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SPECIAL ISSUE: *The Communist Manifesto*

Papers from *NST* conference, New York, August 1998

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The conference, held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto,* was sponsored by the journals *Nature, Society, and Thought; Marxistische Blätter; Marxismo Oggi;* and *Topos*. This issue of the journal includes all but one of the papers for which a written text was provided by those who presented papers at the conference. The omitted paper, "Flora Tristan: A Predecessor of Marx and Engels," by Gisela Blomberg, will be published vol. 11, no. 1.

The Socialist Goal of the German Communist Party

Robert Steigerwald

The German Communist Party has produced a fundamental document concerning the socialist aim of the Party. The Communist Party of Portugal has done so also, and Gus Hall has written a contribution to this matter. But is it not well known that at present conditions do not exist to fight for socialism? Are there not more important pressing problems for our discussions and efforts? Did not Marx write that we do not have to work out specific recipes for the future socialism?

The current debate about socialism is justified, as I see it, for several reasons.

First: we should not forget that behind apparently small and superficial questions are hidden fundamental issues and problems. Speaking about unemployment, for example, is superficial without speaking about capitalism!

Second: For a long time, obviously, we must continue to defend the results of past struggles of the working-class movement against the attacks of a capitalism that has become more brutal since the defeat of the European socialist countries. At the same time, we must, when possible, fight for better standards of living and working conditions for working people. These efforts entail the risk of leaving our revolutionary and socialist orientation and becoming reformists. To avoid this danger, we must clarify our socialist aim and understand that it is impossible to reach it only by means of reforms. In this context, the struggle for reforms continues to have great importance.

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Third: Our opponents throw masses of all kinds of dirt against the reality and idea of socialism. Therefore we are obliged to clean this reality and idea. We have to show that our enemies do not throw this dirt in order to fight for a better socialism, for a socialism free from its former mistakes and failures. Their goal is to obliterate the idea of socialism and to create the impression that no alternative to capitalism exists, that capitalism is the end of human history.

Fourth: Since Marx's dictum that we need not work out the recipes for a future socialism we have had seventy years of socialism in Europe with significant experiences. We are obliged to draw conclusions from those positive and negative experiences.

In Germany today twelve-year-old children are afraid of being unable to get a job after leaving school. Capitalism obviously can provide no future for the young generation. This system nevertheless is now ruling over the largest part of the world. Under its rule, nearly fifty million people die annually from avoidable hunger and epidemics. Among them are nearly fifteen million children less than fifteen years old. Fifty million victims of capitalism in each year are as much as in the entire five years of World War II! This yearly death rate is the living rate of capitalism! Those who debate the problems of so-called Stalinism but are silent when confronted with this living rate of capitalism are hypocrites! We must remind all those who defend the so-called free-market economic system of this hypocrisy: look into the real face of that society!

The imperative to overpower this system lies clearly before us. It would be senseless to draw such a conclusion, however, without signs that it could be possible to do so. These signs show us also some real fundamentals of the future socialist society. And most important: these signs are emerging from the laws of capitalist development themselves.

Marx and Engels identified some of these signs and laws in the *Communist Manifesto* and in *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*. I shall review three of these points and then make a new one suggested by present developments.

The first fundamental law of capitalist development is that the larger private owners of the productive forces expropriate the smaller ones; at the beginning of this process, this takes place in an extremely painful manner–so-called primitive accumulation. Without small private ownership, however, capitalism cannot exist. The foundation of capitalism is thus endangered by the very nature of capitalism itself. Marx and Engels drew the conclusion that it is necessary to impose on the capitalists themselves the judgment that capitalism imposes on the masses of the people: capitalist property must be brought under the ownership of the people, of the society as a whole.

The second law of capitalist development dictates that private ownership generates serious crises. Each capitalist enterprise is working only for its interests, without knowledge of whether the products of the enterprise will be successful on the market. Conflicts are the inevitable consequence. On the other hand, the production in each enterprise is organized in the most rational and planned manner. The goal is to avoid the waste of labor power, working time, and other resources. Planned production in the individual factory and unplanned production in the capitalist economy as a whole–that is a basic contradiction in the capitalist system in itself.

That basic problem can be solved if the productive forces belong to the whole society. Then planned production can be organized throughout the entire productive system and not only in isolated mills or factories. Today we are in an entirely different situation as far as planning is concerned than was the case in the former socialist societies. Modern electronic media make it possible to plan in a flexible manner. Only the most important areas of production and the economy (such as energy production, some aspects of traffic, etc.) that concern the life of the whole society must be planned by central organs. Not everything should be subjected to central planning, because that will create a terrible bureaucracy and chain rather than liberate creative energies.

Third, the bigger the enterprise, the more the workers are working together. No one can say, “I alone produced that

product." All the workers together have produced it. Production is collective, but appropriation is private. The private owners, the capitalists, appropriate whatever the workers produce beyond what they earn as their wages. The mass of goods in the market is therefore greater than the purchasing power of the masses. This contradiction is another reason for economic crises. The only solution is to change the system so that both production and appropriation of the products of production are social, collective processes.

In our time, an additional and very important reason exists for overcoming the capitalist system. Such mighty scientific and material productive forces have been developed that the human race can be destroyed if the uncontrolled use of these forces is driven by the quest for profit. But democratic and social control of and responsibility for such forces are not possible on the basis of private ownership.

The overcoming of capitalism is not only necessary but also objectively possible. We recognize the main outlines of the society of the future–its name is socialism. But it is not sufficient to recognize the objective conditions for overcoming capitalism. Subjective conditions are also needed: human forces that are willing and able to fight for socialism.

In discussing those questions it is also important to think about the positive and negative experiences of seven decades of socialism in Europe. In the midst of a tremendous process of brainwashing against socialism, we must emphasize what seven decades of socialism demonstrated:

(1) It is possible to build a society without capitalists, without the rule of the profit principle, without unemployment, and without classes that exist by exploitation of a domestic working class or of foreign countries and peoples.

(2) These decades brought enormous achievements in such areas as education, women's rights, and social security, especially considering the extremely unfavorable starting conditions (above all in Russia). For example, in the German Democratic Republic the process of improving the status of women reached a very high level, I think higher than in most other countries of the world.

(3) Socialism provided a very stable base for the worldwide anti-imperialist battle, for international solidarity, for the struggle for peace.

(4) The enormous efforts in the Soviet Union to build a mighty industrialized socialist system resulted in breaking the neck of Nazi Germany, an event of unforgettable significance for the world.

(5) During the years of the two German states, the German Democratic Republic was sitting as a hidden partner at the collective-bargaining table in all labor negotiations in West Germany. Now, with this partner missing, capitalism has become more rapacious and brutal than ever.

So the destruction of real socialism[1] in Europe was a defeat for the entire Left, not only for Communists. Therefore those who deny this defeat or who are celebrating it cannot claim to belong to the Left. But why did real socialism in Europe lose the battle? Communists have been engaged in much serious and painful discussion of this question.

Some of us attribute the defeat to the very difficult starting conditions for socialism in Europe. Others say it was the result of the treachery of the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze-Yakovlev group. Indeed, both reasons are valid. But such attempts of explanation are too superficial. If treachery could be so successful, for instance, we must explore the reasons for the conditions under which it could succeed. I believe these reasons existed before the treachery could take place. And the very difficult starting conditions did not prevent the Soviet Union from transforming itself into a powerful country that made huge steps in a short time, like no other system in the history of the modern world. The problems during World War II, furthermore, were no less difficult, and they too were solved.

Naturally it would be ridiculous to ignore the efforts of the antisocialist forces. Yet I see the main reasons for socialist failures in the last two or three decades not in the objective problems but in the subjective area, especially in the character of the Communist Party. That we have to look at the Party as the main reason follows from the fact that it was primarily responsible for all aspects of social life in the socialist countries. It is not

permissible to credit the Party for all the achievements of the revolution and to assign responsibility for all the bad things to other forces. All problems outside of the Party, such as deformed socialist democracy, were caused by the character of the Party itself.

Some Communists make the Twentieth Congress of the Party, and especially the Khrushchev group, wholly responsible. The consequence of this view is to exclude the period before this Party congress and to wipe out the responsibility of the Stalin leadership. But had the Party during the last years under Stalin's leadership been a party of Lenin's type, a party of the new type, how could it have lost this character in the few years between 1953 and 1956?

I repeat: This Party organized mighty victories. Think about revolution and counterrevolution, about the building of a mighty socialist country, about the victory over fascism. The highly centralized character of the leadership of this Party during such difficult periods was a necessary condition for these victories. But it was also a condition for the increasing weakening of the democratic element of democratic centralism, for the alienation of the leading group from the base, and finally the alienation of the Party from the people. Some consequences were:

(1) In loosening the link between the democratic and the central elements of democratic centralism, important signs and information concerning real social problems were lost, and therefore important problems could not be identified and solved.

(2) In Party life, the method of command substituted for discussion of the real problems.

(3) When the Party masses lose the possibility of controlling the leadership, the door was opened for elements that only cared for privileges and careers and not for socialism and the interests of the people. So an apparatus grew up that substituted itself for the Party, resulting finally in the disgraceful downfall of this type of party. This discussion is important not for the future alone, because it also has consequences for the present order in Communist parties. No one would believe us to be serious in speaking about a socialist future if Party life at present is not

democratic. Therefore our Party document on the socialist alternative[2] gives norms for present and not only future behavior.

I have not spoken about the inexcusable terror, nor about the changing of a living theory into a lifeless dogma, and much more. I shall now speak about what the document of the German Communist Party is saying concerning our socialist goal.

Marx and Engels were always very reticent in speaking about a future socialist society. In the *Grundrisse* Marx wrote that we need not work out specific recipes for the future socialist society, that the people living then will do that for themselves. And Lenin emphasized during the Eleventh Party Congress that Marx had not left one single line about the question of how to do it.

We cannot know how the world will look in that time when socialism will again be on Germany's immediate agenda. We do not know what forces will prevail in that time, and what the international situation will be. We nevertheless felt it necessary to say something about how the future socialist society would look if the processes go as we wish. But we are also convinced that the processes will be determined *not only by us.* Our opponents are also preparing the concrete conditions for the struggle. Wishful thinking is not allowed! We are not writers of utopian fiction, although in fact a utopian novel would be very helpful if written at the level of Bellamy's *Looking Backward.* History is always richer than any document. But we should show our visiting card; the public is entitled to know what we wish and foresee.

The German Communist Party document begins with a short introduction concerning the scientific-technological revolution and its possibilities, as well as the misuse of it by capitalism and the contradictions entailed in such misuse. We conclude that it is necessary to break with capitalism. We describe briefly the objective and subjective conditions of our struggle. Then we show the broader efforts and failures of socialism as it actually existed in Europe. The next point is a broad survey of the bases of socialism–social relations, economy, gradual liberation of social relations from commodity production, socialist democracy, and finally the path to socialism.

Our scientific understanding of socialism leads to the conclusion that socialism is not possible without the political power of the working class and its allies. The existing bourgeois power acts to secure capitalism by political, economic, military, ideological, and other means. For example, this state apparatus and its mass media spread such lies as that humankind is not good enough for socialism and that history has come to an end with the capitalist order. In addition, socialism is demonized in every imaginable way.

The existing power structure suppresses socialist ideas and movements by political and pseudolegal activities, beginning with the claim that socialism would destroy human rights and the fundamental liberal-democratic order. Naturally the assumptions of this order are that only capitalist conditions can be just, and the main laws of the existing structure defend capitalist ownership.

It is evident that within this order socialism cannot be erected. The only solution is for the working class and its allies to achieve political power. Only with such political power can capitalism be overpowered.

This power must work in the areas of economy, politics, social relations, education, culture, jurisprudence, and ideology. Doing so is not an end in itself but is needed for solving the question of property. That is the second undeniable task of socialism. Socialist society is based on public ownership of those productive forces that can only be set into motion by social, by common activities. But that does not mean a single form of ownership, because there will exist state ownership and cooperative forms of property. State ownership of the main productive forces is essential. They are important for the fundamental needs of the whole society, its sources of bread and life. Such productive forces often demand means of accumulation that are only possible with the engagement and efforts of the state.

A number of consequences will follow from this variety of types of ownership. In this situation, products will come into circulation in response to market pressures. Calculations of labor power, materials, etc. will be necessary; the law of value is valid here. Another consequence is that competition of various kinds

will arise–not only between the enterprises but also between the workers of different enterprises. It is clear that we will have some negative effects. For example, the needed solidarity of the workers is damaged. These are major problems that we will have to face, but to attempt to move ahead in other ways would have even more conflicts and contradictions.

A third essential characteristic element of socialism is planning in production. It is not that everything must be planned, but planning is necessary in those fields that play a strategic role for the whole society. This planning must take place in a flexible manner, quite differently from previous failures in collapsed European socialism.

A main point in our document is dedicated to socialist democracy, continuing the discussions in earlier Party documents and the analysis written by Willi Gerns and me some years ago.. The illegal Communist Party of Germany published the outline for a new Party program in 1968; Gerns and I wrote a small book in 1977, *For a Socialist Federal Republic of Germany* [Für eine sozialistische Bundesrepublik], and one year later the legal German Communist Party published its Party program. Although we held some positions of 1968 and 1977 that we were and are convinced are still valid, we did not include them in the Party program because of reservations about them held by other Communist parties–not only in the socialist countries. The reason for not including them was the petty bourgeois wave in some socialist countries, for example in Czechoslovakia in 1968. These parties feared our positions could be used as arguments by the petty bourgeois forces.

In our present Party document we have returned to these points, because we are sure they are necessary for opening the door to a future socialism, and I shall speak about some of such points now.

(1) The way to socialism will not be open if we are unable to win the overwhelming majority of the population into a broad coalition for socialism that embraces not only Marxists. Other movements, groups, parties–such as Christian forces–also will wish to construct socialism. Therefore one of the political bases of this socialism may be a multiparty parliamentary system in

Germany. Furthermore, a parliamentary opposition working on the basis of a socialist constitution must be possible. We must remember that the working class and its allies have in the meantime reached such a cultural and political level, and have had such long-running experiences with the parliamentary system, that this will be respected. The problems caused by that will demand a highly developed Marxist party. But without such a party we will in any event not realize socialism.

(2) The forms of social power must be separated. We do not mean shared in the usual, bourgeois sense. All these powers–the legislative, the executive, and the judicial–are always the powers of a distinct ruling class and therefore not neutral. An actual sharing of power, for example between the bourgeois class and the working class, does not exist anywhere. To speak of an independent jurisprudence system is mystification. In Germany, for instance, this independence cannot exist because the laws are made by a parliament in which social and political interests dominate. Second, the higher judges are chosen by a commission of this parliament, and therefore in the end they are connected with and dependent on the social and political interests of their electors. And third, career interests play a role. But the separation of political powers within the ruling class gives some guarantee against observable arbitrary actions. Under socialism these powers are held by the working class and its allies–that is clear. Nevertheless, some negative experiences in the socialist countries of Europe prove that we must avoid arbitrary actions by political leaders concerning the judicial system.

(3) We pay careful attention to basic social and individual rights. In the past we did not give enough respect to individual rights (except for cases in which the individual rights of friends or comrades were damaged, as in *Berufsverbote*[3]). We knew from experience that the bourgeoisie had betrayed their own holy promises, after their revolution, for such rights. Then we had learned that the working class had to organize difficult struggles for even elementary rights. Women in Germany, for example, got the right to vote only by a revolution. Also, none of us could believe in the possibility of such abuse of individual rights by Communists in power. Therefore, real instruments of security for

individual rights were not established. But historical and cultural evolution has resulted in people at present being more sensitive to this question than in former times. We demand special organs of administration of jurisprudence to secure basic rights.

(4) It is an old position of socialists that regular statements of account of representatives in the parliament and other offices are needed, and that the people must have the right to recall those who do not fulfill their duties; these rights must be fixed by clear laws and rules.

(5) The history of the working-class movement in central Europe is very different from that in eastern Europe. The trade unions are older than the parties and therefore of much more influence than, for example, in Russia. The working masses have long experience with trade unions. Among members of the German working class, the trade unions have more influence and authority than the parties. Therefore trade unions will play a very important role in the future socialist society. We have been discussing the question of the right to strike in the future socialist society. In the European socialist countries, serious social and political problems existed, some of them caused by unwise decisions of the governments. Instruments for solving such problems scarcely existed, and this fact was one of the sources of problems for these socialist societies. No one can be sure that in the future socialist society we will be free from such problems and failures. The best situation would be to have parties mature enough to avoid or solve such problems. But are we sure that this will always be the case? We do not yet have at present a clear position on this question. I believe, however, that in the future socialist society, if the workers cannot defend their rights without strikes, we must have clear and distinct rules for such cases. These might include a rule to hold responsible such persons or political instruments that created the conditions for such a strike.

We regard it as very important to define the functions of parties and other public organizations on the one hand, and state organs on the other. The Communist Party, for example, cannot replace state organs or substitute for the state.

These are some of the main features of the German Communist Party document on the future socialist society.

Let me now speak about the forces for the battle and the path toward a socialist society as we see it at present.

I repeat: The way to socialism will be open only when the overwhelming majority of the people want to overpower capitalism. I shall not say much on the question of whether socialism is possible for an isolated nation in Europe. In my opinion that is impossible, but I also believe that when socialism is on the immediate agenda, we shall have a union of most European countries.

We know that the masses in Germany at present are very far from desiring socialism. We have to think about how to change that. And it is clear: discussions, papers, books, and conferences are important, but not sufficient. Ultimately such far-reaching changes can only be the result of mass experiences. Some such experiences are organized by capitalism itself, but it would be a mistake to put all our trust in such a spontaneous tendency to socialism. At present, the most prominent tendencies are increasing resignation, escaping into private niches, and withdrawal of approval of political parties. Though such experiences provide some elements for building socialist consciousness, we must do much more.

Our first priority is, naturally, to look at the Party. Our Party is at present very far from being able to organize an intensified battle for class consciousness. The membership is too old. Gorbachev's *new thinking* substituted so-called global problems for the class struggle. An alleged renewal of Marxism arose, triggered in part by fear over what had happened in the past, especially in the Soviet Union. Many young Party members were mystified by Gorbachev's slogans and began to fight against those they saw as Stalinists, hard-liners, etc., within the Party. So we lost a very great part of our, especially younger, members. At present, therefore, out main task is to strengthen the Party. Some small positive signs are appearing that we will be successful in working for this aim.

We remind ourselves: the owners of the productive forces will never voluntarily give up their property. Nor will they abandon political power voluntarily. Therefore the working masses must organize social strength sufficient to overcome the old

forces. This social strength can be reached only by a broad alliance for socialism organized with the help of a conception of socialism that the masses will prefer to living under capitalism. Only with such conditions will we be able to isolate the old forces and overcome them. And such broad alliances would also provide favorable conditions for influencing people in the army, the police, and the justice system who are working for the old powers in order to neutralize them or to make them unable to do their duty for the old powers (because they would have to fight against their own mothers and fathers, their own sisters and brothers).

If mass movements were to have recourse to violence, the weaponry of the state is powerful enough today to destroy every one of them, using only a small military force. We must try to avoid violence, therefore, by fighting for radical disarmament.

The alliance that will erect a socialist society must also create its own political power to protect itself against the danger of counterrevolution.

To accomplish all these things we need concrete goals in specific fields to change the character of the army and weapons. All those concrete steps are contributions to the solution of the power question, because the wind of radical words and phrases will not by itself set windmills in motion.

Our second priority is to work out a strategy for the road to socialism. In our document we have tried to take into account the two main tactical rules written by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* on the one hand, and by Lenin in *Left-Wing Communism* on the other. In philosophical terms, this means to concentrate on mediation [*Vermittlung]*. Marx and Engels wrote that the Communists have to fight for such intermediate goals, because, although they are insufficient in themselves, the battle for their realization will move the goals to a higher level. And Lenin directed us to think over slogans and kinds of battle that make it possible for more and more of the masses to go over to more radical political positions. Our strategy tries to look for such points of mediation and transition, because we do not believe that there exist conditions for an unprepared transition to socialism. We do not believe in the so-called great leap.

According to such a strategy, our politics can be divided into stages. In the present stage, the main task is to defend the results of decades of fighting for the betterment of living and working conditions of the masses against the attacks of barbarian capitalism. This can be the basis for broader alliances. Insofar as not only social but also political rights are in danger, objective conditions do exist for such broader alliances. We think that this is also the best way to overcome the deep-seated anti-Communism in the majority of the people.

