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ROSA LUXEMBURG
LETTERS 1896-1918



Rosa Luxemburg


ROSA LUXEMBURG

Letters to KARL and LUISE

KAUTSKY from 1896 to 1918.

Edited by LUISE KAUTSKY and

Translated from the German by

LOUIS P. LOCHNER  

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE translator's desire to render the original as accurately as possible has prompted him not to break the letters up into paragraphs in accordance with English usage, but to leave them intact as written. Rosa Luxemburg's letters contain exceptionally few paragraphs. This is due, no doubt, partly to the fact that the space allotted her in her prison correspondence was extremely limited, and partly to the fact that so active a mind as hers hurried along without stopping to bother about paragraphs, punctuation or style. Thus the reader will also find many elliptical sentences. These are faithful reproductions of the original.

Wherever possible the punctuation is that of the original letters. This explains why whole sentences are frequently connected by nothing more than a comma. Figures and quotation marks are left as in the original. In connection with dates it is important to remember that in Germany the day of the month is placed ahead of the month: thus 2.1.12 means January 2, 1912.

In connection with correspondence concerning her literary work the expression "Bogen" is frequently used. This is a large printer's sheet on each side of which eight pages are printed, so that the sheet, or "Bogen," when folded, amounts to sixteen pages. Asterisks indicate that Mrs. Kautsky, in editing the letters, has omitted portions of a purely personal or confidential nature.

The greatest difficulty presented was that of finding equivalents for the many idioms used by Rosa Luxemburg. This task was so baffling that the translator had to resort to the expedient of a footnote in a number of instances to explain the difference in *nuance* between the German original and the English translation.

For the translator to attempt to add anything to this little volume by way of personal introduction would seem peculiarly out of place. This privilege belongs exclusively to Luise Kautsky, to whom the letters were addressed. He will therefore limit himself to the above purely technical observations.

INTRODUCTION BY
LUISE KAUTSKY

INTRODUCTION

SOON after Rosa Luxemburg's death many of our mutual friends and numerous Socialist Comrades approached me with the request that I publish Rosa's letters. But a certain feeling of hesitation, for which I was unable to account, restrained me, despite the ever stronger urging of my friends.

Whether it was the realization that I myself was still too close to the sad events connected with our departed friend, and that I was not clear in my own mind as to what could be given to the world from the contents of these letters and what was of interest solely to me; or whether it was a feeling of aversion to exhibiting our exceedingly intimate and friendly relationship to public view—the fact remains that I could arrive at no decision.

Even the reference to the unparalleled effect produced by the publication of Rosa's Letters to Sophie Liebknecht was not sufficient to alter my determination. On the contrary, my doubts were confirmed. For I feared that many a reader might regard the publication of a second collection of letters as a mere repetition and possibly even as importunate presumption on my part. This seemed to me to be so disgusting a profanation of Rosa's memory that I fairly recoiled at the thought.

But our friends would not desist, and gradually, in the course of years, the idea of publication began to assume concrete form in my mind. The decision was hastened by the following circumstance: when the first wild grief

quieter sorrow, I frequently recalled how she had urged me again and again to write my memoirs. The reader will find evidence of this in a number of letters.

Her contention was that my chief strength lay in my emphasis upon the personal note; that my articles on the occasion of Clara Zetkin's fiftieth and Bebel's seventieth birthdays as well as on the anniversary of Julia Bebel's death had proven this to her satisfaction. Besides, she never tired of having me tell her about my youth and about other experiences of mine.¹

Despite Rosa's attempts, in part successful, to raise my "modest self-estimate," I am unable even to the present day to share her opinion on this point. She has not been able to persuade me that my memoirs can lay claim to general interest, especially not in these times, when humanity has far different cares than those of concerning itself about the fate of a single person.

But the story of that portion of my life's path which I walked jointly with Rosa—I should almost like to say, hand in hand with her—, seemed to me to be of interest to a wider circle, and at the same time its publication

¹ [Clara Zetkin is the veteran of the communist movement in Germany. During the period covered by these letters she worked shoulder to shoulder with Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in the Socialist Party of Germany.]

August Bebel was the political leader of the German Social Democracy following the death of Karl Marx. He was chairman of the Socialist delegation in the German Reichstag. He died in 1913 at the age of 73 years, one of the most picturesque characters in German public life.

Julia Bebel was the wife of August Bebel, and an energetic worker for the Socialist cause.—Transl.]

meant the fulfilment in a certain degree of the terms of a legacy and the squaring of an old account of gratitude. For my whole being, yes, the whole content of my life has been immensely enriched by my connection and friendship with Rosa Luxemburg.

In an ever increasing measure I experienced the feeling of acting entirely in her spirit in publishing her letters, and this gave me not only a certain poise and assurance but also a great personal joy as I prepared the material.

The occasion for choosing this particular moment was furnished by a group of Russian friends who are at the head of the review "Letopis," and who labored ceaselessly to obtain the portion of the letters dating from the years 1905-06, the period of the first Russian revolution. They were able to persuade me to turn these letters over to them for publication.

I therefore began to organize and sift the material, and was immediately captivated by the task. The more I became engrossed in the content of the letters, the more life-like did the figure of my deceased friend rise before me, the more bound was I by the magic charm that seemed to emanate from her memory.

At the same time I recognized that it would be unfair to her to publish this series of letters in fragmentary form, for in such an event it would be robbed of its finest characteristic: the series, beginning in 1896 and ending with the year 1918, shows how a relationship that consisted at first merely of a certain "consanguinity of the mind," of a co-membership in the party and of a co-partnership in work, gradually ripened into a most intimate friendship. Moreover, it gives a picture of Rosa's development and reveals Rosa both while at work and while engaged in struggle, both while resting and

while seeking recreation, as a person of tremendous earnestness and at the same time of most joyous abandon.

As compared with the prison letters of Sophie Liebknecht, which resemble a delicate picture in subdued colors projected against a background of grey, these letters give the effect of a painting of many colors, with virile red predominating. They thus serve as a happy complement to the impressions received by the reader from the letters to Sophie.

The gaps between certain letters, often covering a period of several years, are to be explained by the fact that our usual intercourse was direct and personal. Only during times of separation were we compelled to write letters.—Both my husband and I feel very much grieved to think that all the letters that we have written to Rosa have been placed beyond our reach. It is claimed that, in so far as Rosa may have preserved them, they were “confiscated” by the soldiery which searched and plundered her home.

Rosa Luxemburg was born in 1870. She was the daughter of a Warsaw merchant who was fairly well-to-do, and who gave his children a good education. As long as Rosa lived she spoke with special affection of her father, while the memories of her mother seem to have been more or less relegated to the background. Yet of her, too, she spoke in loving terms, albeit a note of good-natured compassion seemed at times to accompany her references to her.

I have the impression that her mother was one of those self-sacrificing women whom one often finds in Jewish families, who center their whole being upon husband and children, and in their concern for them give up their own identity, yes, fairly obliterate it, so that the memory

of their existence easily becomes a hazy one. Nevertheless her mother must have been well-read and educated—which fact was disclosed to me by a casual remark of Rosa's. We were once discussing Schiller and his literary works, and Rosa spoke rather deprecatingly of him as of a second-rate poet. When I warmly defended him and insisted that she, a revolutionary, ought especially to take to him as a revolutionary poet, she replied, thoughtfully: "Well, perhaps I took an instinctive dislike to him because my mother was so crazy about him. By that very fact he was labelled as old-fashioned and sentimental as far as I was concerned."

However that may have been, in any case her father was more congenial to her, and it is from him that she seems to have inherited her strong intellect, her energy, in short, her sense of "the earnest conduct of life."

She must have developed very early and thirsted for knowledge even as a child. That is borne out by the nature of her reading-matter, with which she busied herself from earliest childhood on. Hardly sixteen years old, she already occupied her mind with the most difficult problems,—not only with the origins of humanity, with the right to motherhood, the history of tribes and clans, but also and especially with all problems connected with the modern labor movement, with the history of revolutions, the theory of surplus value, etc. Morgan, Bachofen, Lubbock, Kowalewski and other sociologists, besides Marx and Engels, constituted her chief reading.

At the *gymnasium* or high school which she attended she soon gathered about her a circle of like-minded fellow students, whose spiritual leader she forthwith became. Although the youngest in the group, she was looked to from the beginning as an undisputed authority. When-

ever there were difficulties the others said confidently, "Oh well, Rosa will know it all right; Rosa will help us." With flushed faces the girls debated for hours, and in this clash of minds the youthful faculties were sharpened. Soon, however, these meetings, which czarism rightly suspected to be the centers of plots, aroused the suspicions of the political police and of its stool pigeons. If Rosa and those of like mind with her did not want to see their studies rudely ended and their life at school exchanged for one in the prison that was but too eager to receive revolutionary students, they must needs leave Warsaw as quickly as possible. Still wearing the garb and apron of a high-school student, the sixteen-year-old Rosa fled to Switzerland, there to begin the life of intensive study for which she yearned. There was no lack of Russian and Polish companions from her native land, for the universities of Berne and Zurich were filled with large groups of revolutionary countrymen of hers, who like herself had fled to Switzerland to escape the czaristic police.

At Zurich, where she settled, she found in her compatriot, Leo Jogiches, a young man but a few years older than herself, a guide and leader with whom she was associated until her death in an abiding friendship. Her fiery spirit caught flame from his; in him she saw the type of representative of revolutionary thought who was worth emulating, for while still quite young he had already learned to know the terrors of Russian prisons and of banishment to Siberia. Besides, he was a master in the art of plotting, the romanticism of which cast an irresistible spell upon Rosa's impressionable mind.

Rosa plunged head over heels into her studies. Her ardor knew no bounds, and as she comprehended with

the utmost facility, she was tempted to go into all branches of human knowledge. But she finally decided to specialize in political science, economics and jurisprudence, as these studies gave promise of supplying her with the best weapons for the struggle to which she intended to devote her life: the struggle for the rights, now trampled upon the ground, of the workers, the poor, the dispossessed. In Zurich, too, she soon became the recognized spiritual head of her fellow students, and was rated by her professors as the keenest-minded and most gifted of all.

For Rosa this period was a very happy one. Freed from the unbearable political pressure from which her Russified native land suffered, she breathed deeply the free air of Switzerland. And even though hunger was more than once the guest of the students from the East, who were none too well supplied with earthly goods, and though, despite the mutual aid freely extended to each other, the rebellious stomach insisted in the midst of discussions upon being appeased with large quantities of tea and a little sugar and less bread, yet these university days constituted the high spot in Rosa's memory and she always spoke of them with a sort of happy emotion.

Besides her studies, the problems of the working class movement, then under discussion in the German "Arbeiterverein" at Zurich, interested her keenly, and she took an active part in the debates. In addition, she had begun to write quite early, and even before she came up for her doctor's examination her name had appeared here and there in the columns of socialistic organs. At first this was true only of the Polish periodicals which were published abroad on account of the Russian censorship; soon, however,—as the first letters in the present collection

show—also of the most important organ of the socialist Internationale, the “Neue Zeit,” published in Germany. This was the scientific organ of the German social democracy. It was founded in 1883 by Karl Kautsky and edited by him continuously up to the year 1916.

