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FEBRUARY 6th 1917, TRONDHEIM, NORWAY

Growing discontent amongst the Sámi population in matters of education and the historic land rights of reindeer herders, inspires a group led by Elsa Laula Renberg to organise the very first public debate.

The conference is announced by the newspaper Dagsposten and referred to as a manifestation of an emerging political awarness. It is commemorated by making February 6th a Sámi National Day.

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1917

FEBRUARY 23rd 1917, ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Mass demonstrations organised by women workers in the streets and factories of St Petersburg lead to the deposition of Tsar Nicholas II and formation of the Provisional Government. Alexandra Kollontai proposes to commemorate the February protest by making March 8th an International Women's Day[1].

[1] The 23rd of February Old Style (Julian Calendar) is the 8th of March in the Gregorian calendar adopted in Russia in 1918.



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III. 1b

DOUBLE ACT. 1917

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Elsa Laula and Nadia Vanska
February 6th 1917, Trondheim, Norway

At the beginning of January 1917 while exiled in Norway, I received an invitation to attend the very first ever Sámi conference[2]. I hesitated, as writing of Plantain was going well, and yet I was tempted by the opportunity to be part of an event emerging from within that community. On the 6th of February 1917, Sámi representatives gathered in Trondheim for a four day conference to discuss their own situation regarding land rights, education and sovereignty. The meeting was convened by Elsa Laula[3].

My train journey to Trondheim was long and tiring, full of interruptions and frequent delays. All the way from Oslo to Eidsvoll, I sat by the window taking in the landscape, immersed in some distant memories. The image of the snow-covered platform at Finland Station haunted me every time I travelled. I left Russia from there almost a year ago. Not understanding the language saved me from being drawn into small talk but also created a barrier. Who were the people around me? What did we have in common, apart from sharing a crowded train?

[2] 6th – 9th February 1917, Trondheim, Norway. The first Sámi conference brought together about 150 people, from Norway and Sweden marking the beginning of Sámi cooperation across the borders. The conference extended by one more day (9th of February) than originally planned. The agenda of the meeting included the reindeer herding, Sámi law, education and Sámi organisation.

[3] Elsa Laula Renberg (born Elsa Laula, November 29, 1877 Tärnaby, Sweden, died July 22, 1931 in Brønnøy, Norway) was a Sámi politician and activist and the first Sámi woman to have her writing published. Elsa Laula was committed to working towards a greater independence of Sámi people, as well as embracing the international women's movement. In 1904, she published the pamphlet: *Do we face life or death? Words of truth about the Lappish situation. (Infør lif eller død? Sanningsord i de Lappska förhållandena)*. In 1908 married reindeer herder, Thomas Renberg with whom she moved to Vefsn in Nordland, Norway. On December 5, 1910, Elsa founded the first Sámi women's organisation, *Brurskanke Sámi Women's League (Brurskanke Sámmiske kvindeforening)* – the main organisers of the Trondheim conference in 1917.

6 *Moving between places, the train journey itself provided an interruption and escape from my own exile. I often thought of crowds and potentialities of individuals that made them. While the train was moving deeper into the woods, I remembered Mary Wollstonecraft's*^[4] *solitary journey to Scandinavia. Like her I was taken by the harsh beauty of this vast and unexplored land. I resisted the temptation to close my eyes and stayed awake, rarely losing sight of the landscape, or rather what remained of it in the falling light. On the next train from Eidsvoll to Hamar, one of the passengers asked me in broken German how come I was traveling alone over such long distances.*^[5] *His curiosity was prompted by my somewhat unusual situation and led to a long conversation. We ended up talking about theatre. He had been fortunate to participate in rehearsals of Masquerade at Petrograd's Alexandrinsky Theatre.*^[6] *When I told him I was going to attend a Sámi conference in Trondheim, he was intrigued again: why would I be interested in these people, renowned for their ignorance? His views were based on newspaper reports*

[4] In 1795, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 – 1797) undertook a three month tour to Scandinavia. As a result she published *Letters Written in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*, containing personal material from her journal and letters sent to her lover Gilbert Ismay.