If we are successful in this struggle, forces may emerge leading to more far-reaching goals. In this second stage of the battle, we must not only defend earlier positive results but work for reforms. In our Party program we have five chapters for such battles. Each chapter contains one or more demands that can be the core of struggle. But these demands cannot be finally realized on the basis of capitalism. It is not possible, for instance, to achieve an absolute right to work in capitalist society. Solving this requires organizing a balance between jobs and workers, and that needs planned production instead of a so-called free-market system. But if a broad alliance of very different parts of the working class arose to fight for this aim, it could be possible to force such a right into the constitution. In this case the legal situation of the country would be quite changed, and the basis for working-class struggle would be much better. Each chapter of our program contains such demands for transitions. This stage is called “the battle for democratic and social progress.”

The next stage, growing out of the previous, aims at far-reaching reforms in the system of state monopoly capitalism. We do not believe that it will be possible to break state monopoly capitalism with one single blow, and therefore we divide the tasks in this stage. We have distinct goals in the different areas of the economy, the military, the mass media, etc. We believe that a series of specific breaks will take place, instead of only one. In this long and difficult battle, the weight of the fighting forces can be changed. It can be possible to reach the levers of power but not power itself. For winning power itself, these levers must be set to work and this will not be a mere reform but a difficult struggle. This struggle would be less difficult if it were

possible to change the character of the army and the police before this, to weaken their aggressive and reactionary character. As you see, the battle for disarmament has its own weight but is also important for the path to socialism.

So perhaps on the basis of a series of breaks, a more or less continuous path and transition to socialism might be possible.

These are some of the main arguments of our Party document on socialism and the path to it. Of course we know that the conditions for the struggle will not be determined by us alone. The struggle will be difficult, and perhaps more and more so as we approach nearer and nearer to the core of the economic and political power of capitalism. Only by winning the overwhelming masses for overcoming capitalism can the possibility exist to find a way without bloody capitalist terror, a way without civil war.

German Communist Party (DKP)
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EDITOR'S NOTES

1. The terms *real socialism*, *existing socialism*, and variants were used by the socialist countries to distinguish their reality from utopian schemes and models of socialism. Their origin can be traced to Marx's letter of September 1843 to Arnold Ruge, in which he wrote, "I am not thinking of some imaginary, and possible communism, but actually existing communism" (in vol. 3 of *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, New York: International Publishers 1975, 141–45).

2. An early draft of the document was published in *Nature, Society, and Thought* 9, no. 4 (1996): 467–81.

3. Regulations that were used to ban Communists and other leftists from public-sector employment on the grounds that they did not support the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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Critical Aspects of Current Class Struggles in Germany

Hermann Kopp

The annexation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) by the Federal Republic of Germany was the most important event in German history since the capitulation of the Wehrmacht in May 1945. And it is not by chance that the ruling class of our country did not make its national holiday the 8th of May, the day of the end of a genocidal regime, but the 3rd of October, the day of the end of the first German socialist state. In Germany, the antagonism between capital and labor, between the bourgeoisie and the working class, had culminated in the formation of two separate states. This "unnatural" situation has now been eliminated.

The two German states, however, never acted independently of each other; the history and the politics of one state cannot be understood without reference to the history of the other. Due to the 3rd of October 1990, Germany has now, so they say, returned to "normality." We can again present ourself to the rest of the world as a "strong and self-conscious nation," as in the times of the Kaiser and of the "Führer."

German imperialism is showing its teeth again, both domestically and in foreign politics.

In foreign policy, its central aims are:

1. A Western Europe under German leadership. The European Union (EU) and the Eurocurrency are not exactly what the Nazis and the forces behind them dreamt of, but they are not that different either. Joint projects were worked out by German

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industrialists together with the SS during World War II–to be exact, from 1943 onward. There cannot be any doubt that due to the superiority of the German economy, the EU will be dominated by German capital.

2. German control over eastern and southeastern Europe. At the moment, the main attention is directed to former Yugoslavia. The German government encouraged the separation of Slovenia and Croatia, and pushed through their diplomatic recognition–against the explicit advice of the UN and against the resistance of other European states. It was also the source of the war in Bosnia. The German government supports the Kosovo-Albanian separatists and, as we learned only a few days ago, urges the Montenegrian leadership to separate from Serbia.

In violation of the German constitution, which strictly forbids the use of the army outside of German territory or for reasons other than mere defense, the former Yugoslavia, an area invaded by German troops in World War II, has been made a proving ground for how far the public is prepared to accept military adventures on "humanitarian" grounds. At present, the German soldiers there are still part of a UN (more correctly, a NATO) force, but the ambitions go far beyond. That is why the German army is being thoroughly restructured, its future core being highly professional, rapid-deployment troops able to intervene within hours anywhere in the world where our German interests–defined as "free access to markets and resources"–are at stake. This will sound quite familiar in the United States, I suppose.

Some words on domestic politics:

In 1982, when Helmut Kohl came to power, he proclaimed a turn to a "spiritual and moral policy." It was the beginning of a policy to undercut the achievements of the working people and to redistribute social wealth from the bottom to the top. After the absorption of the GDR, this policy has gained maximum speed. Let me give an example. This past spring Norbert Blüm, Kohl's labor secretary from 1982 on, was highly criticized by the most reactionary parts of the coalition government and big business. He was accused of not being sufficiently "avid for reforms." In response to these critics, Blüm pointed out that measures

initiated by his department reduced the federal budget by DM 98 billion annually. These measures were mainly laws that dramatically reduced pensions and unemployment allowances. Of the fifteen laws Blüm referred to, only two were passed in the eighties, the rest–including the most effective ones in the capitalist view–were passed only after 3 October 1990. The DM 98 billion cuts mentioned above do not, of course, include the cuts associated with other government departments such as health (we speak of the "Americanization" of the health service), housing, the reduction of corporate taxes and increase in the value-added tax, etc., nor do they include so-called "reforms" carried out in favor of business at the expense of the working people that do not have a direct effect on the budget.

None of these things will astonish you, I imagine–they have been and still are part of neoliberal policies all over the capitalist world. But why did Germany have to wait that long for the full blessings of neoliberalism–whereas the United States and Great Britain, for example, could enjoy them a good ten years earlier?

There is a simple answer: German capital and its politicians had to take into account the existence of the GDR and its highly developed social system. From the fifties through the early seventies, many of the social rights that the French, Italian, and British workers had had to fight hard for were largely given away to the working people in West Germany. Even the most anticommunist trade unionists knew that during all wage negotiations, a very quiet but very helpful third partner was sitting at the table–the GDR. The worldwide shift to neoliberalism, beginning in the late seventies, did not bypass West Germany, but it developed rather slowly in our country because of the proximity of a second, and socialist, German state. Since 1990 this kind of consideration has ceased to exist.

Linked to the dismantling of social rights is a tremendous decline in democracy. Due to lack of time I cannot go into details, but I mention only the most visible result of this: an increasing hostility toward immigrants and foreigners, toward handicapped and homeless people, toward all those considered "minorities."

An event as important as the "hostile takeover" of the GDR by German imperialism had to have its grave impact on all social and political segments of society. The entire Left was weakened, even those groups that criticized or actually rejected the GDR and "real socialism." For various reasons, the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe, of which the end of the GDR was a part, was probably a harder blow to the German Communist Party (DKP), than to any other Communist party in the capitalist world.

On the one hand, the DKP was financially dependent on the SED (the Socialist Unity Party in the GDR) and the GDR. The Party itself had hardly any financial resources (this was also a consequence of the experiences of the banning of its predecessor, the KPD, in 1956) and did not and still does not, of course, receive any money from the state or donations from capital, which are the main resources of the established parties. The salaries of about three hundred full-time Party workers and expenses connected with the broad public activities of the Party could not be covered solely by the dues and donations from its members.

On the other hand, this financial dependence reflected a sense of togetherness linking at least the older generations of Communists in both German states, which went far beyond the general solidarity that exists among Communist parties. In the forties and fifties, thousands of comrades having grown up in the West went (or were sent) to the East to help build up the GDR; many of them became leading members of the SED (Erich Honecker was only one of them). It should be remembered that it was the Communists and their allies who fought for a united Germany up to the sixties–an antifascist, democratic, and not necessarily socialist, Germany; thousands were sent to prison for working toward this goal; it was the West and the conservatives around the then Chancellor Konrad Adenauer who wanted a separate West German state from which to launch their anti-Soviet crusade. Adenauer's slogan was that it was wholly better to have half of Germany than to have a whole Germany only half way.

Only in the late sixties did the Communists in East and West Germany began to accept the lasting existence of two German states. In a way, even this was only true for the younger people;

the comrades that belonged to the generation of antifascist resistance or to the generation of the FDJ (the Communist youth organization of the fifties)–and these were the generations who founded the DKP in 1968 and were for a long time its principal cadre–still regarded the GDR as their state, as their achievement. For the West German population, too, socialism meant "GDR," in a positive as well as in a negative way. Whenever we had a public debate with anti-Communists in the seventies and eighties, and we had these often, and whenever our opponents could not counter our arguments, and they mostly could not, we were confronted with the phrase *"Geh doch nach drüben"* [Go off to the other side (of the border)].

Thus even those comrades–like myself–who had joined the DKP for specifically "West German" reasons became accustomed to identifying themselves with the GDR.

In addition to this, the collapse of the GDR and the SED took place at a time when the DKP was nearly paralyzed because of internal clashes. The disagreements in the evaluation of the Chernobyl accident during the Party congress of 1986 were the first indicators of a forthcoming crisis. For the first time in its history, the Party's leadership was openly and severely criticized at such a forum. By the way, the name of the representative of the CPSU who tried to persuade the comrades not to believe the bourgeois horror stories about Chernobyl is well known today–Boris Yeltsin. Although because of lack of time it is not possible to go into details, I just want to mention that these controversies became increasingly critical and in the end led to the formation of two wings in the Party from 1988 onward.

These irreconcilable disagreements and the shock caused by the developments in the GDR led to mass withdrawal from the DKP. The student organization, Spartakus, whose entire leadership belonged to the Party opposition, was dissolved in the summer of 1990; most of the members of the youth organization Socialist German Worker Youth (SDAJ) quit. At our highest point, the number of the Party members was about 35,000 (the actual numbers published by the Party's leadership were usually exaggerated; by the beginning of 1990 the number declined to 19,000, and kept dropping very rapidly in 1990 and 1991. The

last big drop came with the Moscow coup in August 1991 and the subsequent discussion about it. The loss of young comrades, of female members, and of members of the intelligentsia was especially excessive.

The existential crisis of the Party was overcome in 1993; the loss of members, in absolute figures, continued through 1994–1995, with membership hitting almost exactly 6,000 at the lowest point. Since then, the number of comrades has slightly risen to 6,540, the last figure tallied before I came here.

Some 300 new members live in the East–most of them, but not all, were former members of the SED. They constitute only 4 percent of the present membership of the DKP, whereas 20 percent of the entire population of Germany live in the former GDR.

Thus, the DKP is still a "West" party, even if this is not intentional. On the other hand, the Party of the Democratic Socialism (PDS), though much bigger, is still an "East" party, with barely 2 percent of its 98,000 members living in the "old" Federal Republic of Germany.

The downfall of the GDR and the socialist bloc as well as the crisis of the DKP did not only lead to the drastic loss of members but even more to the decline of the Party's political influence. The parliamentary influence of the DKP had been very small all along. Even before 1990 the DKP was only represented in two or three dozen regional councils, mostly in smaller communities. In federal and state elections the DKP vote rarely exceeded one percent.

Nevertheless in quite a number of larger industrial enterprises, in the honorary cadre of some trade unions, at the universities, in the cultural sector, and in grass-roots movements, Communists at least temporarily had a rather strong position. This was mainly due to well-known comrades who worked very actively in these sectors. In the biggest mass movement in West German history, the peace movement against the stationing of the U.S. Pershing II rockets and Cruise missiles in the early eighties, the DKP played an important role as an initiating and organizing factor.

Even this influence in the extraparliamentary movements has now dropped tremendously. My thesis is that the resignation of

Party members is far more responsible for this decline than a change in the political outlook of Germans. In former times we were highly respected, even as Communists, by others whenever we proved to be the most consistent fighters for their immediate interests. Our socialist goal, the decisive reason for our political engagement, however, was mostly tolerated as a sort of cranky garnishing. And this is the case even today. Those who supported us were not, therefore, much disturbed by the collapse of real socialism in Europe in general and the GDR in particular. Thus, those rather few Party clubs that continued their struggle for the day-to-day interests of the people even during the most difficult times did the same as, and sometimes even better than, before 1990 in local elections.

If my thesis is correct, this also means that the decisive factor for the survival of the DKP as a political force–as distinct from a mere theoretical circle–will depend mainly on its ability to struggle for the interests of the working people and not on its attitude to certain ideological questions.

At this moment the DKP is moving closer to this position and is drawing the corresponding conclusions. During the first period after the collapse of the GDR, the remaining comrades were occupied with maintaining the DKP at least at an organizational minimum. Then a period of ideological reorientation followed. In this context, since 1992, the Party has discussed and gradually adopted three documents: one dealing with programmatic orientation, a second being a program of action, and the third dealing with the question of socialism. These three documents are meant to serve as preliminary statements for a new program.

Even if this new program does not yet exist, we can say that the period in which the Party was mainly occupied with its ideological orientation is coming to an end. And this is necessary, as I have said, if the Party wants to survive. Certainly there are people who become Marxists before becoming Communists, but the usual path is different. Usually the process begins with a hatred of the existing conditions, of those who profit from them, and of their representatives; with personal experiences with the established system; and with compassion for those who are degraded and humiliated by it. And there is the will to change

these conditions. This path must lead only to the Communist Party, but only when this Party not only explains the cause of these conditions, but also presents itself as a force that wants to and is able to intervene.

As all polls show, the dissatisfaction with the political and social conditions in Germany is rather great and is still increasing. But this dissatisfaction results mostly in political apathy, rejection of all politics and all politicians, and flight into consumerism. The majority of young people reject being drawn into any political organization and even into trade unions. And those young people who look for an alternative to the existing system look for it more often on the right. In the latest elections for the state parliament in the federal state of Sachsen Anhalt, where the unemployment rate is especially high, the neofascist party DVU (German People's Union) gained 13 percent of the vote; 30 percent of the people below the age of twenty-five gave their votes to the DVU. It was the most popular party with this group. In additio to racist and nationalist slogans, the DVU gave expression to anticapitalist statements during the election campaign.

The minority of the youth who have engaged themselves on the left during the last ten years have done so mainly in autonomous movements. These groups or tendencies, organized in networks and having rather anarchist characteristics, are rather heterogeneous. Particularly because of their common antifascist and antiracist aims, there are many points of contact with them, even if their left radicalism–such as the rather common rejection of the trade unions, lack of distinction between fascist, conservative, and social democratic positions, rejection of elections, "circus tactics," and so on–leads to certain problems. Quite an important number of the younger members of our Party and, in particular, members of the youth organization SDAJ come from these autonomous groups (and some still remain active in these groups), and naturally they retain many of these attitudes.

In recent years, some autonomous groups have been asking the DKP for experts on historical subjects or theoretical questions. But this does not mean they want to give up their own structure. On one hand, they know their own deficiency in theory, and they respect the Communists because of their long

struggle against fascism and capitalism (the few still-living members of the resistance against Hitler fascism are very much admired by them and are frequently asked to participate in discussions). On the other hand, to them the DKP is too passive and not sufficiently oriented towards action. And in the case of the majority of the 230 Party clubs, they are not that wrong about this.

By pointing out that the crucial problem of the DKP is its inadequate collective activity in political events, I am not advocating activity divorced from theory. This would be a fatal misunderstanding. An ongoing concern over the fundamental principles of theory, like the maintenance of organizational structure, is a constant necessity. More than ever today, all practical political action requires theoretical preparation and scientific analysis. Class consciousness and a class point of view are a necessary but not at all a sufficient prerequisite for Communists who want to change the world. Therefore they have to master the word, not only in general but also in detail.

Until 1989 a major part of the apparatus of the DKP was occupied with the theoretical preparation and support of the political activities of the Party. Additionally, there was the Institute for Marxist Studies and Research (IMSF) in Frankfurt, a small-scale but highly effective research institute associated with the DKP. There used to be several dozen university lecturers, mostly from the 1968 movement, who were members or sympathizers of the DKP. And, of course, many Marxist scholars at the universities and research institutions of the GDR were also occupied with questions of great importance to West German Communists.

Of all this not much is left. The Institute in Frankfurt no longer exists. The DKP and the two publishing houses connected with or very close to the Party can only afford to employ eight professionals, including the technical staff. This tiny cadre has to cover the full field, including the publication of the weekly newspaper *Unsere Zeit*. The diminished numbers of university lecturers in sympathy with the DKP are reaching retirement age, the greater part of those former GDR scholars who remained loyal to Marxism have been fired from the East German

universities and research institutions, and their knowledge is becoming obsolete.

Even in the long run there will be no return to the conditions of the seventies and eighties, which, in comparison to our present situation, were nearly paradise-like. In my view, a sensible cooperation of the widest possible scope among intellectuals would at least be one way to alleviate these difficulties. The defeat experienced in 1989 weakened the entire Left, including the non-Communist Left. Some of the former Left went over to the neoliberal side, and the others have not come closer to the Party. This is true for both the scholarly and the theoretical work.

For German Communists, the relationship to the USSR and the socialist countries used to be the ultimate decisive criterion for distinguishing friend from enemy even among the intellectuals regarding themselves as Marxists. Today this is only of historical interest. Even the critics and opponents of the GDR criticize and reject the way German imperialism deals with the scholarly achievements of the GDR.

A new attempt toward socialism is not on the present agenda–but the resistance and opposition to the policy of imperialist expansion and the dismantling of social services and democracy, which affect not only Communists and the working class, but all those oppressed by big capital, must be the focus of our activities. Here we find starting points for new alliances. I hope we will be able to make use of them.

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The *Communist Manifesto* and the World Economy after World War II

Wadi'h Halabi

In 1848, two brash youths pointed out that capitalism overcomes its periodic crises with methods that "pave the way for more extensive and more destructive crises." The depressions in the century that followed publication of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* certainly seemed to confirm Marx and Engels's analysis. The crises that hit the capitalist world from 1873 through 1897 were unprecedented, more extensive, and more destructive than in the first half of the nineteenth century. And the crises and wars punctuating the first half of the twentieth century were the greatest and most destructive in capitalism's bloody history, indeed in all of human history.

But then, following World War II, a relative stability seemed to settle in. From 1950 to 1990, global output grew year after year without interruption. And the imperialist countries, above all the United States, capitalism's capital since World War I, suffered recessions but avoided a general crisis like the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Bourgeois theorists proclaimed the end not only of capitalist cycles but of Marx and Engels's specter and of history itself. They will soon be forgotten.

But a certain confusion emerged within the working-class movement. Perhaps Keynes had indeed resolved certain problems of capitalist cycles. Maybe military spending or adjustment

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of interest rates had led to stabilization. Perhaps monopolies have had to learn to plan. Maybe the exploiting class had developed some regulation of capitalism's rhythms and tempos. Perhaps Marx and Engels erred on this one question, although surely not on the immiseration of the working class. Maybe . . . .

But as we shall see, Marx and Engels had not erred.

The unraveling of the secret of the relative, and purely temporary, postwar stability, lies in a historical-materialist class analysis of one world economy, because, for far longer than a century now, there has been but a single global economy.

To be sure, "one world economy" today comprises extraordinary unevenness and inequality. And above all, since 1917 and to this day, it has also embodied two mortally antagonistic social systems, one capitalist, the other based on working-class rule. And it is only in the complex interrelation and mortal struggle between these two social systems that we can develop an assessment of the postwar world economy–and of today's developments–consistent with the *Manifesto.*

After World War II, indeed as a consequence of the war and the global economic crisis that impelled imperialism into war, the working class seized power in more than a dozen states, from Albania to China, Czechoslovakia to northern Vietnam, Yugoslavia to northern Korea to Poland and eastern Germany. This development was entirely law-governed, entirely consistent with the *Manifesto*–as Marx and Engels put it, the "overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat." It also changed the physiognomy of the world economy.

