As we've noted, Hegel didn't see or didn't wish to see the exploitation of the majority by a minority of the privileged rich. Here is the first question the young Marx asked himself...

**Alienation** means to distract, to seize possession of something, to extort from others what belongs to them.

Work alienates the worker... but how own why?

**Unfree labour, if what's done for a boss may earn the worker a wage, but at the same time it "alienates" him. It deprives him of something which goes into the boss's pocket.**

But is this something money or what?

In his first work, Marx begins to investigate alienation - or better, the different kinds of alienation: political, religious and economic.

This work is called "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844."

Alienation not only degrades man, but also de-personalises him. What can you expect?

Marx states: the boss imposes the kind of work, the method and the rhythm, but he never bothers if the worker ends up as:

A more appendage of flesh on a machine of iron... (Marx)

By his labour, a worker makes something (cloth, machinery, tyres, books, houses...). But this object, by the fact of remaining the boss's property, turns "Hey presto! into merchandise (a commodity)..."

Alienation begins with the worker being squeezed dry...

"...The alienation of the worker is expressed thus: the more he produces, the less he can consume; the more value he creates, the less value he has. Labour produces fabulous things for the rich, but misery for the poor, machines replace labour, and jobs diminish, while other workers turn into machines..."

This is how alienation makes its victims..." (Marx: Manuscripts of 1844)
MARX GOES EVEN FURTHER AND AFFIRMS: THE COMBINED MEANS OF PRODUCTION NOW IN EXISTENCE HAVE BEEN PRODUCED BY THE LABOUR OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS WHO HAVE THOUGHT, CREATED AND GIVEN THEIR LIVES TO ATTAIN SOMETHING...

So? Who owns the inventions of Edison, Newton, Leonardo, and thousands of others?

ENTER PRIVATE PROPERTY

IS IT RIGHT THAT ALL OF THIS SHOULD REMAIN IN THE HANDS OF THE FEW? THAT THE INVENTION AND LABOUR OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS SHOULD BE THE EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGE OF THE WEALTHY FEW?

NO, IT'S NOT RIGHT!

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION IS THE MAXIMUM FORM OF ALIENATION...


THE ROOTS OF CAPITALISM

AND SO - MARX CONCLUSION - THE DEEPEST ESSENCE OF MAN, HIS CREATIVE ACT, HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A POSSESSION...

"The less you are, the more you'll have. To have more, you must alienate yourself. You good-for-nothing!!!"

Which changes into a thing...


THAT BLESSED "LIBERTY" HEGEL TALKED ABOUT, JUST DOESN'T EXIST. MONEY OBLIGES THOSE WHO HAVEN'T GOT ANY, TO SELL THEMSELVES BODY AND SOUL - THAT IS, TO SELL THEIR LABOUR-POWER (WORKER, PEasant, INTELLECTUAL)... THIS IS ALIENATION!

EXPLOITATION...
To possess possessions, a man will sell himself to have what another has. But it never dawns on him— that the more he gets, the less he keeps of himself...

This guy too aspires to own property. The purpose of his life is to possess more and more and more and...

Bye-bye homo sapiens...

Marx predicted that this class—the working class—was going to change things...

How, and with what powers??

Unlike the small-scale artisans who used to own the tools of their trade, the proletariat owns nothing at all—neither the means, nor the end-products...

And still less gay labour...

The countless evils of the world stem from the "defence" of private property. The evils of envy, war, egoism, crime, injustice, the misery of the masses and luxury for the very few...

How can this state of affairs be changed?

In no way!! Who's going to tangle with the rich, the powerful, the church?...

I have a hunch that this fellow Marx is going to cause us many a headache...

Marx singled out the existence of a "new" class: The Proletariat, which came to life with the industrial revolution when machines began replacing the craftsmen of the past...

A proletarian: someone at the beck and call of the boss's machines...

Unlike all other social classes, the working class possesses only its labour power, i.e. what is commonly known as the "work force".

Dialectically speaking, this is what specifies the struggle between the contraries: capital on one side, labour on the other. They live together, sure, but with opposed interests...
Marx didn't know about such novelties as sales representatives, P.R. and A.D. men, all of whom grossly inflate the price of goods...

Anyway, the question has been asked whether (and by how much) the profits of the wealthy might be limited... By 10%? Is that 'fair and decent'... but at this rate, the problem can never be resolved...

So it's the labour-power of the worker which day by day swells the boss's capital. The rich become even richer, while the poor certainly don't get any fatter on their wages (which hardly keep pace...)

While the boss, the capitalist and the rich man make a fabulous profit from the worker's labour, the poor fellow doesn't make a penny extra for his work...

This drawing shows the process at work: the inputs of the capitalist and the worker (money from one and labour from the other) coming together to create a product. But the profit flows only in one direction, not both, as justice demands... so one grows fat while the other tightens what's left of his belt...

That's how our Charlie came to discover the basis of capitalism, the famous surplus value.

Marx reasoned thus: surplus value cannot derive from the mere exchange of goods, since this is an exchange of equivalent things, commodities are sold to buy other commodities...

O.K., let's proceed. The basic formula of capitalism is very simple: buying so as to sell again for profit. This increase in the value of the money employed which results from the transaction, Marx calls surplus value.