[5] Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letter VI* from *Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*, Cassell & Company Ltd, London, Paris, New York, Melbourne, 1889. "A woman coming alone interested them. And I know not whether my weariness gave me a look of peculiar delicacy, but they approached to assist me, and inquire after my wants, as if they were afraid to hurt, and wished to protect me. The sympathy I inspired, thus dropping down from the clouds in a strange land, affected me more than it would have done had not my spirits been harassed by various causes--by much thinking--musing almost to madness--and even by a sort of weak melancholy that hung about my heart at parting with my daughter for the first time."

[6] V. Meyerhold's production of Mikhail Lermontov's *Masquerade* at the Alexandrinsky Theatre, opened on the same day in February 1917 when the first shots were fired in the Russian Revolution. Meyerhold became one of the most enthusiastic activists of new Soviet theatre, even joining the Social Democratic (later Communist) Party in 1918. This was a risky decision at the time, as it was impossible to anticipate the direction in which Russia's rapidly changing political tides would flow.

and sounded like simplistic and damaging propaganda. I was well aware of the dangers of propaganda in the ideological battles fought both in Germany and Russia. It was not the first time these rumours reached my ears, and once again I remained skeptical. How much of what these people say can be trusted if they have rarely, or maybe never been in direct contact with the Sámi? So many of the negative views on their way of life are based on lack of credible sources as well as lack of good will. I assumed that the decision to organise a conference and more actively self-organise are the signs of their increasing political efficacy. The growing consciousness of the Sámi is what convinced me to attend their conference. I had no clear picture in my mind, no expectations, but I wondered how what appeared to be a predominantly agrarian society, was addressing their oppression. All I ever experienced was deep divisions in the industrial towns. I was interested in what has driven a small group of people to come together to talk, and I was quite determined to hear their voices.

My thoughts were interrupted when I had to change the train and boarded the Røros Line. The compartment was more comfortable, even cosy. It was already dark and I caught a reflection of my tired face in the window. For a moment a vast distance disappeared and I realised I was alone. The next morning I had finally reached Trondheim, walking into a bright sunshine I was feeling weak. I decided to find my host, the journalist Ellen Lie in the Methodist Church where the conference was held. I felt awkward, not knowing the language proved to be more of an embarrassment than an inconvenience. Before being introduced to Elsa, I spotted her in a colourful and agitated crowd. She was a tall woman in her 40s with prominent features and a piercing gaze, dressed in a traditional Sámi costume, she was smiling discreetly while greeting the guests. This first positive impression was subsequently reaffirmed by our conversation. Elsa Laula was a confident speaker, she didn't hesitate or show a slightest sign of confusion. And even when she stumbled upon a word in Russian, she seized the meaning very quickly.





ELSA LAULA

It's a pleasure to finally meet you, Nadia, so good you are here in time. I am grateful you have accepted our invitation. And you had such a long journey, I imagine it was difficult to travel in a cold weather, as our trains are so unpredictable...

NADIA VANSKA

Thank you for your concern, but you needn't worry about me. I was brought up in Petrograd where we have freezing winters. Besides, the holidays spent in Kuusa[7] at my grandmother's house built up my resistance, and not just to low temperatures.

ELSA LAULA

Still, you should be taking a rest and join us later in the afternoon when I expect many of the guests to arrive. There was a delay of the Hurtigruten ship and we are still waiting for them. *Smiles anxiously after a pause.* I am sure they are on their way and are eager not to miss anything from the first day of the conference.

NADIA VANSKA

I will take advantage of this delay, and begin our conversation now; there are so many things to discuss with you. Firstly, I must confess, I am delighted to see a great number of women attending.

ELSA LAULA

I consider it an important accomplishment, which we owe to Brurskanke Sámi Women's League, a Sámi organisation I founded seven years ago. We made a special appeal to them to attend and emphasized their role in the common effort to formulate and demand certain rights, especially those related to education.

NADIA VANSKA

What does this conference mean for Sámi people?

[7] Village in Finland, at that time the Grand Duchy of Finland – part of the Russian Empire.

