

## LABOUR TIME IS THE VISIBLE HAND GUIDING PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION.

*This article reviews the thesis presented by the Group of International Communists, titled the "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution". It was written in 1930, when Stalin, donning the mantle of the Russian Revolution and having anointed himself as chief revolutionary, was crushing debate within the European left and disorientating the movement to honour his informal pact with imperialism. This is a valuable document. One of the few oppositional documents of its time, and one that needs a current airing.*  
<https://www.marxists.org/subject/left-wing/qik/1930/index.htm>

Before proceeding with the review, I would like to address three issues. It is always arrogant to view the past standing on the summit of the technical achievements acquired thus far. It is often said that planning before computers and the internet would have been impossible. Nonsense. It would have been quite possible to plan in the 1930s using the telephone system and the computational machines existing at the time. Of course, it would have been much more labour intensive, thus consuming a bigger chunk of the total labour expended by society and slower. We recall that at the time, larger suppliers had amassed a small army of merchandisers who visited shops to obtain orders and investigate how the products provided by their companies were selling. These orders and observations were then phoned back to headquarters and collated. The planning bodies could have used similar but scaled up and streamlined methods.

Secondly, I would like to address the concept of pricing. In Volume 1 Marx uses the immortal term, "*Price is the money-name of the labour realised in a commodity*". (Page 103, Volume 1, International Publishers 1967 edition.) A page earlier he describes how money as a standard of price, is formed by buyers and sellers imagining the value of any product in the form of a weight of gold or coins to that value. The question arises, if price is the **money-name** for labour, why do I continue to use the term - an objective pricing system - when money will have been abolished in a future communist society? Why not simply use the direct expression - hours, minutes and seconds? The answer is in two parts. Firstly, in the realm of production hours, minutes and seconds will prevail. But these hours, minutes and seconds will themselves be translated into universal labour time units. This will be the standardised cost. This will represent the essence of the product. Secondly, when these products exit production into the realm of distribution, their outward appearance becomes important – their price. However, here for the first time no contradiction exists between essence and appearance, the price of a product reflects the actual cost of the product. Hence the use of the term – objective pricing system. Communist consumers will continue to imagine the differing costs between products in terms of units of standardised labour time. I call this standard, the UNILAT, or Universal Labour Time. The Group of International Communists call it the ASRP or Average Social Reproduction Time. There is a secondary consideration. We are steeped in prices. In terms of agitation, it is more powerful to say that the reward for collective labour is falling prices, because this reward falls on the consumption side. Somehow, it is less attractive saying the reward for collective labour is falling costs, though this is the essence of the matter.

Thirdly do the planning bodies create jobs. Are they an employer? Do we work for them? The answer is no. The planning bodies play a passive role. They do not decide what will be produced in terms of consumer goods, nor how quickly. They are instructed what needs producing. They respond by allocating the labour time of society accordingly and establishing the appropriate divisions of labour. More concretely production units are then tasked with producing a given quantity of product. So essentially the

planning bodies orchestrate tasking. The execution takes place at the workplace level through workers control of the production process. This may require drawing in more workers, and it may involve changing the production process itself. Capitalism has already gone down this path with cell production and adaptive manufacturing. Suffice to say, this industrial choreography at scale will stretch all intellectual and organisational capacities to their limits.

### **The regulation of production.**

There is a high degree of affinity and overlap between my programme and the Thesis set out by the International Communists almost a century ago. The difference lies only in this; their thesis remains underdeveloped, is less precise and sometimes inconsistent, and always underestimates the complexity of a communist society while never veering into Utopianism because of this underestimation.

Its unique strength is its castigation of what it describes as State Communism, further how State Communism was aligned with the interests of the bureaucracy both inside and outside the Soviet Union, how it is the end goal of reformism, and it sparkles with criticism of Karl Kautsky, Rudolph Hilferding, Otto Neurath and Eugen Varga, so called left critics of Stalinism. By State Communism the group understands a society based on collective property but where the proletariat has been politically expropriated by a privileged elite. It is a process where the self-activity of the masses - the linking up of their productive activities through works' councils- is taken over by a centralising authority that usurps their power. *"At the beginning: responsibility from below; at the end: responsibility from above. It was in this way that in Russia a gigantic concentration of productive forces as no other land on earth had ever attempted was carried through. Woe betide that proletariat which is compelled to struggle against such an apparatus of power!... These workers must struggle for their wages against the mightiest state apparatus the world has ever known!"* (Chapter 1.1) . *In this way the Association of Free and Equal Producers proclaimed by Marx becomes a prison-state such as humanity has never before experienced!* (Chapter 1.2)

Effectively what the International Communists are saying is that workers have lost control of production, they have lost control of what will be produced and the connection between what they produce and how they are rewarded is broken. In plain language they are now exploited.

