

Padova-New York, October 3, 1978

Dear sisters :

We have decided to circulate these letters among all sisters, beside those to whom they are addressed, because we want to clear the ground from certain mystifications which, if left unchallenged, would seriously undermine the political work of a number of sisters who over the last years have given, and continue to give, a most important contribution to the wages for housework campaign. Meanwhile, we are continuing our political work in the hope that in the future there will be the possibility of confronting with you our reciprocal organisational experiences.

We are including three letters by Mariarosa Dalla Costa on the question of Power of Women, sent from Padova on April, May 13, and July 27 1978. So far Selma James has not answered to any of these letters. These letters, however, make it clear that, contrary to what Selma James claims in her letter to Silvia Federici of June 8th 1978, Mariarosa Dalla Costa was never opposed to Selma James' signature on Power of Women, in fact POW was always signed by the two authors relatively to the two different articles. However, Mariarosa Dalla Costa had the surprise of a totally abusive change of signature in the article Women and the Subversion of the Community originally signed by her alone and which in the third English edition turned out to be signed by both her and Selma. Other matters relative to the management of this book stand out clearly from these three letters.

We are also including a) a letter that Mariarosa Dalla Costa has received on June 7th, 1978 from Selma James and Mariarosa's answer on July 1st 1978 (Padova). b) a letter by Selma James of June 8th 1978 to Silvia Federici and Silvia's answer. These letters bring out a number of political questions concerning which the Italian Coordinating Committee and the New York Committee have requested an explanatory document (our request is included).

The type of practice we denounce in our communique should have been justified in writing long time ago. Since this so far has not happened, we hope that at least this packet of letters will clear the ground of the most gross political mystifications.

National Coordinating Committee for WFH (Italia)
New York WFH Committee.

Padova-New York, October 3, 1978

To the London WFH Committee and the North America WFH network in relation to the following facts:

- that Silvia Federici and the entire NYWFHC have been cut off from any information and organisational connection relative to your political work for the WFH campaign
- to your attempt to have the Post Office (Vant Brunt Station and Atlantic Avenue -Brooklyn)reroute the mail of the New York Committee and ~~fix the Black Women WFH network from the documents~~ the WFH mail sent to the personal address of Silvia Federici to a P.O. Box of the Black Women for WFH (corresponding to the signature of Ph.M.) of the Black sister Ph.M.)
- that you have cancelled the address of the NYC and of the Italian WFH network from the documents that specifically contain the key points of reference for the WFH campaign internationally

-that you have followed a practice whereby the London Committee during political meetings has faced sisters from the Italian network who had come to London, with absurd criticism of the Italian network concerning its presumed lack of political productivity, if not incorrect political practice, due supposedly to our being directly influenced or dependent from the male left. Furthermore, these sisters were encouraged to establish contacts that would be played against the Italian WFH network as it has been expressed itself organisationally up to this day -this too in order to promote alternative initiatives opposed to the work-plans projected by the Italian sisters on the basis of their political judgements on the ~~same~~ context in which they move. This went as far as proposing an alternative management of the political materials, for it was proposed that some materials would be sent directly to some sisters, while others sisters -who usually are in charge of the circulation and the publication of materials -were warned against publishing them.

As we assume that this way of proceeding indicates the clear determination of undermining the Italian WFH network and the NY WFH Committee

WE ASK URGENTLY AN EXPLANATORY DOCUMENT

We also strongly emphasise that if what has happened stemmed from political differences, the only possible course of action is to express one's position through specific documents, indicating one's political interpretation of the reality in which one moves and making organisational proposals to be compared with those of other sisters who presumably have taken a different stance.

National Coordinating Committee of WFH Italy
NY WFH Committee

Padua-New York # ~~xxxxxx~~ october • '78

Wages for Wageswork Committee - London

alla rete dei gruppi e comitati per il SID degli US e Canada

la
in relazione alla da lungo tempo intervenuta estromissione di Silvia Federici e dell'intero Comitato di New York da qualunque collegamento informativo e organizzativo relativo al vostro lavoro politico per la campagna per il SID

alla richiesta rivolta agli uffici postali della Van Brunt Station e di Atlantic Avenue di Brooklyn di stornare sia la posta indirizzata alla cassetta postale del Comitato di New York sia quella "per il SID" inviata all'indirizzo personale di Silvia Federici alla cassetta postale delle donne Merexx per il SID (cassetta corrispondente alla firma della compagna Nera P.M.)

alla cancellazione del recapito del Comitato di New York e della intera rete italiana per il SID dai documenti contenenti espressamente i principali punti di riferimento della campagna per il SID a livello internazionale

la
alla pratica del Comitato di Londra di proporre in sede di riunione a compagne del salario italiane arrivate a Londra anziche' un confronto politico un'assurda critica continua di improduttivita' politica, se non addirittura di un cattivo agire politico perche' saremmo direttamente influenzate o dipendenti dalla sinistra maschile, di suggerire prese di contatto da contrapporre alla rete organizzativa quale si e' espressa - in tutte le sue forme - fino ad ora in Italia in vista di sollecitazioni di iniziative politiche alternative anch'esse ai programmi di lavoro che le compagne italiane assumono e intendono continuare ad assumere sulla base della propria valutazione politica della realta' in cui si muovono, fino ad arrivare a proposte di gestione ~~alternativa~~ dei materiali politici alternativa anch'essa, poiche' si propone di mandare ad alcune compagne direttamente dei materiali mentre altre dello stesso gruppo che normalmente curano la circolazione e pubblicazione dei materiali sono affidate dal pubblicarli

assumendo che un siffatto modo di procedere e' chiaro indice di una volonta' disgregatrice nei confronti della rete italiana del SID e del Comitato di New York

CHIEDERE URGENTEMENTE UN DOCUMENTO DI SPIEGAZIONE.

Chiariamo anche subito che, se vi fossero ragioni che si fondano su prospettive politiche diverse, l'unica strada percorribile e' quella di esprimersi attraverso precisi documenti di interpretazione politica della realta' in cui ci si muove, proponendo delle indicazioni di organizzazione e confrontandole con quelle delle compagne che si presume abbiano eventualmente un' posizione politica differente

Comitato di Coordinamento Nazionale per il SID
Comitato per il SID di New York

Padova - New York 3 ottobre '78

inviata a ^{Francesca Wall Suzie} ~~Selma~~ London
~~Selma~~ USA via Silvia (cassa alicui) 3 FD, catella 1,25
PD Aprile 78

Elling Wall Press (Suzie Fleming)
and Selma James

I am writing to the both of you because of a question that made me estonished some time ago -exactly when the thirth edition of Power of women came out in English -but it was difficult to find a quiet moment in order to clarify this question with you. I saw the signature of the first article. I never authorize that change. I remember that I agreed to add for the thirth edition in English that foreword signed by the Padua group just to ~~xxxx~~ put an end to this question; and I said also to Selma that I was not convinced at all because it was politically absurd to involve a political group in such a kind of testimony. In addition to that, in almost every book that ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{we write} (we different women of the italian network of wages for Housework) there is work of many women ~~xxxxx~~ but we never found ourselves in the situation to make that clear some time later by any kind of personal or group declaration (I would like on this propos to say really much more but I have a real barrier in the language). In addition to all the reasons ^{above} ~~xxxxxxx~~ the change of signature ~~xxxxxxx~~ (that I never authorized) and the foreword itself make ridiculous the Introduction that Selma wrote. I hope really that we will have an occassion to clarify the criteria of the political collaboration between us because this kind of ^{in Italia} management of the thith edition seems to be really opposite to those ^v that inspire us (I say us not only me). In conclusion I would like to see again the original signature.