ELSA LAULA

I prefer to call it a gathering or simply a meeting, this is a long awaited occasion for us to come together and introduce our concerns to one another. For years now, it has been my burning wish to organise such a meeting but I needed time to convince others, to win their support and point to a clear purpose. It is indeed a historical moment when we all understand that only by acting together we can achieve something. No one can be more aware of their situation than the Sámi themselves. Taking into account that we are descended from a population that has been inhabiting this land for hundreds of years, we consider it to be our right to make our own decisions regarding the reindeer husbandry, the Sámi language and wide spread education. Our sovereignty and integrity are very much at stake.

NADIA VANSKA

Since living in Norway, the information I received about Sámi was only from newspapers. I heard different stories about your historical background and geographical distribution and although my question might seem simplistic, I cannot help asking: Are the Sámi one people?

ELSA LAULA

Originally, Sámi lived as one large group in a wide geographical area with no national borders. However, as a result of the colonisation of our historically indigenous territories, the grazing land is now crossed by the borders of Norway, Sweden and the Russian Empire.

NADIA VANSKA

So how do you live and how do you communicate across such a vast area?

ELSA LAULA

Many Sámis are nomadic and migrate as seasons change, while others live in stable settlements. But regardless of that, we all share the same history,

10 culture and customs. Today, Sámi from both sides, North and South are willing to help each other beyond the national borders. This of course raises the question of nationality and culture, as conflicting sources of unity or identity. We have invited various representatives from Finnmark, Tromsø, Hålogaland, Grong, Snåsa, Meråker, Røros and others from Sweden as well. Teachers, reindeer herders, doctors, school inspectors, journalists. They will be talking about their own experiences, exchanging practical knowledge and working on proposals and future developments. It is our deep discontent that brought us together and we want to be able to voice our anger and put pressure on the government.

NADIA VANSKA

In the last decades, Scandinavia underwent important political changes which in turn transformed the map of the Northern territories. How did these changes affect the life of the Sámi people?

ELSA LAULA

They have certainly had a major impact, which we can't even fully grasp today. As a result of the dissolution of the 100-year-old union between Norway and Sweden[8], Sámi living for thousands of years on these territories became citizens of two different countries. One of the main consequences was that those from the Norwegian part could no longer benefit from the Swedish nomad schools and that these newly established borders impeded the reindeer migration. At the moment I anticipate another political turn within the area. As you already know being half Finnish, the plight for independence is gaining ground in the Great Duchy of Finland. In case Finland breaks up with Tsarist Russia and achieves independence, Sámi people will be split

[8] On 7 June 1905, the Norwegian parliament passed the declaration of dissolution between Sweden and Norway which a few months later led to the recognition of Sweden as an independent constitutional monarchy.

up again, this time between the four states. I'm sure some of these fears will be expressed during the conference.

NADIA VANSKA

What expectations do you have of this meeting?

ELSA LAULA

I hope that at least most of the representatives will devote time and energy to thinking about organisation of education. I believe that a well-drafted proposal can play a major role in effecting other social changes. *After a moment of pause:* Besides, all these years Enlightenment work has been closest to my heart.

NADIA VANSKA

I didn't have time to ask my next question as Elsa was snatched by Ellen Lie to welcome new delegates, probably those coming with the delayed ship. However, her last answer lingered in my mind. Was I witnessing a 'radical in the making' in these most unusual of circumstances?

Two days later, on the 8th of February we arranged to meet again, this time in Ellen Lie's office in Trygvassonsgate, late in the afternoon. I left the conference during a heated debate on reindeer grazing and decided to visit the Sverresborg Trøndelag, an open air museum showing traditional building techniques and vernacular architecture from the area. It was here I saw an example of the lavvu[9] house.