After Rosa finished her studies and, decorated with two doctors’ degrees—of philosophy and of jurisprudence—left Switzerland, she went to Paris for further study and for the purpose of obtaining first-hand knowledge of the political and party conditions there. She came in close contact with the socialist leaders, Guesde, Vaillant, Alemane, and the emigrés there. She was charmed by the temperament of the French, felt very much at home in French surroundings, and remained true to the friendships there formed throughout her life. Her feeling for the *doyen* of the French labor movement, Edouard Vaillant, was one of reverence. Her stay in Paris widened her viewpoint very much. She who had come out of the East now became intimately acquainted with the West, and thus felt at home in both civilizations. Warsaw—Zurich—Paris—this combination certainly afforded a good basis for her internationalism! But her greatest yearning was that for the German labor movement, which at that time, after the collapse of the anti-socialist law promulgated by Bismarck, had grown tremendously.

To work in the German movement, not as an outsider but as a full-fledged, equal comrade, was her most passionate desire. As this would never have been possible under the laws then existing in Germany—she being a Russian—she seized upon the device of which Russian students often availed themselves in order to force the state to yield certain rights to her: she decided to enter upon a sham marriage with a German national, by which

fact she automatically became a German citizen. Gustave Lübeck, son of an old German comrade who lived in Zurich and of a mother who, like Rosa, hailed from Poland and was an intimate friend of hers, was picked by the two energetic women to help Rosa to obtain German citizenship by marriage. After the "wedding" had been performed the "young couple" separated at the very doors of the marriage license bureau. Rosa had achieved what she was after: she was now a German citizen and was entitled to join the German social democracy as an active member; she was now enabled to devote her strength to the German movement and directly to influence the German proletariat by speech and written word—that is, in so far as the state's attorney did not set limits to her activities, a thing that could happen but too easily in Prussianized Germany. Prussian censorship, after all, did not differ much from Russian! But Rosa never knew fear, and in high spirits she arrived in Germany, the scene of her future activities, in the spring of 1899. She found plenty of work immediately—work of a nature that well suited her keen mind and her sharp tongue.

For, at the end of the last century the fight between the old radical tendency and the new "revisionism," as it was called, was in full progress in Germany.

This new tendency, which had for its object to exercise sharp criticism of the Marxian principles thus far adhered to by the social democracy, to modify them, tone them down and "revise" them, had found its spiritual leader in the person of Eduard Bernstein, then living in exile in London. Bernstein had somewhat lost contact with German conditions and, under the influence of the *milieu* of England, had been swerved from his former,

very revolutionary standpoint to one that was strongly reformistic. Among those who rallied to his side were Edward David, M.P., whose specialty was the study of the agrarian question, Max Schippel, also a member of parliament, who specialized in colonial and tariff questions, and a whole circle of publicists, who conducted a spirited fight against the old radical movement in their revisionistic organ, "Socialist Monthly Review."

The leader of the old radical movement was Karl Kautsky. His organ, "Die Neue Zeit," was conducted strictly along Marxian lines. Together with August Bebel and others he opposed the "revisionists" sharply, and Rosa, who had meanwhile joined this group of radicals, boldly jumped into the fray as an esteemed associate editor of the "Neue Zeit." The rest of her time was devoted chiefly to agitation and discussion, and soon she stood out as one of the propagandists best hated by the bourgeoisie, who scornfully dubbed her "bloody Rosa."

In 1904 she was destined for the first time to make the acquaintance of a German jail. She was sentenced to several months' imprisonment for *lese majesté* and for inciting to class war, and started to serve her sentence in Zwickau in Saxony. The death of the king of Saxony, however, and the general amnesty granted to political offenders upon the new ruler's assumption of the reins of government, led to a shortening of her prison term, much to her own discomfiture. She left prison under protest, for she found it incompatible with her revolutionary principles to accept any sort of present from the king.

Another year passed amid industrious educational and propaganda work, when suddenly the storm bell of revolution began to toll in the East. By the end of 1905

we see her on her way to Warsaw, and early in 1906 she begins that feverish underground activity, concerning which the letters of that period can best inform the reader. For two months she succeeds in avoiding the czar's spies; then, however, fate overtakes her and she is dragged, first into the prison of the Warsaw city hall and later into the Warsaw citadel. Gripping descriptions of her experiences in Poland are contained in the letters from Warsaw dated March and April, 1906. Set free at last after half a year's incarceration, because nothing could be proved against her, she spends two more months of intensive work in Warsaw and then proceeds via St. Petersburg to Finland, in order to strengthen herself and rest up in the seclusion and quiet of that country and to commit her experiences and impressions to paper.

The problem of the general strike, especially, now occupied her mind and became the center of her whole thought and action. In Warsaw as well as in Moscow she had seen the principle of the general strike translated into practice, and hereafter the question was uppermost in her mind as to how the experiences gathered and the results achieved in Russia might be applied to Germany. In Finland she wrote a pamphlet about the lessons of the general strike, which she published immediately after her return to Germany in September, 1906. Even at that time she came in conflict with Kautsky, with whom she had thus far been wholly of one mind. Rosa defended the Russian standpoint while Kautsky argued that in Germany different conditions demanded different tactics. Every time the two met they debated the question of the general strike heatedly and earnestly. Yet, despite the heat of the argument there was never even the suggestion of a breach in their friendship.

Then came the contest over the elective franchise in the Prussian parliament. The question of whether or not the socialists should participate in the elections had been one of the most hotly contested problems in the party. Rosa had joined Kautsky in favoring the party's participation, and their point of view had carried the day in the party.

When it came, however, to carrying out the decision of the party convention, there was sharp division of opinion as to tactics. Rosa developed a feverish activity as agitator. She called for general strikes throughout Prussia as a measure for demonstrating the power of the masses. According to her plans, the masses were to organize street demonstrations everywhere; and, wherever possible, general strikes which, in her opinion, alone could bring victory, were to be arranged. Kautsky was of the opposite opinion and defended it in a much-discussed article in the "Neue Zeit" entitled "What next?" in which he vigorously opposed Rosa's views. It was then that Rosa for the first time publicly took issue with him. It now became evident that insurmountable divergencies of opinion separated them and that even the most intimate of personal friendships could not let them forget the factional differences between them. There resulted an estrangement which grew worse as time went on and which finally led to a complete break. In keeping with her fiery, inspiring personality, she soon rallied about her a following from the ranks of the radical elements within the socialist party, who in every way tried to hasten the *tempo* of the revolutionary development. It became evident soon that a left and a right wing were forming in the group thus far associated with Kautsky. Or, to put it more concisely, Rosa and her followers now con-

stituted the extreme left wing of the German movement. Kautsky was thus forced into the center, while the right wing retained its revisionist-reformist character unchanged. From now on Rosa no longer fought side by side with Kautsky, as in former years, but began to go her own way politically. There remained, nevertheless, many points on which she could arrive at a friendly understanding with Kautsky, all the more so since both parties were anxious, in view of their long friendship, to remain as well disposed toward each other as possible. Kautsky especially did everything possible along this line, as the following incident will show:

In view of its constant and rapid extension, the German Social-Democratic Party had felt the crying need of pressing into the service as many functionaries, or organizers, as possible and to equip them in the best manner possible. To give these functionaries a proper education seemed an indispensable necessity. The party therefore planned to found a party school, and began to look about for teachers. When Karl Kautsky was approached with the suggestion that he conduct the courses in economics, he declined as far as he was concerned, but suggested Rosa in his place, whereupon she was promptly chosen. This meant that she had been given the highly complimentary task of instilling in the rising generation within the party—and in the best spirits among them at that, for the various districts sent to this institution, which was looked upon as a party college, only the most gifted and carefully chosen members—the fundamental principles upon which their whole future work in the party was to rest. Rosa thus entered upon an entirely new field, but one in which she was destined to display unusual ability. After but a brief period of teaching

she earned the unanimous opinion that she had excellently mastered her problem. Indeed, although the other courses were taught by able, even exceptionally gifted teachers, Rosa was unquestionably looked upon as the spiritual head of the institution. Her pupils adored her. For, not only did she possess the faculty of explaining the subject under discussion in such a manner that it was easily comprehended and understood, but she also inspired them, awakened the love of scientific study, gave life to subjects that had heretofore been looked upon as dry, spurred her listeners on by her own enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge, and filled her pupils with that same sacred fire with which she herself was aflame.

The symphony of Rosa's rich life re-echoes from the pages of her letters. The whole gamut of scales is touched, depending upon her frame of mind, her whims, and the particular situation in which she chanced to find herself. At all times, however, she is *herself*—a genuine personality—whether in the strong *forte* of her work, or the soft *pianissimo* of tenderest emotion, during her *andante* as well as her *allegro*, or when, divinely cheerful and happy, she forgets all cares in a gay *scherzo*.

Hers was the ability to enjoy life as few persons could, to drink in its beauties and find ever new pleasure in them. Whether she was busy at some creative task, or whether she was assimilating the results of other people's investigations—everything meant enjoyment and happiness to her. In July, 1918, despite an endless imprisonment that shattered her nerves, she writes me nevertheless: "We shall get out of this mess despite everything and never forget gratefully to enjoy the least of the beautiful things that are left to us."

The thing that characterized her before everything

else, and that gave her whole being such buoyancy, was just this: while at work or at leisure, whether stirred by the emotions of love or of hate, she was always at the same white heat; in fact, one of her favorite sayings was, "One must be like a candle that is burning at both ends." And this white heat that radiated from her proved contagious to her entire surroundings. She was a wizard in the art of winning persons over, provided, of course, that she cared about winning them.

The most fossilized Prussian bureaucrats, the most brutal janitors and prison guards were devoted to her and handled her far more tenderly than they did their other prisoners. In the jails of Wronke and Breslau she had the good fortune of finding persons among the officials in charge—both the civil and the military—who caught a breath of her spirit, who showed her the greatest deference, and who counted it a pleasure and an honor to chat with her now and then. With one of the officials, who through his chivalrous behavior toward her alleviated many a hardship of her long detention, she continued to correspond after her liberation.

When, immediately after her death, I called at the Moabit jail for a young girl who had been arrested on the false suspicion of having conspired with Rosa, one of the higher officials there expressed words of the greatest regret, yes of mourning for Rosa when I introduced myself to him as a friend of hers, saying that he had known her and held her in highest esteem.

The secret of the magic effect of her personality was partly this: she was able, as few persons were, to interest herself in other human beings in a perfectly human way and to treat them humanely. She possessed the rare gift of listening with concentrated attention, and just as

her ear was accessible to every complainant, so also her heart went out to every human being in distress.

That the word friendship was not a mere conception to a character of her type is self-evident. Despite the complicated nature of her being the simple words of the old poet Siman Dach, of which she was very fond, seem as though written to apply to her:

“To man there is no finer,
No more peculiar charm,
Than to be counted faithful
In friendship ever warm.”

