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10 February 1970

Pathfinder Press  
New York

Dear Duncan,

This is a general report on the status of translations, publishing possibilities in France to my knowledge at the present point. It also deals with the structure of the publishing commission of the LCR, and what I have been able to find out about the Trotsky writings project. This is based on discussions with three of the five central members of the commission, as well as with other comrades.

The present commission consists of Mequenne, Prager, Carlos Rossi, Stambouli (full time), Godchau and a representative from the bookstore. In theory, each commission of the LCR is supposed to have a representative on the commission, but in practice this has not worked out. I have so far spoken to Prager, Stambouli and Godchau, plus the different comrades from the bookstore. Most of the comrades involved have differing points of view concerning the publishing house of the League. The comrades of the bookstore, and Stambouli, have a much more "commercial" outlook. Stambouli in particular, has professional experience in the publishing industry and has given up his job in order to work full time for the new publishing house. He is very conscious of the financial problems etc. and is very sceptical about publishing books, even those of great political importance, unless he is sure that they will sell. Prager, on the other hand, has quite frankly, little interest in this aspect of the publishing program. He dreams up new projects, particularly dealing with the history of the Trotskyist movement. Occasionally these projects are not as realistic financially as they should be. He is an older comrade from the 1930's, is involved in research on the history of the Trotskyist movement in France during the Second World War and is, with Pierre Broué, one of the editors of the Trotsky Writing Program. Godchau, on the other hand, has a large number of contacts with commercial publishing houses and is particularly interested in having the publishing commission accept for publication books of political importance as, for instance, the debate between Rousset and Johnson and Feldman on the nature of the Vietnamese revolution. This proposal was refused by the commission (the bookstore comrades and Stambouli on a frankly commercial basis, some of the others for perhaps more political reasons).

An important role in the publishing program is played by the various commissions of the LCR. Thus, for instance, the responsibility for the publication of books and pamphlets dealing with the women's movement rests with the women's commission of the LCR. For example, when I approached Stambouli with the idea of publishing Reed's Problem's of Women's Liberation, explaining the commercial possibilities of tying the publication to the appearance of Women's Evolution by a commercial publisher, he immediately accepted the idea and said that the LCR could publish it around October/November if the women's commission would agree to sponsor the book. (As you will see further in this report, that will not be necessary as a commercial publisher will soon come out with the bulk of the book.) Another example of this, was when

Katie Curtain's book Women in China was accepted for publication. When I found out through rumour that a translation had been done, I located the translator (after months of effort) and put her in touch with Godchau. Godchau got the agreement from the women's commission of the ICR to sponsor the book, which was sufficient for the publishing commission to accept it for publication this Spring. Thus, while the overall publishing decisions are made by the publishing commission, a good deal of decentralised planning and authority is also involved.

The current plans of the publishing commission are to publish on the average one book a month and one "pamphlet" (actually a small book) a month. Felix Morrow's book on Spain was the first book published by the new publishing house (called Editions de la Breche) and Katie Curtain's book will be a "pamphlet". The publishing commission also maintains relations with commercial publishing houses through which it can arrange for the publication of other books. You should have received from Editions de la Breche, at my request, the publishing schedule for the first half of the year.

It is hard for me to judge the seriousness and financial stability of la Breche. My general feeling is that the program is somewhat overambitious at least as far as their schedule is concerned. Problems with the ICR printshop, if nothing else, promise to delay their publishing rate. However, it is certainly a more serious venture than most of the publishing programs launched by the ICR in the recent past. It is much more professional and is intended to be a long-term venture (unlike some of their earlier ideas). However, only time will tell.

Before I deal with the different possibilities for publication here, title by title, let me go into the Trotsky Writings program. As you know a joint editorial committee including Broué and Prager has been set up to publish the Writings. The plan is to publish 25 volumes covering the period 1933-40. These Writings will include as many of the books (as well as articles) as it is possible to get the rights for. They plan to publish 4 volumes per year, and I understand that the first volume is ready to go right after the elections next month.

The main problem with the Writings as I see it, is the projected size of the press run. Lambert of the OCI has insisted that the OCI will take 8,000 copies of each book. Thus, the present projections are for a press run of \$\$\$ 10-15,000. This I feel is unrealistic. Much more realistic, I feel, would be a run of 5-10,000 (much closer to the former than to the latter). Given a run of 5,000 and the projected size and cost of each volume, it would take a sales of about 2,500 to break-even. I think that a sales figure of well over 3,000 could be easily guaranteed over a period of a few months, the proceeds being used to finance the second and third volumes. Anything over about 6-7,000 risks being a long term stock, which will have to be financed, thus slowing down the program enormously. It should also be remembered that some of these Writings and books have already appeared in French, which will thus even further slow their sales.