Thank you for suggesting a visit to the museum. It was a good opportunity to begin to understand how Sámi's traditional dwellings were adaptable to seasonal changes and diverse occupations. My attention

[9] The lavvu building (called the Goahti in the interior of Norway) and the Tipi of Native Americans, appear almost the same in form. Looking closely at Sámi approach to architecture one can glean an understanding of their well-integrated relationship with nature and climate.





wandered as I was exploring the collection. Several years ago, I spent an entire day at the Louvre in Paris. It was there that I was able to grasp how history is written by the privileged class through the display of objects. I am interested to know what is your view on the way this particular museum presents Sámi history?

ELSA LAULA

I am glad you enjoyed the visit, Nadia, you are raising an important point, it is one of my main concerns regarding our debates on culture. It is rare for museums to include artifacts related to Sami history and creativity, so I applaud the inclusion of lavuu. It is a symbol of a particular way of life and manifests our exceptional approach to building. It has been such an enduring form. What we need now is a more democratic institution that can ensure the preservation of our rich culture. While properly reflecting on the past we can begin to make sense of who we are.

NADIA VANSKA

I am impressed you are keeping a record of the proceedings, I noticed a row of women making the transcripts of the speeches and debates. These will become invaluable for future generations of activists.

The exhibition of Italian Futurist Painters I visited five years ago in Paris[10] made me aware of the importance of documents as well as technology in the urgent need to break with the past. Would you agree that art as well as writing is actively constructing a new society?

ELSA LAULA

I am more interested in the implications and attention one should give to education. Do you know the work of Charles Fourier[11]?

[10] The first purely Futurist exhibition in 1912 at the Galerie Berheim-Jeune in Paris. The show then travelled to the Sackville Gallery London, the Sturm Gallery Berlin, and afterwards to, Zurich and Vienna, generating widespread publicity for the movement.

[11] François M.C Fourier (1772 –1837) French utopian socialist and

NADIA VANSKA

Oh, I came across this name some time ago. On my tour to North America many socialists mentioned him, but I am not familiar with his works. Please tell me more.

ELSA LAULA

There are many interesting points he makes, but I won't dwell on them. Fourier believes that children are not little idlers, as many parents believe. Since early childhood they manifest natural inclinations for learning and knowledge that should be cultivated through education. Their curiosity of objects helps to develop an understanding of a wider world. In this regard, we consider education for Sámi children should start much earlier than the age of 12, which is the case now. Besides, schooling shouldn't be reduced only to basic knowledge.

NADIA VANSKA

This resonates with me and is close in spirit to Rosa Luxemburg's[12] article published in the issue of Die Gleichheit[13] I brought for you. In Sámi society women seem to be equally involved in the reindeer husbandry which in turn allows them to more actively participate in the economic life. So their impact is greater than those of women only involved in home matters. This is one of the ways in which women can reinforce their political position as economy and politics go hand in hand.

philosopher. He believed that the emancipation of women in society was the general measure of all social progress. It is claimed that he has first introduced the word féminisme in 1837.

[12] Rosa Luxemburg, born 1871 in Zamosc, Poland. On January 15th, 1919, Luxemburg, Liebknecht and Pieck, another Spartacist leader, were arrested. What happened next is unclear but they were taken from the Adlon Hotel in Berlin, where they were being held, to the local prison. Luxemburg and Liebknecht were both murdered by their captors. Luxemburg's body was found in a river.

[13] Die Gleichheit (Equality) was a Social Democratic bi-monthly magazine issued by the women's proletarian movement in Germany. It was published from 1890 to 1925, and was edited by Clara Zetkin from 1892 to 1917.

ELSA LAULA

In a small voice: Thank you, Nadia. It is important you grasped our specific situation so clearly.

NADIA VANSKA

I noticed you frowned. What are you thinking?

ELSA LAULA

I don’t want to express my concern yet, but I wish this conference focused more on the organisation of our education. But so far the education issue, so vital to our sovereignty, has been marginal as the reindeer grazing dominated most of the discussion. I know it is central to our economy and way of living but in these moments when we claim our right to self-determination, we should be focusing on reforming the education system. Since we tended to our land for hundreds of years, I am convinced that we can organise and exert control over our own schooling. I have a list of specific proposals involving changes to the current provision.

NADIA VANSKA

What are the main points you want to address to the Norwegian government?