I would like also to receive per year the figure of what has been sold of Power of women in English and also to have the possibility to sign a contract. I sent regularly to Selma half of the money of every Italian edition saying how ~~xxx~~ many copies it was the edition. I have also some personal calculation with Selma and I would like really to ~~xxxxxxx~~ know definitively the situation about personal calculation and edition calculation. On this propos I wrote twice to Selma but I never received any reply. May I hope to receive it now? I would be really grateful to the both of you. Much love

Mariarosa Dalla Costa
Mariarosa Dalla Costa

trad. di Mariarosa della sua lettera originale in inglese

Falling Wall Press (Suzie Fleming)
e Selma James

Padova aprile '78

Scrivo a entrambe a causa di una questione che mi ha sboccolato già tempo fa -esattamente quando uscì la terza edizione di "potere femminile" in inglese -ma mi era difficile trovare un momento di quiete per chiarire questa questione con voi. Ho visto la firma del secondo articolo. Non ho mai autorizzato quel cambiamento. Ricordo che fui d'accordo di aggiungere alla terza edizione inglese quella "premessa" firmata ~~xxxxxx~~ dal gruppo di Padova proprio per porre fine alla questione; e dissi anche a Selma che non ne ero affatto convinta /- di aggiungere quella premessa / perche' era politicamente assurdo coinvolgere un gruppo politico in una simile testimonianza /cioe' che io e Selma avevamo collaborato assieme nello scrivere "potere femminile..? / .In aggiunta a cio', in pressocche' ogni libro che scriviamo (noi varie donne della rete italiana del salario al lavoro domestico) c'e' il lavoro di molte donne ma non ci siamo mai trovate nella situazione di doverlo chiarire dopo un certo periodo di tempo attraverso alcun tipo di dichiarazioni personali o di gruppo (e a tale proposito vorrei dire molte piu' cose ma ho l'ostacolo della lingua). In aggiunta a tutte le ragioni di cui sopra, il cambio della firma (che non ho mai autorizzato) e la premessa stessa rendono ridicola la introduzione che Selma ha scritto. Spero realmente che avremo un'occasione di chiarire i criteri della nostra collaborazione politica perche' questa gestione della terza edizione sembra essere realmente opposta ai criteri che ispirano noi (e dico noi e non solo me). In conclusione gradirei vedere nuovamente la firma originale.

Gradirei inoltre ricevere di anno in anno i conteggi di cosa e' stato venduto di Potere femminile in inglese e avere anche la possibilita' di firmare un contratto. Io ho mandato regolarmente a Selma meta' degli utili di ogni edizione italiana informando di quante copie era l'edizione . Ho anche alcuni conteggi personali in sospeso con Selma e gradirei veramente conoscere in modo definitivo la situazione sia riguardo ai conteggi personali sia a quelli editoriali. A tale proposito ho già scritto due volte a Selma ma senza ricevere mai risposta. Posso sperare di riceverla ora? Ne sarei veramente grata nei confronti di ambedue. Caramente

Mariarosa

allegati nuovamente i conteggi da parte mia circa le edizioni italiane e i conti personali .

P.S. le annotazioni in parentesi quadra sono per chiarire meglio la traduzione ma non sono nell'originale.

Fb, cartella 1,25

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Padova 13 maggio 78

Dear Selma and Suzie,

an Italian agency asked me the possibility to contract the sale of the "Potere femminile.." in Portuguese to a Portuguese Press that contacted them but that, up to now obviously I cannot know who they are. I am taking information about this agency and I will reply in few days as soon as I will know they are serious. I would like to have also your agreement about.

Previously I have been in contact many times with Portuguese Press that were interested but nothing definitive. I will be very glad if this agency will manage well the contact and will save also some work for us. They will ~~keep~~ ^{keep for themselves} the percentage of 15/per cent of the ~~net~~ income.

If this agency is serious I believe also that is better to manage the translations through agencies some times because it becoming for me impossible to write privately letters to many presses abroad in order to follow all the texts we have produced. Out of a question I will ask to see the proofs and everything else it is necessary for the good coming out of the book as I always already did.

I believe also it would be better to have immediately a definitive sum of money than a percentage every year. ~~that~~ I have seen also with Siglo Veintiuno it is very difficult to ~~have~~ ^{have} and it is impossible to compell them to give us regularly. ^{out the money every year} a control also that we do not have time, if we will not receive the money, to "persecute legally" them. For all these reasons I believe it would be better in this case to have a definitive sum immediately as it is usual for the translations abroad.

Hoping to receive soon a reply

in love Mariarosa

copies to Selma in London, to Suzie, to Selma c/o Wilmette

Mariarosa

trad. di Mariarosa della sua lettera originale ^{mente} in inglese a Selma
e Suzie ~~tradute~~

Padova 13 Maggio '78

Cara Selma e Suzie,

un'agenzia italiana mi ha chiesto di potere contrattare la vendita di "Potere femminile..." in portoghese ad una casa editrice portoghese che ha preso contatto con loro ma di cui ovviamente non posso finora conoscere il nome. Sto prendendo informazioni su questa agenzia e rispondero' loro in pochi giorni appena sapro' ~~che~~ si tratta di gente seria. Gradirei avere anche il vostro consenso in proposito.

Precedentemente sono stata contattata piu' volte da case editrici portoghesi che erano interessate ma non ne e' uscito niente di definitivo. Sarei molto contenta se questa agenzia gestira' bene il contratto perche' cosi' ci risparmierebbe anche un po' di lavoro. Tratterebbero per se' la percentuale del 15 per cento degli utili netti.

Se questa agenzia e' seria credo anche che sia meglio ~~trattare~~ trattare le pubblicazioni all'estero tramite ~~una~~ agenzia qualche volta perche' sta diventando per me impossibile scrivere lettere private a molte case editrici all'estero per riuscire a seguire il destino di tutti i testi che abbiamo prodotto. E' anche fuori discussione che chiederò loro di vedere le bozze e qualunque altra cosa sia necessario ~~far vedere~~ vedere per la buona riuscita del libro come ho sempre fatto.

Credo anche che sarebbe meglio chiedere immediatamente una cifra definitiva piuttosto che una percentuale da conteggiarsi di anno in anno. Ho visto anche con Siglo Veintiuno Editores che ~~è~~ e' molto difficile avere un controllo / si intende dei conteggi / ed e' impossibile avere il modo di costringerli a corrispondere regolarmente ogni anno quanto devono. ~~È~~ fuori discussione anche che non avremmo neppure il tempo nel caso non ricevessimo i soldi di "intentargli causa". Per tutte queste ragioni credo che sarebbe meglio in questo caso chiedere una somma definitiva subito come anche si fa di solito per le traduzioni che si pubblicano all'estero.

Sperando di ricevere presto una risposta

caramente Mariarosa

copie a Selma a Londra, a Suzie, a Selma presso Wilmette in N.Y.

P.S. Quanto in parentesi quadra non nell'~~originale~~ originale ma per facilitare la comprensione della traduzione.

FD, Contella 1, 25

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20 Staverton Road
London N W 2
7th June 1978

My dear Rosa,

I have just returned from the US after a very successful speaking tour, productive politically and financially. I am writing you a note and not replies to your letters since Ruth will be in Italy *on holiday* for a few days and can mail this while she is there. I will answer your three letters in the next few days.

I enclose copies of the Mother's Money bulletin which was prepared for the event in Harlem described in the press release. You no doubt know that we had an enormous ~~XXXXXX~~ success at the International Women's Year conference in Houston last November, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ which is described on page two of the bulletin.

Too many things are outstanding between us to write a short note. I had hoped that before I went to the US we could speak on the phone. I called ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ^{many} times. Once I got a woman, once I got a man, other times no one was home. Polda called me twice to tell me that you were not available. The network in the US is strong and is growing in numbers and influence. They want to know about Italy. I had little to tell them as a result of our not having a conversation. It is time that we cleared some things up. But before anything is cleared up, the women in Wages Due Lesbians here in England, in Canada and in the U.S. insist that YOU NOT PUBLISH MOTHERHOOD LESBIANISM AND CHILD CUSTODY. We are anxious that, until the political relationship between you and the rest of the network is cleared up that YOU NOT PUBLISH ANY OF THE MATERIAL FROM THE ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ENGLISH SPEAKING CAMPAIGN. It would be a scandal which we want to avoid at all costs if Wages Due or any other section of the International Campaign had to publicly dissociate itself from what Triveneto had done.

You may be interested to know that there are now five Black Women for Wages for Housework organisations in the English speaking campaign - England, Canada, and the US.

I expect you are very tired and I hope this news cheers you up.

Love, as always,

Selma

FD, Cortella 1, 25

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20 Staverton Rd
London N W 2
8th June 1978

My dear Silvia,

I received your letter to Race Today this am. Please do not be bothered by it. If they want to, they can take it up with me, since they know I have a copy. They have a lot of money, given them by the churches. It is possible that, because they have been irregular in publication and not exactly brilliant that that money is drying up. I have no information. But I'm sure they won't bother you.

