

March 6th 1971
Bruxelles

New York
Dear Joe and Barry

Hellish weather we have been having here. It is usually a matter of little concern ~~which~~ but without central heating there is nothing you are more conscious of. We had about 4 inches of snow last night but it has been cold and damp for over a week solid despite Gisela's assurances that it will only be a matter of a couple of days. And it is little better at the office than it is at the apartment which hardly seems worthwhile heating for one person even when you have cut off two of the rooms.

I haven't heard from you about the first article I sent on the British labor front. Well this morning I sent another--a follow-up and a lengthy 10 pages of copy of diverse interesting little tidbits on the British scene. The union article can easily be cut if you feel it necessary--but as you can see big developments. As for the 10 page perhaps perhaps they can be scattered around a bit. Harry maybe able to dress up those letters to the editor of The Times, and women's liberation could use a couple perhaps

Good little item about Connie. She and Alan phoned over yesterday.. ?? for the Environment capitaluated and they have the square This weekend the IMG NC is being held. Under normal circumstances this would have been the very time to go but this NC is going to be in a turmoil over "the Canadians" and the situation is so tense that it is inevitable that I would get dragged into it in the worst possible way So I told C and A that in my opinion I should not go--they agreed

Apparently they are out for a showdown with Tony Gorton and Socialist Women. At the bureau meeting of the 2nd as usual we were suddenly faced with a folio of materials as we were supposed to be discussing and dealing various matters. Among the pile of material from Britain ~~was~~ prob brought over ~~from~~ Julien on Feb 20-21 since the strike is still on was an internal bulletin devoted to the case of Socialist Women, a mimeo copy of a letter from Pat to Toni---and a circular from Tariq to all branches if I recall correctly. I tried to get their gist as best I could. Of course no one says a word about these items--and it all makes one have the feeling of being a spy of some sort.

Tariq's ~~is~~ is on the postponement of the IMG conference from Easter to May 30-31. It appears that while only a month ~~away~~ to go to the conference there is no documentation at all. Ofcourse the CO takes the blame--tied up in putting out leaflets etc etc and not the least with the problems brought down on their heads by the tendency. In fact it seems to me to be turned into an attack on the tendency.

Their NC has moved in on Socialist Women. They have just gone ahead with an issue printed under their direct control in London while the ~~is~~ Nottingham women's group has its issue. Apparently the couple of comrades we have on the Nottingham editorial board were in ~~since~~ ~~the~~ the non-IMG majority that their SW should be sunk. I gather that they didn't do this so there are two SWs. Pat's bulletin is somekind of attempt to establish that the Nottingham SW was all along an IMG affair--justifying the NC to do what it wants with it--and the tendency. His letter is another one of those petty scolding attacks on Toni. Apparently she was to be put on the griddle this weekend but now at last it looks like her child is approaching

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end, and she told Connie that she just cannot make the NC meeting.

Connie has been instructed to dump the liberation group she is in but I suggested that instead of defying these bureaucrats she should postpone any action hopefully until the IMG conference. I am going to phone them on Tuesday and then we will decide whether both of them will come over for the March 20 21 U.S. meeting or I will go over to England on the weekend of the 13th--next weekend. Of course there is some advantage in their coming over. Alan has to come anyway and one of you would be here I take it. But then I gather she feels that it is rather urgent that they have some discussion with me on. We will see

Last weekend Feb 27-28 and March 1 I went to Paris. This weekend would have been better in some ways as the Ligue is holding its NC meeting. However I was afraid that our old friends might not have sufficient funds for their rent ---I gather the \$140 might mean even last months rent. So I saw them. I had one hell of a time getting away. On Saturday evening they kept me so late that I decided to take a hotel room. ~~Thurs~~ Sunday morning everyone at the centre was tied up ~~at~~ with some anti-fascist actions so I saw no one intending to do that Sunday evening. But unknown to myself at the last moment our old friends had prepared a real feast with the aid of a Chinese friend and nothing would do but I stay there late into Sunday night. Their isolation is a terrible thing. I talked to Vergeat about it --asking him to introduce one or another of the Paris youth who speak English to drop in on them occasionally and keep them informed. But I doubt that anything will come of it. Perhaps I will try to carry that off next time I am in Paris myself.

Here is the score about their rent. It is true that they are anticipating an increase but it hasn't come yet. I opened up the door for a very frank talk on finances. They are very modest and hesitant about talking on such matters however I think they did open up. What they are worried about is how they are going to do anything about Pi-lan's teeth. As you know for some years now she has been having intestinal trouble. Her teeth have been bad and they are now convinced that the bad teeth are the cause of the intestinal trouble. They think she must have ~~had~~ her teeth removed and a set of false ones made. Lili has a very good dentist and they have gone so far as to consult him, he recommends such action and says it will cost something like \$500. It is possible that through one of the Krivines we could get it done just as well and cheaper. However that is not the immediate problem ...it is money. Apparently with the help of Lili and of their son they can pull together \$200. Can we get the other \$300. We should discuss that when you come. After we had had that out---several hours later they sort of raised the matter again, their embarrassment etc.