Having highlighted the problem, Chapter 1 deals with the criticisms levelled at the USSR by the above mentioned critics which reflects their bureaucratic responses to this issue. *"This perspective of communism, according to which the proletariat only needs to place a new management in charge of production in order that, with the help of statistics, this will then arrange everything for the best in the best of all possible "communist" worlds, derives its basic origin in consciousness from the fact that the type of economist or sociologist, whose brainchild this is, is unable to conceive of the growth of planned production as an aspect of the development of the working masses themselves, but can conceive of it only as a process which they - the economic experts - are called upon to carry through and complete."* *"It is they who have the knowledge, they who think, organise and order. The sole role which the masses have to fulfil is to endorse which they in their wisdom have decided."* (Chapter 1) Exactly.

An elite within the working class pontificating on how to transfer this elitism over to the management of the economy itself. Its justification in theory is: *"All plans of this kind bear clearly the birthmarks bestowed on them by the period of history in which they have been born: in this case, the epoch of the development of the mechanical sciences. The productive system is conceived as an intricate mechanism which functions through thousands and tens of thousands of gears and cog-wheels. The various parts of the productive*

*process function integrally with one another in much the same way as do the separate yet interdependent partial functions of a production belt, like those found in a modern factory - for instance, Ford. Here and there stand the controllers of the production apparatus, who control the operation of the machines by means of their statistics.” (Chapter 1.2)*

Furthermore, the affinity between the various bureaucratic roads to State Communism is outlined. *“Whilst reformist Social Democracy conceived of realising communism through a continuous and gradual process of nationalisation, the revolutionary Bolshevik tendency considered that a revolution was necessary in order to complete the process of nationalisation. Thus, the conception of the men from Moscow is based on fundamentally the same theoretical methods as that of the reformists. During and after the revolution those industrial units which have become ripe for nationalisation will be operated through the state, whilst that part of the economy which is not yet sufficiently concentrated will remain in the hands of private capital.” (Chapter 1.3)* Today those words reverberate once again with the so-called revolutionary slogan, *Nationalise the top 100 – 500 corporations and banks*, which represents nothing more than a capitulation to reformism.

They conclude that Marx himself never saw the state acting as the regulator and controller of production. That in fact the experience of the Paris Commune taught Marx the opposite was true. *“It was especially after the experience of the Paris Commune that the view began to gain ground with Marx that the organisation of the economy could not be realised through the state but only through a combination of the Free Associations of the Socialist society.” (Chapter 1.3)*

So what is the solution put forward by the International Communists and is it correct? Their guarantee for the preservation of workers’ control is that the affairs of a communist society based on freely associating producers should be solely regulated by the expenditure of labour time. This is correct. *“It is the proletariat itself which lays in place the foundation-stone cementing the basic relationship between producers and the product of their labour. This and this alone is the key question of the proletarian revolution.”* And again, *“One may attempt to place “better leaders” in power, although this of course does not lead to the removal of the causes of exploitation. In the final analysis, there remains no other road forward than that of reconstructing the entire system of production in such a way that the exact relationship of the producers to the products fashioned by their labour becomes the foundation of the social system of production. In such a system, however, the task of the leaders and administrators in respect of the allocation of the products is also eliminated. There remains nothing to allocate. The share in the social product is determined directly. Labour-time serves as the measure for determining the proportion of the total product to be individually consumed.”*

Or as I have stated more precisely; the state does not determine prices, nor what is produced, or at what pace, nor what workers are paid, and it is barred from setting margins or involving itself in determining the size of the social fund and its disposition. In other words, we both agree that the state plays no role in the economy. Its role is confined to three Ps, Protect the revolution, Promulgate the laws setting up the structures of the new society and Police these laws to prevent abusive or fraudulent behaviour. This is its limitations. Its form - elected and recallable working delegates, paid no more than the average wage, subject to regular re-election, is not a matter which concerns us here.

