

# WHAT WE KNOW NOW AND WHAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT COMMUNISM

This article concludes our series on why communism can win. It is, however, not the last word.

We began by listing new things that happen in history: from inventions to new social movements and systems. Slavery, feudalism and capitalism were new developments in history. The communist movement based on scientific economics and dialectical materialism originated around 1840.

Although truly new things happen, some events occur over and over. Wars between capitalist rivals and economic crises have existed as long as capitalism has.

Noting that these patterns repeat is not the same as knowing why or whether they must happen. The “laws of motion” of capitalism answer these two questions.

A law is different than a mere pattern. A law of nature exists when natural causes force things to happen according to a general pattern. Things that are not compatible with the law are forced not to happen.

A law is universal. It occurs in a specific system or under specific conditions, a pattern that must occur or can't occur.

A natural law is different from legislation. In a law of nature or economics, the constraint is not imposed from the outside like the cops or the courts. The constraint results from internal causal factors.

The “laws of motion” of capitalism are still primary in socialism, especially laws about money and the market. These laws won't allow us to “do socialism right.” Despite the best intentions of past revolutionaries, socialism could never evolve into communism and had to revert back to open capitalism.

Knowing the specific features of socialism that prevented it from reaching communism is fundamental to our strategy for fighting for communism now. *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* is a program for creating and keeping communism

that specifically rejects socialist ideas and practices that led to working class defeat.

We published *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* a year ago. We've already run through three editions and over 20,000 copies, not to mention web hits. Comrades around the world have asked for more translations other than the original two: Spanish and English. As you read and discuss the conclusion to this series, keep in mind that we have to raise funds to print more and we need translators.

All knowledge is ultimately derived from practice. Since communism has never existed under modern conditions, there is a lot about it that we don't know yet, knowledge that has to be derived from future practice.

We can already identify some laws of motion of communist society, however. We know that communism is impossible without the mobilization of the masses for communism, and that the laws of materialist dialectics apply to all systems.

Generally speaking, however, communism will not have the severely restrictive laws of motion that capitalism and socialism do. In particular society will no longer be limited by the need to maximize profits or base planning on money.

Marx and Engels argued that under communism the “realm of freedom”--that is, the areas of social life where people can collectively choose what they want to do--will expand, and the “realm of necessity” governed by laws of motion will be much smaller.

Our movement is bound to run into things we don't expect now. But the practice of millions of workers and peasants who have already fought for communism, like the Chinese Red Army, the People's Commune movement and the Cultural Revolution in China in the 40s, 50s and 60s, provides a wealth of information about communism as a mass phenomenon. (Read, “The Great Revolutions Teach Us How to Win” in *Mobilize the*

*Masses for Communism*) We stand on the shoulders of giants.

Beyond this, long experience of the communist movement shows the enormous capacity of the working class for creativity, determination and self-sacrifice--experience that tells us the amazing things that workers can accomplish. Knowledge of these capacities of the working class is a key reason for our confidence that the working class can win communism and keep it by communist mass mobilization, now that we are finally on the right road. Join us in creating this momentous new stage of history.