ELSA LAULA

Many things we demand come as a reaction to the Norwegian assimilation policy, which intensified right after the separation of Norway and Sweden. What we have been fighting for is the use of Sámi language in schools. The government attempts to turn us into Norwegians, convinced that their own cultural identity is threatened by the preservation of ours. As a consequence, our children are prevented from speaking their native language. Imagine what it means not to be able to express yourself in the mother’s tongue, and how much frustration accumulates from not hearing your own voice or engaging openly in conversations. This leads to alienation and a sense of exclusion, and that’s exactly what generations of Sámis have been subjected to. In

this regard, many parents chose to teach their children Norwegian so that they won’t suffer from ridicule in school. This tendency resulted from the repressive policy and in time has led to the decline of Sámi language.[14]

NADIA VANSKA

I think I understand what you are saying. It causes a terrible distress when one’s own language is perceived as an enemy. When the war[15] broke out I was in Berlin, and realised that speaking Russian could soon become dangerous.

ELSA LAULA

Since we got to this point, all this time I wanted to ask you what are your views on the war?

NADIA VANSKA

Everywhere I go I speak out against it. Millions of people are sacrificing their lives for the glory of the imperial war. I made an appeal to all socialist forces to engage in a systematic effort to obtain peace by all means possible. In the times of war, we cannot pursue any of our ideals, so they will remain unrealised. The forces of production are blocked; the solidarity among workers and others is weakened. There are no benefits that can be drawn from hatred. Wide spread anger leads to extreme and violent actions.

ELSA LAULA

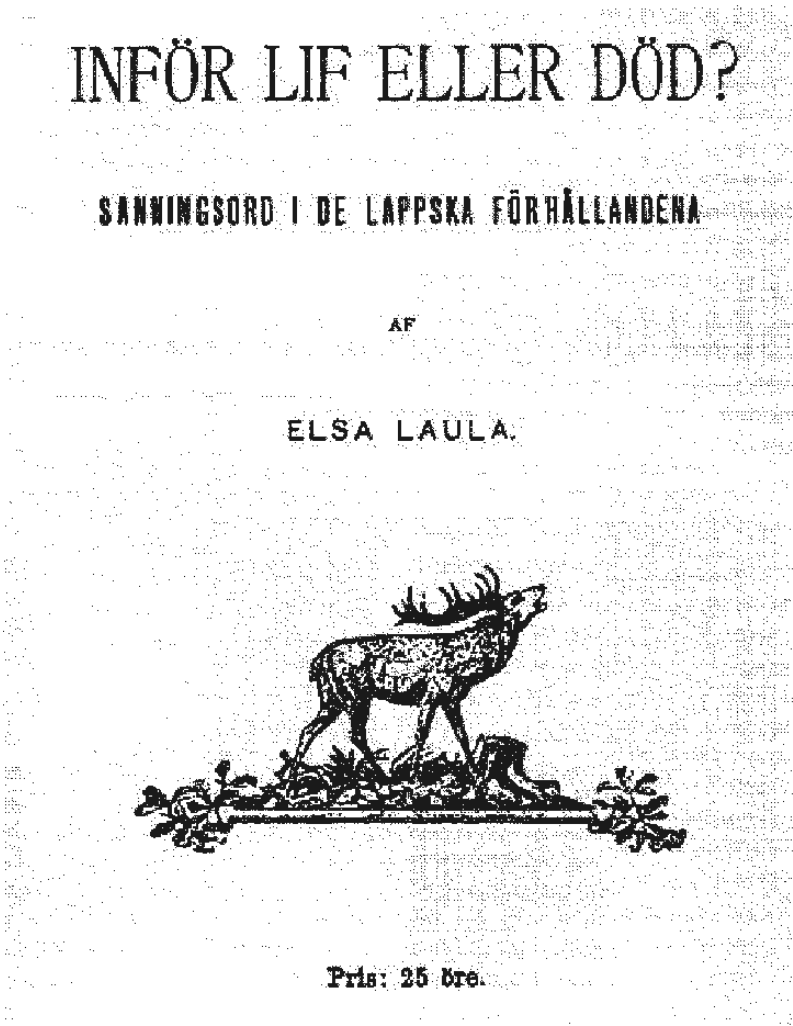
So then do you agree with Lenin?