I see by your return address that you have moved. I got back from the States last Thursday and in the two months I was there I spent almost no time in NY. I had had every intention of seeing you, but after over 20 speaking engagements plus regional conferences and informal meetings and four days holiday in all that time (in the West) there was neither the time nor the energy.

I had hoped to hear from you months ago, expecting the letter we talked about in which you would begin to articulate what you felt were differences between yourself and the network. I thought and felt that we had opened at least a dialogue in the six or eight hours we spent talking last September. I hope that is still true.

As always in an unclear situation - and the situation is publicly unclear because the Campaign has gone out of its way not to make any public or private (outside of the network) statement about your relations with it precisely to give time for this dialogue to proceed - as I say, in an unclear situation, what happens is that rumours circulate. One is that you intend either in your own name or in Rosa's to contribute to ZEROWORK. This is a rumour. I don't believe rumours unless they are proven. And one of the things that I wanted to raise with you was for you to make clear at least to those you have worked with for so long that this rumour is false. ZEROWORK, as are all ambitious people in the U.S., Canada and Britain, at least in these countries, is playing around with Wages for Housework. Once the resolution at Houston was overturned by the network and many other forces brought together by the campaign and led by Black Women for Wages for Housework, and the substitute resolution calling for welfare to be called a wage passed, then of course everyone knows that whether they are for us getting the money or not, they should not look like they're telling the State not to give us the money. I think this is the position of ZEROWORK at present. In addition, there is now a network of men ~~are~~ in four countries who are organising fighting against all unpaid work and ~~are~~ in support of the Wages for Housework Campaign". ZEROWORK has to take a position on Payday, these men, as well as on the Campaign. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The existence of ~~their~~ Payday and their planned publication gives the Campaign another arena, where we are in no way compromised by publishing with men. The split in ZEROWORK was precisely on wages for housework as a perspective, a strategy and a campaign. The men who remain in ZEROWORK may change their minds, but to date they are still on the other side of this split. ~~are~~

For all these reasons, we are very concerned that any woman who has had access to the development of our ideas and methods should not allow us to be ripped off by menx who are hostile to our campaign, should not be the vehicle for this ripoff.

It is particularly intolerable that what Black Women for Wages for Housework has introduced and clarified in the Campaign should be passed on by white women to white menx for the building of their academic and political prestige. I hope and expect that the rumour is not true.

English
 A woman from the campaign in England has just returned. ~~xxx~~ She had been for 6 months studying in Italy. She spoke as a prostitute woman at the conference in Rome on violence and women, and you may have seen her (badly translated) speech in the national or the left press. She also attended the national conference of SLD groups, where the agenda was lesbianism, prostitution and creativity! She was very disappointed and said the groups were not doing much. The discussion, according to her, was like a women's lib. discussion. Neither Rosa nor Poldi ~~xxxx~~ was there to her knowledge. I will be writing to Rosa in the next few days in reply to recent letters I received. You may know that she is now opposed, strongly opposed, to my name being on POWER OF WOMEN & SUBVERSION, and opposed to ~~xxx~~ the preface to the English edition ~~which~~ ^{because} makes a direct and unambiguous link between that book and the campaign. We will discuss it.

I'm sorry you lost your job at Franconia and that you are in such bad financial shape. I told Suzie that I would deal in one way or another with the money you owe, since it's not Falling Wall's responsibility and since you obviously can't pay. She and in fact all the women here were sad that you're up against the wall financially in this way.

There are other things to discuss but you must say if you want a discussion to proceed on other things, ~~xxxxxxx~~ Most things are in any case better discussed with the points of reference in the North American network, namely Wilmette, Margaret and Judith. Wilmette & Margaret have copies of the Mother's Money Bulletin put out for Mother's Day in the U.S. The money that the Italian govt. is discussing giving to housewives in Italy is mentioned. It is not mentioned in Italy from everything I have heard and from the publications from Rome I received this morning.

Let me hear from you soon, especially about Zerowork. I cannot believe you are for anything but

Power to the sisters

Take care of yourself. I
 hope your mother is OK.

Selu

Padova 27 luglio '78

Dear Selma,

on 8 June '78

I have seen the letter that you sent to Silvia

in which you suggest that I am opposing to your signing of Power of women ecc. ecc. What a piece of shit!

In any case ...you will receive soon a letter from me in reply to your's of 8 June '78.

I am not of the opinion to compromise for any reason the publication of P. of W. in Portuguese accepting your absurd delay in replying to the questions that I asked to you on this proposal in my previous letters. My last one is of 13 May '78 ! Now if you agree to continue to manage "Power of Women" as we always did, I do not have anything against. So the publication in Portuguese will ~~include~~ include:

- 1) My "introduction to the Portuguese edition"
- " 2) My Preface to the Italian ed.
- 3) Your Introduction to the English ed.
- 4) "Donne e sovversione sociale"
- 5) My "premesse" to "A woman's place"
- 6) A woman's place
- 7) Maternita' e aborto

Certainly I will not ~~accept~~ accept your completely abusive changing of the signature of "Donne e sovversione sociale" and I will not put the "Foreword" contained in the 3th English edition, and all of that not certainly for the crazy reasons that you are attributing to me.

I am not also going to spend a line or an hour more on this story. I will wait only other ten days your definitive reply. And when I will have made the introduction to the Portuguese ed. I will wait other 15 days in which you will put your modifications or corrections that I will accept if I will agree. Not more. Differently I am ~~not~~ going to publish Power of Women just without the pieces signed by you and adding instead others pieces. I am not certainly of the idea of making any more speed in your activity but ^{sure} I am not keeping suspended some work for months and years just because you do not want to give in time any reply. I had enough experience with "Riproduzione e emigrazione" that you had in your hands, already translated for ~~years~~ years without reading it, and therefore not circulating it in any way. I never behaved with you in this way. When I personally was not in the possibility to read in time or to guarantee the publication or the circulation in time of whatever you were in the position to know and you had the freedom to manage the piece independently from me. Now I want to have the same respect,

Maria

FD, contella 1,25

10

Cara Selma, ho visto la lettera che hai mandato a Silvia l'8 giugno '78 in cui insinui che mi oppongo al fatto che tu firmi "potere femminile..". Che schifo!

Ad ogni modo... avrai presto una mia lettera in risposta alla tua del 7 giugno '78.

Non sono dell'idea di compromettere per nessuna ragione la pubblicazione di "potere femminile..." in portoghese accettando il tuo assurdo ritardo a rispondere alle domande che ti ho fatto ^{questo} approposito nelle mie lettere precedenti. La mia ultima e' del 13 maggio '78! Ora, se sei d'accordo di continuare a gestire "potere femminile.." come abbiamo sempre fatto, io non ho niente in contrario.

Perciò la pubblicazione portoghese includerebbe:

- 1) Una mia "introduzione all'edizione portoghese"
- 2) La mia prefazione all'edizione italiana
- 3) La tua introduzione all'edizione inglese
- 4) Donne e sovversione sociale
- 5) La mia "premessa" a "Il posto della donna"
- 6) Il posto della donna
- 7) Maternità e aborto

Certamente non accetterò il tuo cambio di firma completamente abusivo di "Donne e sovversione sociale" e non metterò la "Premessa" contenuta nella terza edizione inglese e tutto ciò sicuramente non per

le folli ragioni che mi attribuisce.

Non intendo spendere una riga o un'ora di più su questa storia.

Aspetterò solo altri 10 gg. la tua risposta definitiva. E quando avrò fatto l'introduzione all'edizione portoghese aspetterò altri 15 gg. in cui potrai fare modifiche o correzioni che accetterò se d'accordo. Niente di più.

In caso diverso pubblicherò "Potere femminile .." senza i pezzi firmati da te e aggiungendo al loro posto altri pezzi. Non intendo certo forzarti ad accelerare il lavoro ma sta sicura che non voglio tenere sospesi lavori per mesi e anni solo perché non vuoi dare una risposta in tempo. Ho avuto abbastanza esperienza con "Riproduzione e Emigrazione" che hai avuto per le mani per anni già tradotto senza leggerlo e perciò senza farlo circolare in alcun modo. Non mi sono mai comportata in questo modo con te. Quando ero personalmente nella impossibilità di leggere in tempo o di garantire la pubblicazione o la circolazione in tempo, di qualunque cosa, ti trovavi nella condizione di saperlo e avevi la libertà di adoperare il pezzo indipendentemente da me. Ora voglio lo stesso ripetto.

