

“The Communist Manifesto” By Karl Max And Friedrich Engels

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Capitalism, Class Conflict, and The Communist Manifesto

In 1848, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published “The Communist Manifesto,” in “which they introduced the concept of socialism as a natural result of conflicts inherent in the capitalist system.” The Communist Manifesto argues that behind the historical development there is a motivating force of class struggles or exploitation of one class by the other. The class relationships are distinct by the production means of an era. A revolution arises, and a results in the emergence of a new class of the ruling class which is derived from large economic forces. It further writes that this development of class is inevitable, and capitalism is inherently unstable. To eliminate the social class differences, a revolution will need to be done through changes and reforms in the government. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the world changed incredibly, thus changing the Communist Manifesto according to their requirement. They forget the real idea behind the manifesto and transform it and implement it according to their favor and wish.

The mid-18th century was a time of great change in Europe. The Industrial Revolution changed the skilled craftsman into exploited labor. In that time Max and Engels write their Manifesto to bring social reforms. In the manifesto, they stated, “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.”^[1]

People predicted that capitalism would fail, the united labor forces would overthrow the oppressive businesses and landowners, and the government would collapse. Following the defeat of capitalism by the working class, a new classless society would emerge based on the concept of “from each according to its abilities to each according to his needs.” Against capitalism, Marx and Engels introduce the theory of socialism, “a political and economic theory of social organization in which the means of distribution, production and exchanged should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole.” The profit should be for all people who own it and as well for the people who are working there. They gave this idea, and they also fought for the rights of people and against capitalism.

Workers, Historical Change, and the Revolutionary Argument of Marx and Engels

These two men, Marx and Engels, were the first ones to introduce to the working class that their demands are an important outcome of the present economic system. They show that it was not the well-meaning efforts of noble-minded people but the class struggle of the organized working class or the public that brought humanity from the evils that now subjugate it. They were the first to explain to the people that socialism was not the discovery of the idealists, but it was the aim of the development of productive forces in modern communities. They further stated that every class struggle is a political struggle from the past to until now the problem of succession of the rule and winner of particular social classes over others was a major issue."^[2]

The manifesto inspired the communist revolution and also the anarchists, socialists and other anti-capitalists ideas. They brought a new reform in the society before then that 10% of people owned the property and the rest 90% sold their labor to them. The two prominent men want to change society and bring reforms. They want to create a community where the industry, land, wealth and labor would be shared between all the people in the society. All the people will have their basic rights to education, choice, and practice, and the class structure will be eliminated from society.

But now, when Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels see what people have done to their Communist Manifesto, they are deeply shocked by the transformation. Because it has not remained the same as it was in the starting. People have transformed it according to their interests. "Granted that the 19th century was the century of socialism, liberalism, and democracy, this does not mean that the 20th century must also be the century of socialism, liberalism, and democracy. Political doctrines pass; nations remain. We are free to believe that this is the century of authority, a century tending to the right, a Fascist century. If the 19th century was the century of the individual, we are free to believe that this is the 'collective' century and, therefore, the century of the State."^[3] Mussolini, in his book, clearly described the issues and problems faced in the 20th century by the people. He writes it is the century of state despite being socialist and liberalist, the higher authorities are misusing their power. They have forgotten the main idea behind the concept of Marx and Engels.

Russia, China, and the Transformation of Communist Ideology

Russian and China are the two biggest powers practicing Communism, and they both have totally changed the real idea behind the communist manifesto of Marx. Stalin repaired and made some fundamental changes in the political theory of Marxism with some adjustments by proclaiming that it would overcome the economic obstacles and develop a socialist society. He simply made it according to his comfort and interest and declared it as the correct interpretation of Marx's theory. "Stalin's

transformation of the aims and practices of Communism was directly responsible for the fundamental changes in the realm of Communist thinking, not only with respect to what thought but with respect to the basic function of doctrine in the Communist system.”^[4]

Now, the people have changed the whole idea behind the Communist Manifesto. It was about freedom, it was about equality, it was about the equal distribution of wealth, and it was about the economic system governed by the community. But as time changed the theories change with it, Stalin put his own idea and thought it the manifesto. He changed the minds of his people, and they believed in him blindly. “Pressed by the necessity to transform their country into a modern state, the Communist leaders used every opportunity to force the population to adopt the attitudes and motivation necessary to effect such transformation. Education from nursery school to university provided special opportunities to mold attitudes.”^[5] Everybody was forced in the Stalin era to promote the idea of Stalin’s Revolution.

The theories change with time according to the needs and interests and sometimes circumstances of the leaders and countries. Today Marx and Engels would be very shocked by observing the extensive transformation in their Communist Manifesto. They drafted it to provide people with freedom and their rights and guide them, but today, leaders are using it how to oppress the public. The wealth is not equally distributed, and it is concentrated among a few people and the stated. As observed in China and Russia, the people don’t have their basic right to freedom of speech and choice. They follow the strict rules of their country and leaders.

References

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