Internally, the two social systems are regulated by different economic laws. Where capitalism still rules, production is ever more governed by the boom-bust laws of commodity exchange, ever more choked by the narrow limitations of private ownership, national borders, top-down rule, indeed all capitalist forms.

But wherever capitalist rule was overthrown, the law of planning predominates, however flawed, however mixed with continuing commodity production. Here the economy is fundamentally noncyclical.

Most importantly, the two antagonistic social systems are not islands onto themselves. They relate and conflict within one

global economy. And that is essential.

So the Soviet Union was part of one world economy. China, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, all noncapitalist states where planning predominates to this day, are part and parcel of one world economy. (The working class took power in these states, a historic step forward. But I believe it was premature to call them socialist; capitalist restoration will no longer be a historical possibility when socialism sets in.)

Today, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and Poland and Romania (the products of the post-1989 counterrevolutions), as well as the United States and Japan and India and Nigeria and all other capitalist countries, are part of one world economy.

The only source of stability in the postwar economy

In the four decades after 1950, the noncapitalist states as a group showed no sign of cycles. Growth rates were steady, albeit slowly declining, throughout the entire period; there was not even one boom-bust cycle. (Individual states, such as Poland in the political crisis years of 1980–1981, did suffer falls.) Their performance was in sharp contrast with that of the world's capitalist countries *taken as a group*, which was decidedly cyclical. The Soviet Union and China and the other noncapitalist, noncyclical states were the only verifiable source of stability in the postwar world economy. All indications are that they helped prevent the world economy from plunging into depressions worse even than the Great Depression of the 1930s. How?

In the "bust" phase of a capitalist cycle, the paying demand for commodities collapses in an avalanche of bankruptcies, debt defaults, and unemployment. This is particularly true under monopoly capitalism, when imbalances in the economy can grow rapidly and debt servicing becomes particularly onerous and inflexible. "Clots" develop throughout the system; circulation breaks down.

But each time capitalism began a slide into crisis in the postwar years, such as in 1975, 1980, and 1982, paying demand from the noncapitalist states remained steady or grew. Although not very large, this demand acted as an "anticlotting" agent that kept

the capitalist circulation system from congealing. For example, Soviet trade with capitalist countries more than doubled between the crisis years of 1975 and 1982, from $30 billion to $73 billion. The trade of other Warsaw Pact states with capitalist countries–some of it unofficial or in barter–was larger and grew faster. Furthermore, while many capitalist countries and corporations defaulted on their debts in those years, the noncapitalist states punctually serviced theirs. This too helped prevent a capitalist crisis from ballooning.

In 1990, capitalism began yet another slide into crisis. But noncapitalist China's purchases from the capitalist world did not collapse; in fact, they more than doubled in seven years. By 1997, official purchases totaled over $140 billion, plus $32.4 billion paid to capitalist institutions to service China's $131 billion foreign debt. (At the same time, collapsing Thai, Indonesian, South Korean, Russian, and other banks effectively defaulted on their debts.) In 1993, Morgan Stanley's chief international economist admitted that without China, "there would be world chaos." China's stabilizing role notwithstanding, imperialism was relentlessly driven by its class antagonism and inescapable contradictions to undermine working-class rule in China (and Vietnam, Cuba, etc.), as it did in the USSR and other Warsaw Pact states. There is but one world economy, and ultimately either the bourgeoisie or the working class must rule it.

To summarize, it was the working class, primarily through the states where it seized power, that was responsible for any postwar economic stability. This represented a genuine step forward for humanity. The working class has no interest whatsoever in crisis, which only brings misery to the masses.

No postwar stability for the majority

The imperialist countries suffered recessions but no general crisis in the postwar period. But can we speak of postwar stability, even relative stability, for Argentina? Bangladesh? Chad? for Latin America, Africa, south Asia? Absolutely not. Nor can we speak of stability for Ukraine or Yugoslavia or the Russian Federation, the states where capitalism took back power beginning in 1989. Nor, since 1997, can we speak of stability even for

capitalism's fabled "Asian tigers." So we cannot talk even of relative stability for the overwhelming majority of people living under capitalist rule. The United States may have enjoyed relative stability–albeit with declining wages, especially after 1973–but for the majority, postwar capitalism has spelled profound crises, growing hunger and unemployment, wars and social decomposition. What is going on?

If Keynesian mechanisms, military spending, and interest-rate adjustments–that is, genuine self-regulatory capitalist mechanisms–really explained the relative stability of the U.S. economy, then surely the Mexicos, Brazils, Indias, and Nigerias of the world could also use them to avoid crisis and lift their economies. Surely, the imperialist center could have found institutions and mechanisms to develop the capitalist economy worldwide and avoid bankruptcies and defaults. But it has not; it cannot. Rather, it resorts to institutions, such as the IMF and the Pentagon, that choke economies or even destroy them altogether. Even Japan, now in the eighth year of recession, finds itself completely incapable of "stimulating" its economy. On the contrary, both imperialist and Japanese government actions are worsening problems, and Japan is now tottering helplessly into general crisis. What is happening?

What is happening is that capitalism's contradictions never stopped accumulating throughout the decades of "relative stability." On the contrary, they grew, measurably, year after year. Yes, the imperialist countries escaped general crisis–until now. But they cannot be viewed in isolation. For one thing, there were the Soviet Union and China and the other noncapitalist states, growing without boom-bust cycles and exerting a stabilizing force in the global economy.

Another factor was and remains the exploitative relation between the imperialist center and the rest of the world, above all the oppressed capitalist countries, but also the noncapitalist states. When we group the United States and England together with Puerto Rico and Haiti and Ireland and Nigeria and India and Pakistan, that is, the capitalist countries as a whole–a grouping imperialism does not encourage–a different picture of postwar capitalism emerges. Sharp cycles are evident. The capitalist

countries as a group suffered several years of absolute decline, such as a 4.1 percent fall in output in 1981–1982, a 5.7 percent drop in 1974–1975, and sharper tumbles after 1990. On a per capita basis–another measurement imperialism discourages–the declines were steeper, the growth even less pronounced. And entire countries suffered devastating failures. For "oil-rich" Nigeria, per capita income fell from $1,000 in the early 1980s to $300 in 1996, below the "absolute poverty" line.

And problems with overproduction and overcapacity can be seen growing. In the United States, by the 1980s, more than 30 percent of practical industrial capacity lay consistently idle, above all "for lack of market." In 1982, a recession year, 41 percent of U.S. practical capacity lay idle. In wide areas of Africa, whatever industry was not destroyed was found to operate at barely 10 percent of capacity.

The Great Depression and World War II led to enormous monopolization and centralization of capital worldwide. The imperialist center–Wall Street above all–has been using its monopoly on capital and technology, and improvements in transport and communications, not to raise the general standard of living, but to facilitate pushing off capitalism's toxins onto weaker countries and weaker capitalists, while sucking them dry of surplus value and "human capital" (the so-called "brain drain"). Wall Street's instruments for achieving this are numerous and complex. Debt and unequal exchange are surely primary. But one must also include allocation or denial of capital, import quotas, tariffs and other regulation of access to imperialist markets, manipulation of currencies, vicious exacerbation of the opposition between intellectual and manual labor and cheapening of physical labor, war, and out-and-out plunder.

The United States and other imperialist economies unquestionably gained a certain stability from their "Keynesian" borrowings, war expenditures, interest-rate regulations, and currency maneuvers. But for every measure of "Keynesian" spending in an imperialist country, Wall Street imposed ten measures of "anti-Keynesian" austerity and destruction on oppressed countries, whether by IMF or Pentagon dictate. Keynes was but the theorist of finance (monopoly) capital. The imperialist center

gained, but at the expense of the Nigerias and Mexicos and Indonesias, even of the Soviet Union and China, enslaving (and relentlessly devaluing) labor in the oppressor nations, super-exploiting and looting that of the oppressed nations.

In a sense, then, the imperialist center did not achieve even relative stability. But it did develop the mechanisms to export its toxic wastes, beginning with the plague of unemployment, onto the Caribbean and Latin America, onto Asia, Africa, and the profoundly oppressed African-American people. In a sense, then, the U.S. Depression was pushed onto Africa and the African American ghetto, onto Asia and Latin America–and now onto Russia and Romania and Ukraine as well. The benefits from the relative stability provided by the noncyclical economies went overwhelmingly to the imperialist center. At the same time, the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and the other noncapitalist states suffered from the ever-growing anarchy of world capitalism.

Capitalist destabilization of noncapitalist states

In fact, is there any doubt that a world capitalism in ever-deepening crisis helped destabilize the Soviet Union, the GDR, Poland, Hungary, the Warsaw Pact? How? In innumerable ways. Both social systems are part of one world economy. The growing chaos in the capitalist economy unquestionably played top-down havoc with planned economy. For example, planned sales of steel and coal by Poland to capitalist countries could not be realized. Or the revenues from Soviet oil sales were suddenly less than expected. Consequently, planned purchases of machinery and other necessary inputs from capitalist countries could not be carried out. Imperialism's very real military threat helped disrupt and distort the economy and society in noncapitalist countries, making it more difficult to meet domestic needs. The list goes on and on.

To be sure, it is how failing capitalism's pressures played themselves out internally, within the noncapitalist states, that was decisive. Otherwise, Cuba or Vietnam would have long ago collapsed. The fall of the GDR, of the Soviet Union, and other Warsaw Pact states was hardly predetermined. Nor does their

collapse indicate a failure of socialism. Perhaps it is easier to see this by analogy with a trade union. If a union collapses in the face of capitalist pressure–and it happens–that does not signify a failure of trade unionism. The union may have been inadequately organized. The leadership may have failed. The workers may have been insufficiently prepared. But they were insufficiently prepared for the attacks of *capitalism.* It is world capitalism that is demonstrably in crisis, economically, and socially. The working class alone can point the way out. And it will.

The epidemic of disproportionality

To understand what is happening today, it is necessary to understand how capitalist crises arise. For an economy, *any* economy, capitalist or socialist, to develop without crisis, proportionality must be maintained. By proportionality, Marx means a balance, most broadly, between the economy's two great departments, those producing the means of production and means of consumption and in the final analysis a balance between production and the demand of producers and consumers. Ultimately it means a balance throughout the economy, of steel and cotton, cement and corn, transistors and resistors, housing, shoes, shirts, and toys. This is one of Marx's great lessons, developed in *Theories of Surplus Value* (1985). It is elaborated in outstanding works by Bukharin in *Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital* (Bukharin and Luxemburg 1972) and, especially, by Preobrazhensky in *The Decline of Capitalism* (1985).

The truth is, no economy has ever achieved, no economy will ever achieve, perfect proportionality, not even under communism. Changes in technology and tastes alone assure perpetual imbalances. But under working-class rule and even more under socialism and communism, a planned economy, balanced with genuine control from below, permits prompt correction of disproportionalities before they balloon and disrupt the economy's ability to satisfy human need.

Not so under capitalism. The system is congenitally antagonistic to both genuine planning and control from below. Economic activity is necessarily unplanned, necessarily

controlled from above, for the sole aim of realizing individual profit and no other purpose. Imbalances appear to the capitalists as "overproduction"–more has been produced than the capitalist can sell to realize profit. Nothing else matters. "Overproduction" of food can thus arise side by side with mass hunger. "Overproduction" and "underconsumption" (and unemployment) are manifestations of disproportionality under capitalism. The decline in the rate of profit accelerates processes, such as cheapening of labor and introduction of new technologies, that inevitably worsen disproportionalities.

The accumulation of imbalances and ensuing losses ultimately lead to crisis. The *Manifesto* refers to this crisis as "the epidemic of overproduction." For the exploited and oppressed, it is an epidemic of want. Based on Marx's subsequent work, justification exists for calling this crisis "the epidemic of disproportionality," if only to emphasize the necessity for the working class to seize control of the economy and thereby assure lasting proportionality. Furthermore, because there is but one world economy, it will continue to suffer crises until proportionality is achieved in at least its greater part.

Capitalism's two great weaknesses

Imperialism never ceases to remind us of its military might, its technological prowess. It is unquestionably capable of mass destruction. But the reality is that, in spite of its temporary political victory over the Soviet and Eastern European working class, capitalism has never been more powerless economically, and consequently never weaker socially. How?

Capitalism's congenital incapacity to correct disproportionalities before they balloon has guaranteed periodic crises from its earliest days. But the combination of monopolization with advances in technology and productivity has the effect of inexorably accelerating and magnifying imbalances. The microcomputer industry suffered its first problems with overproduction before it could even celebrate its fifth birthday. Despite the stabilizing role of the noncapitalist states, the indications are that 35 percent or more of capitalism's worldwide productive capacity lay idle by the mid-1980s for lack of paying

demand. The proportion of world productive capacity that is idle is another statistic that the capitalists do not encourage. But it is known that the world's major capitalist auto manufacturers currently have the capacity to produce 30 percent more cars and trucks–22 million–every year than they can sell. And their accounting ignores the vehicle plants in the former Warsaw Pact states, now under capitalist rule, whose productive capacity has been idled in the past decade. Similarly, there is reason to believe that the world capitalist oil industry is operating at barely half its practical capacity. For some months now, this industry has been actually producing a million barrels a day that the market cannot absorb, even as several hundred million people spend two hours or more a day looking for firewood.

Capitalism's economic weakness has two sides of fundamental importance. On the one hand, capitalism is powerless to prevent the growth of productive forces from devastating the masses. For example, the growth in productivity, including agricultural productivity, since World War II has been accompanied by a relentless growth in chronic hunger. There is reason to believe that more than 40 percent of the world's population under capitalist rule is now suffering from chronic hunger or worse, up from less than 10 percent in the 1950s. A 1994 survey of children entering the first grade in the Philippines found that 80 percent showed the signs of chronic hunger or worse. Capitalism is powerless to find a cure for hunger. In the United States, the proportion of the population at risk of chronic hunger has grown from 8 percent in 1985 to an estimated 17 percent in 1995. Women and children, considered property under capitalism, are suffering the greatest blows. Unemployment is a social expression of growing disproportionality. The years 1989–1990 are a turning point in global unemployment, with the number of people unemployed and underemployed nearly doubling to exceed one billion by 1996. The masses' constant insecurity–about today's bread and tomorrow's job–is a profoundly revolutionary factor that the Communist parties can and will channel. Capitalism is absolutely powerless to allay this insecurity. And therein lies one of capitalism's fundamental weaknesses.

But for occasional worries about revolution, the capitalists hardly care that the masses are hungry. But they most violently care about capitalism's second, fatal weakness. And that is an inability to prevent the losses that accompany the growth of disproportionalities. A crisis of disproportionality spells a crisis of profits, an epidemic of bad debts and outright losses. For example, worldwide losses in capitalist agriculture alone may be exceeding $100 billion yearly in the 1990s, masked only by massive government subsidies. A financial crisis could result in rapid shifting of those subsidies to prop up banks, starkly revealing the actual losses and resulting in a sudden world food crisis. This has been happening in Indonesia since crisis broke out in 1997.

More generally, bad debts are a measure of growing disproportionality in the world economy. In Japan alone, the bad debts held by the largest Japanese banks rose from some $40 to $50 billion in 1988–1990 to $1,400 billion by the end of 1995! Similar growth in bad debts in this decade can be cited for French and Brazilian banks, and now for Thai and South Korean and Indonesian banks as well. Wall Street, which ultimately sits above these bad debts, is absolutely powerless to prevent them. It attempts to shift their burden onto weaker capitalists and above all the masses. And that is what is fundamentally behind the deregulation, privatization, "trade" pacts, pension "reforms," and similar schemes sweeping the entire capitalist world.

Similarity between 1998 and 1912?

There is a brief, sometimes overlooked sentence in the *Manifesto* that provides a clue to the historical possibilities we are entering. "The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class" (that is, for its continued rule), Marx and Engels wrote, "is the formation and augmentation of capital." At the rate that bad debts and bankruptcies are growing, it is possible that there will soon be no "formation and augmentation of capital" worldwide, perhaps even before the end of the twentieth century. The bad loans and bankruptcies in Japan and the rest of capitalist Asia are beginning to approach the combined profit, rent, and interest income of the United States and European monopolies.

It could be argued that 1998 is a little like 1912, indeed that with 1989–1990 the world entered a period like 1907–1923. How? As in 1990, there was a capitalist crisis in 1907. This crisis impelled the capitalists into relentless attacks on workers and other oppressed people, and ultimately into the First World War. Blood flowed freely, workers and their organizations suffered terrible defeats, the Second International splintered. But the crisis and war gave birth to the Russian Revolution and to the Communist International and Communist parties around the world, to the revolution in Hungary in 1919, albeit short-lived, and near-revolution in the West, in Germany in 1923. The years from 1929 through 1949 mark a similar historical period, from depression to wars to overturn of capitalist rule across eastern Europe, parts of Vietnam and Korea, and above all in China.

The world economy today and the years ahead

Since 1989–1990, when the Warsaw Pact states began to fall, the proportion of world production that is noncyclical has fallen to a little more than 10 percent.

A violently unstable world capitalism now claims nearly 90 percent of world output. In this sense, the world economy of the 1990s differs sharply from that of the four preceding decades. The "gyroscope" of the postwar world economy has been profoundly damaged. Certainly, there is absolutely nothing capitalism can do to prevent the growing disproportionalities from spiraling into general crisis in the imperialist center itself. Only the working class can bring a halt to crisis.

What then can we expect in the years ahead? Is there any doubt that as the crisis grows, capitalist attacks will escalate against the working class and its states, trade unions, and all of its organizations, indeed against all the exploited and oppressed? Is there any doubt that imperialism, choking in overproduction, will engage in "enforced destruction" of productive forces by both peaceful and military means? Is there any question that a bankrupt imperialism will engage in ever-greater racism and national chauvinism, will back the most extreme right wing and even fascist forces, not least to "lubricate" and facilitate its nefarious wars? Is there any doubt that China and Cuba,

Vietnam, Laos, and North Korea will face ever-greater challenges, economic and political, social and military, internal and external?

Of course, what these escalating attacks, these wars, these challenges reflect is an escalating crisis of the old system. The very sway of the old ruling class is at stake. The struggle for democratic rights, for jobs for all, for "peace, bread, and land," indeed for the most elementary needs, for housing, clean water, cooking fuel, has never been more necessary. The capitalist class, constrained by debt and growing losses, has never been less capable of meeting those needs.

The international working class will struggle for those needs and emerge triumphant from the coming tests. We can make no greater mistake than to underestimate the proletariat. But victory will require the utmost in organization, in preparation, in scientific assessment of the great economic and political developments such as we are already witnessing, and the drawing of the necessary conclusions.

More than ever, the *Manifesto* retains its validity. Its closing call for "Working men of all countries, unite!" truly points the way to extraordinary liberation in our lifetime.

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Lenin and the Rentier State

David Eisenhower

The term *globalism* is merely the contemporary euphemism for imperialism. This is the very same imperialism whose features Lenin outlined in his famous 1916 pamphlet, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1974).

It is useful to review some of these features. To begin with, imperialism is the stage of capitalism:

- where the "financial oligarchy" is dominant;
- where banks greatly intensify and accelerate the process of the concentration of capital and the formation of monopolies;
- where the "financial monopolists" engage in the "conscious regulation of economic life";
- where the big profits go to the "geniuses" of financial manipulation;
- where "the export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentier [sector] from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by the [global] exploitation of labor";
- where the income of this rentier sector is far greater than the income obtained from trade–this being the essence of imperialist parasitism and the reason why the term "rentier state is passing into current use";
- where "the rentier state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism and these circumstances cannot fail to influence

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all the social-political conditions of the countries affected generally"; and

- where institutions like the British navy "play the part of bailiff to guard against the indignation of debtors." (It would take thirty years before the IMF made its appearance and with infinitely more deadly consequences.)

Over the rest of the century these features have developed and matured as their center shifted from Great Britain to the United States.

In *Arrogant Capital*, Kevin Phillips describes lower Manhattan, "with its giant investment firms and banks, major currency speculators, hedge fund operators and corporate raiders" as the new haven of financial pirates plundering the world, i.e., the "new Tortuga." (1994, 84).

In their recent book *The Judas Economy*, William Wolman and Anne Colamosca report that "the U.S. has been thrown into a phase of history where finance rules all" (1997, 142). They go on to write, "There is no doubt that the American financial community now benefits from the same business hegemony that once was inherent in America's industrial economy."