Mariarosa

Udine, 9/10/78

Cara Selma e compagni,

sento la necessità di chiarire alcune cose che ritengo molto importanti in quanto si riferiscono ai colleghi che abbiamo avuto insieme a Londra e che, al rientro in Italia, discutendo con compagne reduci da precedenti soggiorni londinesi, mi sono risultate contraddittorie e con altro significato da quello che in un primo momento potevo aver loro attribuito.

Per questo ci siamo trovate in una riunione di verifica anzitutto con il Comitato di Padova cercando di verificare l'esperienza rappresentata dal contatto con il Comitato di Londra da parte di varie compagne che in questi ultimi anni avevano avuto occasione di recarsi in Gran Bretagna. E' iniziato così un confronto che è andato allargandosi ai vari gruppi per il SLD poichè varie compagne di differenti sedi, venute a Londra avevano importanti elementi da discutere. Da questa verifica e discussione complessiva è emersa la necessità di una richiesta da parte del Comitato Nazionale di Coordinamento per il SLD in Italia al Comitato di Londra di un documento politico che spieghi tutta una serie di comportamenti che risultano ambigui e impolitici dentro la pratica internazionale del SLD. E, solo per citare i più macroscopici, che inizi a spiegare:

- a) il depennamento dall'indirizzario internazionale per la campagna sul SLD dell'intera rete italiana e del Comitato di New York.
- b) la richiesta - a che titolo? - all'ufficio postale di sostituire il recapito della cassetta postale del Comitato di New York con altro recapito.

Ma complessivamente è da chiarire da parte del Comitato di Londra la pratica, che ha disgustato molte compagne nostre venute a Londra di investirle a livello di riunioni vere e proprie, con un tipo di critica, nei confronti della rete organizzativa in cui lavorano, totalmente infondata e tendenziosa. Tendente cioè a creare disgregazione e sfiducia politica tra le compagne stesse. Tale critica si concretizzava, anche per quanto ho sentito direttamente da voi, nel definirci politicamente dipendenti dalla sinistra maschile (oltre che dipendenti genericamente dagli uomini a livello personale) nell'accusarci di bassa produttività politica, nel criticare in modo assurdo i risultati del nostro lavoro politico sempre e comunque. Fossero essi risultati di momenti di lotta o di messa

a punto di strumenti specifici come documenti di analisi e di informazione (libri, giornali, bollettini ecc.) Per non parlare della questione del disco.

E si concretizzava anche nel bollare di intellettualismo il grosso sforzo che varie compagnie hanno condotto e stanno conducendo per costruire quel livello di dibattito politico indispensabile ad ogni crescita organizzativa. Per non parlare dell'accusa di razzismo che varie compagnie mi hanno documentato essere scagliata con una disinvoltura pari alla totale mancanza dell'anche pur minimo appiglio.

Ma, oltre a una siffatta critica, tale pratica si esprimeva in fatti ben più pesanti quali

1) la richiesta pressante di indirizzi di compagnie costituenti i riferimenti organizzativi dall'interno della rete italiana, come se i numerosi riferimenti di cui le compagnie londinesi da lungo tempo disponevano non fossero più che adeguati.

Richiesta che, oltre a rappresentarsi strana perchè equivale ad assumere che la struttura organizzativa esistente non è efficace a trasmettere l'informazione politica dall'estero e quindi si vorrebbe trasmetterla ad altre donne - e probabilmente anche indirizzarle - da Londra direttamente, si presenta molto pericolosa per noi che da sempre facciamo uso molto economico dei recapiti che fissiamo sulle nostre agende e che facciamo in qualche modo circolare visto che non intendiamo aggiornare continuamente gli schedari dello statov. Può darsi che le vostre case non siano mai state perquisite mentre quelle di compagnie nostre più volte, ma non crediamo che siate comunque scusate dall'ignorare queste elementari regole di condotta per chi intende muoversi politicamente.

2) l'invito a prendere contatti con varie compagnie - piuttosto che con altre, l'invito a promuovere in Italia riunioni, convegni ecc. che, eravamo avvertite, avrebbero suscitato il dissenso di varie compagnie nostre; questo metodo in una parola, ricorda molto quello della congiura più che del confronto politico.

Avendo confrontato e discusso a lungo con tutte le compagnie con cui ho lavorato politicamente in questi anni, tutti questi elementi, trovo necessario e urgente avvertirvi che, mentre a Londra potevo aver considerato la sollecitazione di una serie di cose in

Italia fattibile da parte mia, oggi ritengo che, anche per quanto riguarda un eventuale convegno internazionale, le compagne complessivamente ed io con loro sapremo valutare quando ne sarà il caso. Imprescindibile comunque sarà la vostra risposta alla richiesta di chiarimento politico, almeno relativamente ad alcune questioni ben precise, che il Comitato Nazionale di Coordinamento per il SLD in Italia - e il Comitato di New York - vi richiedono.

Anna di Udine

Alle Rose ed ai gruppi per il S.L.D.

Caro, Rose di mando copie delle lettere che mi inviate alle compagne del Comitato di Londra perché ritengo che sia una testimonianza, all'interno delle rete internazionale del Solario, che non riguarda solo le mie persone, ma anche le compagne italiane dei diversi gruppi che hanno vissuto analoghe esperienze e con cui mi sono confrontate ed è seguito di queste verifiche che ho scritto questo sopra
Con saluti Anna,

What is certainly much less clear is why these groups have decided not to continue their relationship with us, but this is not our fault. We had hoped that, consistently with our practice in the past, a document would be produced indicating the political criteria that had led to this decision. But for the first time in the history of the NA network a group has been presumably expelled without any public justification being given for it. This silence is particularly strange given that the group that was presumably expelled was the group that opened the campaign in NA, a group that for years was the reference point for every other group in NA and furthermore the "expulsion" involved myself as well, a founding member of the International Feminist Collective. Why this exception, and why these groups have not felt the responsibility to justify their decision to other women in the NA network and in other countries ?

In any case, in the present situation a personal dialogue is out of place because what is involved in our presumed expulsion is crucial political questions which cannot be discussed behind closed doors , but must be dealt with openly and with every other group in the wfh network internationally. Furthermore, it is not the NYC who must explain why our relationship with the NA network has not continued, since this relationship was never interrupted by our initiative. ~~xxxxxxxresponsibility~~
 As for yourself and the London Committee, your responsibility in this context was not to encourage personal dialogues, but to encourage the group in the NA network to explain the reasons of their decision to break with a group with whom you and the London Committee had a long relationship of political work and trust. Instead you have preferred to contribute to the problem by spreading rumors to the effect that the NYC "has dissolved" .It is certainly a quick way of solving political problems, but nothing positive grows out of it.

Concerning our publishing or not on Zero Work : I could tell you right away that this is none of your business, since to my knowledge the London Committee has interrupted its political relationship with us. I also find it peculiar that you can ask women in the NA network not to discuss the campaign with us and then ask me to follow a different procedure. In any case, I do not understand why you should rely on "rumors" when you should know the political criteria we have always followed. It also seems that you refuse to accept that among groups that work within the same political perspective there may be differences of interpretation concerning the

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feasability of certain initiatives. You seem to assume that any difference from your position implies a political betrayal and ultimately that only you can think, move and make autonomous judgements. Whether or not Rosa or any of us will publish on ZW will depend on our judgement about the function of this journal. But you should be more humble and realise that the same women that you implicitly accuse of "selling out to the men" have never been afraid of clashing personally and politically with men on the left, even when their own job was at stake. To be more specific, let me remind you ~~the~~ of the public attack that Rosa has organised in the very place where she works against some men who happened to be her bosses, beside being among the leaders of the Movement in Italy--an attack which, among other things, occurred in the presence of the political "intelligentsia" from Italy as well as from other countries. Thus, if Rosa should decide to publish on ZW you could hardly assume that this is due to a sudden intimidation or to political naivete. Not to mention that if publishing on a male journal were so obviously a sell out, then you should explain why you have published Power of Women on Radical America, articles by yourself and the London Committee in Race Today and you were quite ready to publish Wageless of the World with an introduction on the struggles in the Third World on ZW itself. As for your warning against "white women passing to white men what BWWFH have introduced and clarified in the campaign", this is sheer mistification clearly used as a form of blackmail. You seem to forget what you yourself have asserted many times in your own defense when accused of ripping off the Women's Movement because you were publishing articles in your own name. Against these accusations you always repeated that if the personal efforts anybody makes, either through specific researches or specific activities were to be seen as ripp-offs of the struggles the class is making then one should conclude that Marx has ripped off ~~the struggles of the~~ the working class, including, I will add, the struggle of Blacks against slavery. I don't think, however, that this ~~accusation~~ warning comes from any serious political consideration, but rather it comes from the hope of blackmailing us, on the capitalist assumption that what cannot be controlled must be destroyed. The Leninists used to turn uncontrollable comrades to the police you want to turn us to the network with the accusation of racism, but the principle is the same.

