

F.B., contella 1, 71

5 Feb 1975

My dear Rosa,

I did my best with the long letter you wrote to Silvia and me about the document on wages. I have no copy of the document, and of course could not understand much of the Italian, but I got some idea from it. Not enough, however, to comment with any accuracy. The important thing is that we have the document as soon as possible translated here so we can plan publication. If there are serious disagreements we will probably note them, but that will be a decision of others as well as me, and there may not be those disagreements at all. Silvia will translate for me, no doubt, but they are up to their eyes in N. America preparing for the second conference, this time in Montreal. (I'm not sure anyone told you that Beth, an American woman, with another woman, made a tour all through the US a couple of months ago, and spoke to all kinds of groups of women not only "in" the movement, but proletarian women in organisations. The results of this would be even greater if they could now be followed up, but to whatever degree they are, some fundamental work has been done, and the results for Europe must be great.)//We suggested that Women's Day be devoted to SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN'S STRUGGLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. There was hardly any enthusiasm for the demonstration and it was virtually impossible to get anything mobilised for the variety of ~~ex~~ really pressing issues that were bombarding us: the women in Portugal being beaten in the street, the women in Spain facing the death sentence, and strikes here. In this way, however, we shall also be able to give full publicity to what you are doing in Italy, and I can understand that you are up to your eyes there. (I got a report in London from a woman who attended the conference of the Radical Party etc. in Rome, and have some idea even from that of the feeling which is now expressing itself on abortion in the streets. You are reaping the benefit, among other things, not only of hard work but of a student movement that was something. Here the students are doing nothing at all except joining the left.)// Enclosed the final version of the Preface to the Latin American edition. I hope you find it all right. It was written in a great hurry, since the publishers turned down the Preface done by the women in Mexico City and then told them that I hadx turned it down. Luckily, they were sent a copy of the publishers' letter turning it down. I hope there is nothing serious that you disagree with violently. It was written for a Third World audience which is steeped in the need for development and the division between the "peasantry" and the "workers", and which has many leftovers of societies that are not capitalistic, but have been transformed, etc.,etc.// I send you one copy of the journal and wait for someone to go to Italy to bring others. We were able to cover the cost of the second issue, which is a great victory (I mean cover the cost with sales, and may even begin to pay for the loss on issue no. 1.)//I rush now to the mechanic to get my car and then to the post office. Despite the difficulty in the Italian, I see that you are well, tired but thriving, and I'm very glad.//You will see the mess in the journal about the international addresses. It was largely because I was ill. I'm better now.

Love and kisses,

*Self*

*I have a copy of the document on wages. I have no copy of the document, and of course could not understand much of the Italian, but I got some idea from it. Not enough, however, to comment with any accuracy. The important thing is that we have the document as soon as possible translated here so we can plan publication. If there are serious disagreements we will probably note them, but that will be a decision of others as well as me, and there may not be those disagreements at all. Silvia will translate for me, no doubt, but they are up to their eyes in N. America preparing for the second conference, this time in Montreal. (I'm not sure anyone told you that Beth, an American woman, with another woman, made a tour all through the US a couple of months ago, and spoke to all kinds of groups of women not only "in" the movement, but proletarian women in organisations. The results of this would be even greater if they could now be followed up, but to whatever degree they are, some fundamental work has been done, and the results for Europe must be great.)//We suggested that Women's Day be devoted to SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN'S STRUGGLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. There was hardly any enthusiasm for the demonstration and it was virtually impossible to get anything mobilised for the variety of really pressing issues that were bombarding us: the women in Portugal being beaten in the street, the women in Spain facing the death sentence, and strikes here. In this way, however, we shall also be able to give full publicity to what you are doing in Italy, and I can understand that you are up to your eyes there. (I got a report in London from a woman who attended the conference of the Radical Party etc. in Rome, and have some idea even from that of the feeling which is now expressing itself on abortion in the streets. You are reaping the benefit, among other things, not only of hard work but of a student movement that was something. Here the students are doing nothing at all except joining the left.)// Enclosed the final version of the Preface to the Latin American edition. I hope you find it all right. It was written in a great hurry, since the publishers turned down the Preface done by the women in Mexico City and then told them that I hadx turned it down. Luckily, they were sent a copy of the publishers' letter turning it down. I hope there is nothing serious that you disagree with violently. It was written for a Third World audience which is steeped in the need for development and the division between the "peasantry" and the "workers", and which has many leftovers of societies that are not capitalistic, but have been transformed, etc.,etc.// I send you one copy of the journal and wait for someone to go to Italy to bring others. We were able to cover the cost of the second issue, which is a great victory (I mean cover the cost with sales, and may even begin to pay for the loss on issue no. 1.)//I rush now to the mechanic to get my car and then to the post office. Despite the difficulty in the Italian, I see that you are well, tired but thriving, and I'm very glad.//You will see the mess in the journal about the international addresses. It was largely because I was ill. I'm better now.*

