

10/1/46

Dear Max:

Re democracy and strikes in early Soviet state--as late in fact as 11th congress of RCP (March 1922), that is, AFTER Kronstadt, and banning of factions and parties, and when NEP made it seem it was o.k. to strike against private enterprises, but not against state projects, Tomsky addressed the congress thus: (Minutes, p.251, Russian)"It is time to disclaim this chinovnik attitude to strikes!" In Moscow, he continued, there are, monthly, between 30-40 strikes. If the Communists remain at their benches, and do not join the workers in their strikes, how they expect to make of the trade unions "schools of communism." "We consider strikes, from a principled point of view, when headed by Mensheviks, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ who fight against the Soviet state politically, non-permissible. But when no politics is involved, and the strikes are well-founded, the Communists in the shop should join them." The Congress approved ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the position of Tomsky. By the way, even after parties were banned, the Mensheviks, SRs, Anarchists participated to the full in the trade union congresses.

Another interesting point is how quickly workers grievances against lack of democracy got results. As you know, Trotsky was put in charge of putting railroads into functioning order in 1920. Cectren and Glavpolitput was administratively in charge, in which military discipline could be invoked "for/^{this} emergency purpose". (3/20) The workers decided (11/20) that the emergency had passed and trade union democracy be restored, so by next congress not only was Trotsky relieved of job, Cectren abolished, but all regular trade union organs began to function. All of which ^{led to the formation of the} made Tomsky, ~~who~~ was, opposed even during the emergency for any narrowing of workers

8987

and had then described (Stenog. Report, 9th Congress, Mar. 1920, p. 140) the politicians thus: "On the one hand, they all love the trade unions --each according to his own manner. Comrade Lenin, from love, pushes them so their head shakes; Comrade Trotsky embraces them by the neck so their eyes pop out. Comrade Rykov almost squeezes their kidneys out." His position against one-man management lost out, but, as we saw, the emergency measure was with strict time limitation.

Also, so did Trotsky's position lose out, the 10th Congress (3/'21) adopted Lenin's position which read "The congress considers necessary the realization of the following organizational measures: (1) participation of the trade union in the working out of a single economic plan and production program, and equal participation in the practical leadership by the realization and execution of these programs. (2) the formation of economic organs. The organization of the direction of industry is formed by agreement between trade union and corresponding economic organs on the basis of proposals from the trade unions."

These "economic organs"--Workers Production Conferences--by the way, lasted into the first year of the First Five Year Plan when all norms set by plan were overfulfilled and made the Stalinists get the dizzy idea of "The Five Year Plan in Four Years". They first ceased to exist in 1929.

You might also remind our turn-coat that his "honest" Manya Gordon in her "Workers Before and After Lenin" never mentioned any part of this/dispute, in fact made it deliberately appear as if only Trotsky as an individual had some understanding of trade unions, but that his position never held out, and trade unions never functioned, etc. Everyone rewinds the film of industry in his own way.