

(Bayman)

October 3, 1977

Dear Peter:

Whatever happened to the copy of the letter you wrote to Hannah Arendt on Rosa Luxemburg that I was so anxious to see and you promised to send me? I'm still looking forward to it.

In addition to that, may I ask a lot of other favors in relation to my work on RL? Though, as you know, my concentration point are the years 1910 to 1914, there was one thing that happened either in 1908 or 1909 that I was unable to follow through. I'm referring to the fact that I saw a letter from her (to Kautsky I think) at the time she received Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. She considered it quite amateurish, but had asked that Lenin's work be treated "kindly". I promptly got excited, thinking that if she knew as much about dialectics as to see the vulgar materialism in Lenin's work, then I certainly would like to know about it. But I could find no other references to it, and do not know to this day whether that work of Lenin's was reviewed in the German press and who reviewed it. Have you seen any such review from that period? Though the word dialectic was often enough used by Luxemburg as by all other Marxists, there was only one specific and very uncomplimentary reference by Rosa to Capital at the period she was writing Anti-Critique. It was a letter to Diefenbach in which she said that Capital Vol. I in at least one respect she now found hard to take because of its "overloading of rococo ornaments in the Hegelian style." To my knowledge it was never developed in any public article, was it?

Now back to the 1910 to 1914 period, which I think is not only the high period in her theoretical development and her break with Karl Kautsky and her fighting the whole Social Democracy on imperialism but also the period when she addressed a rally on the woman question. That was 1912 and I wondered whether that was the only speech she had made on the subject. In view of her friendship with Clara Zetkin and the very revolutionary position that the women took on the whole question of anti-imperialism and anti-war struggles, it seems to me that there should have been others. I now have a new Polish comrade who could be translating for me if I knew of any such articles extant in Polish. She has contacts there. I had a peculiar incident in my last lecture tour this Spring after I left you and went to Chicago. A Polish professor who was lecturing at De Paul University, where I was, was in the audience and evidently was then invited by the professors who were having a luncheon for me. Being as dumb as bourgeois professors are, he evidently thought there was nothing like Slavs getting together, and they promptly introduced him to me stressing he had just arrived last week from Warsaw. As he stretched out his hand toward me, I said, "Why in the hell are you keeping my friends in jail? What have you done with Kuron and Modzelewski?" While the American professors were blushing and thinking I was talking Greek, he answered, "They are not in jail. I just saw Kuron last week in Warsaw." The point was that I then tried to get him interested in sending me material by Rosa Luxemburg. He said they were publishing everything she had ever written, and that he would and which aspect was I interested in, etc. Need I tell you he never did any such thing? I do believe that since they are official texts, I may be able to get them another way, but I would have to know the precise volumes. In the East German publication I believe it is Vol. 4 that covers 1910 to 1914. What can you tell me on that? Do you have any either in Polish or in German, material unavailable in English?

I'm very grateful for anything you can do on this; please don't let me wait forever.

Yours,

15069