To have anybody doubt her friendship grieved her deeply, unless, indeed, in consonance with her ironical nature, she made fun of such doubts as being absolutely senseless. The reader will find various passages in substantiation of this point, *e.g.*, the letter of January 20, 1916, written from the prison in Barnim Street, Berlin, “. . . and ‘trifles’ don’t exist for me as far as you are concerned; everything is important and of the greatest interest.” Again, the letter from Breslau dated December 16, 1917: “How is it, you sheep, that you still doubt my friendship from time to time? I was surprised, since I know that our relation is already founded as upon a rock . . .”

There was one field or sphere, however, where all love of her fellow men and all friendship counted for nothing in case she felt herself misunderstood or even suffered disappointment: that was the realm of politics. For, artist though she was, she was politically minded through and through. To think and act politically was a necessity to her; politics was the element in which she dis-

ported herself as a fish does in the water. However tolerant she might be to her *personal* friends, acquaintances, and relatives, however good-naturedly she might laugh at and make fun of their weaknesses, which she detected with a sharp eye and exposed with a sharp tongue, in the case of her *political* friends she would stand for no joking. With reference to conflicts within her political party, especially, she regarded considerateness as lukewarmness, readiness to yield as weakness, willingness to meet the opponent halfway as cowardice, and compromise as treason. Her passionate nature led her to go straight at the center of an issue, without circumlocution. Concessions even to her closest political friends were anathema to her. Inflexible and unyielding as she herself was in these matters, she demanded a similar attitude from her political friends and closer comrades at arms, and in case she was not able to bring them unreservedly over to her own point of view, she did not hesitate to break with them. "Whosoever is not for me, is against me" was her political *leitmotiv*.

Those who know the history of the party during the last two decades are aware how her relation to Karl Kautsky underwent a change and how the most intimate personal friendship gradually changed over into one of bitterest political opposition.

During the year 1896, as a comrade almost unknown in German circles, she addressed herself for the first time to the editors of the "Neue Zeit," a periodical which at that time enjoyed a splendid reputation, and which was personified in the figure of Kautsky. The leading spirits in the international socialist world at that time counted it an honor to contribute to its columns.

With a certain respect, though not always without

objection, she submitted to Kautsky's editorial suggestions. Even here, however, one is struck by the self-assurance of this young woman of hardly twenty-six, as well as by her masterful diction, the keenness of her argumentation, the depth of her thinking, the wealth of ideas. In short, a new Pallas Athene, sprung from the head of Zeus, she stood before us, resplendent in her armor.

Notwithstanding the respect that she evinced toward her "beloved teacher," her "master," she felt herself as his peer and had the faculty of defending her standpoint. Her strong feeling of self-reliance is strikingly shown in the first eight letters; and as I was anxious to show this side of her character also, I overcame my original misgivings on this point and, at the risk of turning away this or that reader not interested in politics, I have placed these letters, which have to do with purely editorial matters, at the beginning of the collection, where indeed they belong chronologically. This increasing self-reliance is, by the way, emphasized even more sharply in the letter to Kautsky, written in 1901 after the Lübeck convention of the party.

After about three years of correspondence Rosa came to Berlin in March, 1899, and soon written communication was superseded by active personal intercourse. Residing at first in the student section of Berlin, she moved to the suburb of Friedenau as early as the fall of 1899 and rented a flat on the same street on which we lived.

Hardly a day now passed which did not see her at our home. At first, of course, her visits were intended solely for the party comrade, editor and theoretician Kautsky, with whom she loved to discuss things untiringly. As for myself, I proved a great disappointment to her,

used as she was to the ways of the Russian students. Laughingly she herself later confessed this to me:

“Karl Kautsky’s wife wears an apron!!”—what a surprise, what a terrible discovery! She, too, nothing but one of those narrow-minded German housewives! Or, according to Rosa’s own terminology of that period, “a foolish hen, a cow!”

The apron was not destined long to separate us. After but a few weeks she was so accustomed to it as well as to its wearer that she declared, “All my wants are cared for in the Kautsky home.”

With the *pater familias* she embarked upon politics, with me upon everything that makes life more beautiful, with the three boys upon the maddest tomfoolery, and with our faithful domestic fairy, Zenzi, she even ventured, ambitiously and just like a little housewife, upon the mysteries of cooking, on which occasions she at times did not even scorn—an apron!

For, her versatility was quite as surprising as were her mental elasticity, her readiness at repartee and her ability to adapt herself immediately to every person and to every situation. Supposing she had just gone deeply into the most difficult theoretical problems with Kautsky—the very next moment she could be found romping about with the boys like a wanton school-girl, or sitting with our second son and engaging with him in friendly rivalry at drawing (she was extraordinarily gifted at painting and sketching, of which fact one finds many a proof in the letters). Or, she appeared in the kitchen department and listened with the most earnest expression in the world to Zenzi’s wise maxims concerning the culinary art, delivered in the broadest Suabian brogue;

in fact, she herself hinted, rather shamefacedly, that she was no stranger to Lucullian secrets, and waxed eloquent about a certain legendary "husar's roast" which she knew how to prepare in an unrivalled manner.

Christmas would have been unthinkable without Rosa, and it was a joy to observe with what zeal and devotion she played with the children, especially with the youngest, Bendel, then about six years old. The toys which she brought him were always selected with thoughtfulness and good sense. Usually they consisted of pretty, movable objects created by Arno Holz's² imaginative mind and offered for sale on the Potsdamer Platz. It was at her hand that the nodding little mule and the creeping crocodile made their entry into the House of Kautsky. Her greatest and most enduring success was achieved, however, with a little cart that, sliding down a winding trestle, in ever accelerating motion brings its passengers down to the ground. With glowing cheeks she could for hours kneel down with the boys and enjoy these wondrous things. It was only with difficulty that she tore herself away from them when the children had to go to bed. After that she would chat and argue for a long time with Kautsky until he, too, withdrew. My hour had now arrived, for I accompanied her home, and measureless is the distance that we traversed, as we brought each other again and again to our respective doors. Tired of boarding-house life, she had soon rented a flat of her own in Cranach street, New Friedenau, about ten minutes away from our home. These minutes usually grew into

² [A modern German poet of distinction, who for many years was so poor that he had to invent children's toys to earn his living.—Transl.]

hours, for there was no limit to the things we had to tell each other. Then, too, Rosa was in the habit of constantly forgetting her "Dricker," as she called all keys for short, and almost every night we stood before her house, waiting for the night watchman to open the portal. The incident always furnished the occasion for unrestrained mirth. She was also fond of giving vent to the revolutionary urge within her by singing aloud in the stillness of midnight, and many a time we were sternly reprimanded by the guardians of law and order in Friedenau, who lacked the necessary artistic appreciation of arias from "Figaro," or songs by Hugo Wolf, or the "Marseillaise" or the "Internationale." One stout police sergeant especially, named Maier, whom the young folk, to the infinite delight of Rosa, disrespectfully nicknamed the Fat-eye of the Law, "had it in" for us. To outwit him was Rosa's greatest earthly joy.

In two passages of her letters she refers to nightly escapades of this sort. Her overbubbling spirit knew no bounds, and she was as though intoxicated by her effervescent cheerfulness, which had a contagious effect. During such moments I felt instinctively what has since then become perfectly clear to me, namely, that hers was a poetic nature which was drawing upon a fountain that was practically inexhaustible. To use her own words, it seemed on such occasions "as though we had drunk champagne, and life pricked us in our finger-tips."

Thus our friendship became an ever faster one, and to all of us, not least to our boys, she had soon become the indispensable friend, who had to take part in everything affecting our house, whether in days of joy or of sorrow. She was never absent from the Sunday evening "at

homes," when a circle of devoted friends came to us, and half seriously, half in mockery she called herself the "Sunday Supplement of the Neue Zeit."

Gladly and without much fuss she also joined us when, as was often the case, we were invited to dinner at the Bebels. It did not disturb her in the least to appear there in a simple house-dress even if she suspected that a more formal party was in store. Thus she was very fond of wearing a certain olive green morning frock of velvet, which I had given her as a birthday present, and with which she was so unwilling to part that I presented her with similar goods on all festive occasions thereafter.

Her relations with Bebel were likewise most cordial and she was very fond of teasing him. For instance, during the party convention at Lübeck, where she was especially overbubbling and full of temperament, she stuck an anonymous slip of paper one morning at the hotel into the shoes standing before his door. The following words were written upon it: "Aujust, ick liebe Dir."³ He on his part reciprocated this affection and always enjoyed her breezy humor and her readiness at repartee. When at times she had possibly overshot the mark and had been exceptionally biting and aggressive against acknowledged "big guns" in the party, so that the older party members could not find words strong enough

³ ["August, I love you." In ordinary high-German the phrase should read, "August, ich liebe Dich." But the Berliners speak a dialect as different from standard German as the New York dialect is different from college English. Just as the New York dialect is characterized by "oi" sounds, so the Berlin dialect substitutes "j" (pronounced like "y") for "g" and "ck" for the soft "ch."—Transl.]

to express their indignation at her insolence, he merely observed, smiling indulgently: "Just you leave my Rosa alone. It's a mighty good thing to have a wolf like her in our sheep-fold."⁴

When my husband and I went to Paris in the spring of 1900, where Kautsky was to sift the papers left by Karl Marx at the home of his son-in-law, Paul Lafargue, Rosa acted as mother to our boys and helped them with their lessons at school. It must be admitted that, according to reports from both parties concerned, a pretty hot time ensued, and the two grammar-school students, Felix and Karl, are said really to have succeeded in putting the fearless fighter to rout—an unusual triumph!

In this connection I want to recall a pretty episode, since it unrevealed to me a certain human and lovable trait in her character: Rosa was at that time on intimate terms with the meritorious socialist writer, then editor of the "Leipziger Volkszeitung," Bruno Schönlink, an ingenious man and the father of our poet, Bruno Schönlink. One day she surprised us with an invitation to have dinner with him at her rooms, which were at that time located in the apartments of a certain Mrs. Klara Neufeld, an extremely capable lady of Friedenau whom we all esteemed very highly. The invitation had been extended with such solemnity that I donned my evening clothes to honor Rosa, although Karl's mother declared, "Why should you bother to make a big fuss about Rosa!"—My instinct had served me well, however. When she opened the door and, looking me over with a quick, critical glance, discovered that I was in evening dress, she fell

⁴ [Literally "to have a pike like that in our carp-pond."—Transl.]

upon my neck and declared with deep gratitude and emotion, "I thank you for having taken me seriously."

The evening was a stimulating and harmonious one, Rosa proved a charming little housewife, who took her duties as hostess most seriously, yet who dominated the conversation by her wit and repartee.