NADIA VANSKA

For some time I shared his conviction that the war could be defeated only by Revolution. However I am against

[14] Western Sami languages: Southern Sami, Ume Sami, Pite Sami, Lule Sami, Northern Sami
Eastern Sami languages: Inari Sami, Kemi Sami (extinct), Skolt Sami, Akkala Sami (extinct), Kildin Sami, Ter Sami

[15] World War One (1914 – 1918)



Elsa Laulas kampskrift för samiske rettigheter. 1904.



a violent uprising of the workers or any other form of militant manifestation. I don't believe violence can be defeated by violence. There is such a strong longing amongst us for social change but it has to be achieved in another way. All change however, whether just or unjustified leaves casualties.

ELSA LAULA

Tell me more about your kind of revolution.

NADIA VANSKA

The goal of the Revolution reflects our desire to end the exploitation and social inequalities throughout the world, which maintains a limited number of people in positions of power. We should all be able to have a share in it. I know the process leading to the Revolution is now irreversible. A growing number of mass strikes in Europe as Rosa Luxembourg pointed out, indicates its imminent outbreak. The existing system and order cannot be reformed, it has to be overthrown! This is what socialists and their followers are confidently proclaiming across Europe!

ELSA LAULA

I see. *She pauses for a moment.* It sounds very extreme to me. My experiences have taught me moderation, and a belief in gradual, almost organic changes. Here in Norway we are not so concerned with immediate political action. We are trying to engage different groups in dialogue with each other by using the methods we already feel are ours. This is the basis of our understanding of the world, a source of continuity, both economic and cultural. In addition to establishing local organisations, we try to enlist the help of newspapers. Sámi newspaper Sagai Muittalægje, launched in 1906 helped Isak Saba to become the first Sámi member of Norwegian Parliament. What I hope to achieve tomorrow, in the last day of the conference, is to appoint a group, which would help with work on a Sámi magazine. Publishing can give a voice to our present problems, allowing as many people as possible to express

their opinions and engage more actively in our community. I have been writing for many years and I am very aware what a politically useful and efficient medium the newspaper is. Fortunately, the Sámi movement, especially here in Norway has found sufficient support through their own publications. Many Norwegian and Swedish newspapers showed interest in publicising this conference. Your host, Ellen Lie introduced the agenda of our meeting and has written an article for Dagsposten, one of the main broadsheets in the region.

NADIA VANSKA

As far as I know, you are the first Sámi woman writer. One of my Swedish friends was kind enough to translate parts of your publication for me. Why did you start writing?

ELSA LAULA

I was brought up in an oral tradition where storytelling[16] played an important role in shaping my view of the world. This was evident by the connection established between generations. Ever since I was little, my mother used to share with me tales, which I later passed on to my children. Aware of the fragility of memory, once I learnt how to write I started to put down on paper the stories I heard from my mother. When I got involved in the Sámi cause, I saw in writing not only a medium for preserving the oral tradition, but also a political tool. Not necessarily in the simplistic way of using it as propaganda, and here our opinions may differ, but as a way of imagining as well as recording. Since then, every subject I approached was placed in the living context of the Sámi situation.

NADIA VANSKA

Something just occurred to me... What if I included in the article on this conference a passage from your

[16] The Sámi scholar, Harald Gaski writes, "The Sámi way of telling a story is to tell a lot of stories simultaneously – one digression leading into another into another and so on"

publication? It seems relevant to introduce your writing to the Russian readers through our newspaper.

ELSA LAULA

Thank you, Nadia. Your suggestion is more than welcome. And I hope you will succeed in re-launching Rabotnitsa[17] this summer as planned.