I promise not to yawn if you keep it simple...
... even less does surplus value come from increases of price, since the reciprocal profit-and-loss between buyers and sellers tend to balance out...

If one gains, the other loses!

WELL THEN!

To obtain surplus value (extra profit), the possessor of cash has got to find on the market some other "commodity" with the current value having the one peculiar quality which makes it the source of value...

Gosh! And what is that commodity?

Simple! Human labour-power!

The capitalist buys the worker's labour-power as if it was any other kind of merchandise, and puts it to work eight hours a day (in Marx's time, the working day was 12 to 15 hours...)

In six hours he produces his salary...

In the two hours remaining he produces another commodity, a "surplus" product for which his boss doesn't pay him anything...

But the worker can make, say, in 6 hours ("necessary" working time) a product which is enough for his livelihood.

This surplus product, the boss's extra profit, is surplus value...

Thanks to surplus value, the boss gets richer, while the worker earns not a penny from it. Sure, some money is supposed to be used to improve working conditions... but it goes straight into the bank...

To fatten my capital some more...

This is the trap of present-day capitalism: increasing the worker's productive output and his efficiency, also increases surplus value...

A rise in productivity is nothing other than a way to augment the boss's capital... and the poverty of all workers...!!
MARX AND ENGELS IMMEDIATELY GAINED THE LEAGUE'S FULL SYMPATHY, AND THANKS TO THEIR GREATER INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL MATURITY, THEY HAD A BIG INFLUENCE OVER THE LEAGUE. MARX, THE 'TOUGH GUY' KNEW HOW TO COMMAND.

...to start, in stead of the 'just', we'll call ourselves the League of Communists...

Right...

Question 1: What is communism?
Answer: Communism is the doctrine of the prerequisites for the emancipation of the proletariat.

Question 2: What is the proletariat?
Answer: The proletariat is that class of society whose means of livelihood entirely depend on the sale of its labor and not on the profit derived from capital; whose weal and woe, whose life and death, whose whole existence depend on the demand for labor, hence on the alternation of good times and bad, on the vagaries of unbridled competition. The proletariat, or class of proletarians, is, in a word, the working class of the 19th century.

Question 3: Proletarians, then, have not always existed?
Answer: No. Poor folk and working classes have always existed. The working classes have also for the most part been poor. But such poor, such workers as are living under conditions indicated above, hence proletarians, have not always existed, any more than free and unbridled competition has always existed.

Question 4: How did the proletariat originate?
Answer: The proletariat originated in the industrial revolution which took place in England during the second half of the 18th century and which has repeated itself since then in all the civilized countries of the world. This industrial revolution took place owing to the invention of the steam engine, of various spinning machines, of the power loom, and of a great number of other mechanical instruments. These machines were expensive and, consequently, could only be installed by persons who had plenty of capital to lay out. Their introduction completely altered the existing method of production and displaced the existing workers. This was due to the fact that machinery could produce cheaper and better commodities than could the handicraftsmen with their imperfect spinning wheels and hand looms. Thus, these machines handed over industry entirely to the big capitalists and rendered the little property the workers possessed (tools, hand looms, etc.) entirely worthless. Soon the capitalists got all in their hands and nothing remained for the workers.

NOTE: THIS KIND OF EASY-TO-READ CATECHISM STYLE MADE ENGELS MORE POPULAR THAN MARX, WHO, DEEPER AS HE WAS, SEEMED PRETTY HARD TO DIGEST...

My favourite? Charlie or Fred? I haven't said.

Question 7: In what way does the proletarian differ from the slave?
Answer: The slave is sold once and for all. The proletarian must sell himself by the hour or by the day. Each individual slave, being the direct property of a master, has his existence assured, be that existence ever so wretched, if only because of the interest of the slave owner. Each individual proletarian, the property in its entirety, is a part of the whole bourgeois class, whose labor is sold only when it is needed by the owning class, with no security of life. Existence is merely guaranteed to the working class as a whole. The slave is excluded from competition; the proletarian is beset by competition and is a prey to all its fluctuations. The slave is counted an object and not a member of civil society; the proletarian is recognized as a person, as a member of civil society. The slave may therefore be able to secure better conditions of life than can the proletarian, but the proletarian belongs to a higher stage of development of society than the slave. The slave frees himself by rupturing, of all relations of private ownership, only one, the relation of slavery and by this act becomes himself a proletarian; the proletarian can only achieve emancipation by abolishing private property in its entirety.

Question 15: Will it be possible to bring about the abolition of private property by peaceful methods?
Answer: This is greatly to be desired, and communists would be the last persons in the world to stand in the way of a peaceful solution. Communists know only too well the folly and, indeed, the harmfulness of conspiratorial methods. They know only too well that revolutions are not made deliberately and arbitrarily, but that everywhere and at all times revolutions have been the necessary outcome of circumstances quite independent of the will or the guidance of particular parties and whole classes. But they also perceive that the development of the proletariat in nearly all civilized countries is violently suppressed and that in this way opponents of communism are working full force to promote a revolution. Should the oppressed proletariat at last thus be driven into a revolution, then we communists will rally to the cause of the workers and be just as prompt to act as we are now to speak.