Gradually she drew all of her friends then living in Berlin into our circle: Adolf Warschawski and Julian Marschlewski, two Polish socialist writers now in the Communist Party of Russia, were among our regular guests, and whenever Leo Tyschko (Jogiches) turned up, meteor-like, we had the pleasure of entertaining him, the shy conspirator, also in our house.⁵

Her relation to Jogiches was a very special one, but I never presumed to speak to her about it. Nothing, perhaps, cemented our friendship so firmly as the circumstance that I never put questions to her, but let her do as she pleased, without every prying into her feelings or investigating her coming and going. For, despite her vivacity, her communicativeness and her apparent frankness she was, after all, of a reserved, taciturn nature, wanted to live her life all by herself and not be pursued by obtrusive curiosity. She was fond of weaving a thick veil of secrecy about herself, which was to guard her against inquisitive eyes; and a modicum of conspirator's romanticism was indispensable to her if life was not to seem too flat and "petty bourgeois" to her. However anxiously she sought and even demanded to know all

⁵ [Leo Tyschko, or Jogiches, was Rosa's intimate friend, a distinguished Polish revolutionary socialist, who found his death in the German revolution a few weeks after Rosa and in the same beastly way as she: he was shot from behind by reactionary soldiers.—Transl.]

emotions and experiences of her friends—about which, by the way, she was able to keep silent with a model sense of discretion—, just as little was it possible for her to reveal herself unreservedly. I recall certain moments when I knew her to be involved in difficult conflicts of the soul or of the heart. She could then sit with me for a long time, her hand clasped in mine, and evidently struggle for words with which to tell me of her distress. Usually, however, nothing more resulted than that she uttered a few doleful sounds, a few disconnected sentences. After that she told me with a helpless shrug of the shoulders, “I can’t”—placed her head against my shoulder and remained silent. In situations of this kind she merely craved quiet understanding and sympathetic tenderness. To press her hands or to fondle her gently was quite sufficient to restore her cheerfulness and to bring back her customary equilibrium.

In this connection I should like to make a sort of correction on my own behalf: In the spring of 1919 a member of the Belgian commission in Berlin, M. Maurice Berger, visited us to make Kautsky’s acquaintance, since he was engaged in writing a book about the “new” Germany. In the course of the conversation the activity and death of Rosa Luxemburg were also touched upon. M. Berger evidenced the greatest interest in her and was most anxious to devote a chapter of his book to her. He pressed me for data concerning herself, laying special stress upon her private life and the circumstances accompanying her death. He finally persuaded me to write him an appreciation of her character and a sketch of her life *as a politician*, though at the same time I declined emphatically to give any other information. In addition, I made it an expressed condition of my imparting this

information, that the whole chapter be submitted to me in French translation before it went to press.

Imagine my surprise when, a while later, a bound copy of a book entitled "La Nouvelle Allemagne" reached me from Brussels, containing, in addition to the section approved by me, several pages derived from a source entirely unknown to me, which gave a detailed report about Rosa's "amours" and her sensational death!

I protested immediately by letter and by telegram against this misuse of my name, but obtained no further satisfaction than that the author apologized politely, stating that, while the personal data brought at the end of the sketch had "been told him by another source," he had nevertheless incorporated them in my article and published them under my name "for literary reasons and in order to round off the sketch." At the same time he authorized me to publish this explanation. The whole incident, transpiring as it did during days that were in themselves full of excitement, almost made me sick, for I trembled at the thought that the French and Belgian comrades might look upon this publication as an indiscretion, and possibly even as an attempt to be sensational, though nothing had been further from my thoughts than that. But no unfavorable comment came from them, so that I gradually calmed down, all the more so as I had to say to M. Berger's credit that he had done his job not only with tact and literary taste, but even with feeling and from a full heart, so that he had succeeded in placing Rosa in a very sympathetic light before foreign readers.

While Rosa had given conclusive proof of her unusual abilities in all the fields in which she had been active, it began to seem as though her greatest ability lay along

educational lines. She possessed all the prerequisites of a pedagogue: not only was she gifted and thoroughly educated, but she also possessed the self-confidence and self-assurance that a teacher needs in order to impress his students. She found great satisfaction in teaching and, while in her former positions, such as editor of the Dresden "Volkszeitung," of the Berlin "Vorwärts," etc., she had not shown particular stick-to-it-iveness, the teaching profession seemed permanently to fascinate her and her enthusiasm seemed to kindle anew with every succeeding semester. Then came the war and with it an abrupt end to her activity. The school ceased to exist and Rosa was confronted with new problems.

The outbreak of the war was terrible to her. Still more terrible did the attitude of the German Social Democracy seem to her; in fact, as she herself admitted, she was brought to the verge of insanity and almost committed suicide. The granting of war credits by the social democrats was the signal for her to part company once and for all with her former comrades from whom she had already felt herself estranged for a long time, and with a little band of like-minded followers to begin the underground work of propaganda among German workers that found expression in the so-called Spartacus Letters, which, of course, had to be issued secretly because of war censorship. Besides containing propaganda against the war, its pages were filled chiefly with the most biting criticism of the right wing and of the center of the German Social Democratic party. Through hundreds of channels the Spartacus Letters found their way into the factories, the shops, the armies of the reserve, and even out to the front.

Rosa was able to carry on this underground propaganda for but a few months, when the "hand of justice"

was laid upon her. She was arrested and sentenced to a year in prison for a speech delivered before the war, on September 25, 1913, near Frankfort-on-the-Main, on "The Political and Economic Situation and the Task of the Proletariat." Her address to the court on the occasion of her trial on February 20, 1915, in defense of her action has become quite famous, and has appeared in print. She spent a full year in a woman's prison in northeastern Berlin. This did not keep her, however, from continuing her activities with undaunted courage, and from speaking to the outside world with the aid of friends and like-minded comrades, who undertook to smuggle out not only the Spartacus Letters but also the celebrated "Junius Pamphlet." In the latter Rosa attacked the war and her former comrades even more boldly than in the Spartacus Letters. This pamphlet, written in prison in April, 1915, and distributed secretly, achieved unparalleled success with all opponents of war in Germany and, in so far as it could pass the frontiers, also abroad. The wealth of ideas, the boldness of speech, the beauty of diction, and the truly revolutionary content characterize this work as one of the weightiest documents against the crime of war.

Upon leaving her cell in February, 1916, she plunged at once into the maelstrom of events. Above all she sought contact with the "left" elements in the party, especially with Karl Liebknecht, to whom she had been very close ever since parting company with Karl Kautsky. Liebknecht was at that time in Berlin on furlough. Like herself, he had suffered terribly under the outbreak of the war and had been the only member of parliament to vote against granting war credits when the government demanded them the second time. From then on Rosa felt

herself in complete accord with him. Together with Liebknecht she now planned a bold public action, for the slow, underground propaganda, the results of which could not become apparent very quickly, tried the patience of these two fiery spirits too sorely. They decided to call out loudly and audibly into a world paralyzed by terror and fear what they had thus far dared to say only secretly and surreptitiously to the masses of the workers. No matter how dire the consequences might be for them personally, they hoped by their self-sacrifice to stir up the sluggish spirits or at least to hurl a *mene tekel* at the ruling powers.

They summoned all their followers to the busy Potsdamer Platz on May 1, 1916. It was impossible to organize a May-day celebration on a large scale then, since most men were at the front and military control was unusually severe at that time. Nevertheless a crowd of faithful followers had gathered, from whose midst Liebknecht stepped forth upon the street and with a voice that resounded afar cried out, "Down with War." He was surrounded immediately by police in uniform and in plain clothes; Rosa and several of his followers, who clung to him, were shoved aside, and he was dragged off to prison. His courage, to be sure, challenged the admiration of all free spirits, but he failed to achieve the far-reaching result that he had hoped would follow upon his action. The time was not yet ripe and people's minds were still too much bound by the tradition of war for his rallying cry to awaken the right sort of echo. Oddly enough, Rosa had been permitted to return home unhindered, and for about four more months she was at liberty. She used this respite to conduct incessant educational propaganda. On July 10, 1916, however, she was

taken into "precautionary arrest" upon the orders of the military—an arrest that differed in no way from regular imprisonment.

At first she was brought into the same prison on Barnim street in northeastern Berlin in which she had served previously; soon thereafter, however, to the citadel of Wronke in the Province of Posen, and after another half year, to the prison at Breslau.

The letters of that period furnish eloquent testimony as to how she, the great specialist in the art of living, knew how to make her life, even in that place of severe confinement, a reasonably human one, yes, and even to draw more satisfaction, not to say a greater measure of happiness out of that life than the rest of us succeeded in gaining from our life of freedom. These letters best give us an idea of the richness of her spirit and the greatness of her soul. If it is true that we tried through our letters and gifts to relieve the lonesomeness and enliven the monotony of the cell for her, the prisoner cut off from life, it is also true that her letters carried forth from this solitude light and color, joy and sunshine for our troubled spirits. These letters of hers from prison reveal her from her most beautiful human side. Every one of them shows how a strong mind can triumph over all outward adversities, how a noble soul can rise above even the terrors of incarceration. Whenever her health threatened to give way under the exhausting monotony of her long imprisonment, whenever her fiery temperament was arrested by the bars of her narrow prison cell, again and again her studies and her work as well as her mental superiority constituted the magic remedy that sustained her and enabled her to suffer in patience. And infinite patience was indeed necessary! The grandiose

drama of the Russian revolution in October, 1917, the seizure of power by the Russian bolsheviks, many of whom had been her former companions in arms—events which, as they transpired, made every fibre of her being tremble and awakened the yearning in her to participate actively in them—all this she had to let pass by her, condemned as she was to be inactive and to play the part of an impotent bystander. Who can adequately gauge the magnitude of her grief, the pain of her impatience, the anguish of enforced passivity! Who can feel adequately what emotions shook her frail body!—And yet, not a word of complaint, of lamentation! Perfectly composed, proudly and even stoically she bore the hard fate that was hers until finally, at last, the hour of liberation struck for her, too.

The German army was defeated. Its glorified leader, Ludendorff, had run away in shameful flight, while the emperor himself had withdrawn from the world's stage in no less despicable a manner. During the first days of November, 1918, first the sailors at Kiel and later the soldiers at Berlin had refused to continue to serve, had fraternized with the people and had ended the military dictatorship at one blow. The prisons were automatically opened for political offenders. Liebknecht was set free and triumphantly received, and soon thereafter Rosa, too, appeared in Berlin, after she had addressed the masses on Cathedral Square, Breslau, immediately after her liberation. Not a moment for quiet reflection was given her. Though still weak and wan from her long confinement, though still unused to the bustle of life after the stillness of her prison cell, the gigantic wave of events carried her right into the midst of the whirlpool of life, where not a moment for thought or even for

hesitation was given her, and in the midst of which she had to fight, lest the waves of counter-revolution that were rising threateningly engulf her.

Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were still members of the Independent Socialist party which had split off from the old Social-Democratic party over the war issue. But the gulf that had begun to separate the majority of the party from the Spartacus group in recent years became wider and wider, and all attempts on the part of the late Hugo Haase, leader of the Independents, and his followers to bridge the chasm were doomed to failure because of the obstinacy of the Spartacists. Thus it happened that there were sharp differences between the two factions at the convention of the party in Berlin in the middle of December, and that a definite split occurred by the end of December. The group thus far known as Spartacists organized the Communist Party and decided to publish its own organ, the "Rote Fahne," which was to take the place of the Spartacus Letters thus far issued.