Unfortunately ,judging from your letter, it seems that blackmails and lies have become for you a key political instrument,if not a strategy--the problem,however, is that you dont lie only to the State. For example, do you really expect me to believe that "Rosa is opposed to the preface of the English edition"of POW because "it makes a direct and unambiguous link between the book and the campaign " ? Have you lost all touch with reality to expect me to believe such a grotesque lie? In this case too, resorting to a lie exonerates you from dealing with the political questions at stake.

You know well that Rosa has always publicly declared that Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community is the result of your reciprocal collaboration. What Rosa has objected to was the idea of mobilising two political groups--The London Committee and the ~~Trix~~ Padova Committee-- to issue a declaration to be published on the book verifying, supposedly from a "higher ~~xxxxxx~~ level" what the authors had already said. After much insistence on your part, Rosa agreed to the foreword by the two groups for the 3rd English edition of POW, on the assumption that the English sisters would be the best judges of its feasibility relative to the situation in which they operated. At the same time she has repeatedly written to you (also recently) that she objects to the use of this foreword for the publication of POW in other countries because it ^{diminishes} ~~diminishes~~ its political function to use a group to guarantee the words of two sisters. Furthermore, Rosa has authorised the foreward for the English edition of POW ,but it turns out that she has never authorised changing the ~~signature~~ signature of her article Women and the Subversion of the Community, which means that you have made this change in a pirate-like way ,without asking her permission. In other words, Rosa has never objected to POW being signed by both you and her, but she has never being asked and therefore she has never agreed to changing, after many years from its publication, the signature of her article. As you certainly know by now, she objects to this change because a) it ridicules the introduction you had written where you comment the fact that despite the distance in space and time two articles ("A Woman's Place" and " Women and the Subversion of the Community") expressed the same political perspective , b) every work is the result of some collaboration among sisters, but it is unconceivable that ,years later, the sisters who have helped claim to see this help recognised by a change of signature. If this practice were generalised it would become impossible to write or sign anything in anybody's name,because, among other things, this would

mean that we would not be taken seriously by any publisher. Fortunately, however, while collaboration in writing a piece is a generalised practice, your retroactive claim is a unique case and hopefully will remain unique.

Finally, there is your attack on the Italian women, Rosa and Poldi in particular, whom you are accusing for their supposed low level of political productivity. This type of criticism is not new, but has a long history behind it. For years now you have been telling me and other women as well that Italy is not "doing much" and that their politics are not very reliable. Now you may convince other women, but I read Italian and I have spent a considerable amount of time in Italy, so I cannot help noticing the blatant discrepancy between your description of what is happening there and what I have seen with my own eyes, e.g. the organisational network WFH has established in schools and hospitals--something, which, to my knowledge, has no equivalent in England or NA. The documents that were produced for the May 1st Conference in Rome speak of the struggles in four hospitals in which WFH has been involved. Can you really say that this is "not doing much"?. The truth is that you have exerted a true censorship on the news coming from the Italian network. The case of the Naples demonstration where hundreds of women marched with WFH and which was covered by three lines in the last page of the POW journal is typical of the use you have made of the Italian materials and struggles. This summer the struggle that women in WFH were making against doctors who refuse abortions was making all the papers. Yet, I am sure that of this nothing will circulate in England except through the NYC. At the same time while you seem totally oblivious to the struggles WFH is making in Italy, you are continuously ready to gather news from Italy which have no value except that you try to use them to discredit the Triveneto Committee. For example, ~~nowadays~~ you have been giving much publicity to a proposal for WFH that supposedly the Italian parliament is discussing. We all wish it were true, but it is not. If you had spent a bit more time informing yourself, or if you had not assumed that the Italian sisters are politically incompetent, you would have realised that ~~is~~^{for} all practical and political purposes this proposal is non-existent. But also in this case you assume that you are a

much better judge of the Italian situation and of the political possibilities for the campaign there than the sisters who in this situation work on a day to day basis. Again it would be more fruitful if instead of spreading news about what does not exist you would ~~refer~~^{report} what in fact is happening in the Italian WFH campaign. I refer specifically to the rape trials the Italian sisters have politically supported, among which the trial of a prostitute, whose defense also involved a confrontation between the sisters in Trieste and the police. I refer to the struggles in hospitals, which involve a day to day attack against doctors who refuse to perform abortions, the struggles in the schools and on the second job in general, as well as in the community, which, among other things, have led to the formation of women's assemblies and commissions moving autonomously from the unions on the second job. On all of this there is abundant information in the books, bulletins, journals that the Italian sisters, with a considerable financial effort, have continuously sent both to England and NA. In this context it is peculiar that you judge negatively Rosa and Poldi because they were not present at the National Conference in Rome on May 1st. Why are you so prone to assume political irresponsibility on the part of these sisters, instead of realising that their absence indicates a division-organisation of work which allows the Italian network to spread and operate at different levels?

Should I assume that you are so politically naive and can't see this? But I do not think it is simply a question of naivete or even simply a question of political arrogance. What is involved is a basic lack of loyalty towards the women you work with, whom you take more as horses in a race than as sisters involved in the same struggle. There is no way I can explain why instead of supporting sisters that are worth all your trust you keep measuring their political productivity as if we were in a competition. What is worst is that I do not believe any longer that you are just concerned with "political efficiency". I have seen too much eagerness in you to see the worst in women who had every right to your trust and that you yourself, at one point or the other, halted as "the salt of the earth"

I watched too many lies or pieces of amnesia to still trust your motives.

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If I had any doubt the last letter you sent me has dispelled them, with its ~~mixxxxx~~ hypocritical mixture of threats and calculated shows of affection and concern --about my financial situation, about my mother etc--, with its power play--your successes and the successes of the campaign, with which you clearly hope to intimidate me--not to mention your magnanimous offer to "help me" settling my financial accounts with the network, which is grotesque given the deliberate attempt from the network to fuck me over, telling e.g. the Sanfrancisco group not to pay their debts to us, trying to steal my mail and the mail of the NYC. Dear Selma, for sake of our past political relationship, and for sake of the loyalty I have always demonstrated to you, you could have spared this to me and to yourself as well.

One more thing : I dont want to receive personal letters from you. If you have any political communication, send it to the New York Committee that contrary to your claims and hopes is still alive and politically activ

Silvia Federici

Silvia Federici

N.Y. Wages For Housework C.

P.O.Box 326, Van Brunt Station

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F.D. Cortella 1,25
Selma :

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Padova 31 luglio '78 1

I have read your letter from London of June.7, 1978 and for the first time after years of patient silence, in the hope that more serious political matters would dispose of petty things like these, I want to speak openly to you.

It seems very strange to me that the international network and particularly the network in the US should depend on the phone call we did not have to find out something about Italy. In fact, we have always sent regularly to many groups in Canada and the US materials that show the development of our struggle and our organisational work, from the different issues of the journal to the several local bulletins to books and fliers. What is true, however, is that for years now every information concerning Italy has been curtailed to the extent that nothing has been published or translated and even the already made translations were not utilised (it seems that Silvia Federici made many of them for nothing).

I also find ~~me~~ not so much strange but ridiculous the attitude that, also in this letter, is assumed towards us wfh women in Italy who, supposedly, are "going to be judged" by some other foreign group and are not allowed to publish any material in English until certain "questions" are not "clarified".

Concerning this, I want to make it immediately clear that as far as ~~we~~ our using US materials is involved I will keep referring to Silvia Federici who was specifically assigned to this since the foundation of the International Feminist Collective, and will follow the criteria we always followed. I am not aware that the International Feminist Collective has ceased to exist, also because Silvia and I are part of it and therefore I do not see how it could be dissolved without a decision on our side. It seems, however, that you have completely forgotten the criteria the International Feminist Collective has always followed concerning publications. I will make then a brief digression to summarise them.