In Chapter 1 the International Communists discuss Marx’s exposition on Robinson Crusoe as well as Engels views on labour time. Their view is that labour time is a simple and transparent measure. This would be true if we were living on an Island, but it is not true when measuring an industrial economy, two hundred

and fifty years in the making employing close to two billion wage earners. The International Communists talk of the basis of labour time to be average social labour time. *"From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" (the higher stage of communism) has already been achieved. In other words: the organisation of economic life may in the course of the various periods of development move through various stages, but the stable basis for all of them nevertheless remains **the unit of average social labour-time.**"* (Chapter 12.3) And from the same chapter *"The foundation of ASRT is the average social hour of labour."*

Whenever we talk of average it appears so beguilingly simple, but anything so simple is usually a trap. The International Communists seem unconcerned by complexity when they declare: *"Under communism it is ASRT which subsumes within itself all individual characteristics, those of slower and more relaxed workers, those who are more capable or less capable, those who labour either by hand or by brain."* (Chapter 12.3) They can't be serious. All these facets are not subsumed, they have to be taken into account in order to arrive at the concrete expression of labour time.

Let us dissect this statement beginning with slower and more relaxed workers. One of the advantages of the production line to capitalists was that all workers had to work at the pace of the line. There was no room for slower and more relaxed workers. The same applies to the more modern practise of team work where in response to the reward of multi-skilling, more say over the production process and other relaxations, the team polices itself ensuring there are no slow and relaxed members in their midst. In any case workers do not like shirkers or passengers, contrary to the contempt that Varga showed towards Hungarian workers at the time. It can also be argued that if we abolish unpaid labour then so too must we abolish deliberately slow and relaxed ways of working unless these workers agree to having their vouchers docked. This is why labour vouchers have to be signed off by the plant or work's committee so it can be a true record of the hours contributed.

So, let us dismiss this nonsense and turn to more or less capable workers. The best interpretation of this is that workers are individualised by their physical attributes. Men are stronger than women, some men are stronger than others, generally older workers find it harder to produce as much labour as younger workers, and finally women's ability to work during menstruation can be reduced. Let us take a real live example. Amazon warehouses track each worker. Some workers have longer legs and more fast twitch muscle fibres. This is purely an accident of birth and if Amazon could get away with it, they would measure legs and take a muscle biopsy before employing anyone, because a worker with longer legs and more fast twitch muscle fibres can get around the warehouse faster and move more parcels.

No communist society could allow intensity of labour to be rewarded. Resorting to this practise returns us to piece rate remuneration, something the working class has fought against all its life. It would mean that younger workers would be remunerated more than older workers, and women during menstruation would have to take a pay cut. In any case it is impossible to determine universal labour time unless we homogenise intensity. Otherwise, we are stuck with individual labour times.

So how do we achieve this? Without too much difficulty. The world of sport has long ago mastered the measurement of exertion. A communist society would set up commissions to homogenise intensity by factoring in the differing capacities to work. Those with less capacity would not be expected to compensate for this by working harder in order to achieve a mean. Rather adjusted for capacity everyone would work equally hard. Society is therefore rewarding relative expenditures of labour and not absolute expenditures. True the more capable workers may be contributing more labour, but this is not taken into

account. It simply goes into the mix. The same applies to disabled workers with diminished capacity, they will be welcomed into the world of work without any penalties.

In any case as I have pointed out repeatedly, mechanical aids such as power tools, power steering, forklift trucks and so on have levelled the playing field. Jobs based on brute strength are declining rapidly.

Only once we have homogenised intensity can we begin to determine universal labour time because the physical contribution of labour from each worker is no longer a variable but a constant. But this is only half the journey. The International Communists also include the issue of skills, “those who labour by hand or by brain”. Without taking into account skills, it is impossible to finalise universal labour time. Marx was quite clear that skilled work can be considered as multiples of unskilled work. Thus, the most skilled worker may be contributing three times the labour in a given hour compared to the least skilled when measured by the quality of labour. (Note 1.) The objective measurement of skill being how much labour is consumed producing a specific skill. Pay rates are meaningless in a capitalist society as a means of determining the skill contribution because of changing conditions in the labour market. Also, the presence of unions in a workplace, for example, reduces pay differentials primarily by raising lower pay.