Although the mast-head of the new organ gave the names of Rosa and Karl Liebknecht as founders, it was evident that Rosa from the beginning held views contrary to those of many of her followers and co-workers. Like the sorcerer's apprentice in Goethe, she had conjured up many spirits whom she was no longer able to hold in check and who in following their own ideas went far beyond what Rosa had mapped out as a goal capable of immediate attainment.

Thus, for instance, she differed with most members of her party on the important questions of participating in the coming elections for the Constituent Assembly. Rosa deemed participation essential and categorically

demanded it. But this advocacy brought her her first defeat at the organization congress of the communists, and she had to realize that she was powerless against the comrades who were rushing headlong blindly. Many a thing she had to let happen with which she did not at all agree. Out of a revolutionary uprising against the military state there had developed, because of these differences within the proletariat and among their leaders, the bloodiest kind of civil war. The bourgeoisie was concerned about re-establishing the spirit of the old system under the slogan "Peace, order, and security," by which it meant the domination of capitalism over the workers. The communists were determined at any price to "carry the revolution on." And the right-wing, moderate socialists, fearing an economic breakdown for Germany if this were to result, looked upon the extremists among the radical elements as constituting the greatest danger. They made use of the military apparatus, such as still existed, and of the officers of the old regime, on the erroneous assumption that they could control them and employ them to hold down the extreme left wing, at the head of which were Rosa and Karl Liebknecht. The military was under the command of Gustav Noske and his staff of old generals. Skirmishes were fought for weeks with extreme bitterness and it was not long before a final catastrophe ensued. In the streets everywhere there were bloody encounters daily, and whatever happened in one quarter of the city was reported in a wildly exaggerated manner in the other sections. The fury of the misguided soldiery was directed mainly at Rosa and Liebknecht and their followers, in whom they saw the instigators of the daily recurring attacks upon the troops. They therefore tried in every manner to apprehend them,

and both were constantly forced to flee, were constantly compelled to hide, and were prevented from going to their own homes on pain of falling into the hands of their military captors. For several weeks they succeeded in keeping in hiding. But, either because they had been made too bold by their success so far, or else because they tired of being forever pursued, they became very careless in their last abode in the western part of Berlin, where they stopped with sympathizers. They openly took up quarters in the fashionable house of some friends, and soon the other bourgeois tenants became aware of the unwelcome company living under their roof.

It was not long before someone reported them, and the military were quick to throw themselves upon their victims. Under strong cover the two were brought to the Hotel Eden, where the staff of the Reinhard Brigade had its headquarters.

It is hardly to be supposed that Rosa fully appreciated what was in store for her. Although she was undoubtedly familiar with the thought of death, which threatened her daily either in an open street fight or by a treacherous bullet, yet she seems to have thought about this last seizure that, as so often previously, it was merely a case of being brought to prison so that she might be made harmless for a while. Evidence of this is the fact that she took with her a little bag with books and laundry when the soldiers led her away. In the best of spirits she bade farewell to her hosts, in the best of spirits she started off on the journey that was destined to be her last.

As to what the officers of the Reinhard Brigade discussed with Rosa, and as to what they negotiated with her, the public has never learned the facts with certainty. Judging from later events one may assume that

these "gentlemen" heaped vile insults upon the defenceless, delicate woman, in order to wreak their anger upon their hated adversary and to let her feel their power. But even though they may have preserved the semblance of an orderly procedure, the fact is that these murderers seemed to have determined in advance not to let Rosa leave the building alive. Altogether too willing tools were found who undertook to carry out the bestial deed. As she left the building and stepped out upon the street, a non-commissioned officer named Runge struck her down with the butt of his gun, causing her to fall to the ground in a swoon. She was then picked up and thrown into a waiting automobile and, as she gave signs of still being alive, one of the "heroes" present shot a bullet through her head. Runge, the hired assassin, who afterwards quarrelled with his noble employers, later described the gruesome scene in all its ghastly detail before the court. Nevertheless, there is still much in this drama that remains to be explained.

The courageous officers, however, were not yet completely satisfied with their deed. They feared Rosa even though dead and dreaded her influence upon the proletarian masses. The problem therefore was for them that of getting the corpse out of the way and of making up a story about her resistance and flight, so as to deceive the public and to divert the fury and revenge of the angered masses from themselves. As is characteristic of assassins, they added cowardice to their bestiality and dared not stand by their deed. The corpse disappeared, and those who had participated in the cowardly murder would tell nothing but fantastic lies. According to one version Rosa was supposed to have been dragged out of the automobile and lynched; according to another, Rosa's

dead body was seized by her murderers and taken into hiding. Then, too, some persons claimed to have seen her body thrown into the water. For months no exact details about the whole affair were known, and already the proletarian masses began to weave legends about the memory of their martyr. Also, they did not cease to hope that she might turn up unexpectedly some fine day and again march at their head as their leader.

This state of uncertainty continued until, several months later, Rosa's distorted corpse was found floating in the water and every doubt was silenced by the gruesome reality. As to just how she died, we shall probably never learn with absolute certainty. That she was fearless and courageous and faced death composedly, of this the letters written shortly before her death give every assurance. That she faced death consciously on behalf of the cause sacred to her is proven by the fact that she remained in Berlin and never thought of fleeing to another country.

For us who outlive her the thought is terrible that her last glance fell upon the brutalized faces of paid assassins, and that she, who believed so firmly in the good within each human being and faced death fighting on behalf of this faith, should have been surrounded by such scum of humanity during her last hours. But although the circumstances attending her death helped to intensify the grief over her loss among her friends, yet not one of them denied to himself that this sacrificial death, despite its gruesomeness, constituted a fitly solemn close to a life rich in sacrifices.

"Enshrined within the great heart of the working class," Rosa Luxemburg's memory will continue to live

among the millions of oppressed and dispossessed throughout the world, for whom she fought, suffered and lived. And the name of Rosa Luxemburg will remain engraven upon the brazen tablets of history upon which are recorded the heroes of humanity.

Letters of ROSA LUXEMBURG
to KARL and LUISE KAUTSKY

I

BEGINNINGS

1896—1899

1.

Zurich, March 5, 1896.

To the Editors of the "Neue Zeit":

I am herewith sending you a rather lengthy article¹ concerning the nationalistic currents in the Polish Socialist movement. The topic is a decidedly live one, as I hope you will see from the article. The change of front on the part of the Polish socialists in Germany and Austria, prepared long in advance, may in my opinion bring with it, as one of the first consequences, the secession of the Galician party from the Austrian Social Democracy, exactly as happened in Germany. It has already elicited a decision of the Galician party regarding the coming May Day celebration which is of great practical importance. All these facts lend a purely practical aspect to the critical analysis of this topic. Its importance extends far beyond the limits of the Polish

¹ [The article appeared in the "Neue Zeit," Vol. VII, second series, pp. 176 ff. and 206 ff. under the caption, "New Currents in the Polish Socialist Movement of Germany and Austria."—L. K.]

movement itself, since—even without taking into account the immediate importance of the Polish movement for the German and Austrian comrades—the whole nationalistic movement among the Polish socialists is endeavoring to endow itself with a Marxian character through the sympathies of the German Social Democracy, and since, on the other hand, it seeks to win the sympathies of the socialists in western Europe by issuing a special publication, “Bulletin officiel du parti soc. pol.,” printed in London.

The discussion of this question seems especially desirable, however, in view of the fact that the representatives of the nationalistic-socialistic point of view will, as they themselves state in the Allemanistic “Le Parti Ouvrier,” urge upon the international congress at London the adoption of a resolution sanctioning the restoration of a Polish state as a political demand of the working class and thus paving the way for its inclusion in the practical program of the Polish parties.

Should you decide to publish my article, its practical importance would be the greater the earlier it appears, especially in view of the impending congress of the Austrian Social Democracy, which will concern itself with the question of the May Day celebration and other problems touched upon in the article.

Most respectfully,

Rosa Luxemburg.

Since the German language is a foreign tongue for me, it is quite possible that an expression may have crept in here and there that is not quite correct. I therefore take the liberty of politely requesting you to correct my article in this respect if necessary.

My address: Fräulein Luxemburg, Universitätsstrasse 77.

[There were two currents within the Polish Social Democracy. One of these aimed at the restoration of Poland, which at that time was under Russian dominion. It bore the name of Socialist Party of Poland (P. P. S.) and had among its leaders Ignaz Daszinsky, who carried on his activities from Austrian Poland (Galicia) and was afterwards elected to the Austrian Reichsrat (national council). The second opposed all nationalistic movements and strove for union with the German Social Democracy. Its official name was The Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania, and its chief exponent was Rosa Luxemburg.—Transl.]

2.

Zurich, March 30, 96.

To the Editors of the "Neue Zeit":

Your esteemed letter of the 28th inst. reached me yesterday, but I waited until today for the manuscript, which you intended to send at the same time as the letter, but which has failed thus far to arrive. I am ready, though with great regret, to shorten the article as requested. This cannot be done, however, by simply striking out parts of it. The article represents a rounded-out whole, and I must somehow fill in the breach occasioned by leaving out Parts II and III. This is necessary, if for no other reason, to forestall the reader's possible surprise at my discussing the practicability of a program without devoting a single word to the supporting arguments advanced in its favor—all the more so since the practicability is intimately connected with the

method of presenting a program. I therefore dealt quite briefly with the question of its possibilities since I believed that for a Marxist the method of marshalling the supporting arguments is more than half of an answer to this question. It will, therefore, in all likelihood, take several days to restore the connection between the various parts of the article.—The other deletions which you deem necessary I leave to you, gentlemen of the editorial board, since I am not quite certain as to what you desire in this or that instance.—In reality I had not counted upon more than 21 pages of the "Neue Zeit," from the beginning, for my attempts to compare my handwriting with the typographical makeup of the "Neue Zeit" led me to believe that my article would hardly take more space.

As regards your remarks about the argumentative part of the article, I take the liberty of urging in my defense that it is not so much my criticism in Parts II and III but rather the reproduction of the section criticized, that lends color to the impression of argumentativeness, since the reasoning therein employed is naïve. On the other hand my argumentation has nothing personal in it and is directed exclusively at points of view. I believed, however, that in criticising a certain position I must above all show proper consideration for the line of argument advanced in its favor, since without it the criticism must necessarily be incomplete. Besides, the position dealt with in Parts II and III is actually one subscribed to by *all* adherents of the social-patriotic wing. Also, this view was aired in the German and French press (see the Handbuch des Sozialismus, Le Socialiste) without meeting with criticism.

The importance of publishing this article, especially

for the *Polish* movement, would lie precisely in the criticism of this line of reasoning which has been spread so widely and which must be evident in all its weakness when published in the columns of the "Neue Zeit."

Finally, I was anxious from the beginning, in the interests of a discussion that may possibly ensue, to settle this argument once and for all, since it is of less importance to wider German circles, and thus to concentrate the discussion exclusively upon more serious phases of the problem.

Despite all this I am awaiting the manuscript in order to shorten it as desired—I have no other complete copy of it.

