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Avenida Londres 127
Coyoacan, D. F.
Mexico
September 2, 1937

My dear Sara:

I didn't answer the question concerning Comrade Hansen because I had the impression that it is necessary to wait for the agreement of Hansen himself. The recommendation you and Comrade Cannon made seem to me absolutely adequate, and I would be glad if Comrade Hansen comes here as early as possible.

After your departure a great catastrophe happened here in the house. My Russian collaborator Kita is going to be married, and that with extraordinary speed, the 15th of this month. She already abandoned her work. You knew that I was returning to work on my "Lenin" book, which means that the Russian collaborator becomes my most important collaborator for a long period of time. Comrade Rae is willing to do this work. She is now hard at work on her Russian stenography and, as far as I can judge by the first attempts, with evident success. Nevertheless, there are two obstacles: a) for the next months Rae's Russian language will not be perfect; b) she is far too precious for me as an English stenographer. That's why it seems to me absolutely necessary to try to find in the States a Russian typist, not necessarily a stenographer at all. There will be more than sufficient work for both and Rae would during this time have the possibility to perfect her Russian. Do you believe there is any hope for finding a Russian typist in New York?

I received the letter of comrade Louis. I will answer it in the near future.

My best wishes to both of you,

LT:rs

Leon Trotsky

P.S. I wish to communicate to you that comrade Lankin was excellent in every respect and especially as a "guard". He entered on his new duties with a remarkable assurance and precision. I am very thankful to him.

2305

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Avenida Londres 127
Coyoacan, D.F., Mexico
September 14, 1937

My dear Sara:

Thank you very much for your readiness to come here to help me. It is not necessary. For the current needs I have the collaboration of Rae also in Russian and at the same time we hope to have a permanent collaborator. Jan is now on a trip to Durango where a Russian typist is living. We are waiting for a cable from him as to how it all turned out. (In principle she agrees; the question is only if she is skilful).

I confess I am a bit disquieted not to have received news about the German book. Eleanor Clark assured me that Norton would do more for the book than Doubleday Doran because: (a) he is a less known editor and looks for sensational publications; (b) he is more "radical". The material conditions proposed by Norton are 15%, from which 10% are for the author and 5% for the illustrator. But I didn't give any definite answer. Norton was obliged to accept or reject within two weeks from receipt of manuscript. Please telephone him or Eleanor Clark or both in order to get an immediate answer. If you believe that the conditions from Doubleday Doran could be more advantageous, then my duty toward the author would be to transmit the manuscript to Doubleday Doran.

With warm greetings,

LT:rs

Leon Trotsky

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Avenida Londres 127
Coyoacan, D. F.
Mexico
Sept. 18, 1937

Sara Jacobs

Copy to Cannon

Dear Comrade Sara:

The situation with the Russian collaborator is not resolved. Jan telephoned us after his very long and very tiring trip that the proposed typist is totally not fit for the job. What is to be done?

I received the cable signed Cannon Reber about the "professional English stenographer and Russian translator", with the remark, "Russian typing imperfect". I am in doubt. When we discussed the matter here, I had Rita as my Russian collaborator and at the same time I dreamed of a permanent English collaborator who knew, more or less, Russian for my current needs. At the moment this work is done very well by Rae. But I lack a good Russian collaborator-typist. If she knows no other language but knows well the Russian language and typing, ^{and is efficient} because my work on the Lenin book would use her full time. But the collaborator proposed by you and Comrade Cannon types Russian "imperfectly". What can be done? Can you examine her? Do you believe that a good English typist can, in a short time, perfect her Russian typing? Rae answers these questions negatively. It would be a terrible blow for me to invite here from Chicago a collaborator and then first establish the fact that the invitation was a mistake. I don't know what to do.

I received from Comrades Shachtman and Cannon the proposition to write an article for the NEW INTERNATIONAL on the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution. I would do it willingly but it's impossible for me in the present situation. I can't dictate an article of such an important character in any other language than Russian. Rae's Russian is sufficient for a letter or short article but not for an article of such size. This is one more reason to find for me a Russian collaborator.