Thus, there is a difference between the economic hours expended and the physical hours expended. Economic hours exceed physical hours because they factor for skills. Thus, economic hours are the physical hours expended multiplied by the coefficient of skills. Of course, physical hours can be made to equal economic hours statistically. All that does is swop things round. A skilled worker will be paid no more than the physical hours expended, but unskilled workers will be paid in fractions of physical hours, say each physical hour expended is reduced to only 20 minutes when measured economically. Let us leave this dilemma to be sorted out in the future.

The more important point to be made is this; it is only the economic hours expended in production which is divided by the number of products to obtain individual prices - the average time taken to produce it. It is not physical hours.

But here we encounter our final problem. Regardless of intensity and skill, workers have different productivities. This reason lies outside the worker herself or himself. It has to do with the means of production. Some producers work with more modern machines, others work with older technology. But mark this, we all own the means of production collectively which means that workers who have the good fortune of working with more modern equipment and techniques, and who are therefore more productive, are not allowed to gain from this. This would violate our sacred collective ownership.

To compensate for this specific variation in productivity, average labour times no longer suffice.

Plant	Economic Hours	Volume of Items	Cost Per Item	Total Price
A	1000	1000	1	1000 (1000 x 1)
B	1500	2000	0.75	1500 (2000 x 0.75)
C	2000	4000	0.5	1500 (4000 x 0.5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>7000</b>	<b>0.75 average</b>	<b>5250 (7000 x 0.75)</b>

When we examine the table above, we immediately detect an incongruity. If we take the average cost of 0.75 and multiply it by 7000 items, we get a total price or cost of 5250. But if we add the individual total prices, viz, 1000 + 1500 + 2000 we only get 4500. There is a difference of 750. Both cannot be right. The

correct answer is in fact the 4500. This is because workers have different productivities between the three plants, and also the volume of production varies. This has to be taken into account. That is why simple averages are not only abstract but even deceptive. The unit cost in this case is not 0.75 but 0.64 or 7000 items times 0.64 = 4500 when weighted for differences in productivities and volumes.

Only the weighted average labour time needed to produce any article will yield the total labour time expended on that product in a given time. Why is this so important. *“At any one moment this particular establishment will be modernised and renewed, at another moment another one, and so on. The lowest social reproduction times will thus, at any given moment, be continuously taken up by and reflected in the production process.”* (Chapter 12, my emphasis) The next paragraph ties this to a discussion regarding value in the capitalist mode of production. From this it is safe to assume they are focused on the difference between embodied labour time and reproduced labour times, i.e., which one determines actual costs.

If they are setting ASRP costing to reflect reproduction costs, or what is the same thing, cost set by the most advanced plants in the sector, this would be a disaster. Why? Total vouchers always represent the total expenditure of economic hours. In turn, total prices on the consumption side regardless of whether we are talking about articles of consumption or means of production, must equal the total hours expended. There must be a balance between the production and consumption side. But if prices are dictated by the lowest costs then it is clear that total prices will be less than the total expenditure of labour. Not all the vouchers could be “spent” on this basis. Chaos would ensue. That is why only weighted average labour times can act as the metronome of production. I will never tire of repeating the following statement I originated; only weighted average labour times multiplied by the number of products can equal the total labour expended on their production.

We have thus come a long way from the simple exposition of labour time as adopted by the International Communists and of course, from the simple example used by Marx in investigating Robinson Crusoe’s expenditure and recording of his labour. Does this mean we need a panel of experts which will thus take control of production out of the hands of the immediate producers. Nah. The technical levels achieved by workers and modern algorithms would take care of this.

Notwithstanding these inadequacies, omissions or at best, woolly phrased categories, the International Communists are correct to state that a society of freely associating producers is regulated by labour time. The accurate recording of labour time means that everyone is rewarded fairly and there is no space for the emergence of an exploiting minority. It was no accident that the first casualty of the first five-year plan in the USSR was price. Just as workers became detached from their product, so prices were divorced from actual costs of production. In the hands of the Stalinist bureaucracy, price became the means to regulate exploitation.