Respectfully,

R. Luxemburg,
Universitätsstrasse 77.

3.

Dear Editors, the manuscript arrived only today (Tuesday). I have made all the abridgments requested by you and a few besides that were directly connected with the former. Considering the space allotted by you, I have had to refrain from even remotely filling the gap occasioned by the abridgments and have confined myself to indicating the transition from I to II by a very few sentences, as well as intimating the positive ground, originally elaborated upon but now entirely missing, by a few sentences at the close. The article now comprises $31\frac{1}{2}$ pages (among the 33 numbered pages there are several incomplete) and I have found absolutely nothing more to cut down.

When the manuscript was returned to me, I discovered

that I had overlooked signing my name to it. I now correct this oversight, for an article of this nature must of course not appear anonymously.

Herewith a request: I don't know whether you intend to repeat in the "Neue Zeit" the utterance of your esteemed letter of 28.III. to the effect that you are not able to agree entirely with my article. In case, however, that is your intention, it is obvious that an *editorial* comment clothed *in such general terms* would detract greatly from the importance of the article. I should therefore be very grateful to you if in that event you were to give more precise content to your observations, so that the possibility might be afforded me thereby of referring to them in the course of the discussion.

Very respectfully,

R. Luxemburg,
Zurich, 31.III.96, Universitätsstrasse 77.

4.

To the Editors:

I am taking the liberty of sending you herewith a short article concerning the social-patriotic resolution to the London congress.² This resolution—as is apparent from the "Critica Sociale" No. 10 and as I learn from the French comrades—was sent to all parties for adoption. The treatment of this subject therefore becomes a matter of interest to wider party circles.—Should you find my little essay serviceable and decide to accept it

² [The article appeared in the "Neue Zeit," Vol. 19, Second Series, No. 41, p. 459 ff. under the caption, "Social Patriotism in Poland."—L. K.]

for publication in the "Neue Zeit," it would be very desirable that it appear quite soon if at all possible. Several parties, as for instance the Italian, have already begun to discuss the question; others will do so during the next few days. Besides, the discussion between Prof. Labriola and Turati, who has already made reference to the "Neue Zeit," will probably be continued in the next issue of the "Critica Sociale." The publication of the enclosed article might perhaps be of some importance for this discussion.

It seems somewhat doubtful now whether the discussion for which I had hoped in connection with my first article in the "Neue Zeit" will materialize. Judging from the reply herewith enclosed, which was given me by the Galician party in its central organ at Cracow, my opponents will probably let matters rest there. Considerable time may therefore be consumed in awaiting their rejoinder. But even if, in the most favorable case, the reply should appear in the very next issue of the "Neue Zeit," it may easily happen that the discussion, which must needs be more concerned with special German-Polish and Austro-Polish details, may postpone the publication of the criticism of the congress resolution, which interests wider circles within the party, until such time as it shall have lost its importance. The publication of this essay before the discussion will, however, have the advantage of compelling my opponents to take a position on the question of the resolution and thereby to place their reply upon a broader basis.

I should be immensely grateful to you for notifying me as soon as possible of the fate of the article. I should then know what to reply to the French comrades who have turned to my comrades in Paris for information

on the Polish question and whom I might possibly simply refer to the "Neue Zeit."

Most Respectfully,

Rosa Luxemburg,

Zurich, 24. May 96, Universitätsstrasse 77.

P. S. The social-patriotic resolution, which I criticise in the article, was published not only in the "Critica Sociale" and the "Parti Ouvrier," but also in the "Nowy Robotnik" of Lemberg and the "Vorwärts" of Berlin—in the latter case in the report of the meeting at London called by the Poles, as a resolution brought before that meeting.

Enclosure with the Letter of May 24, 1896

"Naprzod" ("Forward") Nr. 20, May 14, 1896.

Miss Rosa Luxemburg, an hysterical and quarrelsome female, has published an article in the "Neue Zeit," in which she attempts to accuse the Polish socialists of a terrible crime: she tries to prove that we are glowing patriots, not, however, "in the sense of private (!) love of the fatherland" (as is said to be the case in western Europe), but that we have the ambition of restoring Poland! Miss Rosa Luxemburg, from whom all people in Poland whose hearts and heads are in the right places have withdrawn, evidently does not like our patriotism. That is something that we can't help. We take comfort in the fact that the ablest men among the socialists of "western Europe" understand our patriotism excellently and further our endeavors. Our bourgeoisie, led by a timid political instinct, calls our efforts "cosmopolitan." Miss Rosa, however, together with several Berdyczow "Russians,"³ is seized with hysterical convulsions because

³[Anti-Semitic reference to two Russian comrades—contributors to the "Neue Zeit"—who endeavored to mediate in the conflict over Polish credentials during the Zurich congress. (Note by R. Luxemburg.)]

of our Polish patriotism. It seems that we shall be unable to please any faction and shall therefore in all probability stick to our own position. We merely regret that a serious German periodical was taken in by Miss Rosa, who bluffs the people in Switzerland into thinking that she represents somebody or something in Poland. The Polish socialism has not sunk so low as to enable Miss Rosa, together with the quiet company of Berdyczow "Russians," to claim the right of speaking in its name.

5.

Undated. According to content, June, 1896.

To the editors:

Your card was received Friday, my manuscript Saturday morning; today, Sunday, I return the latter.⁴

Through the discussion in the "Neue Zeit" I was confronted by two problems: to throw light either upon the *practical* side of the Polish movement with reference to social patriotism, or upon the *theoretical* side and thus to contribute, to the best of my ability, material for the solution of the Polish question. Through the elision of the theoretical part of my first article, as well as through the reply by Häcker, the discussion was lowered exclusively to the level of petty details of a practical nature. I am the one least responsible for this, and in view of the small amount of space which you granted me, saw myself compelled against my will to keep my eye on nothing more than the fight-to-the-very-end of the *practical* aspect of the question. The passages in my reply that might give offense refer exclusively to aberrations

⁴ [The manuscript in question is that of the article referred to in the previous letter, "Social Patriotism in Poland," which then appeared in the "Neue Zeit" on July 1, 1896.—L. K.]

from principles on the part of my opponents and not to their *persons*, such as is the case with reference to my person in Häcker's reply. Besides, it was not *I* who exposed the internal rows within the Polish movement in the columns of the "Neue Zeit"—my first article, you will remember, *did not contain a word* about this. On the contrary, I was surprised to see this phase enlarged upon in Häcker's article.

I therefore believe that you are doing me an injustice when you charge all these results of the discussion to *my* account.

In its present form my original reply has, I believe, almost no value to the German public; it contains nothing serious from either a practical or a theoretical point of view. Therefore, in order to meet your wishes and to make my reply one of general international interest, I have boiled down a more extensive article which I was just preparing for a French periodical into four pages of the "Neue Zeit," my entire original reply to Häcker into but *one*, and my personal reply into a small footnote, and of the old article I added nothing but the pages concerning the resolution, leaving them unchanged. I have put the article together in its present form and numbered it with red letters; it is smaller, even then, than Häcker's reply.

I hope that you will be satisfied with it and that in its present form you will not refuse to give it one or two pages more in the "Neue Zeit" than was your original intention. Should you nevertheless find yourself unable to give so much space, I should like to request you simply to omit the first two pages containing the reply to Häcker, to give the article the title "Concerning the

Polish Question," and to place the words "In Lieu of a Reply" in parenthesis under the caption, and if necessary to strike out all footnotes with the statistical material. You will in that case be good enough to insert the footnote with the personal reply at some convenient place.

I have written this article in a great hurry. The German language has no doubt suffered thereby. I should therefore like to request you kindly to improve the text, if necessary, without consideration for my rights as author.

At all events, I also enclose the article boiled down by you. Should you, contrary to all expectations, prefer it to the present one, I shall have to agree to that, although with misgivings, in order not to be deprived of the opportunity for a reply. In any case I place the article entirely at your disposal and leave it to you to make all cuts and combinations that you deem necessary in connection therewith.

Awaiting an early reply,

Respectfully,

R. Luxemburg.

P. S. In case you accept my article in its present form, I must nevertheless trouble you with the request to strike out the first sentence (in a red parenthesis) on page 3 (red) and to put in its place the sentence written on a strip of paper beside it; likewise, to simply strike out the last sentence but one on page 6 (red), in the red parenthesis. The missing citations of pages in the works quoted by me in the footnote to page 8 will be sent tomorrow. I haven't them on hand this moment and am quoting from my note book. I should be very grateful to you for sending me proof sheets.

6.

Weggis near Lucerne, "Zur Tanne,"
10.9.97.

Dear Editor:

The purpose of these lines is that of inquiring whether you would welcome a short article about the last visit of the tsar in Warsaw for publication in the "Neue Zeit." This event is being unanimously heralded by the Polish and Russian press as an important historical moment. This is absolutely true when one considers it in connection with the development thus far of the ideology of Polish society. My question refers, of course, only to the theme. By treating it in such a way as to bring in the history of the relations between the classes in Russian Poland, the article could be made to assume more than passing interest.

Very respectfully,

R. Luxemburg.

[The article mentioned in this and the succeeding letter appeared at the end of October, 1897, in the "Neue Zeit," Vol. XIV, First Series, No. 6, Page 164 ff., under the caption "From Step to Step—A Contribution to the History of the Bourgeois Classes in Poland."—L. K.]

7.

Weggis near Lucerne, "Zur Tanne,"
7.10. 97.

To the Editor:

I am herewith sending you the manuscript. Unfortunately it has assumed larger dimensions than I originally anticipated, owing to the method of treatment, by

which I endeavored to make the article one of permanent interest, although I have struck out the larger part of the actual material.

I hope, however, that it is not too long, after all, to permit of its publication in *one* issue of the "Neue Zeit," and I therefore make bold to request that, in case you like the article, you have it appear in *one* number if possible. In the interests of the article I am *very much concerned* about this.

As I was anxious to avoid all controversial points, I did not go directly into the questions at issue. I should be very grateful to you if, in case you intend to add an editorial note to it, you were to notify me of that fact.

In conclusion there remains but for me to express the request that you kindly remove from the manuscript the Polonisms of which I am often guilty, and, in the event of its acceptance, to publish the article as soon as possible.

Most respectfully,
R. Luxemburg.

8.

Weggis, 11.10.97.

Dear Editor:

I am very sorry to have to bother you with a letter at a time when you are so busy. Nevertheless I must take the liberty of urgently requesting you please to refrain from your intention of possibly adding an editorial note to my article. A comment from your pen would undoubtedly be another blow aimed at the point of view defended by me and it would then become my duty, in the interests of the party, to resume our defense,

although I refrained from so doing after the appearance of your article "Finis Poloniae?", since I felt that the interest of the public in a further discussion had abated greatly. I should, of course, welcome the opportunity of resuming the discussion. I am sure that you wish to consider the interests of the viewpoint I represent and that you do not desire to aim a blow at it without at the same time giving me the opportunity of warding it off. I don't know, however, whether such a continuation of the discussion would now be possible in the "Neue Zeit." Should this be impossible, then I must repeat my urgent request to publish the article without editorial comment. I ask this also in view of the fact that the other point of view has been given expression in the "Vorwärts" without any reservations on the part of the editors, and that, after the publication of "Finis Poloniae"⁵ there can be no doubt about your own position in the matter.

