

Connect to Today



Communism Today

Communism expanded to all parts of the world during the Cold War that followed the end of World War II. (See map on page 963.) At the peak of Communist expansion in the 1980s, about 20 nations were Communist-controlled, including two of the world's largest—China and the Soviet Union. However, dissatisfaction with the theories of Karl Marx had been developing.

Eventually, most Communist governments were replaced. Today, there are only five Communist countries—China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos in Asia and Cuba in the Caribbean. (See map above.)

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels stated their belief that economic forces alone dominated society. Time has shown, however, that religion, nationalism, ethnic loyalties, and a desire for democratic reforms may be as strong influences on history as economic forces. In addition, the gap between the rich and the poor within the industrialized countries failed to widen in the way that Marx and Engels predicted, mostly because of the various reforms enacted by governments.

Labor Unions and Reform Laws

Factory workers faced long hours, dirty and dangerous working conditions, and the threat of being laid off. By the 1800s, working people became more active in politics. To press for reforms, workers joined together in voluntary labor associations called **unions**.

Unionization A union spoke for all the workers in a particular trade. Unions engaged in collective bargaining, negotiations between workers and their employers. They bargained for better working conditions and higher pay. If factory owners refused these demands, union members could **strike**, or refuse to work.

Skilled workers led the way in forming unions because their special skills gave them extra bargaining power. Management would have trouble replacing such skilled workers as carpenters, printers, and spinners. Thus, the earliest unions helped the lower middle class more than they helped the poorest workers.

The union movement underwent slow, painful growth in both Great Britain and the United States. For years, the British government denied workers the right to form unions. The government saw unions as a threat to social order and stability. Indeed, the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800 outlawed unions and strikes. Ignoring the threat of jail or job loss, factory workers joined unions anyway. Parliament finally repealed the Combination Acts in 1824. After 1825, the British government unhappily tolerated unions.

British unions had shared goals of raising wages for their members and improving working conditions. By 1875, British trade unions had won the right to strike and picket peacefully. They had also built up a membership of about 1 million people.

In the United States, skilled workers had belonged to unions since the early 1800s. In 1886, several unions joined together to form the organization that would become the American Federation of Labor (AFL). A series of successful strikes won AFL members higher wages and shorter hours.

Reform Laws Eventually, reformers and unions forced political leaders to look into the abuses caused by industrialization. In both Great Britain and the United States, new laws reformed some of the worst abuses of industrialization. In the 1820s and 1830s, for example, Parliament began investigating child labor and working conditions in factories and mines. As a result of its findings, Parliament passed the Factory Act of 1833. The new law made it illegal to hire children under 9 years old. Children from the ages of 9 to 12 could not work more than 8 hours a day. Young people from 13 to 17 could not work more than 12 hours. In 1842, the Mines Act prevented women and children from working underground.

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History Makers



Jane Addams
1860–1935

After graduating from college, Jane Addams wondered what to do with her life.

I gradually became convinced that it would be a good thing to rent a house in a part of the city where many primitive and actual needs are found, in which young women who had been given over too exclusively to study, might . . . learn of life from life itself.

Addams and her friend Ellen Starr set up Hull House in a working-class district in Chicago. Eventually the facilities included a nursery, a gym, a kitchen, and a boarding house for working women. Hull House not only served the immigrant population of the neighborhood, it also trained social workers.

In both the United States and Britain, women who had rallied for the abolition of slavery began to wonder why their own rights should be denied on the basis of gender. The movement for women's rights began in the United States as early as 1848. Women activists around the world joined to found the International Council for Women in 1888. Delegates and observers from 27 countries attended the council's 1899 meeting. **E**

Reforms Spread to Many Areas of Life In the United States and Western Europe, reformers tried to correct the problems troubling the newly industrialized nations. Public education and prison reform ranked high on the reformers' lists.

One of the most prominent U.S. reformers, Horace Mann of Massachusetts, favored free public education for all children. Mann, who spent his own childhood working at hard labor, warned, "If we do not prepare children to become good citizens . . . if we do not enrich their minds with knowledge, then our republic must go down to destruction." By the 1850s, many states were starting public school systems. In Western Europe, free public schooling became available in the late 1800s.

In 1831, French writer Alexis de Tocqueville had contrasted the brutal conditions in American prisons to the "extended liberty" of American society. Those who sought to reform prisons emphasized the goal of providing prisoners with the means to lead to useful lives upon release.

During the 1800s, democracy grew in industrialized countries even as foreign expansion increased. The industrialized democracies faced new challenges both at home and abroad. You will learn about these challenges in Chapter 26.

MAIN IDEA

E Making Inferences

Why might women abolitionists have headed the movement for women's rights?

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

TERMS & NAMES 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- laissez faire
- Adam Smith
- capitalism
- utilitarianism
- socialism
- Karl Marx
- communism
- union
- strike

USING YOUR NOTES

2. What characteristics do capitalism and socialism share?

Capitalism	Socialism
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

MAIN IDEAS

3. What were Adam Smith's three natural laws of economics?
4. What kind of society did early socialists want?
5. Why did workers join together in unions?

CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING

6. **IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS** What were the main problems faced by the unions during the 1800s and how did they overcome them?
7. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** Why do you think that Marx's "dictatorship of the proletariat" did not happen?
8. **MAKING INFERENCES** Why did the labor reform movement spread to other areas of life?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **ECONOMICS** Write a two-paragraph **persuasive essay** on how important economic forces are in society. Support your opinion using evidence from this and previous chapters.

CONNECT TO TODAY PREPARING AN ECONOMIC REPORT

Research a present-day corporation. Prepare an **economic report** that includes the corporation's structure, products or services, number of employees, and any other relevant economic information you are able to find.