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English 101

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Karl Marx and Communism

Karl Marx, a philosopher in the mid 1800s, is known for his theories of socialism. According to Marx, an ideal economic system would involve exchanges of equal value for equal value, where value is determined simply by the amount of work put into whatever is being produced. He says Capitalism interrupts this ideal because it involves profit. People are driven to work harder and be better at what they do for profit. This profit allows for ownership of property which in turn is a mark of power. Power, property, and wealth create a division of labor and a separation of classes. On the other hand, Communism is built on the statement, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Marx is a misunderstood visionary philosopher.

In a communistic society, the State has many responsibilities toward the people. First of all the government is the servants of the people, as in a capital society. The State holds all property and trust of the people and the workers. Since the State holds all property, then the State in turn is responsible to provide the means for production. The communist state is governing on behalf of the proletariat (the common people). The State also provides diversity of life

experiences and allows people to see their potential. Also in a communist society, people are freed from the capitalist labor system. Marx believed labor was bad, he said it alienated people from the world.

A society that does not use wealth as power can balance the independence of individuals who have great wealth against the independence of those people who are poor. The rich cannot use their wealth as capital, to earn profits. A rich person cannot use his wealth to own property or lend for interest that would be wrong because it is capitalism. Marx believed the rich should be free to use their wealth otherwise, and should use it in service to the poor. Marx believed people in this society would take pleasure in serving each other and doing things to help each other. If one person is rich and the other is poor then the richer has more opportunity to serve.

There are possible abuses in this type of situation. Abuses can be caused by the wealthy, examples are those found in capitalist societies, where wealth is used to acquire the means of production and other necessary services. All people that do not own their own means of production are forced to sell their wage labor, and to pay rents for other needs. The rich have the means of production and they use this means to make people do what they want. Marx's remedy is the expectation in his description of history (yet in the future) that all "capital",

or all property and means of production will transfer to the state in an evolutionary, not revolutionary, manner. Thus, man is freed from the slavery of capitalism.

Communism is an ideal economic program that our world is not ready to live by, our world is far too selfish and many are too lazy, communism has failed every time simply because of these reasons. Communism also goes against human nature. Karl Marx was not a bad person for his philosophy about an ideal economic system. Marx is a misunderstood visionary philosopher. Communism is not a terrible thing to be avoided like the plague. He has great ideas that if followed would end many problems our society faces. His philosophies are possible if people treated others with respect and equality, not selfish, and are hard workers. Communist supporters believe Marx's ideas to be great and view him as a prophet unfortunately his visions of the perfect society would only work in a perfect, ideal world.

