

4th March, 1949

I think that the abolition of special-labouring
to the extent becomes more likely

Dear Kay,
yesterday, I received the report of the good
discussion on Lenin and state capitalism. It is a
good thing that we see fallibility in the ablest of
men. It is not easy for a person to disengage with all
he once believed to be true. Having lived during the
pre-first world war period I recall two things: first
of all, there was the widespread but false belief that Lenin
disposed of Bernstein the victory over opportunism and
revisionism was complete. The other was the faith in
world social democracy, Lenin supported the main
trend.

Kautsky was seen as the carrier of Marxist
truth. Lenin supported Kautsky on most issues. In
"What is to be Done," he went further than Kautsky.
Recently, I looked over Kautsky's book on
the Erfurt Programme and ~~the Erfurt Programme~~ Socialism
Versus the State. Both of them mention state-
capitalism. They were against it while marching in
that direction. They would "transform" the State
and declared that the alternative was state capitalism.
The lessons of the Paris Commune were forgotten by
the world-famed legislators.

There is always the danger that one will
continue to repeat the ~~same~~ same ~~old~~ old ~~stories~~ stories were high
because of the growing strength of the movement.
The already developed ~~idea~~ idea prevented one from going
thought to dialectics. Socialism was certain, Lenin
lived in this period. It took a world war before the
~~idea~~ idea of the second international came
to an end. It looked as if all hopes were
blasted. Lenin took a firm stand but he must
have felt greatly disappointed.

Lenin knew the lessons of the Paris Commune, but
he was part of the social-democratic movement. Let
me ask, Kay, did Lenin have hopes that the
Russian Social Democrats would one day be able
to operate in the same way as in Western Europe?
The Bolshevik electoral programme issued in 1911,
I think, would even indicate that.

It is important to remember that no writer
has ever outstepped Kautsky, the Wanderschildts,
and the Nordstrands the way Lenin did when the
war broke out. I think you are right when attaching
great importance to the "Testament". He made some
of his best statements from 1922 until he died. I
must have been there at a meeting to attend.
I don't think I have ever been so trivial.

I had the flu last week, after everyone else
had got rid of it. Anyway, it annoyed every day.
Eric Hoffer has written a book, "The Class Struggle
in Parliament". He phoned me last night and said he would
send me a copy. He is sensitive to the criticism of the
groups. At least he mentions the class struggle
my best wishes, Harry

March 4, 1973

Dear Raya,

Yesterday, I received the report of the good discussion on Lenin and State-Capitalism. It is a good thing that we see fallibility in the ablest of men. It is not easy for a person to dispense with all he once believed to be true. Having lived during the pre-first world war period I recall two things. First of all, there was the widespread belief that having disposed of Bernstein, the victory over opportunism and revisionism was complete. The other was the faith in world social democracy. Lenin supported the main trend.

Kautsky was seen as the saviour of Marxist truth. Lenin supported Kautsky on most issues. In What Is To Be Done? he went further than Kautsky.

Recently, I looked over Kautsky's book on the Erfurt Programme and Vanderveldt's Socialism Versus the State. Both of them mention State-Capitalism. They warn against it while marching in that direction. They would "transform" the State and declare that the alternative was State-Capitalism. The lessons of the Paris Commune were forgotten by the world-famed leaders.

There is always the danger that one will continue to regret the passing of a period when hopes were high because of the growing strength of the movement. The steady development prevented one from giving thought to dialectics. Socialism was certain. Lenin lived in this period. It took a world war before the worship of the Second International came to an end. It looked as if all hopes were blasted. Lenin took a firm stand but he must have felt greatly disappointed.

Lenin knew the lessons of the Paris Commune, but he was part of the social-democratic movement. Let me ask, Raya, did Lenin have hopes that the Russian Social-Democrats would one day be able to operate in the same way as in Western Europe? The Bolshevik electoral programme issued in 1911, I think, would seem to indicate that.

It is important to remember that no writer has ever castigated the Kautskys, the Vanderveldts, and the Macdonalds the way Lenin did when the war broke out. I think you are right when attaching great importance to the Testament. He made some of his best statements from N.E.P. until he died. I must draw to a close as I have a meeting to attend. I hope I have not been too trivial.

Very Best Wishes,

Harry

P.S. I think that the attitude of social democracy to dialectics deserves more attention.

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