built missiles now in place in France and England, the hundreds of nuclear-loaded war planes stationed



in Europe, the nuclear-loaded submarines and ships—all within target range of the Soviet Union.

In all areas, but especially in the area of world peace and disarmament, the Reagan-Pentagon-CIA-military industrial complex has concocted a completely fabricated fantasy-world scenario to coincide with their policies—policies that threaten to blow up the world and incinerate all of humanity!

This nuclear madness is now being extended, with both planning and implementation, to the development of new weapons such as laser beams and proton particle streams, to the militarization of outer space.

And now, the Hollywood Cowboy's script writers have recently conjured up a poisonous witches brew, a scenario of lies that could literally explode in a nuclear cloud.

It is a vicious, totally unscrupulous, criminal attempt to fool the peoples of the world and the United States, to lull the worldwide movements for peace including the U.S. freeze movement (which is supported by the great majority of our people) into believing that the placement of 572 Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe is a move toward disarmament—a negotiating chip!

The world must understand that *at this moment the Reagan Administration has absolutely no intention of negotiating a disarmament treaty with the Soviet Union.*

A policy of nuclear weapons buildup for nuclear superiority, the budgeting of trillions of dollars for nuclear weapons that now extend even to the nuclear arming of outer space is the very opposite of

negotiating to reduce nuclear arms and maintaining the nuclear balance of forces.

The Reagan Administration is out to create the *image of negotiating* as a cover for the total and all-out development of weapons of nuclear superiority.

Thus, to support in any way, directly or even indirectly, by nuance, insinuation or by omission, the "two superpowers" big lie is playing recklessly and criminally with the survival of our precious world and all of humanity. It is playing the war-game of U.S. monopoly capital.

For anyone to say that they relate to and treat all nations equally, without any reference to the imperialist nature of the major capitalist countries, is to *objectively* play right into their hands.

### ***Dangerous illusions***

The governments and peoples of the world must not deal with the Reagan Administration as if it is composed of honest, responsible people committed to peace and disarmament. To do so is a dangerous, costly illusion.

The daily concrete acts of imperialist aggression and nuclear confrontation stretch from Nicaragua, Cuba and El Salvador to South Africa, the Mideast, across Asia to the Pacific.

For our work in the United States, it is of great significance that Marx, Engels and Lenin, who shouldered the problems of the working class and the peoples of the world, gave so much time and attention to the struggles of the racially and nationally oppressed peoples in general and to the Afro-American people in particular.



Marx's wise counsel that "labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin, where in the black it is branded," has the power of a law for the class struggle, for the struggle against racism and the relationship between them.

Because the working class is the only truly revolutionary class, it is the key component in all fields of struggle. Increasingly, it is becoming the decisive force in the struggle for democracy.

The growing and maturing class consciousness of the working class becomes a critical factor in the struggles for all democratic rights and against all bourgeois ideological currents, including racism and chauvinism.

Karl Marx is right on target today because the inner laws of socio-economic processes he revealed are as operative today as they were one hundred years ago.

For us in the belly of the beast, the class struggle, the monopoly drive for maximum profits, the recurring economic crises, the deepening general crisis, the inevitable objective processes that move history toward socialism and national liberation are law-propelled processes. They are just as valid today as they were in the days of Karl Marx.

It is quite understandable that the ruling-class ideologues reject all concepts of law-governed processes. Because for capitalism they are the objective rails leading in only one direction, to the garbage dumps of history.

It is a little more difficult, however, to understand why individuals, movements and organizations which

profess to oppose capitalism also persist in ignoring this basic law-governed reality, or opportunistically cover it up. Each time this happens, it is a rejection of the objective laws Marx first revealed.

### *Opportunism*

Near the end of the Second World War, our Party fought a painful bout with opportunism that was directed at the basic concepts of Marxism-Leninism.

Browderism did not openly reject the laws of capitalism which Marx discovered. Browder said only that they did *not apply* to U.S. capitalism.

He theorized that the United States and the world had so changed that one could actually convince U.S. monopoly capital to voluntarily give up some of its stolen wealth in the interests of the nation and the people.

Browder concluded that Marxism-Leninism "does not apply," that "there are no precedents in history . . . [or in the Marxist] classics which give us the answers." (*The Communist*, February 1944).

Browder claimed:

Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in the new world. We must be ready to sacrifice our prejudices, our ideologies and our special interests. Class divisions or political groupings have no significance now" (*ibid.*, January, 1944).

In other words, the class struggle, Marxism-Leninism, class partisanship and the Communist



Party had become, in Browder's fantasy world, obsolete.