They had ~~nothing~~ done nothing about the statement on the imprisoned Chinese for the very reason that they only had a French copy. Vergeat had not translated it for them. I did this. They agreed but I added a few descriptive words about the various comrades, their record---otherwise you just had a jam up of meaningless names. They agreed and I have turned the thing over to Vergeat who I assume has acted. Peng didn't want to add anything more and he agreed that he can do this later. In fact Lili has brought back some more news which when he gets it all he will write up. He hasn't had an opportunity to have a full chat with her yet.

One little thing he told me--it seems that Pablo had really got some of the Hong-kong comrades steamed up against him --convinced that they had missed the whole revolution and that Mao would tolerate if not welcome their collaboration. In this belief some 100 to 150 comrades one day very openly proclaiming who they were commenced to march as a group into China to be welcomed as collaborators. They were all immediately thrust into prison.

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Also at the U.S. meeting there turned up a letter from Pi-lan related what she had learned about the situation on Macoa. from Lili. According to this letter things are quiet there and quite secure. It appears that there is another person there also. The letter would allay all fears and any cause for us to take action. When I met them I first tried to assess their attitude to this person. You had suggested that it might be coloured by their past relations --in 1938-40 or thereabouts. In my opinion they did not show any factional or embittered personal attitudes to this person--and recognized that regardless of ~~once~~ their relations if there was any danger that we should help. They insist there are no dangers. What are we to do? ~~Disbelieve~~ the other person as to the circumstances there? I gather the information comes via Li fu-yen. Well there you are.

After this bit of a discussion they raised the matter of the International Information Bulletin September 1970 No 7. ---and that strange "letter from a Chinese Trotskyist addressed to an unidentified friend entitled Guerrilla Warfare, the Lesson of China. It so happened that while it is dated September 1970 I myself had only come across it as I was leaving for here and had a copy on me. Despite the fact that it is an attack on Peng you never mentioned it to me.

What do you think of this appearing in the International Bulletin. Now I recall how this came up. When I raised this Macoa matter they said oh yes --you mean the person ~~who wrote~~ letter appeared in the International Bulletin. When I quizzed them further they affirmed that that is who wrote that letter --they had read the Chinese version which was identifiable --it was circulate in the Far East.

~~Subsequently~~ I think that it is quite a shocking thing that the International Bulletin should carry that letter. I gather that it is an established fact that he is not a member of the Chinese--that he broke from them. Maybe those differences are no longer of importance. But do we recognize the Chinese. or dont we--and do we recognize Peng--that he should only know about it from reading it in the IB. I know I would be goddam made if suddenly I were to read in our International Bulletin a contribution of any kind from say Al Engler that I or we did not know about regardless of whether it attacked or agreed with my views on some matter

Remind me to discuss this with you for if I have the facts right it seems to me that this is an impermissible faction use of the International Bulletin. If I were Peng I would be raising hell here there and everywhere.

When you were talking to me in NY you mention that there was a visitor in Latin America. As you must have noted Livio was here when I got here. But I have since learned that Jean Pierre of France is and has been in LA for some little while. This was mentioned in passing --there appears to be big interest in the spanish edition of QI--he has orders galore from Bolivia Uruguay etc which they talked about not filling until getting some money.

You havent written me about the availability of material from there on Philippine developments. Ernest is pressing me and I am stalling. The old heat is on again on Africa. Ernest asked me about taking this up again. I expressed surprise--how hadn't we dismissed the one contribution as worthless and had I not noticed that the other valuable item was decided from the minutes to go into a ahiers Rouge. Yes Yes. Ten you should have heard the discussion--~~the~~ informal and friendly about an African bureau--it seems that Pablo had one or wanted one and now they are talking about our bureau with out Pablo. I procrastinated and will have it out with Ernest privately

By now you should have the minutes of the last U.S. and materials that arise from it. So the Bengali fund is now on a campaign basis. I have suggested to the Canadian comrades that we should consider holding forums across Canada this month on the Indian elections which would provide us with the basis for making a modest financial appeal for this work. I managed to get a few changes in the allocation of funds for the coming world congress. But there still seem to me to be some strange flowers on the list and peculiar allocations. To take up some of it you have to know what we have or what the potentialities of the connections. I am surprised at the small ~~representations~~ representation particularly in light of the fund allocation for the U.S. ---however I see it is presented as tentative so we can discuss this shortly

A couple of dates I should give you

The French congress is April 10-11-12
German congress is the same date
Belgian congress is April 24-25

There is a workers conference in Italy March 27-28 all European
Mar March U.S. meeting is March 20-21
The April April 17-18
May May 22-23
The IMG congress May 29-30-31

I have raised the matter with Ernest of my being available for a bit of a tour—his first reaction was—he didn't see the practicability of it. There is an Austrian congress in April which no one here wants to go to—he sees a big language problem—German ~~fundamentally~~ It is generally agreed over the April 10 weekend that Livio will go to the German—that Ernest will go to a Swedish cadre school and that I will go to the French. Of course both E and L cannot go to France. I have written our Quebecois to suggest that one of them preferably Manon come over for the French—I think she inherited some money recently.

I had a good excuse to phone Wainstock—I had some material that I know he wanted—he speaks English perfectly—but he suggested I mail it to him—didn't get an invite. Not a soul has turned up at the office. Had a good talk with Rousset while in Paris where I managed to pick up some Rouge and take out a subscription which Ernest assures me I will receive. That student action was really big. I am enclosing a copy of a youth paper that the comrades put out right after

comradely

Ross