

4th March, 1947

I think that the abolition of special-labouring  
is dialectic because it is a

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-war world war period I recall two things: first  
of all, there was the widespread 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 Wanderers' 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 old stories and hopes were high  
because of the growing strength of the movement.  
The steady development prevented one from going  
thought to dialectics. Socialism was certain. Lenin  
lived in this period. It took a world war before the  
wonder of the Second International was  
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 seem to indicate that.

It is important to remember that no writer  
has ever outstepped Kautsky, the Wanderers,  
and the Wanderers 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 hope I have not been too 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 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.

14186