What is commendable as well is that the International Communists do not duck the criticism by Max Weber and Ludwig von Mises regarding the importance of price discovery and how its absence would lay low any economy which failed to price properly. They showed the despondency that enveloped the left in the face of this criticism. *“The result was considerable despondency and confusion in the ‘Marxist’ camp. In the field of economic science the impossibility of communism had been proven, simply on the grounds that, in the case of such an economy, each and every form of planned production would have ceased. Communism, which sought to prove its very right to exist precisely on the basis of the anarchy of capitalist production, showed itself to be even less amenable to a planned mode of operation than capitalism.”* (Chapter 2.1) And they alone correctly rebutted Von Mises by re-establishing the importance of average

social labour time as the price metric. After all Herr Mises, of what worth is a pricing system which rewards profits, to the actual producers, when it is they who suffer having to produce these profits.

### **Planning from the consumption side.**

To the credit of the International Communists, they recognise that consumer decisions must be individual decisions. That said they fail to point out that planning can only be undertaken from the side of consumption, not production. By planning we mean the decisions based on consumer choices and preferences. Only then can the production process be planned.

In investigating this problem two perspectives are needed, the period immediately after the revolution and the period of actual planning, that is the goal we are moving towards which informs the decisions we make to achieve it. The first period we may term the mechanical period, and it is this period where the observations of the International Communists are most relevant. I refer to their proposed cost accounting.

In the mechanical period workers will have to take over production with the old management temporarily in place but reporting to the works committee. Plants will continue to produce what they produced before, with the exception of luxury goods items such as private jet-planes. Plants will solidify and rationalise their links with suppliers and distributors. Accounting will progress towards the measurement of cost on the basis of labour hours. Banks will provide funding where necessarily as the movement in prices between industries with high technical composition and low technical compositions could generate solvency problems.

This period will form the bedrock of working-class power. It is the period when workers take control of production and their self-activity becomes hegemonic. *"The entire communist economy is made up of only factory or works organisations, and they alone "govern" it. Whatever function these may fulfil, they do so only within the limits of their budgets."* (Chapter 6.3) This is well understood by the International Communists.

The problem arises with the later perspective. They see the first period extending into the indefinite future. They are thus to be criticised for having a one-sided approach to planning. They see planning as centred in production rather than consumption. But planning cannot be done from the production side. Producers do not know what to produce and in what quantities. If they are given free reign production becomes production for production not production for consumption. The economy would become constipated with disproportionate production. Too much of this not enough of that.

Only when consumer choices have been collated, and production tailored to fulfil these orders will that which has been produced be consumed. Waste, duplication etc will be eliminated. The labour of individual workers will not have been wasted. Take for example a change in consumer preferences requiring more glass to be produced and less steel. Only once this has been collated and the steel and glass industries informed and orders placed, can resources be transferred from the former to the latter. Which is why the International Communists are quite wrong to propose that individual plants build up their own accumulation (investment) funds. *"The figure thus obtained, which indicates the proportion of total labour-power which is available to be paid out at the separate industrial establishments as labour certificates, we name the Remuneration Factor, or Factor of Individual Consumption = FIC. In our example it amounts to 0.83, from which we can calculate that a worker who has worked for 40 hours will receive from that the equivalent of only  $0.83 \times 40 = 33.2$  labour-hours in labour certificates, indicating the worker's*

*share in total social product available according to choice.”* (Chapter 6.3) Thus 17% of the labour time expended will not be withdrawn but accrue to the plant.

I will not comment on the error in this calculation. What is more important is that these funds become counterproductive. They become obstructive. It may transpire that changing preferences leads to one plant fund being over full while another is insufficient. What happens then. Are the funds transferred, exchanged, is something given and something received, because after all it is the labour of the workers in the one plant that is being transferred or lost to them. But more to the point, more productive plants in a sector may find it easier to accumulate because after all we are dealing with average labour times, not weighted average labour times which factor for differing productivities resulting from uneven technical compositions. No, in the long run this proposal is not unifying it sets up sectional interests. Which is why it is important that we understand where we are going, and once we know that, we can ensure that the steps we take point in that direction.

Of course this is incorrect. The planners will know which sectors are to be expanded and which need to be reduced or adapted. If there is additional investment required, this will come from that part of the social fund dedicated to production. It cannot and must not come from funds held by individual plants. As the social fund expands so does the amount available for investment. It is here where accumulation takes place and not at the level of individual plants or sectors, as these sectors are blind to changes until advised of them by the planners. When workers in plants donate part of their product to the social fund, a segment is set aside for investment forming a centralised fund available to the planners, and it is allocated purely to fulfil the plan.