To increase its financial take, this rentier sector is currently undergoing rapid consolidation. There will soon be trillion-dollar banks, merged with insurance companies and security firms. The pending Travelers Insurance, Primerica, Smith Barney, Solomon Brothers, and Citibank deal will combine assets in excess of $700 billion.

These combinations can only serve to tighten the grip of the financial oligarchy, as it sweeps the globe electronically, twenty-four hours a day, probing every conceivable market for profits. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more evident than in the global foreign exchange (Forex) turnover. By 1995, trade in currencies exceeded $300 trillion a year, compared to $4.6 trillion in 1977.

According to David Felix, professor emeritus at Washington University in St. Louis, only

> about 5% of Forex turnover is used to finance trade in commodities and nonfinancial services, compared to around 30% in the 1970s. Most of the rest reflects purely financial transaction: to exploit discrepancies between

> intercountry interest rate differences and corresponding exchange differences, to capitalize on movement of bonds and equities in different markets, and to speculate on exchange rate variations. (1998, 1)

In 1995, the annual trade of C. S. First Boston alone exceeded the dollar value of the GDP–about $6.5 trillion, as did those of Goldman Sachs, Morgan, and Citicorp.

To make sure every penny of speculative profit possible is squeezed out of the global economy is the work of the financial ministers and central bankers of the G-5 countries. As Wolman and Colamosca observe, "it is globalization of the world financial markets that [has] turned central bankers into despots" (1997, 150).

Sitting at the head of the financial table is Robert Rubin, former chairman of Goldman Sachs, now U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. His job is "to keep Wall Street happy and confident," one he performs admirably, according to Robert Reich, the former Secretary of Labor in the Clinton administration. A recent Sunday *New York Times Magazine* profile (19 June 1998) reports that Rubin plays a key role in international affairs and is often treated as a "head of state."

On Rubin's right is Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. Together they provide the political muscle in various international forums for Wall Street to function, in effect, as the central planners of the world's economy. Over the years their arm-twisting produced a global financial "architecture" of unfettered capital flows.

Domestically this has resulted in the pickup of corporate consolidation. The year 1997 saw a record number of mergers and acquisitions–almost $1 trillion. Profits for the larger brokerage firms from mergers and acquisitions were enormous. Fifty percent of Merrill Lynch's profits, or $400 million, came from this activity. And Merrill Lynch ranks behind Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs in this area. Worldwide, Goldman Sachs advised sellers and buyers involved in deals amounting to $261 billion.

Merrill Lynch, with pretax profits of $3 billion in 1997, anticipates that merger and acquisition activity in Europe will explode from $360 billion in 1997 to $630 billion by 2000.

The effects of these transactions are to saddle corporations with mounting debt, forcing corporate restructuring and downsizing. "The dismantling of the middle class" is how Donald Barlett and James B. Steele refer to it in *America: What Went Wrong?* (1992, 1–29). Since interest on corporate debt is tax deductible, meaning the tax code encourages the elimination of jobs, the ratio of taxes to interest changed radically from 4:1 taxes to interest in the 1950s to 3:1 interest to taxes in the 1980s–a trend that has been maintained in the 1990s.

With the European Monetary Union (EMU) on the horizon, Morgan, Goldman Sachs, and Merrill Lynch are rapidly expanding their staffs in Europe in what is described as a "binge" of hiring and personnel transfers in order to mine their $2 trillion bond market, an anticipated $800 billion corporate bond market, and a stock market currently capitalized at $3.6 trillion (about a third the size of the U.S. equity market).

Second quarter 1998 corporate earnings were reported in a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* (3 August 1998). Financial services posted the biggest net income of any sector: $23.83 billion. This figure was five times the net income of the basic materials sector, four times the energy sector, four times the producer goods sector, two times the technology sector, and two times the utilities sector.

Lawrence Summers, current Undersecretary of the Treasury, calculated that Wall Street consumed roughly a quarter of all the profits of U.S. corporations in 1987 (Wolman and Colamosca 1997, 191). In *The Judas Economy,* Wolman and Colamosca observe that economic decay inevitably results when "finance flourishes at the expense of industry." They write that "the larger the share of corporate income that ends up in the hands of the financial community, the smaller the share that is directed to investment in real plant and equipment" (192). For evidence they point to a drop in the ratio of capital to output.

Kevin Phillips reached a similar conclusion in *Arrogant Capital*. He declares that "financialization has been a stage of decay not triumph" (1994, 90–91).

Professor David Felix makes a similar point regarding "the rising share of GDP generated by finance, insurance, and real estate" in all the major imperialist countries. He writes:

> Until the mid-1970s the rising FIRE/GDP ratio in each G-7 country was accompanied by a faster output growth of goods and nonfinancial services. Since then, however, the relationship between rising FIRE/GDP ratios and economic growth has turned negative, implying that the liberalized financial system has been crowding out the production of goods and nonfinancial services. (1998, 4)

The class perspectives of these critics of Wall Street give a one-dimensional character to their analysis–a focus on the parasitic effects "financialization" has on what they refer to as the "real economy." What bourgeois critics skip over are the *inevitable* consequences that rentier capitalism has on the working class, both domestically and globally.

Comprehensive planning *must* compensate for the fact that the financial sector is unproductive of surplus value. Various strategies must be devised to force productive capital to make adjustments–sooner, perhaps even more radical, than might otherwise have been the case. But whether unproductive or productive, all types of capital have a common goal–the intensification of the rate of exploitation. What the financial oligarchy dictates is the unrelenting ratcheting up of exploitation.

According to calculations by the Marxist economist Victor Perlo, the rate of surplus value for U.S. workers in manufacturing rose from 200 percent in 1974 to 300 percent in 1984 (*People's Weekly World*, 1 August 1998). Perlo writes that such a jump in exploitation

> in a historically short period is a new feature of capitalism. The strategy behind this jump involved union busting, outsourcing, racism, privatization, benefit cuts, forced overtime, sweatshops, higher unemployment, fiscal "austerity," more part-time work, NAFTA, the WTO, etc. etc.

The EMU is seen not only as the way to impose fiscal austerity on member states, but as a means to gain what is called "labor flexibility" and to accelerate the pace of outsourcing to areas with low wages. Even *Business Week* (27 April 1998) was forced to admit the EMU would cause "many workers to suffer."

Over the past two decades, however, the international economic policies authored by the financial oligarchy have managed to keep the air hot under the Wall Street economic balloon.

With unregulated capital flows underwriting export-oriented development programs, the rate and mass of surplus value (together with wholesale looting) jumped dramatically from Mexico to South Korea, Malaysia to the Dominican Republic, Indonesia to Russia, South Korea to Brazil.

As reported by Nicolas Kristof of the *New York Times*, "The result was that tides of investment flooded into ill-prepared developing countries and created speculation bubbles, and then surged out, leaving behind shattered nations and a global financial crisis" (20 September 1998).

Confronted with the inevitable results of their own planning, the financial oligarchy can only urge the rentier state to adopt policies that would force the international working class to bail out Wall Street once again. The level of exploitation and repression inherent in any new global "architecture" satisfactory to Wall Street, however, can only result in increasing the levels of popular struggle. Already the era of neoliberalism is fading, revealing in the process the fault lines of the current stage of imperialism.

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Marx, Engels, and the Idea of Exploitation

Greg Godels

In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels write, "Whatever form they [class antagonisms] may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, *viz.* the exploitation of one part of society by the other" (Marx and Engels 1976b, 504). With this statement, they forcefully assert both the existence and persistence of exploitation. There can be no doubt that they see a thread weaving throughout history, a thread that breaks only with the coming of a Communist order–the thread of exploitation.

Later, Marx and Engels emphasize the changing face of exploitation through history, the "mode" of exploitation that accompanies different historical epochs: "In pointing out that their mode of exploitation was different to that of the bourgeoisie, the feudalists forget that they exploited under circumstances and conditions that were quite different, and that are now antiquated" (508).

However, the polemics in the *Manifesto* are directed against the bourgeoisie–the exploiters of the modern era: "But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few" (498). One relation characterizes the link between the bourgeoisie and the rest of society, the nexus of exploitation. "It [the bourgeoisie] has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom–Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and

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political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation" (487).

Would it be an exaggeration to regard the idea of exploitation as a cornerstone of Marx and Engels's thinking at the time of the *Communist Manifesto*? Do we find in this text an idea that captures the essence of an oppressive system?

Yet the idea of exploitation was a relatively new concept in 1848, at the time of the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. While Marx and Engels's statements sound perfectly understandable–almost commonplace–to the modern ear, then they marked a radically new way of looking at the world. Only with the advent of the new industrial system did the idea of exploitation of one person by another come into currency. Indeed, George Lichtheim (among others) dates the first use of the expression *exploitation of man by man*, to the 1830 publication of *Doctrine de Saint-Simon, Exposition Première Année* by followers of Saint-Simon (1969, 52). In English, the first usage, in the proper sense, cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates to 1844. There may well have been earlier usage in English, but it is fair to locate the introduction of the word to the early nineteenth century. Before its appearance in the cauldron of nineteenth-century working-class politics, *exploitation* was used in a general, nonmoral, nonjudgmental manner, as in, for example, "the exploitation of the farmland" or "the exploitation of raw materials."

While the word *exploitation* came into currency nearly two decades before the publication of the *Manifesto*, the idea undoubtedly germinated for some time before the word's appearance. Writers like David McNally (1993) and Noel Thompson (1984) have made important, detailed studies of how the idea of exploitation emerged in the vibrant working-class press of industrial England and among the early radical thinkers of that time.

But surely McNally is wrong when he states: "Theories of exploitation themselves were not new in the 1820's; throughout many epochs of society one finds prayers, poems, songs and writings that condemn the domination of the rich over the poor" (1993, 109). If we identify exploitation with the domination of the rich over the poor, if we view exploitation as a mere kind of

inequality, we miss the originality of this new working-class thought. Because the industrial system spawned new social relations, new ways were needed in judging them. The idea of exploitation gave the working class a lens for peering deeply into the heart of that system. While that lens could reveal the exploitation of earlier epochs, it remained a tool forged by the early working-class movement.

Early theories of exploitation

The literature on pre-Marxian exploitation theories is scant. Two currents have been uncovered, both informing Marx and Engels's thought in important ways. On one hand, there is the French connection–the writings of Saint-Simon and his followers. George Lichtheim cites Abel Transon, a follower of Saint-Simon, as "making a first attempt to formulate an exploitation theory" (1963, 51). Transon, writing in 1829 in the *Organisateur*, states:

> As the owner of land and capital, the bourgeois disposes of these at will, and does not place them in the hands of the workers, except on condition that he receives a premium from the price of their work, a premium that will support him and his family. Whether a direct heir of the man of conquest, or an emancipated son of the peasantry, this difference in origin merges into the common character I have just described. (cited in Lichtheim 1963, 51)

If Transon's views constitute a theory of exploitation–and they illustrate the difficulty of *identifying* a theory of exploitation–it is assuredly a theory of exploitation-as-extortion. Nonetheless, Transon's thinking recognizes both class differentiation and appropriation, two elements strongly suggestive of the idea of labor exploitation.

The publication of lectures by the followers of Saint-Simon in 1830 brought further elaboration on the idea of exploitation:

> The right of property must be abolished, because, by giving to a certain class of men the chance to live on the labor

> of others and in complete idleness, it preserves the exploitation of one part of the population, the most useful one, that which works and produces, in favor of those who only destroy. (cited in Lichtheim 1963, 52)

The likely author of these words, the Saint-Simonian Saint-Amand Bazard, thus links property to the class-based appropriation of labor. This triad–class, property, and appropriation–became the cornerstone of working-class thought on exploitation.

While Lichtheim dates the first use of the word *socialisme* to Le Roux's *Le Globe* in 1832, Bazard, writing in 1830, anticipates a new world, remarkably prescient of later concepts of socialism:

> Here is the new right, which replaces those of conquest and birth: man does not exploit man any more, but man associated with man, exploits the world given to his powers. [cited in French in Lichtheim 1963, 253, my translation)

Surely it is no accident that the idea of socialism and the idea of exploitation were born nearly simultaneously and were destined to become the core of working-class radicalism. While it would exceed the limits of this paper, one may well argue that the idea of socialism, without recognition of exploitation, is merely radical democracy. And the acknowledgement of exploitation without the advocacy of socialism leads to shallow reformism.

While these ideas emerged in France from Saint-Simon's thoughts on the new industrial order, similar notions brewed in the popular, working-class press and among labor agitators in industrial England. According to Max Beer, the first use of the word
socialist occurred in the *Co-operative Magazine* in 1827 (1957, 152); others date this to 1826. As in France, rudimentary theories of exploitation were emerging concurrently with an ever-sharper image of a new Jerusalem–socialism.

Throughout the early nineteenth century, radical English writers like Charles Hall, William Cobbett, and Robert Owen

criticized the new and powerful industrial system. McNally identifies Godwin's late eighteenth-century writing as invoking class and appropriation, two elements strongly suggestive of a theory of exploitation. He sees Hall as developing it further, viewing it as an exploitative system and not merely a field of individual acts of exploitation. Two factors strongly shaped the early or prototheories of exploitation in England.

1) The emergence of a class-based resistance to the Moloch of capitalism. Class organizations and labor agitators established a popular, working-class press that exposed the evils of the new system and proposed palliatives to its destructiveness. This development spurred a lively and thorough debate on the causes of the growing misery of the working class.

2) The ideological defense of the new industrial system through the medium of classical political economy. Working-class theories of economic injustice and labor exploitation were met by the new thinking that achieved its greatest popularity after Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. They offered clever apologies, maintaining that social justice would flow from selfishness, enterprise, and the market. This influential and carefully argued position forced the advocates of the workers' cause to raise the ideological bar, developing ever more persuasive theories of exploitation.

Anticapitalist thinking in early industrial England thus evolved towards a sharper, more forceful critique of the system. Combining the insights of Thompson and McNally, we can identify three distinct stages in the development of theories of exploitation.

1) Prior to the early nineteenth century, theories of labor exploitation drew largely from precapitalist notions of justice–the moral economy. Notions of fair price, equal exchange, fair shares, or partnership buttress these theories. Exploitation was viewed as a moral evil inconsistent with religious and communal values. To some extent, these theories romanticized feudal relations, mourning their demise.

2) With the popularization of classical political economy (CPE), theories of exploitation were forced to attack its

foundations or incorporate elements of the new thinking. The industrial explosion of the early nineteenth century left an emerging majority of the English population dazed and confused. Relations with the land, the village, the church, and the family were broken, and traditional ways of thinking were swept away. The ideological pillars of CPE–individualism and the market–brought some clarity and understanding to this new era. Most critics of capitalism and most theories of exploitation accepted these pillars, explaining exploitation as imperfect competition, restricted markets, or monopoly. These theories reached their zenith with the works of writers like Hodgskin, Thompson, Gray, and Bray.

(3) While classical political economy supplied powerful analytical tools for understanding the modern economy, it also shrouded its own ideological presumptions. Through this lens, the dark, satanic mills, the squalid, exhausting lives of the workers, and the great upheavals of the economy were made intelligible. On the other hand, the evils felt by the working class were made to appear epiphenomenal. Seen from the vantage point of CPE, the misery and impoverishment of the workers would, in the long run, raise the commonweal. Of course exploitation did not disappear; it merely was rendered invisible. A proper theory of exploitation, then, would have to modify or transcend the powerful science of classical political economy. Marx and Engels accepted this challenge.

Marx and Engels's early thought on exploitation

Prior to their collaboration, neither Marx nor Engels offered anything remotely suggestive of a theory of exploitation. Engels's early work on political economy, "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" (1975) made no reference to the idea of exploitation despite his exposure to the workers' movement in England and his encounter with classical political economy. Late in 1843, Marx began his exile in France. As Ernest Mandel has noted, this period marked "the first contact that he made in real life with the working class and the condition of the proletariat" (1975, 15). He also encountered the socialist intellectual circles of France and began his first earnest study of political economy.

Surely these contacts and studies were decisive in Marx's avowal of communism, a conversion consummated by March of 1844, according to Mandel. Dirk Struik, writing in an introduction to *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, also notes the influence of French socialist ideas and the study of political economy during this period (1964, 16).

We pick up the thread of exploitation with Marx's Parisian notes that make up *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (1975). In the section entitled "Estranged Labor," Marx acknowledges the analytical powers of political economy. Classical political economy exposes the mechanism of the capitalist system, the various roles of the economic actors, and laws of the system's operation. "We have proceeded from the premises of political economy. We have accepted its language and its laws," Marx declares. "On the basis of political economy itself, in its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities" (1964, 106). Thus, for Marx, classical political economy has earned a privileged intellectual stature thanks to its broad explanatory power; one cannot ignore this scientific achievement. But political economy fails to explain certain key notions, merely asserting them as naked facts. These facts–private property and the commodification and "wretchedness" of the workers–cry out for explanation.

The seeds of a theory of exploitation spread from this critique of classical political economy. Marx expresses this shortcoming in the form of an inverse relationship: "The more wealth that workers produce, the less their value as a commodity."

In his own words, "With the *increasing value* of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the *devaluation* of the world of men" (107). Surely, Marx argues, this truth requires explanation; it cannot be left standing as an unadorned fact.

Putting aside the defensibility of the inverse proportion claim (and its relationship to the doctrine of the immiseration of the proletariat), one can nonetheless see the thrust of Marx's argument. For all its power, classical political economy proves shallow, When confronted with the harshness of the producers, the workers' lives, it has nothing to say.

At this point, a theory of exploitation would be welcome, yet none is forthcoming. Instead, Marx develops his well-known theory of alienation. Workers live in desperation and degradation because they are alienated from both the process and the object of production. The plight of the working class, then, springs from a relationship between a worker and the product of his or her labor. In the industrial economy, the worker is alienated from both the process and the product. And both the separation of the product and the coercion of the process constitute this alienation.

But *alienation* is a pallid and impoverished concept, inadequate to explaining the oppressive condition of the working class. Yes, the workers are alienated from their product, though it is not the alienation that constitutes their oppression. Rather, it is the *appropriation* of the product that explains the poverty and impotence of the working classes. While *alienation* marks a separation of the product from its producer, it lacks the moral force contained in the concept of *appropriation.* And it is appropriation that constitutes the conceptual core of exploitation.

This weakness of Marx's theory of alienation is a product of his analysis of the production relation. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* Marx conceives of this relation as one between the producer and his or her product. Indeed, there is virtually no mention of the capitalist (the exploiter). Instead, the key notion is the loss to the worker and not the unjustified appropriation of the product. Where does the product go? What becomes of the worker's effort? Where Marx feels compelled to address these questions, he answers with the abstraction *private property,* a surrogate for the capitalist. We can show the inadequacies of his theory of alienation by contrasting a worker engaged in production for the market, necessitated by the uncertainties of nature, with his or her counterpart engaged by a capitalist to produce for the market. The former experiences alienation of his or her product, though not necessarily exploitation. The latter–through the purchase of his or her labor–experiences exploitation that nests in the purchase and sale of labor, a point that Marx develops brilliantly in his later works. But in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* Marx suffers from an

inadequate conceptual arsenal, limited to Hegelian and Feuerbachean weapons.

Marx and Engels move much closer to a theory of exploitation with their monumental collaboration, *The German Ideology* (1976a). While this work does not develop a *theory* of exploitation, it does demonstrate a profound *understanding* of exploitation, an appreciation of its importance in understanding bourgeois social relations. Interestingly, their critical step away from the influence of German philosophy marked their approach towards a coherent theory of exploitation.

Much of Marx and Engels's thinking on exploitation is contained in a chapter, "Morality, Intercourse, Theory of Exploitation," embedded in the section about Max Stirner, entitled "Saint Max." Many English-language readers overlook or underappreciate this subsection because they know *The German Ideology* from the widely available C. J. Arthur abridgement. This version emphasizes the important and profound critique of Feuerbach, but at the expense of the other sections.

One contemporary anthology by Jon Elster excerpts this important section, but dismisses it as "a critique of the cash nexus, of one-dimensional man and of utilitarian philosophy, not an analysis in the sense of the later economic writings" (1986, 123). While it may not be an analysis, it is a richly suggestive, probing look at the idea of exploitation.