Concerning written materials, the Collective always functioned in the sense of organising ~~xxx~~ their translation and publication as well as guaranteeing the political adequacy of both. For all decisions concerning the use of the materials, the sisters members of the Collective disposed directly only of those pieces (articles, books etc.) whose publication had been authorised either by a group or by their author. An "automatic reproduction" of materials always occurred --for this is what the Collective decided-- only in the case of materials that were to be quickly utilised, like e.g. what was to be reported on the journal. For all the rest--selections of pieces to be anthologised etc.--the sister of the Collective always consulted the "foreign correspondent" to check whether everything was agreed upon or any change had to be made. And the foreign sister could always ~~she~~ decide differently from what was being proposed. This means that ultimately she could publish in a different place from the one we had proposed if she did not agree with our suggestions. We continue to think that these criteria are the only possible ones. This not only because around every publication problems

may arise about which only the author can make the final decision, but because if there are different political judgments it is not through compulsion that agreement can be reached. A real problem, however, is that often we do not receive an answer soon enough so that we have to give up using your pieces because we cannot keep the publishers waiting forever. The Swiss sisters waited for too long an answer concerning the English piece to be put in Le foyer de l'insurrection. While they regularly received answers from us as well as suggestions and corrections on our pieces, they received nothing from you which made it difficult for them to work on the book. At least a "no" but ~~xxxxxxx~~ received in time would have made things easier. It also happens that often, after sending you a provisional translation to be checked, we never receive the final version. Other times we are told that certain documents are provisional and cannot be circulated even as mimeographs among the sisters, but then they are never followed by a definitive version to be circulated. These difficulties are well known to many sisters who have waited in vain for an answer from you on questions like these. They are difficulties it seems to me, that it is more in your interest to solve than ours. ~~XXXX~~ The price ~~xxxxxxxx~~ we pay is only a useless loss of time. In conclusion, concerning "Motherhood, Lesbianism and Child Custody" and the other English materials, what you say in your letter makes no sense whatsoever compared with our usual practice. We have never published anything without first receiving the authorisation to do so. The question remains whether or not you want the Italian sisters to be able to read it, and I think the sisters in Ferrara are anxiously looking forward to an answer. In case, however, you do not want us to translate and circulate the materials you send us, then I do not understand why you send them to begin with. This, I think, is part of some contradictions that you have kept open for a long time and that you should resolve.

As for the recurrent more or less open threat of political scandal which reappears also in this letter, it only adds a grotesque note to the scandalous practice of threats and accusations which, for no reason whatsoever, you have begun since a long time to wage against sisters in other countries and particularly Italian sisters. Among these accusations that of racism is only the most easy and most used. "Easy" for obviously when it is waged by Black Women it should be impossible for white women to defend themselves, in the same way as it should be problematic for those of us who are straight to answer to possible perplexities by a lesbian group. What is "strange" however is that the lesbian sisters among us, and they are many, have no perplexities concerning those of us who are not. But we know even too well that our practice, like that of other Italian sisters in the US, cannot really have moved "against" Black Women and Lesbian Women. The reservations, then that for some time it has been hinted these groups would have about us and the New York Committee, or Silvia Federici, can only be instrumental to an intimidatory manoeuvre which certainly has no roots in our real relations

with them, but originates from your will to ensure for yourself a very questionable political leadership at the international level by establishing a hierarchy of countries, races, and sexual preferences ~~totally~~ ^{totally} impolitically. ^{that is: if the problem is to assume} ~~that~~ ^{that} internationally there is a hierarchy of power within the class. ^{most of us had doubts about that} Given that, the fact remains that ~~that~~ each section of the class can move only with its own instruments. Also in this case the guarantee that the political practices of each section really give power to all the others can be reached only through political comparison (confronto) and not through compulsions, a practice which has never allowed anybody to function politically. Much less can it be reached through curtailment, in the sense that the activity of any section should be conditioned to permissions or suggestions-commands, by others. True, the practice of comparison (confronto) within levels of reciprocal autonomy, is more complex. But it is the only vital and possible one, for political work does not grow and cannot be compared along the paths you are following.

As I said before, not even our patient silence has served to cover this practice which has already revealed its senselessness to the Italian wfh sisters who came to London and who have come back disgusted by the posture as International Tribunal you have assumed towards us and other sisters like Silvia Federici. Also grotesque is your attempt to "direct from London" the activity of some wfh sisters and some "wfh men" in Italy, as if we did not exist.

~~Practical~~ ^{Practical} ~~is~~ ^{is} this project of "Wages for Housework" ~~is~~ ^{is} I want to clarify that there are other wfh in Italy working on Wages P.M. but having learned that the alternative was not simply to receive orders from you or from us. But to try to think and to move autonomously, that is on the basis of their effort, ~~starting~~ ^{starting} from what we represented up to now as organizational work and kind of debate. In ^{good} I think they are on the road to represent a real enlargement of people working for W.F.H., being us free to suggest to them what to do, or not to suggest, ~~xxxxx~~ ^{xxxxx} what to do, being us free even to move against them if there will be the case. It seems also, that even starting from my having or not having a job this year in My Institute, I am ^{and a reorientation of the political discussion on a} ~~able~~ ^{able} to make among all the others people working there a ~~big~~ ^{big} political activity about W.F.H., and ~~all~~ ^{all} this not ~~xxxxx~~ ^{xxxxx} just an ideological assumption but as a real moving. And in effect some of them began an activity, different kinds of works, idoneous to produce in the male movement a rearticulation of the political discussion and a reorientation of the political practice.

{Again : the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ reference in your letter of June 7 to the Triveneto Committee, as if it were separate from the Italian wfh network is reminiscent of the operation attempted also in the US of cutting the head of some sisters as well as eliminating a historically important group with the crazy pretense of substituting it. I say "attempted" because fortunately the political capacity of the sisters in USA against whom this operation has been tried is such that neither them nor their work can be so easily destroyed or substituted. On the contrary, it has ~~grown~~ remained and grown, but certainly not because of your help.

We also think that as long as this is the way you relate to sisters in other countries you wont see the big problems at the level of debate and organisation around which we are working, to prepare ourselves for ~~the~~ a new phase of struggle adequate to the new forms the State is assuming internationally. In the case of Italy the reorganisation of the State involves a new very strong recomposition between PC and PCI, which is certainly the result of the level of attack against capital and the State during these years.

It seems that you know nothing about this. True, only by being part --as we have been during these years-- of ~~the attack~~ this attack can one know its concrete articulations and ramifications. But it is also true that you will know ~~it~~ less and less the more you persist, as you have been doing for some ~~some~~ time, in your practice towards Italy, ~~and~~ ~~do~~ not consider that "information is the result of organisation". Thus, you will never know the reality of the situation, ^{by} interrogating those who happen to come to London, be they women or men. You will know it only through a political comparison (confronto) which is ~~also~~ the only way that allows those passing the information to decide what to communicate and how reliable it is.

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The consequence of this reorganisation of the State ~~is that~~ for us who have been on the battle line during these years is that we have to deal with the problem of feminist organisation, on different grounds. If a political practice based essentially on the use of media for the circulation of our perspective was out of question in the previous phase, due to the level of control exerted by the State on the media, and in any case was not adequate to the level of political confrontation in which we had ~~struggled~~ to move, in the phase which has opened up it cannot even represent a possible course of action. Unless what is implied is the ~~fact~~ fact of using the media "when one can", and who has not done this ?

The repression we are living does not operate only at the economic level but implies a direct military/repression against which neither words nor marches are sufficient--as for general strikes for wfh, our good will is not enough to make them happen. Concerning all the organisational forms which have been experimented and consolidated--assemblies of women only, feminist committees, on the second job and in the community--they have reached a level that already appears as a trench.

Relatively to the past phase, these past years, we do not think that your practice has been more fruitful than ours or your debate more adequate to the problems we face. Nevertheless, even when you marched in six and we in 3000, we always had an attitude of political comparison (confronto) aiming at reciprocal help and not certainly at judging and punishing as in your attitude towards us--a practice which is gratuitous compared with our work and in general is crazy.