With sincere thanks for promptly disposing of the article.

Respectfully,
Rosa Luxemburg.

9.

(Berlin) N.W., Kuxhavenerstrasse 2, 2.3.99.

My dear Comrade:

In order not to take too much of your time, I am taking this means of approaching you with a small request.

⁵ [The article by Karl Kautsky, "Finis Poloniae?" appeared in the "Neue Zeit," Vol. XVI, Second Series, p. 484 ff., and 513 ff.—L. K.]

The "Soz. Monatshefte"⁶ in its last issue brought a criticism by Mrs. Daszynska concerning my work ("The Industrial Development of Poland") and the editors have earnestly requested me to reply to it. As I have no great desire to write for the "Soz. Monatshefte," I should be very much pleased indeed if I could print a short note of 20-30 lines—I do not intend to use more space for an answer—in the "Neue Zeit," provided you kindly offer me that much space.

In the hope of a favorable reply, and with best regards to yourself and your esteemed family,

Rosa Luxemburg.

10.

N.W., Kuxhavenerstrasse 2, 4.3.99.

My dear Comrade:

Thank you sincerely for so kindly agreeing to my request and likewise for inviting me so charmingly. I shall take the liberty in the course of the next few days of calling on you with my note. At that time I shall probably be able to give you some interesting information about the Mehring-Schönlank case, about which I am likewise very much concerned.

Meanwhile my kindest regards to you and your esteemed wife!

Rosa Luxemburg.

[Franz Mehring and Bruno Schönlank were two prominent German socialist writers who were for years on intimate terms of friendship. Later on, however, differences of a personal nature arose between them.—Transl.]

⁶ [The "Soz. Monatshefte" was the "Socialist Monthly Review."—Transl.]

11.

Zurich, in the Schössli on the
Zurich Mountain, 3.7.99.

Dear Comrades!

My best thanks for returning the printed matter. The news of your happy return and of the good prospects that you brought with you has given me honest pleasure. Comrade Kautsky really deserved the vacation; the "Agrarian Question"⁷ alone was an immense task, added to which he had to go to the mat with Bernstein⁸ and his following! But Bernstein was wrong in finding fault with "Russians": at this very moment all sorts of sympathizers are coming to his aid from Russia. Schönlank has just thrown two Russian Marx-annihilators—alias "Conductors beyond Marx"—at my head, a fat-bellied Mr. Slonimski, who has for a long time been making his living in Russia off the contradictions between the third and first volumes of "Capital"; and a terribly learned Mr. Simkhovitch, who has just, in Conrad's "Annual," destroyed, buried, eulogized, wept over and passed beyond Marx. About all this I, the "free Polish woman," am to express myself! * * * * * By way of solace and of comfort I have just received the latest by

⁷ [A voluminous work on the Agrarian Question edited by Kautsky in 1898.—Transl.]

⁸ [Edward Bernstein, an old friend and comrade of Kautsky, in 1897 published a series of articles in the "Neue Zeit," in which he severely criticised the Marxian system. By his criticism a current was encouraged that had long existed in the German party, so that a split ensued and the party was divided into "Radicals" and "Reformists." Kautsky was at the head of the former: the latter were followers of Bernstein.—Transl.]

Jaurès,⁹ "L'Action Socialiste," that breathes a freshness characteristic of him. Best of all it, of course, vacation time—the time of doing absolutely nothing, only I never possess will power enough to compel myself to be lazy.

I wish you pleasant recreation and myself—the opportunity of seeing you soon again.

With hearty greetings,

Your Rosa Luxemburg.

I hope in about two weeks to see Clara¹⁰ (upon the return trip).

⁹ [Jean Jaurès, the great French socialist, was murdered by an insane nationalist named Villain in July, 1914.]

¹⁰ [Clara Zetkin, veteran leader in the German communist movement.—Transl.]

II

INCIPIENT FRIENDSHIP

1900—1904

12.

Post Card from Friedenau, 11.5.1900, to Paris.

Mes amis! The children have studied their lessons and are going to *Werder* with Uncle Roman. The weather is cool (the boys have warm suits), but bright and clear. The children are awaiting news from you.

Greetings!

R. L.

13.

Friedenau, 13.7.1900, to Sellin, on the
Island of Rügen.

My Dears: Many thanks for the charming post card. So you are enjoying a wonderful stay in this excellent weather *et tout va pour le mieux dans ce meilleur des mondes!* Enclosed herewith the reply of Mehring, which I received today and from which you will learn the Telemachide of my article. I found myself in a comical position indeed: no reply from M., so that I could, of course, not send it to Cunow¹; nor could I notify him

¹ [At that time associate editor of the "Neue Zeit."
—L. K.]

(C) not to count upon me for this issue of the "Neue Zeit," since I don't know C's address (I have failed to note it down). And I also could not ask you, dear Karl,—I did not know your address either until the card arrived! I have a terrible memory (in Poland we call it a "cat's head") for names, addresses and similar details concerning an "object," and I was certain, for instance, that I had accompanied you to Sassnitz.—Now the whole matter is cleared up and in order. M, then, agrees with you with reference to the opportuneness of the article, and this confirms the intention which I already had after my talk with you, namely, to turn the article over to the gnawing of criticism—well, let us say of the moths, considering the time of the year! I simply wanted to know M's *opinion*; as for the rest, I admit my tactical error only with reference to the political moment and not with reference to the parliamentary Cretinism within the party itself, which you denied.—But to have to read or think or discuss about "parliamentary Cretinism" in the midst of a bright June sun, in the green, fragrant, shady temple of nature (*i.e.*, the forest on the post card), and amid the peaceful rush of the eternal Thalatta? * * * * I will spare you this.

Let us, therefore, speak of Thalatta. Apropos, are you thinking, while it rushes forever by your feet, of the pretty story of the blind Greek singer, who played on his lyre at the shores of the sea and took the splashing of its waves to be the murmurings of the people; and who, when he heard no applause of the multitude upon completing his most beautiful song, complained bitterly of their ingratitude and in his bitter despondency cast the lyre far from him so that it might break to pieces, but it was caught by a wave of the sea and was

lovingly wafted on by it? And have you any illusions there, of the whole sea smelling of freshly baked cake—a baked Fata Morgana, an illusion such as that experienced by the fisherman with whom our darling lived on Helgoland?

It seems to me that the most overwhelming feeling in connection with the sea must be that—of one's own nothingness in comparison with the eternal, the unchanging, the proudly indifferent character of the ocean. This feeling seized me when I visited the Fall of the Rhine in Switzerland; its incessant roar, never abating for one second, but going on day and night and continuing through centuries, created a horrible feeling of destruction in me. I returned home quite dashed and dazed, and every time, even now, when I ride past there and from the window of my train behold the terrible spectacle, the evanescent foam, the white, boiling, watery cavern, and hear the deafening roar, my heart contracts and something within me says, there is the enemy. You are surprised? Of course it is the enemy—that is, of human vanity which otherwise imagines itself to be something and which here collapses suddenly into nothing. A somewhat similar effect, by the way, is that produced by a philosophy of life which says of all happenings, as also Ben Akiba, "*it was always thus,*" "things will turn out all right by themselves," and the like, and man with his will, his ability and his knowledge seems so superfluous. * * * For this reason I hate that sort of a philosophy and insist, *mon cher Charlemagne*, that one ought rather to throw oneself into the Fall of the Rhine and go under in it like a nutshell, rather than let it continue to rush on, wisely nodding

its head, as it used to rush in the time of our forebears and as it will continue to rush after us.—Dear Lulu! your reseda and carnations are still in bloom and are still “as gloriously fragrant as on the first day.”

I send you all heartiest greetings, including the children and the *Gänsmädle*.²

Your Rosa.

P. S. The latest issue of the “Sozialistische Monatshefte” contains three articles on the trade union question: Legien, Bernstein and Wetzker. Have you it or shall I send it? Please return M’s letter.

[Carl Legien was for many years president of the German Federation of Trade Unions, a position corresponding to that held by Samuel Gompers in America. Legien died in 1920. Wetzker was at that time one of the editors of the *Vorwärts*.—Transl.]

14.

Undated. According to content: Friedenau, End of July, 1900.

Dear Friend:

Again I must address you—this time with a request. Nothing has come of the Elm matter³ for Comrade Bein: he has offered him the position of member of the executive committee of the Co-operative Society of Bruns-

² [Literally “little goose shepherdess”—a term, rather of affection, applied to Kautsky’s domestic, Zenzi, a Suabian girl.—Transl.]

³ [Elm was a distinguished member of the party, and a member of Parliament. He lived in Hamburg, where he organized an active co-operative movement. Bein and Kassjusz were Polish party members.—Transl.]

wick, which does not suit his purposes at all. This position would, however, do very well as a makeshift for another one of my friends, the "Sibiriak" Kassjusz, whose endeavors to find employment in Berlin have thus far been entirely devoid of results.

In order that something may come of this matter, however, you, dear Carolus, must put in a powerful word, which according to the opinion of Elm, too, is necessary. Please write the "warmest" recommendation possible to the Brunswick comrades on behalf of Comrade Kassjusz, who actually has more than enough points in his favor to fill this post satisfactorily. For, he possesses the following talents: 1. Completed the full course in the Academy of Commerce at Warsaw. 2. Knows Polish, Russian, Tchechish, German, French, and English. 3. Is specially interested in the co-operative movement, of which he is anxious to gain practical knowledge at Brunswick. 4. Is married (which fact will vouch for his "stability"). 5. Has had to pay for his social-democratic activity by being condemned to ten years in prison and in banishment. (N. B. At present he has not come as a fugitive, but voluntarily—let us say for purposes of studying the co-operative movement—to Germany.)

In case the Brunswick friends agree in principle to this matter, he would be willing until October 1 (from which time on the position will be vacant) to work as a volunteer either in Brunswick or in a local co-operative for purposes of preparing himself practically and learning his duties.

The fact that you do not know the people in Brunswick personally makes no difference; your recommendation is nevertheless of the greatest importance. Just send such

a letter to me here; Comrade Kassjusz will take it with him to Brunswick and introduce himself.

I can well believe that it is much pleasanter during this hot time to squat down in the woods and, lying upon one's back, "to listen to the heavens divulging their blue secrets," rather than to write recommending—and other (*sapienti sat*) letters. The most horrible thing of all, however, is to dance about during this same heat on the dear curbstones of Berlin without having a job; and the feeling one has after a good deed is also a nice bit of scenery * * * therefore do the deed!

I kiss you all heartily!

Your Rosa.

15.

My dear Friends:

First of all hearty thanks for the prompt and "warm" disposal of my request concerning our Roman [Kassjusz.] The people in Brunswick are true comrades; your letter, dear Carolus, worked *comme une foudre* and K has every prospect of landing the position (by the end of this week we expect the reply).