NADIA VANSKA

Since we are talking about the dissemination of news and stories...when I was a student in Petrograd I came across a potentially revolutionary apparatus of communication. A close friend of my father's who was a member of the Physics Society invited me to attend a demonstration, which he presented as a public event. It not only had effect on the scientific community but on all of us gathered together that evening. At that moment his experiments didn't change my life, though I was deeply impressed by what I saw or rather heard...

ELSA LAULA

You are making me very curious.

NADIA VANSKA

Well, how can I describe it? It was the beginning of spring, I joined other students gathered in the main building to witness a demonstration of a new system of communication, later known as radio broadcast. The Russian physicist, Alexander Popov developed a device that makes it possible to transmit information through radio waves over long distances.

ELSA LAULA

Intrigued: How exactly did it work? Is it like a telegraph?

NADIA VANSKA

The mechanism might be similar, but what makes

[17] Rabotnitsa (The Woman Worker) was a periodical founded on Lenin's initiative and a group of women in Petrograd published from February 24 (March 8) to June 1914. The publication was resumed in May 1917, and continued till January 1918.

this different is that it conveys messages vocally; it can transmit the human voice from one place to another. The development of this new device is still in progress, but I foresee that such an invention will one day deliver the message of our Revolution.

ELSA LAULA

Are you suggesting... *Nadia interrupts.*

NADIA VANSKA

First and foremost, this can become a useful tool in education as it simultaneously reaches a large number of listeners making the information wide spread. Once the technology advances, this medium can complement other cultural activities. Those who live in rural areas will be able to listen to news, plays, music, and concerts in their own villages. There is something captivating in the immediacy of this device. We will be able to get closer to live events and not just report them after they have already happened.

ELSA LAULA

But who will be in control of this communication? It can easily become a tool for manipulation and a propaganda machine[18].

NADIA VANSKA

You are right in expressing caution over the matter of control. I foresee a possibility for representative groups and the wide public engaging with the organisational structure. This invention can literally give voice to the people, and allow to make themselves heard. Those who will be broadcasting to an unknown public will have a chance to seize their imagination. But I agree, it is as much an exciting as well as a dangerous prospect.

[18] Soon after its development, radio broadcasting played a vital role in state propaganda. During the 1917 October revolution, the seizure of the means of communication was a definitive moment in the shift of power, when radio equipment was apprehended on the famous cruiser Aurora. The Bolsheviks spread the word of revolution via agit-prop trains and aircrafts that visited rural villages and towns across the country.

ELSA LAULA

Smiles. I hope you are right. For the progress of the Sámi education, for the moment we have to rely on the resources that are already here.

NADIA VANSKA

Don't you think a true revolutionary should always keep an eye on the new technology?

ELSA LAULA

Looking at the clock on the wall. Speaking about technology. It's time to leave for the photograph session.

NADIA VANSKA

Then wait for me, I need to put my lukka[19] on.

ELSA LAULA

Smiles. I am happy you like my gift.

NADIA VANSKA

This is where we stop our conversation. Next day after the conference, I took the train back to Oslo. The journey gave me the peace and quiet I needed to reflect upon the experience of meeting the Sámi community participating in the conference. Once again, a fellow passenger interrupted my flow of thoughts and we ngaged in a conversation. His prejudices that I have heard so many times before reinforced my conviction that even here in Norway where women were granted the right to vote in 1907, their role and rights are still in question. Elsa Laula's exemplary work is still far from being complete.

[19] Part of Sámi dress, a "lukka", or shoulder covering, is made of felt or coarse woollen cloth.

se bli indlat i dagens
vertsementer være
editionen inden kl. 11
dag (og dagene for
en kl. 10 formiddag,
for aftenen forut.

37
rgang.