Power to the sisters,

20 Staverton Road  
London N W 2  
5 February 1975

My dear Gisela,

Enclosed is the Preface to the Latin American edition of Power of Women. I hope you will treat it with care, in the sense of not letting it be published anywhere yet. We must decide what is best about this, what would do the movement the most good, and get the book better known in Germany - if you think that the Preface can be useful in that respect.

I should be glad to hear from you what you think.

I am afraid the nurses' document is not yet finished. All the others have done their work. I am the one who is behind. You will have a copy as soon as there is a good draft, not even waiting for it to be finished. I hope you received the original that I sent some time ago.

Hopefully the news of Monique is good news. What a thing to have happened!

Power to the sisters,

My dear Rosa,

Perhaps you also have some ideas on this, if you have the time to read it. I found that the publishers in Germany have done nothing with the book. It is also very difficult for them to understand, and perhaps should have been translated from the English which is simpler, ~~and~~ more direct and not so much the work of a poet - which, by the way, is my name for you. // We have thought of doing it in the English edition, but I'm not sure. What do you think? By the way, I understood nothing in your letter about your plans for Potere Femminile in Italian except that I am to get five copies!

S.

I have not taken up with you the difficulty of making clear to the women here the real differences between the wages for H/work group + the Bersa Ha group. Is there anything written that makes the issues crystal clear to non-Italians?

Power to the sisters,

20 Staverton Road  
London NW 2  
5 February 1975

My dear Isabel,

Jenny read to me the letter she had received from Paloma, and I was shocked to learn that Siglo XXI told Grupo Colectivo that I had refused their introduction. Of course that is completely untrue, as you will see from the copy of Eugenia Huerta's letter which Jenny sent. It was because of their refusal to publish that introduction that xxxxxxxxxx Jenny and I decided I had to write one. I certainly did not intend to do that, and of course it was done very quickly in order not to hold up the publication of the book any further. I tried to use the quotations as best as I could, and it would have been difficult in any case for me to use it properly, since I cannot read the Spanish and was not able to study it, though Jenny read it out for me and then translated passages that I asked her to.

Paloma asks what I thought of the Grupo's introduction. I felt it was useful but indecisive, as she herself says. I think also from what I understood that it would be extremely useful to develop the question of class in the context of Mexican society from a feminist point of view. I think it is very important to make clear that many women who have servants are servants too, do unwaged work, have no money except what their husbands give them, are even more restrained because they have a reputation and a style of life to live up to which restrains them in a very particular way. (I am judging here by women of the middle class in the West Indies, and from what Marta reported here, there are very distinct similarities. By the way, will you tell Paloma, please, that perhaps one of the reasons I use "we" when speaking about the Third World is that because of my years in the West Indies I feel very much part of that world. Also I was trying to say that in a fundamental respect the "we-they" of Third World and metropolis is artificial. The State is always posing one against the other, and the left is always pointing out the differences. It is time I think that we say also how we are not different.)

Now that I know the way Siglo XXI behaves, I am not depending on them to send you the final xxxxxxxx version of the Preface, but enclose one directly to you. I have sent the translation you did to Jenny, xxxxxxxx with whom you will no doubt be in touch. This xxxxxxxx whole mess with the Preface has of course meant a great deal more work for you, and I hope you are being paid accordingly!

Jenny has told us about the political work that the Grupo has set itself. This is to let you know that the 8th of March will have as its theme here SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN'S STRUGGLES ALL OVER THE WORLD, and will be a counter-march to International Women's year, which we all agree is a farce. You will be sent the material we are preparing as soon as it is ready. We hope also that you will send a message to the xxxxx demonstration we are planning, and there may be other actions xx which will be organised for that day. We will get as much publicity as we can for what you are doing there, and will see that it circulates in Europe. It would be important for Marta to xx inform the Wages for Housework conference in Montreal about everything that xxxxxx you are doing, so that they may take appropriate actions in different cities in Canada and the US. Three women from Britain are going to the Montreal conference. Marta has the address in Montreal, but in any case here it is again: Susan Wheeler, 3940 Berri, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Although we have not met, I feel that we have been through plenty together with this Preface, and will know better next time how to deal with publishers.

Power to the sisters,