

My dear Suzanne,

FB, contella 1, 59

5 April 1975

First, let me say that I've heard from Mariarosa that someone went to the international meeting in France. I don't know what the result has been, but I'm sure that you will be informed either directly or through us. It is really important, it seems to me, if they have an international tribunal on the crimes against women, that the greatest or rather the most basic crime of housework and the slavery that implies be attacked. I know you agree.

Secondly, there is the question of Grounauer and the French edition of Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community. Sylvine wrote to Rosa telling her that Grounauer has not paid her for the translation, and telling her that Rosa got that money. Since I am not conversant with French, in which all the letters have been written, I may have one or two details wrong. But I gather that Rosa wants an account of what books have been ~~xxxxxxx~~ printed and circulated, and what his plans are for their distribution in France, since it is pointless to arrange for reviews when no one will be able to buy the book in France because it is in Switzerland!

I should be much ~~to~~ obliged to you if you will convey to ~~him~~^{them} the following.

1. I have never received any money from ~~him~~^{them} for the book, and am therefore not in the position ~~to~~ even of Rosa who has insisted that she will pay half of the translation charges herself from the money she has received. I therefore also wish to have an accounting of how many copies ~~were~~^{were} printed, how many distributed, etc.

2. I want to know what are ~~his~~^{their} definite plans about getting the book into France. As Rosa has said in her letter, the question of this raising the price of the book is ~~not~~ crucial. The crucial question is its circulation in France.

3. I am asking that you take these questions up with ~~him~~^{them} or, ^(letters) translate for ~~him~~^{them} this part of my letter, since I cannot write in French, and I am confident of your translation.

4. There is one mistake in Rosa's letter - not 8,000, but over 10,000 copies of the book have been sold in English. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The political effect of this is being felt all over North America now, where Wages for Housework groups are continuing to spring up. The international political tendency of which we are a part is suffering from the fact that the book is being held back from French-speaking readers. I hope you will be able to make clear to Grounauer that our interest in the circulation of the book is not as "authors" but as political people for whom the book is an important ~~part~~ spokeswoman and spearhead.

It was good to speak with you on the phone the other day. If these letters from Rosa had come before our conversation, we could have discussed this matter by phone also. But perhaps it is better that in any case this be written down. I should be glad to know what you personally ~~would~~ think, what is your impression, after having spoken with Grounauer.

Love and power,

Selma

PS: I put two lines to separate these paragraphs which I would be glad if you translated from those which are purely between us.

Copy to Sylvine + Rosa

NB: SUZANNE AND SYLVINE: The women in N. America have asked us to convene an international conference on July which some of them will attend. We tentatively plan it for the 11th or 18th of July. Will you say, please, if you would be able to come and if others who are with us politically would be able to come to London for that weekend.

5 April 1975

My dear Rosa,

Enclosed a copy of my letter to Suzanne Lerch (whose address is in the journal no. 3). I hope my school French has not led me to misunderstand your letters.

I have written to Sylvine giving her the address of Harriet Lutzky in Paris who may be able to collect the money owing to her from Git le Coeur in Paris. I have sent a message to Harriet asking her to do it, and I think she will.

You don't mention how much money Grounauer has sent you, and I should be glad to know. I don't understand why he is being so dodgy about the money.

I have not your letter in front of me, since I am going on holiday and have given it to Ruth and discussed it with her. I think you are right about stopping their circulation of our material, or at least about trying to stop their circulation of our material. There is of course no way for us to prevent it, but we certainly can write to them and say that we do not wish it. ~~xxx~~ Ruth agrees and will present it to the other women. I myself have no way of knowing what the translation is like, but I found the cover very objectionable. It is not political at all. It is a typical bourgeois mentality linking two countries, not linking a class perspective. If even one knew nothing about the group, they would know plenty from the cover.

Finally a certain level of political sophistication has reached British shores. But it is going to be a long, hard pull in this country, and every day it is clearer that we have to apportion our time between the women's movement which is really dominated not only by the male left but by the shit British male left, and the women outside. And yet so much of our power still comes from that movement.

I am parcelling when I finish this letter another 20 copies of number one of the journal. It seems there was a good pile hiding in someone's closet, when we thought we were almost completely out.

We are most anxious to know exactly what your plans are for May 1st. Toronto is mobilising for the 2nd of May in three languages: English, Spanish and Italian. There are, as you probably know, two collectives there, one a lesbian collective, which has put the question of wages for housework and lesbianism squarely before the wages for housework network internationally and which will be a great lever of power for us here in Britain. Four women from the collective have written a statement on lesbianism and wages for housework ~~x~~ and are having a workshop at the ~~xxx~~ national conference in Manchester. (Our other workshop is on the mobilisation for 1st May. We have posed it: against women's work in the home and out of it, hoping to drive a wedge between feminists and the left, but of course this is unambiguously linked with wages for housework.) But I really feel the need - and I think others do - for communication on what we all are doing.

We have been asked by the women in N. America to hold an international conference in July, and the collective has agreed to do this. We had in mind the ~~x~~ 11th or the 18th of July and ~~xxx~~ want to know what you think. Will you write to Ruth Hall, 64 Larch Road, London N W 2. By the time you reply I will be in Bristol where she will communicate what you write, but she should know immediately.

Silvia has done wonders in the US, and Beth whom you don't know but who stayed with Ferruccio last summer and is in Los Angeles (where Sam is, by the way) is one of the most dynamic organisers I've ever known. With Judith in Toronto they make a formidable trio and are planning a March on Washington for March of next year where they expect at least 1,000 women. That is something to work for. They have also made inroads into the press there. ~~x~~ All this has made it easier for me to go away for a couple of weeks, but between us, I fear that I will not renew my energy, and that prospect is an agony which I find difficult to bear. Except for one thing: I believe the groundwork we have done here and the tremendous impact of N. American events will bear sweet fruit in this ~~very~~ ^{very} slow-moving country.

Jane, S.