

WITH LENIN AGAINST STALIN WOMEN SUFFER IN PRESENT ERA

(The following is a chapter from a large work, "THE REVOLUTION DISFIGURED" by L. D. Trotsky. This book will shortly be published by The MILITANT in an inexpensive edition, and will include documents from the archives of the Comintern, speeches of L. D. Trotsky, Lenin and other valuable material never as yet published by the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy. The book will shed a penetrating light on the falsification of the history of the Russian Revolution perpetrated by Stalin and his scribblers, Yaroslavsky, et al. The section here printed is addressed by comrade Trotsky to the Bureau of Party History of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party: Concerning the Falsification of the History of the October Insurrection, the History of the Revolution and the History of the Party."—Ed.)

I will not quote here Lenin's principal letter against Stalin on the national question. It is printed in the stenographic reports of the plenum of July 26, and moreover, it is being passed around in separate leaflets. They will fail to conceal that letter. But there are other documents on the same theme, completely unknown to the Party. Archivarius and the historians of the Stalin school are taking every measure to prevent those documents from appearing. They will continue to do so. They are quite capable, in fact, of simply destroying them.

For that reason I think it is necessary to quote here the most important excerpts from the early letter of Lenin, and the answer of Stalin, on the question of the structure of the Soviet Union. Lenin's letter, dated September 27, 1922, was addressed to comrade Kamenev, a copy being sent to all the members of the Politburo. Here is the beginning of the letter:

"You probably have received already from Stalin the resolution of his commission on the admission of the independent republics into the Soviet Union.

"If you have not received it, get it from the secretary and please read it immediately. I spoke about it yesterday with Sokolnikov, today with Stalin, tomorrow I will see Mdivani (a Georgian Communist suspected of advocating 'independence').

"In my opinion the question is supremely important. Stalin has a slight aspiration toward hurry. You must think it over well. Zinoviev too. (You once had the intention to take this matter up and did so to some extent.)

"Stalin has already agreed to one concession, in Section I, instead of saying 'entry' into the R. S. F. S. R. to say 'formal unification' with the R. S. F. S. R. in a union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia. I trust the spirit of this concession is obvious. We acknowledge ourselves on an equal basis with the Ukrainian Republic and other Republics, and together with them on the basis of equality we enter into a new union, a new federation, the Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia."

There follows a whole series of Lenin's corrections made in the same spirit. In the concluding part of his letter Lenin says:

"Stalin agrees to postpone introducing the resolution in the Politburo until my arrival. I arrive Monday, October 2. I should like to have an interview with you and Rykov for a couple of hours—in the morning, say from one to two, and, if necessary in the evening, say five to seven, or six to eight.

"Here is my preliminary project. On the basis of a conversation with Mdivani and other comrades I will fight for it and change it. I urge you to do the same and answer me.

"Yours,
"Lenin

"P. S. Send copies to ALL members of the Politburo."

By L. D. TROTSKY

Stalin sent his answer to Lenin to the members of the Politburo on the same day, September 27, 1922. I quote from his answer two important passages:

"Lenin's corrections to paragraph 2, proposing to create along with the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Republic, a Central Executive Committee of the Federation, should not, in my opinion, be adopted. The existence of two Central Executive Committees in Moscow, one of which will obviously represent a 'lower house' and the other an 'upper house' will give us nothing but conflict and debate."

And further:

"4. On the subject of paragraph 4, in my opinion, comrade Lenin himself 'hurried' a little, demanding a fusion of the commissariats of finance, food supply, labor and people's economy with the commissariats of the Federation. There is hardly a doubt that this 'hurriedness' will supply fuel to the advocates of 'independence' to the detriment of the national liberalism of Lenin.

5. Lenin's correction to paragraph 5, is in my opinion superfluous.

"J. Stalin"

This extraordinarily illuminating correspondence, concealed from the Party, like many other documents, preceded the famous letter of Lenin on the national question. In his remarks upon Stalin's draft, Lenin is exceptionally reserved and gentle in his expression. Lenin still hoped, in that period, to adjust the matter without a big conflict. He gently accuses Stalin of "hurrying". Stalin's accusation against Mdivani of "independence" Lenin places in quotation marks, obviously disassociating himself from that accusation. Moreover, Lenin especially emphasizes the fact that he will introduce his accusation on the basis of conversations with Mdivani and other comrades.

Stalin's answer, on the contrary, is marked by rudeness; the concluding phrases of the fourth point, is especially worthy of attention:

"There is hardly a doubt that this 'hurriedness' will supply fuel to the advocates of 'independence' to the detriment of the national liberalism (!) of Lenin."

Thus Lenin had arrived to the point of being accused of national liberalism.

The further course of the struggle about the national question showed Lenin that he could not straighten things out by means of inside and, so to speak, family methods of influencing Stalin, that it was necessary to appeal to the congress and to the Party. With this purpose, Lenin wrote in several installments, his letters on the national question.

Vladimir Illych attributed enormous importance to the "Georgian" question, not only because he feared the consequences of a false national policy in Georgia—a fear which has been wholly confirmed—but also because upon that question was revealed to him the falseness of Stalin's whole course on the national question, and not only the national question. The big fundamental letter of Lenin on the national question is concealed from the Party to this day. The pretence that Lenin did not intend his letter to be read to the Party is false to the bottom. Did Lenin intend his remarks in notebooks and on the borders of the books he read to be published? The fact is that you publish everything whatever which directly or indirectly strikes at the Opposition, but you hide the letter of Lenin giving his fundamental program on the national question.