In brief, Marx and Engels's polemic against Stirner centers on his individualism and his utopian egalitarianism. In the chapter entitled "Rebellion," they fault Stirner's leveling notions, noting that "this excess . . . [the surplus], if distributed over the mass of the proletarians, would give each of them a mere trifle and not improve his position in the slightest" (1976a, 387). The vague, but allied egalitarian notion–that every worker should receive his or her "fair" share–is met with scorn. Liberal and social-democratic theories of exploitation make this same mistake, attempting to reduce exploitation to unfairness and inequality. No one doubts that seventeenth-century England was riddled with inequality, but as Carlo M. Cipolla points out, distributing the surplus equitably would have made little difference to the

working people of that time and left the economy in shambles (1994, 32). Indeed, Marx and Engels make a similar point, citing a study of the French economy by Michel Chevalier, though the passage was scratched out of the original manuscript (1976a, 388).

Marx and Engels rebuke Stirner for suggesting that social relations should not be based upon their usefulness. But it is this "usefulness" that permeates bourgeois society. The argument goes something like this:

1. All social relations in bourgeois society are subordinated, in one way or another, to the monetary, commercial relationship.

2. What appear to be noncommercial relations, such as love and altruism, are taken to be masquerades for utility, the "usefulness" of these same relations.

3. These utilitarian relations are actually masquerades for the relation of exploitation.

4. Exploitation consists of a utility relation between agents where one derives benefit from doing harm to another, understood as the Saint-Simonian "exploitation of man by man."

It is not, then, the utility relation that characterizes bourgeois society, but the exploitation relation. In other words, what appears to be the deep structure of the capitalist system, in fact hides an even deeper structure. On analysis, the deepest structure of the system is revealed as exploitation. For example, when we examine the relation between the worker and the capitalist, we may be tempted to see one as using the other. This mutual relation of utility may stand behind what may appear to be friendliness, fellowship, etc. In fact, Marx and Engels argue, this mutual "usefulness" actually masks the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist.

From the surface structure of bourgeois society (all social relations are utility relations), apologists for capitalism derive an ideological defense of the system–utilitarianism. These apologists view human relations through the lens of usefulness and then only see utility as the basis for these relations. If utility is the measure of all things and all people, then, of course, all social relations must reduce to monetary/commercial relations.

According to Marx and Engels, classical political economy and utilitarian theory merged with James Mill. Bentham's wrinkle was to subsume all social relations to utility. Thus, classical political economy emerges as the complete and consistent science of society.

The German Ideology marks another step towards a theory of exploitation. With the difficult but suggestive ideas presented in this text, several constraints emerge:

1. Any theory of exploitation cannot be based upon notions of unfairness or inequality. They fail to capture the full measure of the exploitative relation.

2. Any theory of exploitation must have at its core the idea of gain brought about by using others. This is a return to and a refinement of the earlier, intuitive view of exploitation-as-appropriation.

3. Any theory of exploitation must contend with the formidable science of classical political economy. A theory of exploitation only has value to the working class if it can stand up to the rigors of classical political economy.

Marx and Engels's theory of exploitation

Writing in 1891, Frederick Engels was nearly at the end of a long and productive life. His collaboration with Karl Marx having ended in 1883 with Marx's death, Engels could well take stock of the enormous body of thought constructed by the two revolutionaries. In preparing a new introduction to Marx's 1849 pamphlet, *Wage Labour and Capital*, Engels could find only one formulation that compelled rewriting. While many of the ideas in this early work could be better expressed with the benefit of hindsight, only one later development required incorporation to properly preserve their thought. Engels wrote:

> And for this alteration I owe an explanation. I owe it to the workers in order that they may see it is not a case here of mere juggling with words, but rather of one of the most important points in the whole of political economy. . . .
>
> Classical economics then found that the value of a commodity is determined by the labour contained in it,

> requisite for its production. With this explanation it contented itself. . . .I will only remind the reader, in order to avoid misunderstandings, that this explanation has nowadays become totally inadequate. Marx was the first thoroughly to investigate the value-creating quality of labour and he discovered in so doing that not all labour apparently, or even really, necessary for the production of a commodity adds to it under all circumstances a magnitude of value which corresponds to the quantity of labour expended. . . .
>
> The difficulty over which the best economists came to grief, so long as they started out from the value of "labour," vanishes as soon as we start out from the value of "labour *power*" instead. In our present-day capitalist society, labour power is a commodity, a commodity like any other, and yet quite a peculiar commodity. It has, namely, the peculiar property of being a value-creating power, a source of value, and, indeed, with suitable treatment, a source of more value than it itself possesses. (1969, 143–48)

Thus, to rescue the framework of classical political economy from inconsistency, two facts must be reconciled:

1. Labor is a commodity, bought and sold at its price.
2. When the commodity labor is purchased and employed in the production process, a value greater than the price of labor may come into existence.

The mystery of this unique feature of the commodity labor is solved by Marx's powerful distinction between labor and labor power. When we separate the labor used in the production process, which imparts value to products, from the labor power purchased from the production worker, we will recognize that they can have different values. The cost of maintaining a worker's labor power may be x, yet that same worker's labor, when employed in productive activities, may create a value of $x+y$, a value greater than the cost of the purchased labor power.

Embracing this distinction, we can reconcile classical political economy with the value-creating function of labor. But we

can also ground a theory of exploitation on this distinction. Without the labor/labor power distinction, classical political economy allows, other things being equal, an exchange of equals for equals between free agents. One searches in vain for exploitation when "labor" exchanges at its value. But when we separate labor power from its value-soaked product, we identify a surplus that has no political, juridical, or moral home except through the appropriation of the capitalist. It is precisely with this distinction that we can formulate a theory of exploitation within the framework of nineteenth-century social science, classical political economy. It is precisely with this distinction that Marx was able to reconcile the rigor of the most advanced social science of his day with the cause of the working class.

Pittsburgh

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Emancipation from the Communist Manifesto

Jeffrey R. Kerr-Ritchie

How has the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Marx and Engels 1976; hereafter *MCP*) expanded and restricted the notion of freedom? Our exploration of this question begins with contrasting views of emancipation that preceded the *MCP*. The central part of this essay examines the articulation of emancipation in the *MCP* and the ways in which this both reflected as well as distorted contemporary conditions. We conclude with the link between the *MCP*s vision of human liberation and its challenge in the Marxist tradition. The objectives are threefold: most obviously, to commemorate the 150th year of the *MCP*s publication; to contribute to the continuation of a radical intellectual tradition; and to suggest the roots of the tension over class/race hierarchy in the Marxist emancipatory project. What follows might loosely be called a letter to Marx and Engels informed by a Black Marxist historiography haunted by the spirit of slave emancipation.

The Western intellectual tradition has been dominated by the idea of freedom. Its modern cornerstone was the protection of productive property rights. As John Locke, English philosopher and colonial administrator during the late seventeenth century, put it in his influential *Two Treatises of Government*: "Thus the Grass my horse has bit, the Turfs my servant has cut; and the Ore I have digg'd in any place where I have a right to them in common with others become my property" (Blackburn 1997, 264). This notion of freedom soon became defined as the absence of

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interference with individual rights.[1] In the 1776 *Declaration of Independence* of the North American colonies, "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," rationalized republican rebellion against monarchical intrusion (Spahr 1946, 3). Similarly, the 1789 French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* stated that "Liberty consists in the power to do anything that does not injure others" (Spahr 1946, 9). This individualist liberal spirit permeated nineteenth-century political thought. Its classic expression was located in English philosopher John Stuart Mill's 1859 tract *On Liberty*. "The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it" (cited in Spahr 1946, 213).

Opposing this liberal definition of freedom was a broader understanding of emancipation in which individual rights were held to be contingent upon a collective will. Rather than protecting productive property rights, its major concern was the eradication of obstacles to human self-determination. This alternative definition of freedom blossomed from the symbiosis of enlightened reason and revolutionary transformation from the late eighteenth century onwards. According to French *philosophe* Jean Jacques Rousseau, the principal political right represented a social contract that mediated natural freedom with civil freedom.[2] For the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, individual liberty must be predicated upon universal right whereby "free exercise of thy Will may be able to co-exist with the Freedom of all others, according to a universal Law."[3] For Kant's idealist heir, G. W. F. Hegel, this collective freedom resided in the state as "the ethical whole and the actualization of freedom" (cited in Spahr 1974, 189). In other words:

> the state, or freedom, which, while established in the free self-dependence of the particular will is also universal and objective. The actual and organic spirit (α) is the spirit of the nation, (ß) is found in relation to one another of national spirits, and (γ) passing through and beyond this relation is actualized and revealed in world history as the universal world-spirit, whose right is the highest. (188)

Both private right and public spirit were to be mediated by the constitutional state, the highest form of modern freedom (Anderson 1992, 285–95, 325). The *MCP* emanated out of this broader philosophical understanding of freedom. All those "fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away," by the bourgeoisie promising a tremendous human liberation (487). But the current obstacle to its realization was wage labor. This made the proletariat, rather than Hegel's world spirit of the state, the historical force for the universal emancipation of humankind in which "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (506). The alienation wrought by proletarian slavery provided the historical basis for the emergence of this universal emancipation. According to the *MCP*, the bourgeoisie's subjection of the countryside to towns and cities had freed peasants from the land and the "idiocy of rural life" (488). The peasantry's newly found freedom, however, was as proletarians selling their labor-power in exchange for a cash wage that reduced them to commodities (490). They were now free to market their labor power but also free from older forms of support. These wage proletarians were not only "slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself" (491, 495).

In short, the *MCP* insisted that wage slavery was the modern obstacle to the realization of human freedom for waged workers and society as a whole. The abolition of wage slavery would entail the abolition of bourgeois society because the "proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority" (495).

This linking of proletarian slavery with universal emancipation, however, is conceptually problematic. Why, for instance, must the next epoch *necessarily* be more liberating than its bourgeois predecessor? The *MCP* effectively illustrates the progress of bourgeois over natural, ancient and feudal freedoms. In placing emancipatory hopes in the proletariat, however, it is open to the charge of simply replicating the bourgeois universalist claim that its interests are shared by the majority.

Another problem is the *MCP*'s priveleging of a class-conscious urban proletariat over a class-consciousless rural peasantry in the progression toward greater freedom. (The spirit of the "sack of potatoes" describing the French peasantry in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* (Marx 1979, 187) haunts the *MCP*). The radical historian's notion of a moral economy, however, suggests that machine-breaking and rioting (492), far from reflecting premature disorganized rebellion, were effective strategies of resistance against emerging restraints on older freedoms (Thompson 1971; Hobsbawm 1998a). More recent critiques have attempted to transcend this sack of potatoes/moral economy debate by suggesting that it smacks of a Eurocentric exceptionalism that snuffs out a potentially more internationalist spirit (Chakrabarty 1989, esp. chap. 7; Scott 1976)

Both these critiques might be deemed injudicious because they are the product of hindsight. The same cannot be said, however, regarding the *MCP*s central notion of proletarian slavery. Its meaning, both literally and figuratively, was fiercely debated by contemporaries through the U.S. press in the northern free states. Much like the *MCP*, numerous commentators argued that wage workers were little more than "white slaves" and "wage slaves." Thomas Ingersoll from Westerfield, New York, wrote to New England abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison in March 1847 that "the system of wages, as now established, is a biting, galling enslavement" (Foner and Shapiro 1994, 45). An anonymous contributer to the *Voice of Industry*, organ of the New England Labor Reform League, anticipated the *MCP*'s proletarian slave position in May 1847 writing:

> Wages Slavery is the legitimate offspring of this great Monopoly of the Soil and the instrumentalities of life, only by the enjoyment of which a man can really become free, and without which he becomes a slave, selling himself in the market to the highest bidder, and if there is little or no demand for human bones and sinews–why, he must starve or go to the poor house, and this too in the midst of abundance. (Foner and Shapiro 1994, 12)[4]

Many other contemporaries, however, argued for the profound differences between wage laborers and chattel slaves.

Wendell Phillips, the Boston Brahmin abolitionist, identified "two prominent points which distinguish the laborers in this country from the slaves." The first: "laborers, as a class, are neither wronged nor oppressed: and secondly, if they were, they possess ample power to defend themselves, by the exercise of their own acknowledged rights" (Foner and Shapiro 1994,6).[5] The *Voice of Industry* also drew this distinction but in a trans-atlantic context:

> Even in England the condition of the poorest people is far preferable to that of the American slaves, for they are recognised as men having rights–men to be cared for and legislated for–men who hope to be legislators themselves, and who will by and by have the chance. The American slave is entirely a different being, and though he may have enough to eat and to wear and a place to lay his bones upon after a day's otherwise unrequited toil, yet he is not a *man*, but a *chattel."* (Foner and Shapiro 1994, 53)[6]

The abolitionist *National Era* pointed out ten months before the publication of the *MCP* that all these distinctions could be boiled down to one stark proposition: "*the free working man owns* HIMSELF; *the slave is* OWNED BY ANOTHER" (Foner and Shapiro 1994, 49).[7]

This passionate debate, conducted through the pages of the U.S. northern popular press, was significant because it challenged restrictive definitions of wage laborers as chattel slaves. This challenge was not evident in the *MCP*. Its success, however, lay in Marx's later recognition that white labor could never be free until the emancipation of Black (i.e., slave) labor. Its long-term legacy would be the problem of class/race hierarchy.[8]

The conflation of real, existing slavery with emerging wage labor was compounded by a blind spot in the historical vision of the *MCP*. We are familiar with the famous teleological opening and its clear historical trajectory away from past coercion toward future freedom. While past epochs had been characterized by class struggle, there had been a progressive revelation of freedom from its earliest archaic expression of communalism to modern notions of bourgeois national citizenry (482, 485). This

resembled the inevitable "march of modern history" (507). Such a breathtaking historical panorama, however, overlooked a more immediate surrounding landscape. During the nineteenth century, there was a global shift from unfree to free-labor relations. Between 1771 and 1864, thirty-eight emancipation decrees abolishing serfdom were issued in Europe, climaxing with the freeing of twenty-three million privately held serfs in Russia. Twenty-two of these decrees were passed prior to the publication of the *MCP*, while six sprung from the revolutionary ferment of 1848 (Blum 1978 356, 365, 383). Between 1777 and 1888, through legal statute, revolution, and civil war, some six to seven million African slaves were freed beginning in the northern states of the United States, through the colonized Caribbean and the U.S. South, concluding with the Brazilian empire (Woodward 1978; Blackburn 1988; Scott 1988). Nearly two million slaves had been freed before the *MCP*, while 1848 saw the abolition of slavery in the French West Indies colonies of Guadaloupe and Martinique and the Danish West Indies colonies of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix (Hall 1992).

The complex matrix of this emancipatory process included agricultural improvement, forced labor's inefficiency, emergent ideas of political economy, state crises, and religious abolitionism (Davis 1966; Williams 1944; Blum 1978, 357). But one commonality was class conflict between unfree labor and *ancien régimes* representing a universal link in the age of emancipation (Du Bois 1935; Aptheker 1943). This noisy process of destroying unfree labor was strangely absent from the *MCP*'s teleological summation. Indeed, I would argue that this emancipatory spirit troubled the unfree world far more than the communist specter haunting Europe.

Meanwhile, the epoch of bourgeois freedom troubled traditional social relations. In place of past "numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms," the bourgeoisie "has set up that single, unconscionable freedom–Free Trade" (487). Feudal relations of property had become so many fetters that were "burst asunder" and replaced by "free competition" (489). The result was the "economic and political sway of the bourgeois class," whose bourgeois freedoms entailed "free trade, free selling and buying"

(487, 499). The nature of law, morality, and religion in modern society mirrored this new class with its economic-political interests amounting to "so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests" (494–95, 501).

The *MCP*'s emphasis on this one-dimensional freedom offered a profound critique of existing liberal capitalist ideology. It also represented an overemphasis. Many of these bourgeois freedoms were more than simply illusions. Take religion. This was accurately defined in the *MCP* as an opiate, especially regarding the function of organized religion through the Church (508). But the function of the unofficial religion of oppressed people was more complicated. Numerous Marxist historians and others have suggested that religious nonconformism among the English peasantry, Afro-Christian syncreticism among slaves, and May Day's divine inspiration for forging an international working-class conciousness consecrated a radically different kind of heart-burning among lords, masters, and industrialists (Hilton 1990,143–53; Hill 1993; Genovese 1974; Fick 1990; Turner 1982; Hobsbawm 1998b, 113–27). And what about the law? It certainly defined bourgeois property relations in its own image (*MCP* 501; Horwitz 1977; Thompson 1993, 200–7). But law also became a useful tool for contesting domination by landlords and masters. At the most material level, it was used by oppressed people to defend customary rights. On a more subtle level, it helped detemine the parameters, or field-of-force, for contesting social relations (Thompson 1975; Genovese 1974; Scott 1976). And in contrast to the *MCP*'s notion of bourgeois prejudices, bourgeois law supported the emergence of civic incorporation that protected individual rights as well as those of the propertied bourgeosie (Hobsbawm 1962; E. Foner 1988).

Slave emancipation provides a vivid example of more universal bourgeois freedoms. During the antebellum decades, free-labor ideologues in the U.S. northern states propagated the notion of equality between capital and labor (E. Foner 1969). These ideas were implemented by federal overseers of the transition from slavery to freedom in the U.S. South after 1865. Their mandate was to turn former masters and former slaves into employers and employees whose subsequent social relations

were to be mediated through the cash nexus in the free marketplace.[9] A classic expression of this northern free-labor ideology was penned by Colonel Orlando Brown, the Freedman's Bureau commissioner for Virginia, to the former slaves in the summer of 1865 (see Appendix). Note the emphasis in this address upon self-help, independence, industry, frugality, thrift, schooling, citizenry, progress, and wage payment. Here, freedom was primarily defined as work and not "liberty to be idle." This exemplary tract of bourgeois political economy–or what could be dubbed *A Capitalist Manifesto*–undoubtedly confirmed the *MCP*'s critique of one-dimensional bourgeois freedom.[10]

There were, however, other bourgeois freedoms that challenged traditional unfreedoms. Most obviously, slaves were freed from the domination of former masters. They were free to starve, but were also compensated for their work through either wages or shares of the crop. In contrast to the *MCP*, if their previous exploitation had been "naked, shameless, direct, brutal," it was now hidden, indirect, and harsh (487). Furthermore, former slaves now had legal rights as employees dealing with employers. These were far from the capital-labor equality espoused by free-labor ideology, but neither were they simply bourgeois interests. Also, an older paternalism was undermined by an emergent benevolent state guaranteeing equal rights under the law. These rights were often trampled upon, but civic incorporation did make a profound difference in the lived struggle of former slaves (Foner 1983). Of course, many of these new freedoms fell short of those desired by the freedpeople. These included rights to the land; the protection of institutions like the family, school, and church; and political representation. But the rights of bourgeois freedom were far from illusionary. Indeed, these betokened the beginnings of the freedpeople's real history (Kerr-Ritchie 1999).

I wish to conclude this discussion of the problem of emancipation with a brief look at the nexus between the *MCP*'s vision of human freedom and its legacy in the Marxist tradition. Recall the teleological movement from older cramped forms of freedom towards a greater bourgeois freedom that was

nevertheless one-dimensional. The future aspiration, briefly stated in the "Proletarians and Communist" section of the *MCP*, included: personal work for self-determination; freedom of the law, family, and education from bourgeois control; the liberation of women from being a propertied species; and, the transcendence of national chauvinisms through a universal spirit. This process, initiated by proletarian workers and communist intellectuals, would usher in a real human history freed from past exploitation and alienation (497–506).

Such visions of human freedom have been inspirational to various movements for human liberation. They have also been contested within the Marxist tradition. In the opening decades of the twentieth century, national-liberation movements against European colonialism began to challenge the hitherto hegemonic transformative agency of the proletariat insisted upon by the *MCP*. Political tensions surfaced in the Third International debates on the "Theses on the National and Colonial Question" during the early 1920s. Lenin inisted that world revolution depended on supporting national-liberation movement in colonial countries. M. N. Roy, a prominent member of the Indian Communist Party, challenged the progressive credentials of the nationalist bourgeoisie in colonized countries and proposed instead that "Communist Parties should be organized with the purpose of revolutionising the social character of the movement under the pressure of organised workers and peasants" (1984, 382). While working within the emancipatory parameters of the *MCP*, this broader understanding of anticolonial agency betokened a shift toward the core centrality of peripheral peoples in making world revolution. Its legacy can be directly traced to the anticolonial politics of the Trinidadian Marxist triumvirate George Padmore (1971), C. L. R. James (1963a), and Eric Williams (1944). From the 1930's onwards, both James and Williams insisted that the master/slave dialectic, more than the capitalist/proletarian dialectic, provided the historical basis for revolutionary transformation.