With comradely greetings,

LT:rs

L. Trotsky

P.S. In any case, this does not mean that you yourself should come since the question is not so much to have your collaboration for a few months but to have a permanent collaborator.

2307

October 4, 1937

Dear Comrade Sarah,

It is necessary to explain precisely my present situation towards my English and Russian collaborators.

As I told and wrote you the arrival of Rae in a critical moment was of inestimable help to me, not only for my English but also for my Russian correspondence. Though it would be hardly possible for me to write my book on Lenin with Rae, I can dictate to her not only Russian letters but also short articles. For my English correspondence I may have the collaboration of Comrade Hansen. We began our work yesterday and it goes all right. But the Russian question remains open. Some weeks ago Comrade Rae told me that Abern is very anxious to have her collaboration in the management of the New International. You know that the New International is very near to my heart. I know at the same time from experience how important it is for the success of common work to have mutual confidence and personal friendship. In spite of this I opposed the departure of Rae. (She did not insist at all: you know her spirit of complete devotion to party work and her warm personal readiness to help me in every respect.) But I repeat the question of a Russian typist remains open. Rae accomplished miracles in studying Russian, and she is very gifted as a stenographer even in Russian. But the difficulty arises from the fact that she was not educated in the Russian language from her childhood. She can understand enough in order to translate from the Russian to the English; but she has not, and I believe it is impossible in a couple of months to win, the necessary assurance in the subtleties of a foreign language which is necessary for a stenographer or typist. Until a Russian typist comes, Rae's collaboration is absolutely necessary for me.

But I ask myself if it would be reasonable and even permissible to have her at the same time as a Russian typist (when and if she comes), given the fact that Hansen will remain here, as I hope, for an indefinite time. You wrote me that the tentative Russian typist is only a sympathizer. This signifies that her departure from the states will not in any way prejudice party work. With Hansen and with Rae the situation is very different. For purely personal reasons (and egoistic in point of view) I should be glad to retain Rae here as long as possible, but from the point of view of elementary party interest it would be impermissible luxury. My conclusion is that Rae should remain here until we find a Russian typist and until we win the assurance through experience that she is suitable for her work; then and only then Rae can return at the disposition of the party.

I am not writing officially to the committee because a letter in such circumstances rarely enough is self-explanatory,

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but you my dear Sarah know all the conditions of my life and work and you can not only transmit the letter to the committee but also give to them all the necessary explanations.

Comradely yours,

June 11th, 1938

Dear Rae,

I am writing to you (at the suggestion of LD) in connection with the forthcoming conference. As you know, L. Sedoff, usually represented the Russian section and the Bulletin at all conferences. Without him the Russian section, though grown much larger with the addition of new forces, etc. feels terribly bereaved. It lacks a representative known to other sections; what is more, sections or leaders who carry on a fight against the international leadership certainly will dispute a mandate given in the name of the Russian section to a comparatively unknown person. But be it as may, the Russian section and the Bulletin MUST be represented at the conference. In order to help our comrades in France to speak in the name of a section and not just a group of emigrés it is advisable that comrades who group themselves around the Bulletin (though they may belong to the section of the country in which they live) also consider themselves part of the Russian section and urge individually (since we never met collectively nor constituted ourselves officially as the Russian section) upon the Russian comrades in France that they see to it that a representative be delegated to the forthcoming conference. I have written a letter in this sense, you will have to write a similar letter. You can write to the Bulletin (until you are given a better address) in a double envelope, the inside envelope mark for Lela (on second thought you might have another address, though whether it is still used I do not know - so the Bulletin is a better bet).