Now down to specific cases. First on women's liberation. The comrades from Editions de la Breche generally like the idea of publishing some Pathfinder titles on women because it is a more or less guaranteed money maker (in their view) among other reasons.

I knew, of course, that Women's Evolution was planned for publication this Spring. But how real is this date? Do you have any more recent information? Can you ~~write~~<sup>write</sup> to Belfont (or should I contact them)? I had proposed that the LCR publish Problem's of Women's Liberation around the same time as Women's Evolution in order to take advantage of some "free publicity" when I ~~§~~ found out that a part of Problems... was already scheduled for publication for September of this year by a commercial publishing house (I believe it was 10/18 - one of the largest publishers in France). Evidently you did not speak to Mary-Alice when you researched all the information I had asked you for. ~~§§§~~ In any case, Francoise Godchau has translated 12 different texts of the SWP which will appear as a book Women in America (or something like that), in September. Press run 7-8,000. The texts include two articles of Reed's Problems... ("Women, Caste, Class..."; and "How Women Lost Control...") as well as many other articles (and one SWP resolution) on women, Black women, Chicanas, Women in Struggle 1848-1920, abortion rights. All the articles are from the 1971-2 period.

Godchau (Jean-Francois) also gave me an introduction which is scheduled to appear in the book. He apparently had not shown it to Mary-Alice, and I think she or Caroline should review it. I asked him to send a copy to Mary-Alice. I think that the introduction raises a number of questions that perhaps could be avoided.

Godchau also asked if there was some way to up-date the book. He asked if there was either an article available which reviews the women's movement since 1972 or if they could interview Caroline as a final chapter to the book. The book is out of date. For instance there is nothing on CLUW, on the IWY, ERA etc.

The publication of Women in America meant that about half of Problems... would be in French. Godchau and I came up with another idea. Why not take another article from Problem's... and publish it in the new LCR journal Cahiers du Feminisme at the same time that Women's Evolution comes out? This would help sell the LCR journal by taking advantage of the free publicity. The most logical article to translate is "Women and the Family: An Historical View". This would mean that about 45 pages out of about 90 pages of text would be available in English. Godchau is willing to contact the LCR Women's Commission.

In addition to publishing one chapter from the Problems... as an article in Cahiers du Feminisme, Godchau will suggest that they run a monthly column or article on women in other countries. He remembers that there was an article on women in Korea and another on Women in Iran in the ISR. Caroline remembered one by Betsy Stone on Women in India (late 1976?) and another on women in South Africa (March? April? 1977?). I remembered Peng Chi Lan's articles.

Thus, on the question of Women's Liberation I have several concret questions:

- 1) What is the exact date of publication of Women's Evolution by Belfont? Can you find out or should we?
- 2) Has the article, "Women and the Family: An Historical View" been translated? I will also write to Quebec on this.
- 3) Make sure someone reviews the project's introduction to Women In America. Is there an article which can be added to up-date the book?
- 4) Can you suggest other articles, in addition to those already mentioned, which would be suitable for publication in a journal such as Cahiers du Feminism? Also I am not sure we have all of the already mentioned articles. Can you send copies? On the Chen Pi Lan article: I know that one article was sent to Claire Prouet (who translated the Women in China book). But were all of the articles sent? Exactly how many articles were there, and in which issues of ISR did they appear?

In addition to the above:

Leon Trotsky on Germany : Stambouli mentioned to me that they were considering publishing this because of the ICR's current interest in the United Front. I believe part of the articles were already published in French. I will meet with Stambouli and show him the Pathfinder edition (published by Pelican). As I understand it, Pathfinder still holds the English copyright, and Bonnet has the rights in French. However, my impression is that this is not an immediate project and has not been thought out seriously.

Hugo Blanco, Land or Death : I brought this up in discussions with Godchau. Both of us have heard various rumours over the years that this has been translated into French and at one time was scheduled for publication by Maspero. Was the translation ever made? Where is it now? Who has the rights? Godchau will check up on this.

COINTELPRO: I have not yet discussed this with anyone but it seems logical that we should be able to find a commercial publisher to take this. As I recall, Pathfinder sold this to Vintage(??). Who has the French language rights? Perhaps in addition to the introduction by Chomsky, we could get Daniel Guerin to do one for France. What do you think? I will bring this up with someone from the commission and see what they think. *Can you send me a copy?*

U.S. Labor Today: This is another idea that came out of the discussion I had with Godchau. The idea is to find a commercial publisher willing to take a book on the re-awakening of the American labor movement. The book could consist of the Pathfinder pamphlet on Steel (with some Militant articles), the Pathfinder pamphlet on the Right to Vote Committee in the Railroad Workers union, Militant articles on developments in the coal Miners, and the 1975 SWP resolution on the party turn. Godchau got quite excited about the idea and believes he can find someone to take it. Do you plan

to publish a mineworkers pamphlet?