Indeed, James went further in issuing a fundemental philosophical challenge to Marxist emancipation through his linkage of the Hegelian world spirit with individual leadership of

national-liberation movements. In contrast to Hegel's earlier dismissal of Africa's "Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature," James insisted that leaders, in dialectical relationship with anticolonial movements, foreshadowed the future of human liberation. Hegel's older comment on the "Negro" that the "distinction between himself as an individual and the universality of his essential being, the African in the uniform, undeveloped oneness of his existence has not yet attained," was being rendered increasingly obsolete by an emergent Pan-African consciousness struggling for liberation (James 1932, 1963, 1977, 1994; Hegel 1956, 99, 93). Anticolonialism from the 1930s onward symbolized a very different ethical whole.

The modern spirit of freedom haunted other Marxists. The Frankfurt School provided a vision of emancipation as a basis for critiquing real, existing capitalism. Rather than wage labor, its modern obstacles to the realization of human freedom were instrumental reason, personal anomie, and increasingly impersonal domination (Held 1991, 210–11). But the Frankfurt school's self-emancipation project was paradoxical because of its insistence on systematic domination that denied all effective opposition. The *MCP*'s proletarian agent had withered to political impotency. The irony was that these modern obstacles were intellectually articulated at precisely the moment when Black liberation struggles were galvanizing other popular movements during the 1950s and 1960s. In stark contrast to this Marxist intellectual pessimism over a shrivelled proletariat, liberation movements were breaking out worldwide. Some Marxists intellectuals, however, continued to disdain these liberation movements because they failed to fit normative definitions of European revolutionary transformation.[11]

Let us return to our original question. The *MCP* powerfully expanded the notion of freedom especially through its critique of the limited and frozen definition of liberal freedom assumed by modern capitalist ideology. But this critique was also restrictive because of its easy dismissal of all bourgeois freedoms along with its proletarian straitjacketing of liberation struggles. The historian can only explain the present in terms of certain

proclivities. These would have to take into account more universal emancipatory struggles outlined in this essay. This spirit of freedom from the *MCP* can be the only future specter.

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APPENDIX: A Capitalist Manifesto

Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands.
Head Quarter Asst. Commissioner, State of Virginia,
RICHMOND, Va, July 1st, 1965

To THE FREEDMEN OF VIRGINIA.

Having been appointed Assistant Commissioner in the Bureau of Refugees, Freedman and Abandoned Land for the State of Virginia, it becomes my duty to look after all matters that pertain to your welfare, to endeavor to teach you how to use that freedom you have so earnestly desired, and to prevent the abuse of it by yourselves or others.

The difference between your former and present condition is this: formerly your labor was directed, and the proceeds of it taken by your masters and you were cared for by them, now you are to direct and receive the proceeds of your labor and care for yourselves.

Can you do this? is the question you must now answer to the world. Your friends believe you *can* and *will*. The Government and charity will aid you, but this assistance will be of little advantage unless you do this yourselves. To do this you must be industrious and frugal. You have now every inducement to work, as you are to receive the payment for your labor, and you have every inducement to save your wages as your rights in what you possess will be protected. You have now no masters to provide for you in sickness and old age, hence you must see the necessity of saving your wages while you are able to work, for this purpose.

While it is believed most of you will feel the responsibilities of your new condition, and will do all in your power to become

independent of charity and of government aid, it is feared that some will act from the mistaken notion that Freedom means liberty to be idle.

This class of persons, known to the law as *vagrants*, must at once correct this mistake. They will not be allowed to live in idleness when there is work to be had.

You are not to suppose that your former masters have become your enemies because you are free. All good men among them will recognize your new relations to them as free laborers; and as you prove yourselves honest, industrious and frugal, you will receive from them kindness and consideration. If others fail to recognize your right to equal freedom with white persons, you will find the Government, through the agents of this Bureau, as ready to secure to you, as to them, Liberty and Justice.

Schools, as far as possible will be established among you, under the protection of the Government.

You will remember that in your condition as *freedmen*, education is of the highest importance, and it is hoped that you will avail yourselves, to the utmost, of the opportunities offered you.

In the new career before you, each one must feel the great responsibility that rests upon himself, in shaping the destinies of his race. The special care that the Government now exercises over you as a people, will soon be withdrawn, and you will be left to work and provide for yourselves.

It is then of the greatest importance that you take immediate advantage of the protection and assistance now afforded you to place yourselves in a position in which you can do so. All officers and employees of this Bureau will aid you in doing this. If you are in a location where work is to be obtained at fair wages, it is much better for you to remain than to be looking for something better. You must remember that, owing to the unsettled state of the country, work is scarce, and the chances are against finding constant employment at high wages.

Be quiet, peaceable, law abiding citizens. Be industrious, be frugal and the glory of passing successfully from Slavery to Freedom, will, by the blessing of God, be yours.

O. BROWN,
Col. and Assistant Commissioner.

Colonel Orlando Brown's address to the Freedmen, July 1, 1865, located in Box #4056, Louisa County Court House, Virginia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Record Group 105, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

NOTES

1. This modern idea of freedom was often hammered out on the hot anvil of African slavery. See Davis 1966, Morgan 1975, Patterson 1991.

2. "What man loses by the social contract is his natural freedom and an unlimited right to anything he wants and can get. What he gains is civil freedom and ownership of everything he possesses. To avoid error in evaluating this exchange, we must make two clear distinctions: first, between natural freedom, which is limited by the general will; and second, between possession, which results only from force or the right of first occupancy, and ownership, which can be based only on juridical title" (Rousseau 1974, 20).

3. Or: "RIGHT in general, may be defined as the limitation of the Freedom of any individual to the extent of its agreement with the freedom of all other individuals, in so far as this is possible by a universal Law. PUBLIC RIGHT, again, is the sum of the external Laws which make such a complete agreement of freedom in Society possible" (Spahr 1946, 165).

4. Further examples depecting wage laborers as slaves can be found in Foner and Shapiro 1994,7–9, 15, 18–19, 21–22, 22–24, 38–43, 51–54.

5. Phillips's shift in class position from the Boston elite to the abolitionist movement resembled that "small section of the ruling class [that] cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class" (*MCP* 494). C. L. R. James noted the importance of this shift decades ago (although the exact citation has thus far eluded me).

6. It should be noted that the antinomies of human beings and chattel were defined here in terms of freedom as independence versus slavery as dependency.

7. Further examples differentiating wage laborers from slaves are given in Foner and Shapiro 1994, 6–7, 10, 14–15, 24–27, 72–77.

8. Much of the political struggle of the CPUSA from the 1920s onward concerned this problem. See Foner and Allen 1987; Foner and Shapiro 1991; Haywood 1978; Kelley 1990.

9. In other words, the payment and receipt of wages was to replace the masters' whip of coercion and the slaves' resistance to working.

10. For earlier expressions of this slave emancipation and bourgeois freedom in the British West Indies Colonies in the 1830s, see Holt 1992.

11. Just consider the tone of Eric Hobsbawm's "May 1968" essay published in 1969 and just reissued as one of the essays in his Uncommon People (1998c). The social struggle in France gets top billing; the cultural revolt in the United States is summarily dismissed as a "symptom of weakness"; while national-liberation struggles are virtually ignored altogether.

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Immigrants from Turkey in Germany

Gisela Blomberg

It is important to understand why we do not speak of Turkish immigrants but of immigrants from Turkey. The reason is that even if they formally have Turkish nationality, not all of them are Turks, but Kurds, Armenians, Laz, and others. Many different peoples live in the Republic of Turkey.

In this presentation I wish to deal with the following points:

(1) Germany as a country of immigrants
(2) The immigrants' lack of political rights
(3) The foreigners law as an instrument of institutionalized discrimination
(4) Employment, unemployment, and independent business
(5) Racism and hostility towards foreigners in Germany
(6) Reaction of the so-called Turkish community
(7) Responsibilities of the Left

Immigrants in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) are generally treated as second- or even third-class residents, especially when from a country outside the European Union (EU). The view that foreigners are only a temporary workforce is still dominant even if the facts tell just the opposite. Thus immigrants are confronted by institutionalized discrimination in nearly all spheres of life. The fact that they are not recognized as part of German society leads to most of the problems with which immigrants from Turkey are confronted.

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1. The FRG as a country of immigrants despite official denial

A brief review of the development of immigration into Germany can easily show that Germany is a country of immigrants. Its economy andimmigrants. Its economy and especially industry was and still is dependent on immigrant workers. Agriculture, in particular, is dependent on seasonal workers that now come mainly from Poland.

In the late nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century, on one hand, we observe emigration, mainly to the United States. On the other hand, we observe immigration of a large number of Poles to work in the coal mines and Italians to work in southern Germany. In 1920, some 800,000 immigrants were working in Germany.

During fascism, about eight million compulsory/deported workers were exploited in German war production, receiving hardly any compensation.

Immigration into the FRG began with the first recruitment agreement with Italy in 1955, followed in 1961 by an agreement with Turkey, and shortly thereafter by agreements with Morocco, Portugal, and Tunisia. An immigration agreement was signed with Yugoslavia in 1968.

In those days, the main aim of the recruitment was to cover the labor shortages in basic industries such as coal, steel, and in the very low-paid services. Migration was understood in the context of a rotation system. After having stayed for one or two years, these workers were supposed to return to their country of origin and "fresh" immigrants would come. Foreigners, or guest workers, as they were called, were supposed to be a buffer in the labor market.

In the first postwar economic crisis of 1966–1967, we can indeed observe that many unemployed immigrants returned to their country of origin. In the long run, however, the German employers grew dissatisfied with the short-term rotation system, and the period of the stay was prolonged. This was also in the interest of the foreigners themselves, especially in the case of those from Turkey, where the economic and political situation

did not present much opportunity for a successful reintegration upon return.

The recruitment halt in November 1973 was designed to reduce the immigration of new workers, but it did not reduce immigration as a whole, as family members of nonreturning foreign workers began to enter the FRG. There was also an influx of refugees. Of course, in the long run, these immigrants also entered the workforce.

Despite legal complications and rollbacks–the de facto abolition of the right of asylum in 1993, for example–immigration continues even today. The liberal right of asylum guaranteed in the constitution has to be understood as a reaction to Nazi fascism, during which so many Germans had to leave their country. This history seems to have been forgotten, and the constitution was changed. Even the Social Democrats and the Greens, once known for their progressive policies on immigration policy, do not want to rescind the new regulations. Although the reinstitution of the former right of asylum is written in their programmatic papers during the current election campaign [general elections took place on 27 September 1998–ed.], Cem Özdemir, a member of parliament and son of immigrants from Turkey (now with German nationality), asserted that they could cope with the present situation.

If we look at the actual figures of non-German residents in recent years, we observe a steady increase. At the end of 1973, nearly four million foreigners lived in Germany; at the end of 1996, the figure reached 7.3 million, or about eight percent of the entire population.

2. Lack of political rights

Over two million immigrants originating from Turkey live in the FRG; they are the most numerous group. We can say that their sociological structure now resembles that of Germans. More than sixty percent of the immigrants from Turkey have been living in the FRG for more than ten years, and nearly one-third for more than twenty years. There are additional clues for their actual status as immigrants. The consumption pattern has

changed over the last years. Instead of saving as much as possible for return to Turkey, they have become part of the German consumer economy. For example, ten percent of all households have bought the house or apartment in which they live.

Having the same burdens as German citizens (e.g., tax obligations) the people originating from a country outside the EU do not have the right to vote, even on the community level, where the right to vote had to be granted to the EU-foreigners according to the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. Thus more than eight percent of the population in Germany is excluded from political participation.

3. The foreigners law as an instrument of institutionalized discrimination

Reflecting the political atmosphere, the conservative politicians stress that non-Germans are not to have equal rights with Germans; they are still considered as guests in the FRG. Therefore no immigrants law exists, but there is a foreigners law. Its main purpose is to separate the society into different groups and to justify legal discrimination. All sectors of an immigrant's life are influenced by this restrictive law, from residence permits to a possible prohibition of political activity.

Among the two million immigrants from Turkey, only twenty-five percent have a residence permit for the FRG that makes expulsion rather unlikely. This permit can be obtained after an eight-year stay in the FRG if certain conditions are fulfilled (work, housing, etc.) We cannot expect the situation to improve in the near term. To the contrary, last year a compulsory visa or residence permit was introduced for all non-EU children and youth even if they were born in the FRG. In the German naturalization act dating from 1913, ethnic origin is still decisive, not the country in which one lives. For example, Russians having lived in Russia for their entire lives and not knowing any German can claim German nationality if they had a German grandparent. After a lengthy stay in the FRG, generally a minimum of eight years, people can apply for German citizenship but they do not acquire German nationality. About 200,000 people from Turkey now have German citizenship.

Children born in Germany whose parents are from Turkey are foreigners. Instead of being accorded German citizenship automatically, they or their parents are forced to apply for a residence permit. Under the pretext of combatting crime, the deportation of foreign criminals, even of very young criminals, was made easier last year. This summer the Bavarian government wanted to expel an entire family on grounds that their fourteen-year-old son had committed several crimes. The boy's father has been working in a BMW factory for over thirty years. The Bavarian government is of the opinion that the parents are not capable of educating their son properly, that this is proof they are not integrated into German society, and that the costs of public reeducation and resocialization of this foreign offender should not be borne by the German public. Therefore the whole family (even though they have two older children who are very well integrated into society) is to be deported (and this is not the only such case). In July 1998, the court decided that their expulsion is legal. Adult offenders, for example, lose their residence permit after they have served their sentence. Thus immigrants are punished twice.

4. Employment, unemployment, and independent business

As I mentioned earlier, most of the workers from Turkey were employed in the production and low-paid service sectors when they first entered Germany. In those days we could observe the formation of a subproletariat; in general the foreigners got the dirtiest, most dangerous, and most difficult jobs, allowing German workers to take better jobs. This pattern is still valid today, but a general trend has developed among people from Turkey to move away from the production sector to the services. In 1976 some seventy-one percent worked in the production sector, in 1986 this fell to sixty-five percent, and in 1996 it fell further to fifty-two percent.

The official unemployment rate is constantly rising in the FRG. officially there are almost five million people unemployed. Whereas the unemployment rate in the entire workforce is more than ten percent, the unemployment rate among all immigrants is

about eighteen percent and the rate of the immigrants from Turkey is above twenty-two percent, one third being women. These figures, however, include only recipients of unemployment benefits, which means that the actual figures are much higher, a common fact when we deal with unemployment rates in general. Since the recruitment halt in 1973, we are unable to correlate unemployment rates with return migration. Even if people are unemployed, they prefer to stay in the FRG.

There are several reasons for the high unemployment rates of people with a Turkish passport. First, they work in those economic sectors where there has been a tremendous loss of jobs in recent years. In addition, their occupational skill is on the average less than that of German workers. Of course, there is a quite strong competition to find jobs, and employers often prefer to employ Germans or EU residents. If immigrants from Turkey do not have a general working permit, they obtain their working permit or have it prolonged only when there is no German or EU resident to fill the job. This is a very obvious proof of structural discrimination.

In addition to this, the concept of the temporary nature of the stay of foreigners in the FRG is still dominant in all job-training programs. There is, of course, the language problem, at least among the first-generation immigrants. Even today there is still no extensive system of teaching the German language to non-Germans, and without a good knowledge of German, discrimination will continue. There are very few job-training opportunities for immigrants.

The unemployment rate of young people is a serious problem. In general, their education is on a lower level than that of their German peers and they have even less opportunity to acquire occupational skills. But even if they are just as skilled as a German, employers in general prefer to employ German citizens. A recent study showed that for younger members of immigrant families, language knowledge and job skill (or lack of it) are not the only reason for their unemployment.

The young people, in general, want to live in the FRG. Many of them have born there and the others came when they are were still small children. Thus, on the whole, they develop the same

expectations and consumer patterns as their German peers, which means that they are less willing to accept their inferior status than were most of their parents.

For some, one solution to unemployment is to open a small business in Germany. On the one hand, people find this a solution to their actual or threatening unemployment. On the other hand, in doing so, these immigrants are realizing an earlier ambition to open some kind of independent business in their country of origin. This also means that being an industrial worker had been for them only a temporary occupation.

Besides small-scale business in traditional sectors, there are also businesses on a larger scale or of an innovative character, such as travel agencies, textile factories, hardware and software firms, construction companies, and advertising agencies. The owners of these companies are organized in their own employers' association, and together with Turkish doctors and academics they form the upper class of the immigrants from Turkey.

5. Racism and hostility towards foreigners in Germany

Since the decline of the socialist system and the annexation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), there has been a constant rise in ultraright politics, racism, and the fascist movement. Neofascist groups wield a growing influence in both the western and eastern parts of the country. A clear example of the success of an ultraright party was the success of the DVU (German People's Union) in an election in Sachsen-Anhalt, a state in the former GDR in which the unemployment rate is extremely high. Thirty percent of those under thirty years of age voted for this party, which received thirteen percent of the vote and was thereby able to enter the state parliament. Living conditions in neoliberal Germany are leading to an increasing marginalization of younger people in particular. At the same time, the former GDR and thus socialism are being criminalized. Many former leading Party and government officials are in the dock. This is one method to prevent socialism from becoming an alternative to the present capitalist system. It is important to note that racism is not limited to the younger people. After World War II, no

serious denazification took place in the West. On the contrary, many leading Nazis became prominent government officials and businessmen in the FRG.

The ultraright and fascist groups are able to channel in their direction the discontent of the marginalized younger people and to develop rather simple answers to the most urgent problems of our day.

Many people seem to find convincing sentiments such as these: Germans are unemployed because the immigrants are occupying their jobs, foreigners have too many children, foreigners are very sly and want to exploit the welfare state, and immigrants are a threat to German identity so that one has the right to fight against them. But it is not only the ultraright parties that have such antiforeigner politics. The conservative parties as well abuse immigrants and refugees in their present election campaign. The Christian Social Union (the Bavarian sister party of the ruling CDU) defends positions that are not very different from those of the fascist parties: e.g., immigration must be stopped, the right of asylum has to be tightened, immediate deportation of young criminals including all members of their family, knowledge of German as a condition for the right of residence. They are very keen to separate the immigrants into a group of those to be welcomed (such as businesspersons and academics) and another group of those who should not be allowed to remain in Germany (the unemployed, the unskilled, and refugees). Due to the institutionalized character of the discrimination to which Germans are accustomed, they mostly do not question the inferior social and political status of the immigrants. Often, when immigrants claim their political rights, Germans get quite alarmed. A common opinion is that political rights must be reserved only for Germans.

Refugees are not regarded as people who are forced to leave their country as a consequences of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization. They are often seen as potential criminals requiring strict controls. The debate over the right of asylum has been and still is dominated by the intention to reduce the number of non-Germans and to prevent new immigrants from entering Germany.

I think it was no accident that the most violent assaults on immigrants took place during the parliamentary debate and the decision to abolish the de facto right of asylum in 1992 and 1993. In those years, nearly nine hundred houses inhabited by immigrants were set on fire, and nearly 13,000 crimes against non-Germans were reported. The climax, or anticlimax, was the fires that destroyed homes of Turkish families in Mölln and Solingen, where ten persons died and many more were injured. Violent attacks on refugees and immigrants continue; they have became part of daily life.

Even if the majority rejects these violent attacks on foreigners, there is no mass protest against the constantly worsening conditions of the refugees. The official hostility toward foreigners confirms the antiforeigner feelings of many Germans who, in times of economic problems and cuts in social welfare, are willing to blame foreigners for their plight. Immigrants are generally seen primarily as a burden to society and treated accordingly.

6. Reaction of the so-called Turkish community

The arson in Solingen led, in particular, to a change in attitude towards Germans and Germans society. The people from Turkey became increasingly convinced that the Germans were actually hostile to them, and this led to a growing self-isolation of their community. In the course of their migration to Germany, a kind of "Turkish" infrastructure developed, in which one could live without having much contact with Germans. Many young people loudly declared that they would not endure violence, and that they were prepared to fight back.