Now on the Bulletin. Hope you will be able to make something better of it than I from Jersey. I found out that individual subs come in very very slowly. Most subs come from New York and the people feel that they can buy the Bulletin, so why subscribe? (especially since it does not come in regularly. But what can be developed, sales at meetings, etc. And for this an energetic person is needed who lives in New York. With you there I am almost sure the sales will jump. Also be on the neck of our bookstores that they pay up their indebtedness. Please, also follow up one more matter (consult my sister on it). Several months ago I sent to the Bulletin \$10.00 by money order. This money was never received. I made an inquiry at the Post Office. But have heard nothing since. Find out whether Jack heard something, if not, let him find out at the post office in the town we used to live what has happened to this inquiry (Mira must have the receipt).

The mail is being collected. So au revoir. LD as you know is busy on the cook. Everybody sends regards to you, including our Mexican "entourage". Best regards to your very best man.

Love

1) you might try to make an attempt (with the help of Sylvia) to form a more cohesive group of "friends of the Bulletin".

2310

2 3 1 1
June 15th, 1938

Dear Rae,

We just received loads of material from Vanzler (had not had a chance to look it over thoroughly, just glanced at it). I see from your letter to Joe that you misunderstood the request to check the references to Trotsky, Zinoviev Kamenev, Stalin in the alphabetical list (alfavitnyi ukazatel) at the back of each of the volumes of Lenin's works. We do not mean references to Trotsky etc. in Lenin's works, only references in the alphabetical notes. What is more, just take the first edition, read through the references, then compare it with a later edition (after Lenin's death) and IF YOU FIND GROSS CHANGES AND OMISSIONS (only in this case) copy what is said in the first ~~xxx~~ edition and the changes in the later editions. This should not entail much work.

Please tell Vanzler (or give him this part of my letter) that there was no mistake on our part in asking whether Stalin was elected to the Central Committee at the London congress. No, surely, we knew that he was not elected, but we needed authentic proofs (excerpts from minutes, etc.) we also wanted to know who WAS ELECTED, etc. etc. This data is now furnished in the material sent to you.

As to the speed with which material should be dispatched. LD is now finishing the chapters on Stalin's early life (the Caucasus, the seminary, work in Batum, Baku, Tiflis, up to say 1903) all data pertaining to this period should be in his hands as soon as possible. Other material is not so urgent. Jesus, it sure is lucky that you can help in this indispensable work!

I notice your reference to looking for a job. You cannot be serious... You promised to be back in six months (frantic efforts are being made to find a "permanent" Russian "collaborator" in Czechoslovakia, but if it does not materialize?...) of this period one and half months have already passed. Can you be thinking of taking a job for four months or so?

Nothing new (at least "specially new") here. Dictation is proceeding daily, some data have to be found here (only as the last resort we write to New York and Paris -- and you know how meager the materials at our disposal are here!), etc. etc. Almost all the work now proceeds along "the Russian front".

From various sources we hear that the situation in New York is somewhat disheartening. And New York is the life-giving center. But then each turn is accompanied by a period of disorganization, indecision (only when will the turn actually be made?) - those are the overhead expenses.

With best regards to you and Max from
"the household"

Yours truly

2311

2 3 1-2

6/27/38

Dear Sara:

Sorry to be late; when your letter re the letter to the Russian Bulletin arrived here, I was in Washington. Since it was my opinion that a letter would have more weight if a few signatures were attached to it rather than just my own, I waited till I returned to NY where I consulted the Russian speaking comrades who all agreed with me. JPC also approved the English draft of my letter. So enclosed is copy of the collective Russian letter sent to the Russian Bulletin. I hope it meets with LD's approval.

This Monday I'm calling a meeting of all Russian speaking comrades and close sympathizers with a view to forming a "Friends of the Russian Bulletin" club. I've already visited sympathizers who favored the idea. We'll probably start with a "vecherinka" and a short lecture soon, though we might decide not to start it till the Fall; it's up to the other comrades to decide this Monday.

One of the questions in your letter to Com. Wright regarding the Bolshevik Center that was organized at the end of the London Congress ⁽¹⁹⁰⁷⁾ was answered in advance in those notes I had sent in on Stalin's article on that congress. I thought the fact interesting so that I had copied it; Lenin's name is the only one mentioned and I know of no other source that would mention the names of the others who composed the Bolshevik caucus.

