



European Commission President Praises Karl Marx's Contributions to European Union

In a speech filled with praise for Karl Marx, whose *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 was fundamental in the rise of communism in Europe, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker insisted that Marx's philosophy was also influential in the rise of the European Union. The European Commission that Juncker heads is the EU's executive arm.

Juncker (shown) was in Trier, Germany (where Marx was born on May 5, 1818), to join in celebrating the supposed accomplishments of Marx, where he participated in the unveiling of a 14-foot statue of Marx. The statute was donated by the Communist Chinese.



Juncker credited Marx's philosophy for teaching Europe that it was the "task of our time" to improve social rights. "The European Union is not a flawed, but an unstable construction. Unstable also because Europe's social dimension until today remains the poor relation of the European integration."

"We have to change this," Juncker added, apparently by becoming more Marxist. Marx called for the abolition of private property, and government ownership of the means of production.

Juncker defended Marx from responsibility for the evils of the communist systems set up in Russia and China (even though the Chinese were the ones who donated the statue) that took the lives of many tens of millions of individuals in the 20th century. "Marx isn't responsible for all the atrocity his alleged heirs have to answer for," Juncker insisted.

"Karl Marx was a philosopher, who thought into the future, had creative aspirations, and today he stands for things, which he is not responsible for and which he didn't cause, because many of the things he wrote down were redrafted into the opposite," Juncker said during his laudatory speech in a Trier church.

Not surprisingly, Juncker's speech, which seemed to indicate that the EU could use more Marxist philosophy, was not received well by all, even in the church. A protester interrupted Juncker's address, furious that Marx was being honored, and security personnel quickly removed him from the building. Member of the European Parliament from Hungary's Fidesz Party wrote to Juncker, protesting his decision to honor Marx: "Marxist ideology led to the deaths of tens of millions and ruined the lives of hundreds of millions. The celebration of its founder is a mockery of their memory."

Hungary was one of the eleven nations that lived under the communist tyranny imposed by the Soviet Union behind the Iron Curtain. Apparently, not everyone thinks Marx was as grand as does Juncker.

Juncker, however, was unmoved by such charges against his idol. "Anyone would do well in



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remembering Marx because remembering and understanding are part of securing the future. Without memory and thought, without understanding memory, there will not be much for the future ... One has to understand Karl Marx from the context of his time and not have prejudices based on hindsight. These judgments shouldn't exist."

Taking Juncker's admonition seriously, let us look at what Marx had to say — in his own time. Some of Marx's views, what Juncker approvingly called "creative aspirations," can be found in his book, *The Communist Manifesto*. Marx called for an end to private property in land, abolition of all rights of inheritance, centralization of credit in the hands of the state, a "more equitable distribution of population over the country," and more planks which would, of course, require a totalitarian state. In fact, self-proclaimed Marxist Pol Pot took this last mentioned plank seriously in Cambodia, leading to the deaths of hundreds of thousands. But of course, Juncker said we cannot hold Marx responsible for someone actually implementing what Marx called for.

At the 1864 International Workingmen's Association (the First International), Marx called for a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin asked, "If the proletariat is ruling, over who will it rule?... if there exists a State, there is inevitable domination.... Can it really be that the entire proletariat will stand at the head of the administration?... There are about 40 million Germans. Will all 40 million really be members of the government?"

As though he were peering into the future and seeing the future Gulags of the Soviet Union or the Cultural Revolution of Mao, Bakunin presciently said, "They say that such a State yoke, a dictatorship, is a necessary transitional means for attaining the most complete popular liberation. So, to liberate the masses of the people, they first must be enslaved."

But, of course, Juncker absolves Karl Marx of all responsibility for something actually foreseen by Bakunin over 100 years ago.

While Juncker asserts that Europe needs Marxism, when the EU was created it specifically rejected any historic contributions of Christianity to the continent. To the man whom Juncker so greatly admires, Karl Marx, religion was "the opiate of the people." Marx hated not only Christianity, but also the Jewish religion. "What is the worldly cult of the Jews?," the rabidly anti-Semitic Marx asked, before answering his own rhetorical question. "Huckstering." Writing to his friend Friedrich Engels, Marx speculated that Jews were "descended from the Negroes who joined in Moses' flight from Egypt."

All this praise of a communist by the president of the European Commission of the EU might be perplexing to those who think the EU, built upon the concept of "free trade" is somehow devoted to market capitalism. But Karl Marx was a strong believer in "free trade" and the abolition of national borders. Jonathan Sperber, writing in *Karl Marx: A Nineteenth-Century Life*, said, "Even after he [Marx] became a communist, he would continue to be an adherent of free trade." Apparently, to Marx, the international socialist, this provided another way to break down the independence of nations, helping to pave the way to an international socialist state.

So, perhaps it is not all that odd that Juncker regards Karl Marx as something of an intellectual founder of the European Union. Which should lead to some obvious questions, including: Does Juncker favor the imposition by dictatorial force of the "creative aspirations" of the man he so greatly admires? Does Juncker support the totalitarian dictatorship that Marx trumpeted?

Hopefully, Juncker's open praise of Marx will cause more European nations to follow the lead of the British and leave the EU, and will wake up Americans who mistakenly think multilateral trade deals



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such as NAFTA are somehow free enterprise.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker at 200th-birthday celebration for Karl Marx: AP Images





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