Turkish nationalists, fascists, right-wing groups, and Muslim fundamentalists exploit this situation by telling people, "You see the Germans do not want you, but we and Turkey are supporting you. You cannot rely on the Germans but only on your compatriots." Such groups have acquired much influence among the immigrants.

The Turkish government and its representatives in Germany as well make use of this situation in order to strengthen the links

between the Turks in Europe and Turkey. Turkish nationalism is part of the official politics not only in connection with their violent oppression of the Kurds. In the Turkish community the government sees a lobby for Turkey's interests inside the European Union. Thus conflicts that are taking place in Turkey, for example, in connection with the Kurds or with different religious groups, are transported to the FRG as well and influence people in their daily life.

7. Responsibilities of the Left

Together with progressive immigrants organizations, the Left has to fight for the following demands:

(1) Full political rights including the right to vote on all levels. Support for the right to vote is not to be seen as an act of solidarity with the immigrants (as is often the case), but as a very important step toward democratization of society. A society that denies basic political rights to eight percent of its population is not a democratic society.

(2) Change of the constitution so that general rights are given to all residents of the FRG, regardless of their race and nationality.

(3) Restoration of the former right of asylum.

(4) Replacement of the discriminatory foreigners law by an act on residency.

(5) Introduction of an antidiscrimination act. The existing laws are ineffectual. Any kind of discrimination must be stigmatized.

(6) Change of the naturalization act of 1913 to replace the decisive character of blood lines with criteria of residence in the FRG. The right of naturalization should be accorded after being resident for some definite period.

(7) Use of all legal possibilities against fascist groups. The existing constitution prohibits the successor organizations of the Nazis. This paragraph is sufficient to ban fascist groups.

A final comment: A very important task of left organizations is to render themselves attractive for the participation of

immigrants in order to overcome the fragmenting of society and to strengthen the democratic forces in the FRG.

The data on immigration and immigrants are taken from *Mitteilungen der Beauftragten der Bundesregierung für Ausländerfragen: Daten und Fakten zur Ausländersituation*, Bonn: March 1998.

Düsseldorf, Germany

REPLACES AD PAGE.

The African American Left at a New Stage

Gerald Horne

The *Communist Manifesto* has been justly hailed for its keen combination of diagnosis and prescription. Its historic importance is manifold, particularly in providing a rationale and roadmap for the overthrow of capitalism, then imperialism. If that were all that it did, this slim volume would have been guaranteed a hallowed role in history; however, we would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge the catalyzing impact of the writings of Karl Marx generally on the struggle for Black Liberation.

This impact has been acknowledged by leading African American thinkers: W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Shirley Graham Du Bois, Claudia Jones, Ben Davis, Langston Hughes, William Patterson, and many others (see Horne 1986, 1988, 1994). As I noted in a recent issue of the journal *Science & Society* (1998), African Americans have long recognized a linkage between their struggle and the revolutionary struggle for socialism. Both at root have involved an assault on the private ownership of the means of production. To wit, Africans were an essential part of private property in the South; the uncompensated expropriation of African slaves was one of the largest uncompensated expropriations of private property in the world before the Bolshevik Revolution of l9l7. In fact, it is difficult to comprehend contemporary white supremacy without reference to the fact that African Americans, particularly in the South, are walking reminders of lost fortunes. Similarly, socialist revolutions inevitably have been compelled to address the question of the private ownership of the means of production.

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What may be less known is that Marxism has had a similar impact on struggles in Africa. If one examines the roster of twentieth-century African leaders ranging from Sékou Touré of Guinea to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana to Agostinho Neto of Angola to Samora Machel of Mozambique to Nelson Mandela of South Africa, one finds the inescapable impact of socialist thought. Likewise, decolonization and the ending of apartheid have left a similar entwined legacy of white supremacy, whereby the former exploiters view their lagging inability to exploit African labor as they did previously as both a totem of lost fortunes and a barrier to overcome.

This impact of Marxism, in other ways, has been easier to recognize on the African continent than in North America, where African Americans have had to contend with an unforgiving right-wing atmosphere that has hampered the flourishing of Marxist thought. Yet the fact remains that there has been a close bond between the development of Marxist and revolutionary thought in Africa and the evolution of an African American Left on these shores.

This nexus was evident as early as the l920s and the dawning of the Harlem Renaissance, a literary and creative revival that reached its zenith in northern Manhattan with the work of such artists as Langston Hughes, Jessie Fauset, Zora Neale Hurston, Paul Robeson, Nella Larsen, Rudolph Fisher, Shirley Graham, and Eric Walrond (Huggins 1995; Hutchinson 1995). As Tony Martin has shown in his unjustly neglected book *Literary Garveyism*, however, this artistic revival took place on both sides of the Atlantic–not just in New York City but in Africa and London as well (1983).

The Harlem Renaissance was not the first occasion when there arose a noticeable linkage between developments in North America and southern Africa. The urban areas we now call New York City and Cape Town were founded within years of each other by Dutch settlers in the seventeenth century. At times Dutch settlers brought their African slaves with them as they plied the waters between these two Atlantic metropoles.

As Jeffrey Bolster points out in his useful new book that details the historic role of Black sailors (1997), and as Julian

Scott points out in his l986 Duke University dissertation that concerns the same subject (1986), Blacks on ships have been in and out of port cities from New York City to Cape Town for hundreds of years now. They were not only a visible example of the heavy influence of a transnational Black working class on the life of Africans generally but, as well, they were a communication network transmitting frequently revolutionary messages of revolt. As Scott shows, this tendency was most clearly in evidence during the time of the revolution against slavery in Haiti. These Black sailors were also the nucleus of a transnational Black Left.

Many of them settled in New York City and Cape Town and became vanguard forces. Some of you may be familiar with Ferdinand Smith, the Jamaican-American Communist who came to lead the National Maritime Union before being deported back to his homeland during the Red Scare of the l950s; but even before the advent of Ferdinand Smith, there were many unheralded sailors who came to play a leading role in the political life of Cape Town and New York City in the nineteenth century.

Of course, the twentieth century is the era that has witnessed the full flourishing of this transnational Black Left.

It is striking that the Communist International at times conflated the struggles of Africans in North America and those in South Africa (Roux 1964). Many of you recall the epochal debates in the Comintern, particularly those of l928 when it was determined that self-determination for the Black Belt South would be the primary slogan of the CPUSA (Foner and Allen, 1987). This decision ignited a historical controversy that has yet to abate as some have cited this decision as exemplary of an alleged imposition of the heavy hand of Moscow on the African American struggle; ignored in this discourse is the fact that examples of African nationality and, indeed, nationhood, had been clearly exhibited by African Americans during the efflorescence of the Garvey Movement–to this day one of the largest movements ever assembled by African Americans. And often neglected is the fact that this was perhaps the largest transnational African movement, in that Garveyite units were organized in Central America, the Caribbean, Western Europe,

and, most notably, southern Africa, where it took the form of an anticolonial movement in colonies like Namibia. The point is that the idea of an African nationality was not an export from Moscow. As is well known, most Africans in North America referred to themselves as Africans until the idea of forcibly repatriating them to Africa became more popular with the rise of the so-called colonization movement, which was led by Euro-Americans. Thus, one notes that the Abyssinian Church in Harlem, which was established in the early part of the nineteenth century, and various religious denominations, e.g., AME and AME Zion, have Africa in their titles (Magubane 1987).

Moreover, the slogan of self-determination for the Black Belt, as I point out in my book *Black Liberation/Red scare: Ben Davis and the Communist Party* (1994), was not seen and was not projected as a detriment to the ongoing struggle for equal rights, as the struggles around Scottsboro, Angelo Herndon, and the campaigns that led to the Black Communist Ben Davis being elected to office amply demonstrated.

Similarly, concerning South Africa, the Comintern and the South African Communist Party came to the conclusion that raising the slogan of a Native Republic was advisable; this determination set the stage for what today's SACP calls the national democratic revolution, an essential part of the two-stage revolution that will lead to socialism. Just as this slogan of self-determination for Africans was pilloried in North America, it was also condemned in South Africa and viewed by some as an imposition from Moscow. This was a South Africa where earlier in the l920s radical miners had gone on strike and come into violent conflict with the government under the slogan, "Workers of the World United for a White South Africa."

It should be pointed out that a number of non-Soviets like Sen Katayama of Japan, a revolutionary who had attended Fisk University and had organized Communist parties in his homeland, along with Mexico and the United States, had a decided influence on these Comintern decisions. Whatever its flaws, the Comintern decision implicitly recognized that too many on the left saw a one-to-one relationship between "whiteness" and "maleness" on the one hand and working class

on the other. The decision to push for self-determination–a Native Republic, as it was called–helped to disrupt this conflation and set the stage for the emergence of an articulate and assertive African Left that was to rock both North America and South Africa in the coming decades.

One can better evaluate these Comintern decisions by comparing their handiwork to that of their counterparts in South Africa and the United States. In the latter nation, the Democratic Party was the party of Jim Crow and Dixiecrats; it was the party that was once proud to claim the Ku Klux Klan as its de facto armed wing. The Republicans were little better, harassing the few remaining GOP officials, like Ben Davis Sr. (father of the Communist leader), placing them behind chicken wire at their conventions in a blatant example of Jim Crow. If anything, the major parties of South Africa were worse.

To be sure, the Comintern did make some serious errors when it came to South Africa; in the l930s Lazar Bach was dispatched there and, by most accounts, his influence was rather baneful, leading to the expulsion of too many cadre. Still, the l930s was the decade that saw the party in South Africa being "Africanized," a development that has continued to this day.

In North America, the l930s also saw a large influx of Africans into the Communist Party, including postal worker James Ford, attorneys like Ben Davis and William Patterson, and activists like the Trinidadian émigré Claudia Jones. The influence of these Africans was ratified when Davis succeeded the Reverend Adam Clayton Powell Jr. in the elections for the New York City Council in l943; he was re-elected by a large margin in l945.

The Communist Party in South Africa also grew dramatically during the first half of the l940s. Africans like Moses Kotane and J. B. Marks came to play a leading role in the party.

The l940s was a period of advance on both sides of the Atlantic, not least because anti-Communism was on the defensive because of the herculean role of the USSR in vanquishing fascism in Germany and Italy. However, l945 proved to be a high-water mark for the Black Left in both South Africa and the United States, for the Cold War developed rapidly thereafter.

The Cold War provided a rationale for neo-Nazis in South Africa to seize power in l948 and impose apartheid in the name of fighting Communism. Washington decided to go along with this racist advance in the name of anti-Communism. As a result, the Communist leader Govan Mbeki–father of Mandela's heir apparent, South Africa's current deputy president, Thabo Mbeki–and a host of other leading figures, including Mandela, were imprisoned. The already parlous conditions of the African working class deteriorated; real income declined, neighborhoods were bulldozed in the name of the Group Areas Act and apartheid; chemical, biological, and conventional military warfare was conducted against Africans of all classes.

In the United States, a similar process unfolded. Ben Davis was unceremoniously ousted from the New York City Council in l949–perhaps illegally; he spent a good deal of the l950s in prison as a result of violating the Smith Act, which fundamentally made the advocacy and teaching of Marxism-Leninism illegal. He was not alone. Claudia Jones and Ferdinand Smith were deported; Jones wound up in London, where she quickly became a leader of that nation's burgeoning African-derived community.

Unlike South Africa, however, the United States was a leader in the titanic conflict that was known as the Cold War and was forced to trumpet its allegedly democratic credentials as opposed to the alleged tyranny of the USSR. Thus, the United States was able to set back the domestic struggle against white supremacy, but was not able to subvert the global struggle against this pestilence. As a result, white supremacy continued to suffer setbacks during the Cold War, although the African American Left, which had been one of its staunchest foes, was largely under wraps. The Cuban Revolution of l959 is a good example of this global struggle; one of the first acts of the new regime was to bar the kind of Jim Crow that its former neocolonial master, the United States, demanded. This process came full circle in l975 when Havana dispatched thousands of troops to Angola to prevent apartheid South Africa from taking control of that nation.

Thus, even during the Cold War, when the African Left in the United States and South Africa was largely on the defensive,

there continued to be significant victories over white supremacy, as evidenced by *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, in l954; the desegregation of public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, in l957; and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of l964 and the Voting Rights Act of l965. These were victories of African Americans and their allies in the United States, but also victories of an international movement against white supremacy that pressured the United States to live up to its "democratic" rhetoric. A book by Mary Dudziak to be published next year by Princeton University Press will provide further ratification of this notion.

Nevertheless, although the African Left on both sides of the Atlantic suffered setbacks during the Cold War, it is evident that these forces in the United States may have suffered the most serious long-term damage. During the Cold War it was easy to imagine in the United States that victories over white supremacy could come without a vibrant Left; all one needed was a sympathetic U.S. Supreme Court and a talented corps of attorneys (in fact, in watching on CSPAN the response to Justice Clarence Thomas's remarks before the National Bar Association meeting, a number of otherwise progressive attorneys said as much); in other words, one did not need to develop a global movement of solidarity, as our Southern African brothers did masterfully. Martin Luther King Jr. was aware of this dilemma; valiantly he tried to keep on his staff Jack O'Dell, a left-wing trade unionist and editor at *Freedomways* magazine, which Shirley Graham had helped to found. But the Right and President Kennedy himself demanded that he break ties with O'Dell, Stanley Levinson, and others with ties to the organized Left. King was forced to comply; yet by the end of his life he was not only crusading against the anti-Communist war in Vietnam, he was also realizing with sobriety that the stifling of radicalism meant that African Americans had gained the right to sit at a lunch counter but had not gained the economic right to a living that would guarantee they could pay the bill. This was a direct outgrowth of the fact that the squashing of the Left took place as the radical vision of the Black Left was being handcuffed.

Meanwhile, in South Africa, the Left suffered grievously during the Cold War. The Suppression of Communism Act of l950 forced the Communist Party to disband officially, though it went underground unofficially. Mbeki, as noted, was jailed; Joe Slovo, a comrade of Lithuanian Jewish descent, was forced into exile, where he wound up heading the armed wing of the African National Congress. Ruth First was murdered by the apartheid authorities, who sent a package to her that exploded when she opened it.

The ANC, however, unlike the NAACP, refused to break its alliance with the Party or with militant trade unionists in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the equivalent of the CIO in the United States.

All the while, the apartheid authorities received significant support from their counterparts in Washington. After the crumbling of the Berlin Wall and the ouster from influence of Communist parties in Eastern Europe, however, it became more difficult for the apartheid authorities to pose as staunch defenders of the Cape sea lanes against Communism. Hence, ninety days after the Berlin Wall fell, President F. W. de Klerk of South Africa felt compelled to unban the ANC and SACP and free Nelson Mandela.

Even before then, the apartheid authorities were on the defensive. In one of the most significant defeats suffered by white supremacy in the past five hundred years, a joint detachment of Cuban, Angolan, and SWAPO (of Namibia) troops soundly defeated the apartheid military at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola in l988. This led directly to the independence of Namibia in l990. Indeed, if the apartheid authorities had not chosen to negotiate at that point, it is possible that the Cuban, Angolan, and SWAPO troops would have marched from southern Angola into Namibia, then on to Pretoria itself.

The elections in South Africa in l994 led to a rousing victory for the ANC-SACP-COSATU alliance. Today, approximately twenty percent of those sitting in parliament are Communist Party members, and about sixty percent are ANC members. South Africa has developed one of the most progressive

constitutions in the world and is particularly advanced on the question of gay and lesbian rights.

Meanwhile, in the United States, the collapse of the USSR has given sustenance retrospectively to what were once thought to be the most baseless anti-Communist clichés. As a partial result, the right wing in this nation has been able to tighten its grip on the United States Congress and the Supreme Court, not to mention the press. Victories African Americans thought were secure, e.g., the Voting Rights Act and affirmative action, are now under severe attack.

In sum, it seems that the collapse of the USSR has had a differentiated impact in the transatlantic context.

However, the Black Left in the United States has not been resting dormant. June l998 witnessed the organizing of the Black Radical Congress in Chicago; almost two thousand delegates from all corners of the nation, along with a hefty representation from the African diaspora, gathered to hammer together an ambitious program of struggle.

Consonant with the tradition of Ferdinand Smith, there was a significant working-class orientation in the Black Radical Congress program. This should not be deemed surprising since it remains true that over ninety percent of the African American community is working class and within unions like AFSCME, SEIU, the UAW, USWA, there are vibrant and progressive Black members.

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On Historical Materialism

Robert Steigerwald

Historical materialism is a component of Marxist philosophy. It is the science of society answering questions about the laws of historical development. It is the basis of the other social sciences.

Before historical materialism, social development was explained with the help of such natural factors as geography, biology, and race, or with reliance on idealist approaches, especially involving the ideas or feelings of prominent personalities, or "great men." Historical materialism brought about a fundamental revolution in thinking about society and history.

Marx singled out the economic sphere from the different spheres of social life. He saw that the relations of production are the principal social relations ultimately determining all other social relations. In all human societies, the method of obtaining the means of livelihood constitutes the basis for establishing the relations with which people enter into the process of production. Historical materialism sees these relations as the foundation, or real basis, of every society. On this basis arises a political, legal, cultural, and ideological superstructure with different forms of social thought.

Each system of production relations arising at a definite stage in the development of the productive forces is subordinated both to general laws common to all socioeconomic formations and to particular laws inherent only in a specific one as it arises, develops, and passes over into another socioeconomic formation. The actions of people within such a formation are then summarized as actions of masses of people. In a class-structured society,

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class actions are necessary to realize the pressing requirements of social development.

Historical materialism does not deny the role of political and other institutions or organizations, nor does it deny their retroactive influence on the material basis. Historical materialism recognizes the great role played by people, classes, parties, consciousness, and organizations–in brief, the great role of the subjective factor. It is opposed to fatalism and voluntarism: people are the makers of their history, but they cannot do it of their own will. Each new generation acts under definite objective conditions that have been formed earlier. These conditions open up various possibilities.

Let us look at some laws common to all societies.

Historical materialism says that people must first have the possibility to eat and drink, to clothe themselves, and to have housing before they can work in the fields of civilization and culture, politics, religion, etc. It is clear whatever motivates people to act must already be in their minds. Does that mean that ideas are the ultimate moving force of our activity? If that were so, how can we understand those situations in which large masses of people have worked for humanitarian ideas such as some Christian ideas, for example, but did not win? It is evident that ideas are powerful only if other factors, nonideal ones–that is, material factors–are conducive to their realization. Therefore we have to shape these nonideal factors that underlie the realization of the ideal process. There exist only four groups of such material factors: the geographic-climatic factor; the biological factor; the demographic factor; and, finally, the factor of the production of the material conditions of social life.

Of course, the influence of geographic-climatic and biological factors was especially great in the early period of human existence, but did not undergo substantial change as a whole over the thousands of years during which society underwent rapid development. For example, during this time we witnessed the transformation from the primitive communal system to slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. Moreover, we will find all these systems under different geographic-climatic and biological conditions. That which is changing slowly cannot be responsible for

the rapidly changing societies that exist under these different conditions. The demographic factor cannot be the ultimately decisive one either, because each of these different societies exists under a variety of different demographic conditions. So we must conclude that the common law of societal development must be based on the recognition of the production of the material conditions of social life as the ultimately determining factor.

Does real history establish the validity of historical materialism?

At the end of 1847, Marx and Engels predicted in the *Communist Manifesto* that capitalism would become the ruling system all over the world with the result that the class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would take center stage in this period. At the same time they predicted the establishment of a world market.

They were absolutely correct. When they were writing this, industrial capitalism was firmly established only in England; it was beginning in Germany, France, Italy, and some parts of North America. Major areas of the world, such as Africa, were blank spots in the atlas at that time. Japan was a closed land until U.S. gunboats opened it for capitalism in 1852.

In 1871, Marx analyzed the Paris Commune. He wrote that it was important that the Commune leaders receive only the wages of a highly skilled worker. Otherwise the danger would arise that careerists and other socially unhealthy persons would infiltrate state power. We have seen the proof of this in the socialist countries. Marx was again right.

In 1875, criticizing the social-democratic Gotha Program, Marx discussed the fundamentals of the social relations of production and distribution in a socialist society. After the October Revolution, the Communists, under Lenin's leadership, began with this exact orientation.

At the end of his life, Engels predicted that the war of the future would be a world war, and he made projections about the tremendous destructive power of the weapons in this war–the world wars of our century proved this to be so. Engels predicted correctly.

