The Communist Manifesto

I: Bourgeois and Proletarians

1) What have the major effects of the ensuing Industrial Revolution been? What are the major achievements caused by the extension (expansion) of industry?

2) Did the bourgeoisie create capitalism or did capitalism create the bourgeoisie, according to Marx?

3) What does this famous phrase mean: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie?" Do you agree? Explain.

4) How has capitalism's emergence changed "human nature?"

5) How has capitalism altered the relationship between cities and the countryside? Has that process continued since Marx's time?

6) According to Marx, how evenly is wealth distributed under capitalism?

7) Besides low wages, what other evils does Marx trace to industrialism? How could these evils be avoided? To what extent is hard work not rewarded with more wealth?

8) Why does Marx say the bourgeoisie is unfit to rule?

9) Read the final paragraph of this section carefully. Marx believes that capitalism inevitably creates its own destruction. What do you think of this thesis?

II: Proletarians and Communists

10) What does Marx mean when he says that capital (the money and goods which make capitalism possible) is a social creation?

11) Marx says that under capitalism living labor (the work of the workers) is but a means to increase accumulated labor (the wealth of the owners). What does he say is the aim of labor under communism?

12) Some Communists have denounced all individuality and most individual liberty. Do you think Marx would have agreed with them?
13) Do you think Marx would have agreed with attempts to kill capitalists?

14) Marx foretells the vanishing of the bourgeois family (though not necessarily the family in general). What evils does he say the bourgeois family causes?

15) Marx agrees that the Communists do want to abolish countries and nationality. What are his arguments in saying that working people are not attached to their countries? Do you believe this to be true? Explain.

16) Do you think communism, as Marx describes it, is a desirable ideal, a foolish dream, an undesirable ideal, or something else? Explain.

17) Some people argue that true Marxism has never been attempted, and that if his original ideas were followed it might be more successful. Marxism, they say, has been discredited by people who betrayed Marx. What do you think of this argument?