

July 18, 1977

Dear Suzanne (copies to NL-W and L),

I should have appealed to you, or your knowledge of Chinese language anyway, as to the sex of the word, Shust. As it is, it was only by reading a third article in that magnificent section III of The Revolution Is Dead—Long Live The Revolution which is all concerned with voices from mainland China that I found out (1) that Yu Shust is a woman, (2) she is recognized as one of the major theoreticians of the "ultra-left," the one who extended Shang Yu-lien's Whither China? While, unfortunately, her piece "The Dusk of Rationality" (3) has many gaps in what we would consider a total theory, it is a fantastic great phenomenon that the Chinese who, from Mao on, thought the "woman question" is more or less exhausted once you love your mother and see that she gets equal wages, should recognize woman as Reason. At least I hope they do not, in hearing Yu Shust, treat her as an exception.

C It certainly gave me both new and concrete points which I hope that the NL-WL can work out, if not for this Plenum, then certainly for the Convention. Here is what I mean. I have had quite a bit of difficulty with RL which was not all due to what is obvious—I absolutely have no time, a point that I certainly intend to change as of this Plenum. At the same time, it is the reaction of the Detroit WL to the TV's column on Chiang Ch'ing which set my mind awhirl. For example, I at once thought of the new title rather than the one I wrote in TV's. More important than that, I thought that if that were my actual title for the RL book, with RL and Today's Women's Liberation as subtitle, it would actually help me work out the relationship of women to revolution, though the woman revolutionary under discussion never broached the question.

P Or take a more immediate question, for you as Chairwoman of Detroit NL-WL, beginning with the special meeting you're planning on the Seneca Falls Convention. When I stated at the local that you should definitely work out a way to relate the pamphlet to 1848 as well as to today, and by no means stress the Chinese aspect to the exclusion of all others, that is what I had in mind and that is what I wish further to develop here.

Y The question of male chauvinism is a great deal more serious than all the exposes written by the women's liberationists, not to mention actual male chauvinists of the exploitative variety. Muckraking has a ~~long~~ long history in America, a very laudable history, and also a very narrow one, and that is also what happened with the women's liberationists, from Kate Millet to Simone de Beauvoir to Sheila Rowbotham: all expose and no content, much less a new revolutionary banner. That becomes very easy, in turn, for us to "expose." What, however, isn't easy is to show that sexism, far from being only "against" women is actual evasion of the revolutionary theory needed finally to complete the revolution begun in 1917 and even then, not completed in the sense in which we mean totality as women as well as labor, Black as well as youth.

Now you may think that it's a jump from the sublime to the ridiculous for me to say that if we did work this out fully when we haven't yet raised the question, then we would know how to make contacts, how to present the question of this new pamphlet as not only universal rather than Chinese, but also as so concrete that it can become the basis, the foundation, for what will make it easy to write the RL work. But try, for example, to see what brief paragraph you could write in an ad for us. Or try to see what, briefly, you can say July 28 which would make both Black and historic, "feminist" flow into this pamphlet so that somebody would really want to read it and come to that very meeting. Or think of "The Revolution Is Dead—Long Live the Revolution" and see how you would formulate a letter to Yu Shust which I certainly intend to do. I'll look forward to what results from the July 21 meeting.

Yours,

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