Both Godchau and I have heard that the party turn resolution had been translated. To the best of G's recollection, the resolution was scheduled for an issue of Quatrième Internationale which may have been printed but never distributed. Would anyone there know if the translation has actually been made and if so, where we can find it?

American Labor Struggles - Have not mentioned this to anyone yet but will bring it up with the publications commission. I doubt if they would be interested but they may agree to try to find a publisher. Another possible idea is to get a journal of the LCR, Cahiers de la Taupe, to publish excerpts.

Novack, Democracy and Revolution; I suggested this to Godchau who thought that it might be possible to find a commercial publisher. He will check around.

Dobbs: Teamster Rebellion, Editions de la Breche was not very interested - they did not think that it would sell very well. However, I only brought it up with a list of other suggestions and it was not seriously discussed. I will check with the comrade from the OCI who has supposedly translated it and find out why the translation, if it exists, has never been published. Godchau thinks that there should not be a great obstacle to publishing it. Perhaps we can get the publishing house EDI to accept the book if both the OCI and the LCR agreed to push it.

Trotsky: Crisis of the French Section: Do you know of any plans to publish this in French? In particular, is the OCI planning to do so?

Indochina Debate - Rousset, Feldman Johnson etc. - I am trying to track down rumours that a full translation was made of this debate some two years ago but never utilised. If I can find this, perhaps we can use it.

Trotsky - National Self-Determination - have not discussed this with anyone yet. Obviously we could not publish any complete collection on this, but I noticed that Moreno did publish a small book with 10-15 articles. To this we could add Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination, the only translation of which has been 6 pages in the appendix of a book by Daniel Guerin. Such a collection would be very useful for the movement, and in the form of a small book, would be a guaranteed seller.

Cannon::: The Struggle for a Proletarian Party - Godchau has gotten an agreement from "10/18", a large commercial publishing house to publish Cannon, specifically the "Struggle". Godchau has the translation which is now being "polished up" by the translator. However, the translation is only the essay by Cannon "Struggle for a Proletarian Party" and not the entire book.

A ~~translation~~ translation of the History of American Trotskyism exists, and Godchau will have it soon. Godchau has proposed two different possibilities. Since "10/18" is willing to publish the "Struggle" why not put both of them into one large book? The alternative idea is to publish the entire "Struggle" in one volume. I discussed the question with Caroline who pointed out that publishing only part of the "Struggle"

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may prevent plans to publish the entire "struggle" in the future. My preference is to publish the entire "struggle" and find some other way of getting out the "History".

As you probably know, Prager, from the publishing commission, suggested to me that the History be published. Because it was not "up to date" he suggested that an appendix be added reviewing the developments since 1938. He has corresponded with Breitman on this, and has shown me his correspondence. However, neither Godchau nor Stambouli were aware of any such plans - thus, it was never mentioned in the commission. Nor has Prager mentioned anything concrete to me - i.e. whether he saw this as a publishing project for Editions de la Breche or whether he was counting on finding an outside publisher. I think that Prager considers this as a long-term project. I know that Stambouli is sceptical about the idea of publishing Cannon on "financial" grounds. However, it is not at all ruled out that an outside publisher could be found.

Socialism on Trial : As you informed me, this has been translated by Marc Claessens. Thank you for enclosing Marc's last letter to you. According to this letter, Marc wrote twice to J-J § Samary of Savelli- France § and never received a reply. Godchau knows Samary and will speak to him about this. In the meantime, who has the translation, you or Marc?


First Ten Year of American Communism : I have not yet discussed this, but will bring it up. Also Notebook of an Agitator. It may be possible to find publishers on this.

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As you can see we have made some progress since my last letter. I feel like I am sorting out what projects are real what is in the works, etc. So far the perspectives look rather good.

If we do make real progress we will have a real need for translators. I am glad to see that Marc is willing to help out. I will try to keep a list of those willing to do some work in this field. I hope you will inform me of anyone I do not know about. Also : it is important to insist that you get physical possession of at least one copy of all future (and past) translations!!! We risk losing valuable opportunities by not having the translations, or knowing what exist.

I will also write to Canada and find out from the § IOR and the GSTQ if there are additional translations, or publications in the works.

Comradely,  
  
Nat/London

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