Production is an exquisitely human process. The success of the plan depends on the closest engagement between the planners and producers. It is the producers who give life to the plan. It is the producers who compensate in a million and one ways for any deficiencies, some foreseen and other unforeseen, and which renders the plan operable. Without the intimacy between the planners and the producers a new system of production cannot be born.

How different this was in the USSR where planning was used to whip the working class into producing more. Because of this compulsion, the management of the enterprises were forced to engage in constant guerrilla warfare with the planners to lower the impossible targets set for them by GOSPLAN. Literally, the blinded GOSPLAN used its white stick to primarily beat up enterprises.

### **The social fund.**

The International Communists have a better grasp of the social fund and its workings. But they do not draw a sharp demarcation between planning and the social fund, less this reduces the importance of workplace control.

The social fund lies at the heart of the communist society. It is based on deductions, how much each worker contributes to it and once this is done, how the resources are allocated. This is the core of working-class democracy. It is the social fund that binds society together in its collective effort for only through the social fund does society transform itself. It is really the strategic heights. Which is why it is jealously policed so that it does not turn into a surplus enriching an elite.

Today taxes in most rich countries as a share of National Income (not GDP) ranges from 40% to 50%. A significant proportion of that is wasted on bureaucracy, oppression of the working class and defence

which is offensive. How big will the social fund be as a share of the social product? This need not be answered. But what can be assumed is that the social fund will grow both relatively and absolutely over time. It will grow as a share of the social product and it will be further swelled by the absolute growth of the social product itself. As it grows, compromises will be less stringent and more can be achieved. In time, perhaps more than half of the social product will be devoted to the social fund. When that happens the satisfaction of social needs will have eclipsed individual consumption forming one of the cornerstones of the higher stage of communism.

## **Conclusion.**

The International Communists represent the continuity between Marx and the present day. They were a breath of fresh air in the fetid prison built by Stalin and the castes of bureaucrats around the world who identified with him. Despite their shortcomings, their central thesis holds true; namely that when labour time is accurately costed, workers cannot be exploited in an economy based on collective property, nor separated from their product. Additionally, accurate bookkeeping removes the need for decision making by elites who think they know best and who usurp a leading role for themselves. Some may consider this pre-occupation with the accurate costing of labour time to be simplistic, it is not. Without it, workers contributions cannot be accurately recorded, their withdrawal of product cannot be accurately recorded, and finally workers cannot be rewarded for their collective efforts. Accurate accounting is the sinews of a communist society holding it together and giving it locomotion.

Note 1. The International Communists concede that inherited skills should be remunerated differently. But this ends once skills are acquired in a communist society as skills are now funded by the social fund. *"Nevertheless, in the first stages of a communist society, it may at first be necessary that various intellectual occupations be remuneration at a higher level; that, for instance, 40 hours of labour gives the right to 80 or 120 hours of product. We have already seen that this represents no difficulty for the method of labour-time accounting. At the beginning of the communist form of society this could indeed be a just measure, if for instance the means of higher education were not available to everyone free of charge, because society is not yet sufficiently thoroughly organised on the new basis. As soon, however, as these matters have been ordered, then there can no longer be any question of giving the intellectual professions a larger share in the social product."* (Chapter 3.3) We will set aside the error that 40 hours on the production side must correspond to 40 hours on the consumption side. The real mistake is to assume that once the social fund itself pays for education the "riches of society" must be shared equally. This is to fail to take into account the severe compromises bedevilling the social fund in the early stages. The demands and priorities placed on the social fund will be numerous and conflicting. There will be the need to repair the planet, the need to abolish poverty, the need to provide perennial potable water, to rehabilitate whole sections of the working class ground down by capitalism and so on and so forth. This will take the resources away from education needed to upskill every worker to the same level as quickly as possible. In time this will become possible as the social fund swells but until then divisions will exist and for that reason they cannot be ignored financially. An equal right exists only because it reconciles inequality and as long as that inequality remains, so too does the right. And the right to receive in proportion to contribution after deductions is an equal right serving to unite a working class divided by the inequality of skill. In time of course hospitals will be populated only by consultants who will not only be performing intricate operations but emptying bedpans as well. In the words of Marx: *"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, have vanished;..."*

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