**Socialism**

**Today, liberals have more or less embraced Marx's depiction of capitalism as a class struggle in which the ruling-class minority exploits the labor of the working-class majority while sharing little of the profits. It's easy to see why. Last year alone, 82 percent of the wealth generated worldwide went to the world's richest 1 percent.**

**Modern social justice movements like Black Lives Matter and #MeToo can also be traced to Marx, who believed in challenging the structure of privilege. His revolutionary thinking lives on.**

**Marx may continue to inspire leftist idealists, said James Bovard in USA Today, but "Marxism in practice didn't work out so well." Marx assumed a classless, altruistic state would arise after capitalism was swept away; instead, murderous dictatorships such as Soviet Russia and Maoist China filled the vacuum. More than 100 million people died in the 20th century under the ruthless communist regimes he inspired.**

**Marx's defenders, of course, will argue "the real thing hasn't yet been tried," said Noah South in Bloomberg.com. But history shows us time and again that revolutionary communist regimes "result in either crimes against humanity, grinding poverty, or both." Consider Venezuela, now in full economic collapse despite its rich oil reserves. Instead, the most successful examples of socialism have been applied incrementally, from within the democratic capitalist system.**

**"Almost all rich countries now have progressive income taxes, universal public education, and laws against child labor -- all things that Karl Marx demanded in 1848 in The Communist Manifsto."**

**Marx accurately diagnosed many of capitalism's biggest flaws, said The Economist. But he didn't understand its strengths: Capitalism drives down the price of consumer goods, giving workers access to things that monarchs once considered luxuries. Thanks to capitalism, the number of people in "extreme poverty" has declined from 1.85 billion in 1990 to 767 million in 2013.**

**"Touchingly, he imagined that as capitalism became more and more destructive, the workers of the world would unite," said Robert Kuttner in HuffingtonPost.com. Instead, workers frustrated by globalization and automation are embracing ethnic nationalism, from Hungary to Britain to the United States. "Poor Marx" could never have predicted Donald Trump. *(The Week magazine, May 18, 2018)***

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**America lacks the unity of purpose that socialism requires. It is too big and too fractious, with too few common values to carry off any such thing without massive strife, coercion, and oppression. What one slice of the population holds most dear, another holds intolerable. A free society, in which private organizations and the free market carry out the needed functions, allows for a sort of pluralism. Socialism levels everything. There becomes only one acceptable way of doing or thinking about things, and those who dissent must be punished until they finally submit. Once that's the case, the culture war really will go to 11." *(Timothy Carney, in WashingtonExaminerr.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 17 / August 24, 2018)***

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**Poll Watch: More Democrats now view socialism more positively than capitalism. 57% of Democrats have a favorable view of socialism, compared with 47% who see capitalism positively. The percentage of Democrats with a positive view of capitalism has dropped 9% since 2016. *(Gallup, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 31, 2018)***

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