Other material will be sent in as soon as we gather it.

Remember me to the OM and the rest of the household.

Comradely,

Rae

P.S. I turned over \$8. to Mira who already had \$11.40 and it was all sent to the Bulletin. I have also increased the bundle order by \$0 in anticipation of the campaign on it.

2312

Aug. 17, 1938

Dear Sara:

Enclosed you will find leading articles in "Pravda" for the years 1924, 1925, 1926. Please note that in the year 1925 the leading articles actually appear on the 22nd instead of 23rd of February (in the latter issue there is only an Order, and an account of plenum in which the speeches of Frunze and Uglanov are reported but not printed as given). In the issue of Feb. 22, however, there is an article by Podvoisky, in which, for the first time, there is mention of Stalin, and not mere mention but in the company of Lenin. In the 1926 issue Voroshilov appears with an article in which he, in passing, so-to-speak, pays homage to the "unforgettable leader Frunze". This is the first time that I have noted such mention to be made of Red Army leaders in articles. There was such mention of Trotsky but only in greetings. It is for this reason that I copied the greetings to Comrade Trotsky appearing in 1924. The reason that for that year I also copied the announcement of his health (the whole announcement, by the way, was printed in black type) is both because it's both a month after the death of Lenin, and there is an interesting refutation of Duranty's "theory" of LD's absence from the funeral of Lenin.

With the next batch I will skip to the yr. 1936 and go backwards. Since it will be impossible for me to copy all articles (I must return to work) I will at least give you a cross section of all the years wanted, and short summaries of those I can't get around to typing. If they should still be wanted, however, in full, Wright will try to have it done without me. O, yes, one more item, in the yr. 1926 there appears an article by a Frenchman, Andre Marti, which, though it's more in the form of a letter than a leading article, I copied (the important passages) because it rings so with the spirit of world revolution, which they hadn't yet had chance to forget.

Best greetings to the household,

2314

75-7

August 17, 1938

Dear Rae,

I am writing again in a hurry, please forgive. On the Red Army articles. It is not necessary to copy entire articles, not even entire leaders. No, what is necessary is to make excerpts of those places where builders of the Red Army are named, referred to, what names are mentioned (for instance Smilga, Lashevich, Frunze). Who is mentioned as builders and participants? Where and in what connection is mentioned Stalin, Lenin, LD? What is said specially on the Southern Front; of LD's role in it, of Stalin's role in it? Would it be possible also, besides the anniversary issues, to look over the papers for the time of the operations on the Southern Front and against Yudenich? To see what they are saying, what names they mention?

I am enclosing an excerpt from Beria's book On the History of Bolshevik organizations in the Caucasus. Would it be possible to find out where and when these reminiscences of Suliashvili were printed; to what period do they refer; when was he a member of the Leipzig group, before the revolution of 1905 or after?

Transmitted to LD the happy news about the magnificent sale of Bulletins. Your mood seems good. What is new in the party? Here we are simply dehors de combat.

With the best of greetings

2315

Dear Sara -

Just a few words - I hope you have heard in detail from Wright - who was & have done the work on the Red Army articles & the quotation you sent in. The only thing I did was to reread the quotation in Beria's book & find the statement: "M. Dabumambulu b 1905-1907/22. coxod rilerod Kobkaycezo cozoqHozu Kduduxpa PCDPN."

Re your find - I write to Natalia that her record must be checked. Rita too said that Yandich likes to talk too much.

But I hope it will turn out for the best. As for the completion of the dictaphone, Rose is doing all she can to get the money for the shaver.

Would you please decipher the enclosed card for me - his copy of the Bulletin returned with "Not at address."

Nothing to write as everything is at quite a standstill. Will get there, I hope, also some activity. Tomorrow will send her Bul. #24, \$4, which is for subs + \$9 for bundle etc., including Peter Bushy having got some. Regards to all - Joe