I must also say that this sort of political idiocy on which I have been patient for years has tired me ~~more~~ much more than the thousand marches, meetings and actions of attack that we have sustained. "What still ~~is~~ ^{cheers me up}" is certainly not letters like this, but the continuous growth of my sisters and of new women through our reciprocal efforts. I repeat it, I do not think that at present you have the political capacity to imagine it. I have only one doubt: your obsession with the problem of leadership taken in isolation and privileged with respect to the problematics from which it should naturally follow, ~~and which~~ not accidentally ~~leads~~ leads to its representation as International Tribunal. But is this obsession the consequence of political naivete or the consequence of a total court identification with capitalist power ?

What is certain is that the Italian wfh will compare (confrontarsi) at the level of debate and organisation with the sisters of other countries when they will consider it politically feasible, and in any case not at levels like those of your letter of June 7 with its happy accompaniment by a flier in which from the main addresses of the campaign have disappeared both Italy in its entirety and the New York Committee. And it is certainly not the first document of this sort that you have sent us.

In the meantime, I do not wish to be obliged to have personal contacts with you neither directly nor by phone. Not accidentally the fact that the personal is political does not mean that political work should close people in a network of suffocating personal relations. As far as I am concerned, the only place where we will see each other again is that of a political comparison (confronto) together with other sisters when we will consider it politically feasible, that is when there will be the possibility of discussing ~~xxxxxxxx~~ politically important matters.

Mariano

x P.S. Copy to Winette^{Brown}, Marjorie, Judy Ramirez, Beth Myler, Lizzie Fleming and Gisela Rock.

- The English text is a translation that I revised. In any case, I want to be considered as the "original" the Italian texts.

A tale proposito intendo allora chiarire subito che, per quanto riguarda l'uso da parte nostra di materiali prodotti negli USA, ~~intendevo~~ continuerò a riferirmi a Silvia Federici, a questo specificamente deferita dai tempi della fondazione del Collettivo Internazionale Femminista, e secondo i criteri che abbiamo sempre seguito. Non mi risulta che il Collettivo Internazionale non esista più, anche perchè, facendone io parte assieme a Silvia, non vedo come si possa sciolle re anche al di là della nostra decisione.

Pare invece che ^{tu} non ricordi affatto i criteri a cui il Collettivo si è sempre informato circa le pubblicazioni. Voglio allora aprire un inciso per riassumerli brevemente:

Il Collettivo, quanto ai materiali scritti, ha sempre funzionato, ~~nell'attuale accordo~~, nel senso semplicemente di organizzare le pratiche di traduzione e pubblicazione, garantendo politicamente della adeguatezza sia della prima che della seconda. Per quanto riguarda il decidere sulla disponibilità del materiale stesso, le compagne membre del Collettivo decidevano direttamente solo relativamente ai pezzi (articoli, o libri, o altro) relativamente ai quali il gruppo o autore singolo li aveva autorizzati a ciò. Invece vorrei precisare che la "automatica riproduzione" del materiale c'è sempre stata, perchè così era stato deciso, solo per i materiali di velocissima utilizzazione, per esempio per quanto andava riportato sul giornale. Per tutto il resto, composizione di raccolte di pezzi in libri, ecc., la compagna del Collettivo consultava comunque la "corrispondente estera" per sapere se tutto veniva accettato o se ci dovevano essere modifiche. E direi anche che era fatta

senza autorizzazione
pezzi

salva comunque sempre la possibilità per la compagna estera di decidere diversamente da come veniva suggerito. Cioè in ultima analisi potevamo pubblicare in altro luogo da quello da noi predisposto se non condividevamo i nostri suggerimenti. E continuiamo a pensare che questi criteri siano gli unici possibili. Non solo perchè attorno ad ogni pubblicazione ci possono essere problemi vari rispetto a cui solo all'autore può essere riservata l'ultima parola, ma perchè anche qui se le valutazioni politiche non coincidono, non sarà certo la coazione a risolverlo.

~~Una difficoltà reale invece è che spesso non sono date risposte in tempo utile per cui si deve accantonare di inserire pezzi vostri poichè non si possono tenere in ballo editori all'infinito. Le compagne svizzere hanno atteso ~~per troppo tempo~~ le vostre risposte riguardo ai pezzi inglesi da inserire in "Le foyer de l'insurrection", ma mentre ricevevano le nostre risposte, consigli e correzioni riguardo ai nostri pezzi regolarmente, nulla ricevevano da parte vostra e si trovavano molto male nel condurre avanti il lavoro del libro. Almeno un "no", ma in tempo, le avrebbe lasciate lavorare meglio.~~

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Oppure si dà il caso che, dopo avervi mandato traduzioni provvisorie perchè le volete rivedere, non riceviamo mai indietro la correzione definitiva. Oppure ci

viene detto che alcuni documenti sono prov-
visori e non si possono nemmeno far circo-
lare come ciclostilati fra le compagne e
poi non sono mai seguiti da una redazione
definitiva e circolabile. Queste sono dif-
ficoltà che hanno conosciuto molto bene ~~su~~
^{molte} ~~alcune~~ compagne ~~colpite~~, che hanno atte-
so invano vostre risposte su questioni co-
me queste, e sono difficoltà che credo sia
un interesse più direttamente vostro che
nostro risolvere. Per noi il prezzo è so-
prattutto l'inutile perdita di tempo.

Concludendo: circa "Motherhood, Lesbianism
and Child Custody" e altri scrit-
ti inglesi, il discorso della lettera è
insensato se confrontato con la nostra pra-
tica di sempre. Non abbiamo mai pubblica-
to niente senza previa autorizzazione.

Resta invece il problema se volete o no
che le compagne lo possano leggere tradot-
to in italiano e ciclostilato e credo che
le compagne di Ferrara siano ansiose di
avere una risposta.

Nel caso desiderate però che i materia-
li che inviate non vengano nemmeno tradot-
ti e fatti circolare, non si capisce per-
chè ce li inviate. Credo faccia parte di
alcune contraddizioni che mantenete irri-

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solte da troppo lungo tempo e che dovrete risolvere.

Quanto alla continua e più o meno larvata minaccia di scandalo politico che ricorre anche in questa lettera, aggiunge solo del grottesco alla scandalosa pratica di minacce e di accuse che senza ragione alcuna avete da tempo cominciato a profferire nei confronti di compagne del salario di altri paesi, e in particolare italiane, di cui quella di razzismo è solo la più facile e la più usata. Dico "facile" perchè ovviamente se scagliata da Donne Nere dovrebbe riuscire impossibile per donne bianche difendersi, così come per quelle di noi che sono "straight" dovrebbe riuscire problematico fronteggiare supposte perplessità di gruppi lesbici. Ma sappiamo sin troppo bene che la pratica nostra come di altre compagne italiane in USA non può realmente mai essersi estrinsecata in alcun modo "contro" donne Nere - donne Lesbiche. Queste riserve allora che da tempo si insinuano che tali gruppi abbiano nei nostri confronti, o nei confronti del Comitato di New York, o di Silvia Federici, non possono che essere strumentali a una manovra intimidatoria che non ha certo origine nei nostri reali rapporti con loro, bensì - a mio avviso - da una tua volontà di assicurarti un molto discutibile tipo di direzione politica a livello internazionale, stabilendo una gerarchizzazione dei paesi, delle razze, delle preferenze sessuali, in modo del tutto impolitico. Cioè, se la questione è l'assumere la stratificazione di potere nella classe a livello internazionale, nessuno ha mai avuto dubbi in merito. Detto questo però, resta immutato il problema che di fatto ciascuna sezione può muoversi solo con una strumentazione propria. Anche qui allora la garanzia

. / .

Ma le "strane" è che le compagne lesbiche al nostro interno, e sono molte, non hanno alcuna perplessità nei confronti di quelle di noi che non lo sono.

come prese di posizione ideologica ma come pratica politica effettiva.

6

Pratica che da parte di alcuni è cominciata con uno sforzo preciso di messa a punto di lavori atti a produrre nel movimento maschile una riarticolazione del dibattito e un riorientamento della esperienza organizzativa.