Here are two quotations from this letter:

"I think that here the hastiness and administrative impulsiveness of Stalin played a fatal role, and also his spite against the notorious 'social chauvinism'. Spitefulness in general plays the worst

possible role in politics." (From Lenin's note of December 30, 1922.)

And here in more exact terms:

"It is of course necessary to hold Stalin and Dzerzhinsky responsible for all this really Great Russian nationalistic campaign" (from Lenin's letter of December 31, 1922).

Vladimir Illych sent me this letter at the moment when he felt that he would hardly be able to appear at the Twelfth Congress. Here is the note which I received from him in the two last days of his participation in political life:

"Strictly secret. Personal.

"Esteemed comrade Trotsky:

"I earnestly ask you to undertake the defense of the Georgian affair at the Central Committee of the Party. That affair is now under 'prosecution' at the hands of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, and I cannot rely on their impartiality. Indeed, quite the contrary. If you would agree to undertake its defense, I could be at rest. If for some reason you do not agree, send me back all the papers. I will consider that a sign of your disagreement.

"With the very best comradely greetings,

"Lenin

"Dictated to M. V.

"March 5, 1923."

"To comrade Trotsky:

"To his letter, sent to you by telephone, Vladimir Illych asks me to add for your information that comrade Kamenev is going to Georgia Wednesday, and Vladimir Illych asks me to find out whether you do not want to send something there from you.

"Signed, M. Volodichiva.

"March 5, 1923"

"To comrades Mdivani, Makharadze, and others (copy to comrades Trotsky and Kamenev):

"Esteemed Comrades:

"I am working in your behalf with all my heart. I am outraged at the rudeness of Ordjonikidze and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. I am preparing for you notes and a speech.

"With esteem,

"Lenin

March 6, 1923."

"To comrade Kamenev (copy to comrade Trotsky):

Leon Borisovich:

"Supplementing our telephone conversation, I communicate to you as acting president of the Politburo, the following:

"As I have already told you Dec. 31, 1922, Vladimir Illych has dictated an article on the national question.

"This question has worried him extremely and he was preparing to speak on it at the Party conference. Not long before his last illness, he told me that he would publish the article, but later. After that he got sick, without giving final directions.

"Vladimir Illych considered this article to be a guiding one and extremely important. At his direction it was communicated to comrade Trotsky, whom Vladimir Illych authorized to defend his point of view upon the given question at the Party conference, in view of their solidarity upon it.

The only copy of the article in my possession is preserved at the direction of Vladimir Illych in his secret archive.

"I bring the above facts to your attention.

"I could not do it earlier since I returned to work only today after a sickness.

"L. Fotevia,

Personal secretary of comrade Lenin
"March 16, 1923.

After all the slanders with which they have surrounded the question of Lenin's attitude to me, I cannot refrain from calling attention to the signature of his first letter—"with the very best comradely

WASHINGTON—Half a million workers women falls the heaviest burden of the struggle for existence as wage earners. A study made for the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor by Agnes L. Peterson shows that women, formerly held responsible for keeping the home, are now compelled in a large proportion of cases to share the family bread-winning while keeping the home and bringing up children. When disaster meets the man of the family, they step forth as sole wage-earner for the family, besides being home-keeper and nurse. And this burden is carried despite the wage discrimination against women.

Information was secured from almost 60,000 women as to their share in family support. More than half of them turned over all their wages to their families. Of 455 working mothers, among immigrant workers in Pennsylvania, only 108 reported that their husbands made as much as \$30 a week. "Sickness and unemployment as possible causes of reduction of the meager income hung over the women like an awful dread."

One woman, a cigar maker, has been supporting her husband and two children for more than six months because the man was unable to get work for more than a few days at a time. In another family the mother was compelled to work for wages to support herself and three children because her husband, disabled by an injury for five months, received only \$12.50 a week as compensation.

Marriage Increases Burden

Among 17,000 unmarried women, 1 out of every 5 was taking care of a family without the help of male relatives. Another phase of the inquiry showed that sons do not forego marriage in order to give needed support to their parents, in any such proportion as daughters sacrifice themselves to this duty.

"In many cases," says the report, "marriage fails to bring to women the economic security considered formerly to be one of its chief advantages. Nowadays marriage may mean new financial responsibilities for wife as well as for husband."

Of 74,000 Rochester women reported by the 1920 census as married, widowed or divorced, 28 percent were gainfully employed. Even in the 59,000 cases where the husband lived with the family, almost 9 percent of the wives were employed away from home; and of 2,300 cases where the husband was absent, 48 percent of the wives had outside employment. In about 4,300 families the wife or widow was the only bread winner.

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A LECTURE ON

Communism and Syndicalism

by

JAMES P. CANNON

at the

Labor Temple
242 East 14th Street

on

Saturday, March 29, 1930 at 8 p. m.

Admission 15 cents

Auspices: New York Branch
Communist League of America (Opposition)

greetings". Whoever knows Lenin's parsimony with words and his manner of conversation and correspondence, will realize that Lenin did not sign these words to his letter, accidentally. It was not accidental either, that Stalin, when he was compelled to read this correspondence at the plenum of July, 1926, substituted for the words "with the very best comradely greetings" the official phrase "with Communist greetings". Here again Stalin was true to