Browder's idea of an "exceptional ruling class and capitalism," was expressed in his statement that "the decisive sections of American capitalists have abandoned the old policy of hard-boiled reaction and imperialism" (*Political Affairs*, February 1945).

And, finally, as is always the case with opportunism, Browder reached the bottom of the barrel when he came up with:

Here we are in the United States, we who are proud to consider ourselves disciples of Lenin, are in practice collaborating with capital and firmly denouncing those who advocate a class war against capital in the United States. (*Political Affairs*, Jan. 1945)

The cold war dramatically punctured *that* opportunistic illusion. As is to be expected, the ideas of Marx prevailed—the laws of maximum corporate profits, of the class struggle, of imperialism.

### ***Marxism-Leninism will triumph***

Frederick Engels said that opportunistic deviations from the path of the class struggle are usually accompanied by a rejection or revision of the objective laws of capitalist development. Opportunism is a negation of the Marxist concept of law-governed processes, replacing it with *subjectively* motivated actions and policies.

This is a convenient cover because a Marxist-Leninist, basing oneself on the science, must keep

abreast of what is new and must reflect on and respond to all new questions. But the science of Marxism-Leninism makes it possible not only to see what is new. It is also a guide that tells us *how* to look at what is new. Here opportunism and Marxism-Leninism part company. Capitalism gives rise to new phenomena. But the new never replaces the basic essence of classes, class exploitation and the class struggle. These are constants within capitalism.

As long as there is capitalism, the new situations will never be able to develop outside of the *class* reality. The new will not be able to exist alone or to ignore the system of class exploitation and the irreconcilable class antagonisms. The new will always develop within the general arena of the class struggle. In all situations, opportunism maneuvers to take the new outside of this class framework.

Opportunism is a negation of working-class partisanship by replacing it with concepts of class collaboration and class partnership. Opportunism is a negation of the objective laws that sustain the class struggle on center stage and the special advanced role assigned to the working class.

Marxism-Leninism is a growing, developing science. Objective truths are revealed by applying this science. These truths are reflections of the laws of motion of the real world. They are not negotiable. They cannot be changed or molded to fit anyone's subjective concepts of reality. Attempting to bypass, ignore or retreat from the objective truth that the class struggle is the very inner nature, the primary



inner-essence of capitalism, is to take the path of opportunism. It is a no-win, dead-end road.

Opportunism always attaches itself to the correct idea that life constantly produces new phenomena. The science of Marxism-Leninism itself constantly grows and develops. Therefore, opportunists say that all they are doing is reflecting on the new developments.

In its basic essence, opportunism is an accommodation to the pressures of the class enemy. Furthermore, the accommodation is always at the expense of the working class.

At different stages of history and in different countries, opportunism uses different words and deeds. However, capitulation in any language is still capitulation. Opportunism speaks with the same political and ideological tongue. Opportunism has its own inner-laws of development. Each defense of an old opportunistic concession becomes a further step on the path toward the swamp of opportunism.

The greatest tribute to Marx is that we are not focusing our attention on past problems, on the Marx of one hundred years ago, but on the science he gave life to as applied to the problems of today. We are focusing on the direction in which history is moving, as Marx predicted it.

The world revolutionary process, with the working class as the main dynamo, has become the main stream of history.

Thus, we can say with full confidence and optimism, as Comrade Lenin did before the capitalist-world-shattering October Revolution:

Each of the great periods of world history since the appearance of Marxism has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism . . . in the period of history that is now opening" (Lenin 18:585).



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Gus Hall has been the General Secretary of the Communist Party since his election to that post in 1959, at the 17th Convention of the CPUSA. An internationally recognized authority on Marxism-Leninism, he is the author of *Imperialism Today*, *The Energy Rip-Off*, *The Crisis of U.S. Capitalism*, *Basics for Peace Democracy and Socialism*, and scores of booklets and articles which have been widely distributed and translated into many languages.

Born on Minnesota's Iron Range, he joined the Communist Party in 1927 and became an organizer for the Young Communist League. He has been a timber worker and steel worker. He was a founding organizer of the United Steel Workers of America, AFL-CIO, and was a leader of the important "Little Steel" strike in Ohio in 1937. He resigned from the union to become a Communist Party organizer in Ohio.

Gus Hall served in the Navy, in the Pacific, during World War II. During the McCarthyite repression, he served an 8-year term in Leavenworth under the Smith Act charge of "thinking dangerous thoughts".

In 1972, 1976 and 1980, Hall was the Presidential candidate of the Communist Party. He is nationally



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