In 1907, the Second International held a big conference in Stuttgart. It declared that there was danger of war arising out of the conflicts among the imperialist states over the Balkans and colonies in Africa. Actual history showed that was a correct estimation.

In 1914, when World War I broke out, the masses supported the war; the German emperor was able to ignore political parties. Karl Liebknecht answered that the main enemy was inside Germany and the correct position is not peace in the castle, but civil war. And Lenin urged: Change the war from an imperialistic one into a civil war against our own ruling classes, turn your weapons against them. Some years later the masses learned that Lenin and Liebknecht were right.

In 1932, we had presidential elections in Germany. The Social Democrats said: Let us elect Hindenburg; he will protect us from Hitler. But Ernst Thälmann declared: Voting for Hindenburg is voting for Hitler, and voting for him means war. Who was right here?

The day after Hitler became chancellor, the newspaper of the German Communists wrote: Now that the Nazi party is ruling, they will make war against the Soviet Union.

One year later Stalin declared: If anyone wants to put his pig snout into our Soviet garden, he should not be surprised that on the day after such a war some kingdoms in Eastern Europe will no longer exist.

In March 1939, Stalin stated that World War II had begun. it encompassed five hundred million people. He singled out the Japanese aggression against China, Italy's against Ethiopia, and the Hitler-Mussolini-Franco war against the Spanish nation.

And finally: How did German capitalism itself behave when appropriating the German Democratic Republic? Its main concern was about property–as Marx and Engels had written in the *Communist Manifesto* in their discussion of fundamental social change. And they dealt with the second matter as Marx and Engels would have predicted: they destroyed the political superstructure of socialism.

Why was it possible that such very different persons were able to make such accurate predictions in such different

situations? The only common position they had was the instrument for analyzing the situation: historical materialism.

Nevertheless, this conception is under attack. If the existence of historical laws can be negated, then scientific socialism would also be negated. Therefore the discussion of historical materialism is a cornerstone in the present great struggle to deny the possibility of an alternative to capitalism.

When in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the strength of the bourgeoisie had grown to the point where it desired to overpower the old society, the problem of history and historical thinking became the spirit of the age in all fields of research, including philosophy. Of importance were not only the flow of historical facts, but also the question of whether there were hidden laws behind history. Thus began the modern philosophy of history; Montesquieu, Voltaire, Vico, Herder, and Kant worked on these problems.

Kant especially wanted to solve the following problem: How can it be possible that human beings, who are, on the one hand, natural beings subject to the powerful natural laws discovered by Newton, are, on the other hand, free to make history (in the background this included, especially, revolution)? Kant was not satisfied with his own solution of the problem and wrote: Just as Newton and Kepler found the leading path for the study of nature, the man will come who will find the leading path for the study of history. The man did come!

The main area of current ideological struggle in connection with historical materialism is a new debate between historical materialism and the philosophy of constructivism (I see it as a particular problem in Europe). The constructivist position is not homogeneous. Some versions of it are often idealist; others can be connected with materialism. I think we need clarity on this problem.

A second area concerns the relation between some new theories and hypotheses in the natural sciences and philosophy–these problems are not only new for materialism.

A third area is the debate about the role of philosophy, because the claim is made that with the success of the natural sciences, philosophy is not needed. Some Marxists give the

impression that the summation of the results of modern natural science would make a modern kind of natural dialectics. This discussion deals with the status of philosophy in relation to the specific sciences.

And once again some Marxists are debating the relation between the methods of philosophy and its contents and asserting that the method of Marxism is its essence, not the contents reached with the help of it. But can a method be correct if all its results are useless or senseless?

I will only speak about some problems concerning the relation between materialism and modern natural science.

Older problems exist in connection with the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics. New problems concerning materialism and modern natural sciences arise from the theories of dissipative structures, of chaos, of catastrophes, of synergetics, and some new problems of neurophysics.

In regard to historical laws, the initial conceptions in these new areas have a common point. Developing systems can reach a distinct point–different in the different conceptions–at which these systems became unstable. This is caused by energy processes. The factor that stabilized the system is "damaged," and therefore these systems begin to fluctuate while "seeking" another factor of stability. Some types of systems seem to be free to "choose" a new factor of stability, but it is not possible to predict which factor they will "choose." It is at this point that some critics of historical materialism argue that in history such freedom also prevails, rather than historical law. It is therefore not possible to say that capitalism is doomed to die and that socialism will replace it, they argue

Within the framework of a scientific method, it is wrong to transfer laws of natural evolution to social evolution. This is a throwback to the historical thinking at the time of the Enlightenment. We recall the harmful consequences resulting from the misunderstanding of Darwin, a result of which was the transfer of his concepts to human society and history in the form of social Darwinism. The mistake was to ignore the difference between nature and society. In nature we have no subjects with consciousness and interests, no classes, no class struggle. We now

have the experience of the process that led to the destruction of the European socialist countries. Did they have the freedom to elect a better socialism? This was a large number of states with quite different situations and leading persons. In all these states the path led to the brutal modern capitalist system.

I think that these are sufficient reasons for rejecting such criticisms of historical materialism. Refuting the arguments following from developments in the field of neurophysics is not so easy. Obviously, adherents of materialist gnoseology have to correct some aspects of the theory of reflection. I tried to do this in my book, *Abschied vom Materialismus? Materialismus und moderne Wissenschaft* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein Nachfolger, 1994) [Farewell to Materialism? Materialism and Modern Science]. In this short paper it is not possible to speak about that problem.

In conclusion, the main subject of this contribution is the historical philosophy of Marxism, namely, historical materialism. Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto* was the first book from which the most important theses of Marxism evolved. A sober analysis of real social processes shows that Marxism is the real scientific theory of our time.

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ABSTRACTS

***Robert Steigerwald,* "The Socialist Goal of the German Communist Party"**–Because of the close ties that had existed between the people and Communist parties of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, the collapse of socialism in the GDR and the subsequent absorption of that nation into the FRG had a particularly negative effect on the attractiveness of the idea of socialism in Germany. The author discusses a document adopted by the German Communist Party on how the idea of socialism must be presented in Germany today. The document discusses the positive and negative experiences of the GDR, some characteristics of the strategy for socialist transformation in Germany, and the features one might expect in a future socialist Germany.

***Hermann Kopp,* "Critical Aspects of Current Class Struggles in Germany"**–The author, editor of the *Marxistische Blätter,* discusses how the collapse of the USSR and the German Democratic Republic impacted on the strength of the German Communist Party (DKP) in what was formerly West Germany and on the German Left generally. He describes the efforts of the DKP to overcome the consequences of the severe weakening of the Party under the conditions that now exist in Germany, and efforts to rebuild Communist influence in the working class and among the youth. He notes that the relationship of the DKP to the USSR and the GDR, which was once the decisive factor that distinguished the DKP from other segments of the Left, is now only of historical interest and should not be an obstacle to the formation of alliances among the opponents of big capital.

***Wadi'h Halabi,* "The *Communist Manifesto* and the World Economy after World War II"**–In the *Manifesto,* Marx and Engels pointed to increasingly destructive capitalist crises. Their analysis was confirmed in the hundred years following 1848. But relative stability seemed to develop in the forty years after World

War II. Theories arose even among some Marxists that capitalism may have developed mechanisms to regulate its cycles. This paper disputes those theories. The secret of relative postwar stability lies in a class analysis of a single global economy. It is only in the complex interrelation and mortal struggle between the world's antagonistic social systems–capitalist and working class–that we can develop a Marxist assessment of the postwar economy. States based on working-class rule, including the USSR and China, were fundamentally noncyclical and helped stabilize the global economy, while decaying capitalism destabilized them and the global economy. We have currently entered a historical period like 1907–1923 or 1929–1949.

***David Eisenhower,* "Lenin and the Rentier State"**–Arguing that globalization is the contemporary euphemism for imperialism, the author discusses the current surge in speculative capital in terms of Lenin's analysis of rentier capital. The international expansion of activity in the nonproductive financial sphere particularly exacerbates the burden borne by the working classes of the developing countries, as Wall Street attempts to salvage its speculative investments at their expense.

***Greg Godels,* "Marx, Engels, and the Idea of Exploitation"**–Until the nineteenth century, the term *exploitation* was used in its nonjudgmental, nonmoral sense. Early attempts to explain the character of exploitation of labor by industrial capitalism at first hinged upon lack of equality in the laborer-capitalist relation. The early attempts by Marx to deal with the concept of exploitation focused on the process of alienation. It was only after he introduced the labor/labor power distinction in the value-creating process that a proper theory of exploitation could emerge. With this distinction it became possible to identify a surplus that has no political, juridical, or moral home except through the appropriation of the capitalist.

***Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie,* "Emancipation from the *Communist Manifesto*"**–This paper explores the question of how the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* has expanded as well as restricted our historical understanding of freedom. Contemporary

definitions of emancipation and their relationship to the *Manifesto* are examined, then the articulation of emancipation in the *Manifesto* and the ways in which it reflected as well as distorted existing historical conditions. The paper concludes with the link between the *Manifesto*'s vision of human liberation and its legacy in the Marxist tradition. This paper commemorates the 150th anniversary of the *MCP*'s publication, contributing to the continuation of a radical intellectual tradition. Most important, the objective has been to trace the origins of the tension over class/race hierarchy in the Marxist emancipatory project.

***Gisela Blomberg*, "Immigrants from Turkey in Germany"**– West Germany recruited workers from Italy, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, and Yugoslavia on a large scale from 1955 to 1968. Two million immigrants from Turkey are among the eight percent of the current German population that is denied rights accorded immigrants from European Union countries. They face high unemployment, racial violence, and other hardships. The German Left is now engaged in a wide-ranging struggle for immigrant rights that includes the right to vote, removal of the "German blood" requirement for native-born citizenship, revision of the naturalization laws, constitutional reform to extend equal rights to all residents of Germany, antidiscrimination laws, and decisive measures to end neo-Nazi attacks on immigrants.

***Gerald Horne*, "The African American Left at a New Stage"** –The author traces the linkages between the freedom struggles of African Americans and the revolutionary struggle for socialism. He notes a similar impact in connection with struggles in Africa and the subsequent linkages between the struggles in Africa and the United States, a linkage also made by the Comintern. He argues that the attitudes promulgated by the Garveyite movement refute the charges that the concept of African American nationality was imposed upon the U.S. Left by Moscow. Horne traces the parallels between the influx of African Americans into the Communist Party in the 1930s and 1940s and the influx of Africans into the South African Communist Party in the 1940s. The African Left on both sides of the Atlantic suffered setbacks during the Cold War–heavier in the United

States. The refusal of the ANC to break its ties with the South African Communist Party and the trade unions provided a basis for its subsequent victory. The Black Radical Congress convened in Chicago in 1998 is a step toward a resurgence of progressive African American struggle with a working-class orientation.

***Robert Steigerwald,* "On Historical Materialism"**–Before historical materialism, social development was explained through factors such as geography, biology, or race. The author shows why none of these factors could have been decisive and demonstrates the validity of the historical-materialist view that the production of the material conditions of social life is ultimately the decisive factor. Without going into detail, the author outlines a number of areas in which historical materialism is coming under attack today. The most important of these is the debate between historical materialism and constructivism. Other areas are generally associated with developments in natural sciences and the philosophy of science, even to the point of questioning whether scientific advances make philosophy unnecessary. New problems concerning materialism and modern natural science arise from the theories of dissipative structures, chaos theory, catastrophe theory, and synergetics, where the challenge to historical materialism results from the failure to distinguish differences between the sphere of nature and society. Developments in neurophysics, however, present a new challenge to historical materialism that needs analysis.

ABREGES

***Robert Steigerwald,* « L'objectif socialiste du Parti communiste allemand »** – En raison des liens étroits qui avaient existé entre le peuple et les partis communistes de la République Démocratique d'Allemagne (RDA) et de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne (RFA), l'effondrement du socialisme en RDA et son absorption subséquente dans la RFA, a eu un effet particulièrement négatif sur l'attrait de l'idée du socialisme en Allemagne. L'auteur discute un document adopté par le Parti communiste Allemand sur la manière dont le socialisme doit

aujourd'hui être présenté en Allemagne. Le document discute les expériences positives et négatives de la RDA, ainsi que quelques caractéristiques de la stratégie pour une transformation socialiste en Allemagne, enfin quels seraient les traits distinctifs d'une Allemagne socialiste future.

***Hermann Kopp,* « Les aspects critiques de l'actuelle lutte des classes en Allemagne »** – L'auteur, rédacteur du journal *Marxistische Blätter,* discute dans quelle mesure l'effondrement de l'Union Soviétique et de la RDA, a eu un fort impact sur la force du Parti communiste allemand (DKP) dans ce qui était autrefois l'Allemagne de l'Ouest et la gauche allemande en général. Il décrit les efforts du DKP pour surmonter les conséquences du sévère affaiblissement du Parti communiste dans le contexte actuel de l'Allemagne ainsi que ses efforts pour rétablir l'influence communiste parmi la classe ouvrière et la jeune génération. Il souligne que les relations du Parti communiste allemand avec l'Union Soviétique et la RDA, qui étaient autrefois l'élément décisif qui distinguait le Parti communiste Allemand des autres courants de la gauche, ne présentent maintenant qu'un intérêt historique, et ne devraient pas constituer un obstacle à la formation d'alliances entre ceux qui s'opposent au grand capital.

***Wadi'h Halabi,* « Le *Manifeste du Parti communiste* et l'économie mondiale après la seconde guerre mondiale »** – Dans le *Manifeste du Parti communiste,* Marx et Engels ont attiré l'attention sur des crises capitalistes de plus en plus destructrices. Leur analyse s'est confirmée pendant la centaine d'années depuis 1848. Mais une stabilité relative semblait se développer pendant les quarante années qui suivaient la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. Certains marxistes allaient même jusqu'à soutenir des théories, selon lesquelles le capitalisme aurait développé des mécanismes pour réguler ces cycles. Cet article conteste ces théories. Le secret de la relative stabilité de l'après guerre réside dans l'analyse de classe d'une économie mondiale unique. On ne peut développer une évaluation marxiste de l'économie de l'après guerre qu'à travers l'interrelation complexe et la lutte exacerbée des systèmes sociaux antagonistes

du monde : les capitalistes et la classe ouvrière. Les états basés sur l'autorité de la classe ouvrière, l'Union soviétique et la Chine comprises, étaient fondamentalement non cycliques et aidèrent à stabiliser l'économie mondiale, tandis que le capitalisme en déclin déstabilisait l'économie mondiale et les susdits pays. Nous venons d'entrer dans une ère historique qui ressemble à celle de 1907–1923 ou bien 1929–1949.

***David Eisenhower,* « Lénine et l'etat rentier »** – En affirmant que la mondialisation est l'euphémisme contemporain de l'impérialisme, l'auteur discute la montée actuelle du capital spéculatif par rapport aux termes de l'analyse de Lénine sur l'Etat Rentier. L'expansion internationale des activités dans la sphère financière non productive accroît tout particulièrement le fardeau porté par la classe ouvrière des pays en voie de développement, dans la mesure où Wall Street tente de récupérer ses investissements spéculatifs à leurs frais.

***Greg Godels,* « Marx, Engels et l'idée de l'exploitation »** – Jusqu'au dix-neuvième siècle, le terme exploitation s'employait dans une acception dépourvue de connotation morale ou de jugement. Des premières tentatives à expliquer le caractère de l'exploitation de la force ouvrière par le capitalisme industriel pivotaient sur le manque d'égalité dans les rapports ouvriers-capitalistes. Les premières tentatives de Marx pour traiter le concept d'exploitation se sont focalisées sur le processus d'aliénation. Ce ne fut qu'après avoir introduit la distinction entre la main d'œuvre ouvrière et le pouvoir ouvrier dans le processus de création de valeur, qu'une théorie correcte de l'exploitation put voir le jour. Grâce à cette distinction, il devint possible d'identifier un surplus qu'on ne peut situer ni sur le plan juridique, ni politique, ni moral, sauf par l'appropriation du capitaliste.

***Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie,* « Emancipation du *Manifeste communiste* »** – Cet article examine dans quelle mesure le *Manifeste du Parti communiste* élargissait et limitait à la fois notre compréhension historique de la liberté. Des définitions contemporaines de l'émancipation et leurs rapports avec le *Manifeste* sont examinés. L'article offre également une étude sur

l'articulation de l'émancipation dans le *Manifeste* et la façon dont ce dernier reflète et déforme les conditions historiques de son époque. Dans sa conclusion l'auteur démontre le lien entre la vision du *Manifeste* sur la libération humaine et son héritage dans la tradition marxiste. Cet article commémore le cent cinquantième anniversaire de la publication du *Manifeste,* contribuant ainsi à la continuation d'une tradition intellectuelle radicale. Son point le plus important est de définir les origines de la tension propre à la hiérarchie classe/race dans le projet marxiste d'émancipation.

***Gisela Blomberg,* « Les immigrés de Turquie en Allemagne »** – L'Allemagne de l'Ouest a recruté de nombreux immigrés d'Italie, de Turquie, du Maroc, du Portugal et de la Yougoslavie de 1955 à 1968. Deux millions d'immigrés de Turquie sont parmi les 8 pour-cent de la population allemande actuelle à qui l'on refuse d'accorder les mêmes droits qu'aux immigrés provenant des pays de la Communauté Européenne. Les immigrés de Turquie connaissent un taux de chômage élevé, ils sont confrontés à des violences raciales ainsi qu'à d'autres épreuves pénibles. La gauche allemande s'engage à présent dans une lutte à grande échelle pour les droits des immigrés, ces droits comportent : le droit de vote, l'abolition du « droit du sang » pour la citoyenneté de naissance, la révision des lois de naturalisation, une réforme constitutionnelle pour étendre l'égalité des droits à tous les résidents d'Allemagne, des lois contre la discrimination, et des mesures décisives visant à mettre fin aux attaques des néo-nazis sur les immigrés.

***Gerald Horne,* « Une nouvelle étape de la guche Afro-Américaine »** – L'auteur retrace les liens entre les luttes pour la liberté des Afro-Américains et la lutte révolutionnaire pour le socialisme. Il note un impact similaire dans les luttes en Afrique et dans les liens subséquents entre les luttes en Afrique et aux Etats-Unis ; un rapprochement qui a également été fait par le Comintern. Il affirme que les attitudes promulguées par le mouvement Garveyite réfutent les accusations selon lesquelles le concept de nationalité Afro-Américaine a été imposé à la gauche

américaine par Moscou. Horne établit des parallèles entre l'afflux des Afro-Américains au Parti communiste dans les années 1930 et 1940, et l'afflux des Africains au Parti communiste d'Afrique du Sud dans les années 40. La gauche africaine des deux côtés de l'Atlantique a connu des revers pendant la guerre froide, cependant plus importants aux Etats-Unis. Le refus du Congrès National Africain de rompre ses liens avec le parti communiste d'Afrique du Sud et les syndicats, a posé la base pour sa victoire subséquente. Le Congrès Radical des Noirs qui s'est tenu à Chicago en 1998, représente un pas en avant dans la réapparition d'une lutte progressiste Afro-Américaine orientée vers la classe ouvrière.

***Robert Steigerwald,* « A propos du matérialisme historique »** – Avant le matérialisme historique, le développement social s'expliquait par des facteurs tels que la géographie, la biologie ou la race. L'auteur démontre pourquoi aucun de ces facteurs aurait pu être décisif, et démontre la validité du point de vue du matérialisme historique qui stipule que la production des conditions matérielles de la vie sociale est, en fin de compte, le facteur décisif. Sans entrer dans les détails, l'auteur souligne un certain nombre de secteurs dans lesquels le matérialisme historique est aujourd'hui critiqué. Le plus important de ces domaines est le débat entre matérialisme historique et le constructivisme. D'autres domaines sont généralement liés aux développements dans les sciences naturelles et la philosophie de la science, et vont même jusqu'à remettre en question la nécessité de la philosophie face au progrès scientifique. De nouveaux problèmes liés au matérialisme et à la science naturelle moderne, émergent des théories des structures dissipatives, la théorie du chaos, la théorie de la catastrophe et la synergétique, où le défi au matérialisme historique résulte de l'incapacité de distinguer les différences entre la sphère de la nature et la société. Les développements en neurophysique présentent cependant un nouveau défi au matérialisme historique qui exige d'être analysé.