Ancora: l'allusione nella lettera del 7 giugno al Triveneto prescindendo dall'intera rete del salario ricorda molto l'operazione tentata anche in USA di tagliare la testa di qualcuna, oltre che di eliminare un gruppo storicamente significativo, con la pretesa - folle - di sostituirla. Dico "tentata" perchè fortunatamente la capacità politica delle compagne in USA nei confronti delle quali avete tentato questa operazione, come quella delle compagne italiane, fa sì che nè loro nè il loro lavoro possano essere così disinvol-

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tamente distrutto e sostituito. Anzi, resiste e cresce parecchio, ma certamente no^m grazie al vostro aiuto.

Crediamo anche che finchè questa è l'ottica con cui vi rapportate alle compagnie di altri paesi, non siate nemmeno in grado di intravedere i grossi problemi di dibattito e di organizzazione sui quali stiamo lavorando per ~~essere in grado di~~ ^{poter} affrontare una seconda fase di lotta. Seconda fase di lotta che tenga conto della nuova forma che sta assumendo a livello mondiale lo Stato capitalistico; tale ~~forma~~ rinnovamento passa, nel caso specifico dell'Italia, attraverso una ricomposizione, nuova e estremamente forte, di DC e PCI. Questo certamente è il risultato del livello di attacco che si è sdatenato contro lo Stato e il capitale in questi anni.

Ma tutto questo sembra che voi non lo conosciate. E' vero allora che solo essendo parte diretta, come siamo state noi in questi anni, di questo attacco, se ne possono conoscere le concrete articolazioni e portata di diffusione, ma è altrettanto vero che voi tanto meno lo conoscerete quanto più vi intestardirete come da tempo fate nella vostra pratica nei confronti dell'Italia, a ~~rifiutare~~ non tener presente che "l'informazione è frutto di organizzazione". Conseguentemente non conoscerete mai il cuore delle cose interrogando chi capita a Londra, uomo o donna che sia, ma lo potrete conoscere solo attraverso un rapporto di confronto politico che è l'unico che permette anche a chi trasmette l'informazione di decidere cosa trasmettere e di valutare che garanzia ne può avere.

Le conseguenze di questa riorganizzazione statale per

zione di decidere cosa trasmettere e di valutare che gu
ranzia ne può avere.

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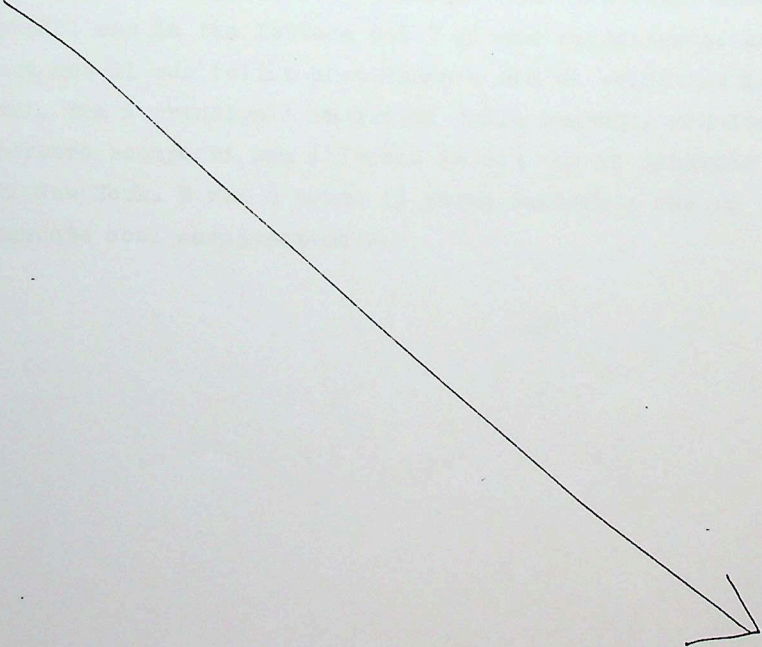
Le conseguenze di questa riorganizzazione statutale per noi che siamo state sul fronte di lotta in questi anni, sono che dobbiamo affrontare su terreni diversi il problema della organizzazione femminista. Se una pratica politica basata fundamentalmente sull'uso dei media per la diffusione del discorso da un lato non ci era permessa già nella fase precedente per il livello di controllo esercitato dallo Stato sui mezzi di comunicazione, dall'altro era comunque ~~una~~ inadeguata al livello dello scontro entro cui già ballavamo, nella fase che si è aperta ora non può nemmeno costituire un'indicazione. A meno che non la si intenda come l'ovvia cosa di usare dei media "quando si può". E chi non l'ha fatto?

Ma la repressione che stiamo vivendo non si sviluppa solo a livello economico, ma si intreccia con una repressione militare diretta ~~contro~~ contro la quale non bastano nè parole nè marce, e gli scioperi generali sul

./.

lavoro domestico non basta la nostra buona volontà a farli saltar fuori. E tutte le altre forme organizzative sperimentate e consolidate, assemblee di scie donne, comitati femministi, sui luoghi di lavoro esterno nei quartieri, hanno attinto un livello che si presenta ormai ~~mai~~ come un fronte di trincea.

Per quanto riguarda la fase precedente, gli anni passati, non crediamo che la vostra pratica si sia rivelata più efficace della nostra nè il vostro dibattito più ~~efficace~~ adeguato ai problemi che ci trovavamo ad affrontare. Cionondimeno, anche quando voi marciavate in 6 e noi in 3.000, abbiamo sempre avuto un atteggiamento di confronto politico diretto all'aiuto reciproco, e non certo a giudicare per punire, come del ~~mai~~ tutto gratuitamente rispetto alla nostra pratica e ~~xx~~ follemente in assoluto avete assunto voi nei nostri confronti.



Posso dire che mi ha stancato molto più questo tipo di cretineria politica su cui da anni ho pazientato, che le mille marce e riunioni e azioni di attacco che abbiamo condotto. Ciò che continua a "tenermi su" non sono certo lettere come questa, ma la crescita continua delle mie compagne e di nuove donne attraverso il reciproco sforzo. Ripeto: credo che tu oggi non abbia la ^{capacità} ~~intelligenza~~ politica di immaginarlo. Mi resta un dubbio: l'ossessione sul problema della leadership, isolato e accanitamente privilegiato rispetto alla problematica da cui invece dovrebbe naturalmente discendere, non è un caso che porti facilmente al raffigurarsi come Tribunale Internazionale. Ma tale ossessione è frutto di ingenuità politica o di un'identificazione tout-court con il potere capitalistico?

Penso che le compagne del salario italiane si confronteranno a livello di dibattito e di organizzazione con le compagne di altri paesi quando lo riterranno politicamente opportuno e comunque non su livelli come quelli che la tua lettera del 7 giugno rappresenta. Anche con il suo felice accostamento ~~ad~~ un volantino in cui, tra i principali indirizzi della campagna risulterebbero scomparsi sia l'Italia intera sia il Comitato di New York. E non è certo il primo documento che ci mandate così caratterizzato.

Non desidero nel frattempo essere costretta a rapporti personali con te, nè direttamente nè per telefono. Non a caso il fatto che il personale è politico non vuole affatto dire che il livello politico debba stringere le persone in un intrico di rapporti personali che non lasciano respiro. L'unica sede in cui ci rivedremo è, per quanto mi riguarda, quello di un confronto politico assieme alle altre compagne, quando anche noi lo riterremo opportuno politicamente, cioè quando ci sarà la possibilità di discutere su problemi politicamente rilevanti.

WWE

P.S. Copia a Wilmette e Marjareth,
Judy Ramirez, Beth Mynber, Lizzie Fleming,
& Gisela Bock

F.D, contella 1,25

15

PS Form 3575 October 1976

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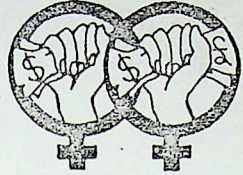
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FD, cartella 1, 25

16

wages due lesbians

p.o. box 38, stn. e, toronto, canada m6h 4e1 416-466-7457
465-6822



January 28, 1979

Dear Rosa,

We discovered a misunderstanding between England and us about our position on the Italian publication of Motherhood, Lesbianism and Child Custody. If you send us a contract first, we will be glad for you to go ahead without further delay.

Yours,

Francie Wyland for
Wages Due Lesbians/Toronto

- cc. Falling Wall Press
- London Wages for Housework Committee
- Wages Due Lesbians/London
- Wages Due Lesbians/New York
- Wages Due Lesbians/Philadelphia
- Wages Due Lesbians/Boston
- Wages Due Lesbians/San Francisco

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