Trondhjem, onsdag den 7de februar 1917.



pernes landsmøte. Renbeitesaken. Rendrift og renavl.

ngerne i lapperne
formiddag hadde
ve'komst- og mot-
amløses da om
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gere var nu kom-
mlingen bestod av

forholdene med sommerbette er
meget forskjellig i de forskjellige
strek. Enkelte steder er der nok
av græs og løv i fjeldene, mens det
er andre steder for eksempel Hede-
marken og trakterne omkring
Valdres, hvor vegetasjonen er
daarlig tilfjelds. Men sommeren
er i visse maater ogsaa en skøn tid
for lapperne. Reien søker da gjerne
til de stier hvor der vokser

et næringsskrivende folk sidestillet
med hufvudet og tvisten mellem
disse to folk vil for at tid være til-
lagt.
Efter foredraget utspandt der
sig en lang og noksaa indgaaende
diskussion, hvorefter det fremgik at
man var enig med foredragsholde-
ren i hans synspunkt om statens
lidring til indkjøb av beitestræk-
ninger. Fra enkelte hold blev der
ogsaa fremholdt at lapperne paa
sine steder var færdige med sine
beitestrækninger og at de ikke
visste hvor de senere skulde ta
bolte fra.

Lars Holm omtalte forholdene
i Rind-districtet, hvor beite-
strækningerne er saa indskrænket
at det vanskelig kan nedgaaes at
de kommer ind paa sommeren og

et muligt i at der under skades-
taster blev fremført som et for-
dende moment mot lapperne, at
hufvudet ikke vilde spise paa
de strækninger, hvor reien hadde
beitet. Ligesaa fik lapperne skyld
den for lebrand, idet man paastod
at der ikke vilde gro græs efter
rebeitning. Naar der for hans di-
alrakis vedkommende var fremført
at lapperne maatte kunne la sin
ren holde paa andre strækninger,
saa var dette umulig at efterkom-
me, idet man i saa fald var utsat
for uh.

Jonassen fremholdt at beite-
strækninger i Nordlands amt
for det meste er avstillet og at dis-
se blir mere og mere indskrænket
paa grund av nybyg. Han om-
talte derpaa at de samlingsfeltske

os, saa de kan af os vor nyt. Vi
er ikke bare et folk som bor i øst.
Jestemfjell fremholdt fri flyt-
ning under den haardeste vinter-
tid. Lapperne har ikke kunne
kommanderes til og dit eller bøn-
dernes eget forogthedsdende.
Lars Holm: Ved at sælge
vor tamren til de samlingsfeltske
aktieselskaber blir vi slaver under
vor egen næringssøvel. Vi maa
sulte os sammen, staae dæppe
trafik og se til at faa de barn
interessert for reindriften, saa de
blir hjemme og ikke søger synder.

Efter et Fjeldstad hadde om-
talt spørgsmaal om gjensidig beite-
for og Holm hadde protestert mot
at norske lapper vilde fortvænge de
svenske, kom diskussionen ind paa
et afgjort spørgsmaal, nemlig mel-

syn til
rygge
over
det ikke
ga fattig
lønne
peger
for sig
at bare
den fjeld
skades
hjelde
som m
stræk
nende
maa
for lapp
sine fre



IMAGE CAPTIONS

1a: Elsa Laula, 1904, credit: Hilfling-Rasmussen, University Library, Trondheim

1b: Alexandra Kollontai addressing the Second International Conference of Communist Women, St Petersburg 1921

2a: Landscape of northern Norway

2b: Street demonstration on Nevsky Prospekt, just after troops of the Provisional Government have opened fire with machine guns St Petersburg 4 July 1917

3a: Delegates of the Sámi conference in front of the Methodist Church, Trondheim 6 February 1917

3b: Red lavvu, a portable construction containing a library, a school and medical service (Lovozero, Russia, 1929). Credit: Murmansk Regional Museum (Russia)

4a: *Do we face life or death? Words of truth about the Lappish situation* pamphlet by Elsa Laula published in 1904, Sweden

4b: The Sámi inhabitants of the village Lovozero in Kola Peninsula listening to the radio 1927. Credit: Murmansk Regional Museum (Russia)

5a: The issue of Rabotnisa magazine 1932

5b: Dagsposten, Trondheim daily newspaper page, 7 February 1917

5c: Elsa Laula in her garden 1904. Credit: Örnköldsviks Museum, Sweden.

DOUBLE ACT. 1917

A project by Marysia Lewandowska 2010

The script to be performed in schools and local theatres across the Sámi territories.

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