Last week I saw Singer ⁴ and Liebknecht; ⁴ they would hear nothing of a China agitation in meetings, because

⁴ [Paul Singer, a leader in the German Social-democracy and a magistrate and alderman of Berlin.—Transl.]

[William Liebknecht, father of Karl Liebknecht, lived for many years as an emigrant in London with Karl Marx. He later became a member of the German Reichstag and opposed the war of 1870. He was condemned for high treason and imprisoned for more than two years. He died in 1900.—Transl.]

[Arthur Stadthagen, one of the astutest Berlin lawyers.

it was hot.⁵ On the other hand beautiful Arthur⁴ spoke very well and quite wittily in the 6 District, and the house was packed. There was much laughter when he said, among other things: "What would people say if China suddenly sent her volunteers to Germany, in order to ferret out all the murderers that have remained undiscovered here and to punish them? * * *"

I am glad to know that you are so beautifully lazy in the warm sun; it seems, however, as though a series of thunder showers were coming, in which case it may be less attractive for you over there * * * My vacation will go by the boards for the present, a fact that I don't regret very much, as it has been very nice here; and as for loafing—this, too, I have accomplished with the best of success. In compensation therefor I went on an agitation trip into the province of Posen last Sunday, where we had a district conference, and where I was solemnly elected delegate to the national party convention and to the congress at Paris. The good people even insisted upon paying a part of my expenses. You see, idealism has not yet died in the province! * * *

At Mayence,⁶ Bebel is to speak about the elections to the provincial assembly and Calwer about commercial treaties. Singer deems your presence, Carolus, necessary

The Bar Association canceled his membership because of his socialistic activities.—Transl.]

⁵ [This was the time when Emperor William II sent Count Waldersee with an army to punish the Chinese for having killed a couple of missionaries. William declared he hoped the Germans would behave like Huns.—Transl.]

⁶ [The National Socialist Congress of 1900 took place in Mayence.—Transl.]

in view of the latter theme. I too; perhaps you will let yourself be persuaded after all?

All the world is asking about you: Liebknecht, Stadthagen, Strietzel * * * (the last named is the "merchant" from the other side of the boundary—lest you imagine that it may possibly be any old, recently elected rhinoceros from our faction!).

The blood—or rather plaster—scaffolding before your balcony has long disappeared; I often cast an eye upon your windows, wherefore your dragon of a landlady evidently harbors the intention of having me arrested on the charge of "preparing to burglarize and steal." And another thing: "our darling on Helgoland," who smelled the baked Fata Morgana, is not Arthur Stadthagen, but a certain Heinrich Heine (see his Second Letter from Helgoland). *Scham Di*,⁷ Lulu, as the Swiss say!—I kiss you all heartily; I trust you are all in good spirits. Send me a message soon.

Your faithful Rosa.

16.

Undated. According to the content: Friedenau
about August 9, 1900.

My beloved:

I suppose you have by this time discovered your error:⁸ I had telegraphed you about *Liebknecht's* death. I did

⁷ ["Be ashamed of yourself"—Swiss-German dialect.—Transl.]

⁸ [Rosa had telegraphed: "Old man died." We supposed she meant her father and sent her our sympathy accordingly. Afterwards it developed that she referred to Wilhelm Liebknecht.—L. K.]

this in order that you might arrange your departure accordingly, so that Carl at least might be present at the funeral. The latter will take place *Sunday* at 12. At the same time you will see Clara [Zetkin]. I, too, have not yet seen her. * * *

The death of the old man has stirred me deeply. All petty details disappear and—be it what it will—I see nothing but the broad-minded, pithy figure of the old gentleman. Alas, my friends, disintegration is beginning with us! The *moral* loss brought by L's death is greater than you perhaps imagine at first. The old generation gradually passes away, and there remains—God pity us! * * * Not long ago, when I called at the "Vorwärts" office (I wrote you about it), the old man suddenly whispered to me as I bade him good-bye: "For you I shall always do everything I can. As a matter of fact, I had seriously proposed you as editor, and I should have been happy to have you. But if you have anything fulminating, give it to me for the 'Vorwärts,' it will have more weight there than in the 'L. V.'" (Abbreviation for Leipziger Volkzeitung.)

I promised to do so, and at the end he extended a hearty invitation to me to visit him, saying that he and his wife would be glad to see me.

This is a mere detail, but I feel comforted to have taken leave of him in peace. We also talked to him and Singer about the questions of the provincial assembly at Mayence; more about this when we can talk to each other.

Who will now fill the place in the "Vorw."? I should think Mehring would be the most logical candidate! Whoever it may be, the change will be a significant one!

Poor old man—he died just in time to retain his fame * * *

Hearty kisses to you! Write me when you expect to come and I shall await you.

Your Rosa.

17.

Undated. According to Content: May, 1901.

Dear Carl:

If you want to discover all the vulgarities of P . . . , you will have to compare the "reprint" in the "Vorwärts" with the original letter of Vaillant in the "Neue Zeit." The enclosed letter of Clara, which I ask you kindly to return, contains a reference to it.

In replying to P . . .'s formally correct assertion that the party is just as little responsible for articles in the "V." as we are responsible for all articles in the "N. Z.," it might be well if you were to call his attention to the fact that there is, after all, a difference: while in this whole affair the "N. Z." stands on the principles of the party and on the basis of the old comradeship-in-arms with the French Social-Democracy, P . . . is concerned at every step to put in a warm word for the socialist minister in this whole French affair—*contrary* to his assurance that he rests upon the basis of their (the French comrades') resolution.

I am of the opinion that such a reference would be very useful.

Greetings!

Your R.

[The letter of Vaillant to Kautsky concerned Mille-
rand's entry into the government. Vaillant, according

to Kautsky, was one of the first initiators of Marxism in France and a special friend of Rosa's from her Paris days.—Transl.]

18.

Friedenau, 3. 10. 1901.

Dear Carl:

Of course I am willing to abstain from publishing my declaration in the "Neue Zeit." Permit me now to add a few words of explanation to it.

If I were one of those who, without consideration for anybody else, safeguard their own rights and interests—and their number is legion within our party, or rather: that's the way they all are—I should naturally insist upon the publication, for you yourself admitted that you as editor had certain obligations toward me in this case. But in admitting this obligation, you at the same time place a revolver of friendly admonition and of entreaties at my breast, not to make use of this obligation and of my rights. Well, I am nauseated at the idea of insisting upon my rights when these are to be granted me amid groans and chattering of teeth, and when people not only fall into my arms at every word of defence, expecting me thus to "defend" myself, but on top of it all try in every way to beat me to pulp, so that I may renounce my rights. You have gained what you are after—I free you in this case from all obligations toward me. But in this whole matter, according to all appearances, you are suffering from the delusion of earnestly believing that you acted solely out of friendship and in *my* interests. Permit me to destroy this self-deception. As a *friend* you ought to have spoken to me somewhat as fol-

lows: "I advise you unconditionally and at every price to defend your honor as a writer, for greater writers and men whose reputation was established through decades, like Marx and Engels, wrote whole brochures, conducted entire ink-wars when anybody dared accuse them of even the slightest forgery. All the more must you, who are a young writer with many enemies, seek to obtain the minutest satisfaction in such a case." That is what you ought surely to have said as *friend*.

The friend was, however, pushed into the background entirely by the editor of the "Neue Zeit," and the latter has but one desire since that party convention: he wants to be left *undisturbed*; he wants to demonstrate that the "Neue Zeit" has learned to behave after the whipping it received, and to keep its mouth shut. And for that reason the good right of an associate and contributor to the "Neue Zeit," viz. the right to safeguard her weightiest interests and to defend herself against public calumny, may be *sacrificed*. Let a worker for the "Neue Zeit"—and one, at that, who does not do the least nor the worst work—swallow even the public accusation of *forgery*, provided only everything remains quiet!

That's how this matter lies, my friend! And now, with hearty greetings your

Rosa.

I am head over heels in work and must therefore write. I can only do it this moment.

[Rosa had been very sharply attacked at the party convention at Lübeck, after she had left the meeting, by Comrade Richard Fischer. She therefore desired to publish an equally sharp rejoinder. The editor of the "Neue Zeit" tried to dissuade her, and in the present letter she yields to his entreaties.—L. K.]

19.

Postcard, undated, post-marked Chemnitz, 6.6.03.

Chemnitz, Carolahotel.

My beloved:

I have chosen Chemnitz as *pied-a-terre* and I ride from here to the meetings every day. In Hohenstein the hall was overcrowded. An opponent (teacher) fortunately asked for the floor; it was a circus. After the meeting an old workingman presented me with—one mark! In Lichtenstein I spoke at an open air meeting yesterday before 2000 persons in a garden decorated with Japanese lanterns—it was very romantic—Here in Chemnitz I saw Mäxchen⁹ and was even present at a meeting of the electoral committee. Max would far prefer to have no meetings, no handbills, no argument with his opponents. He said he feared that his opponents would “rub it in” on him that Bebel had called him a rascal. That was, of course, a jab intended for me.—I have received word from Warsch¹⁰ that he is highly delighted with your article, Carolus¹¹ and that you have told the “parches”¹² exactly what was necessary. Please, therefore, accept my thanks also! Hearty greetings to you all.

Rosa.

⁹ [Schippel, a member of Parliament for Chemnitz.—Transl.]

¹⁰ [Warschawski at that time edited the “Przeglad Socyaldemocraticzny,” organ of the social democracy of Poland and Lithuania.—L. K.]

¹¹ [Refers to an article by Kautsky, entitled “The Massacre of Kishinev and the Jewish Question,” which appeared in the “Neue Zeit.”—L. K.]

¹² [Jewish expression for “blockheads.”—Transl.]

20.

Post card Hessenwinkel, 21.7.04
addressed to "Ladies and Gentlemen Kautsky" in
St. Gilgen.

My beloved:

Here I am sitting in this little hole as it is reproduced above. My special thanks to dear Granny for the Witte Girlies. I enjoy them more every day, but this enjoyment by spoonfuls is a devilish invention of the newspaper folk. For you, *cara Luigia*, herewith the last installment of Schubel. Sorry, but there are no more of this kind. And how is the dear teacher? Thinking up rotten jokes? I received a card today from Königsberg from all the good spirits there.

Many hearty greetings to the whole Kautsky tribe.

Your loving

Rosa.

["Dear Granny" refers to the mother of Karl Kautsky. The "Witte Girlies" refers to the heroines in a novel by Minna Kautsky and "Schubel" refers to a character in a serial novel in the "Berliner Tageblatt."—L. K.]

21.

From Hessenwinkel, undated,
probably end of July, 1904.

Carissima Luigina:

Above all we ought to congratulate ourselves upon Königsberg.¹³ It is a real joy-and-triumphal feast; at

¹³ [The great trial at Königsberg on the charge of sedition and treason ended on July 25, 1904, with the acquittal of the three principal defendants and with negligible awards against the rest of the defendants.—L. K.]

least I feel it as such here and I hope you experience the same feelings over where you are, despite the heat and the beauties of nature. Zounds! such a bloody judgment over Russia and Prussia is still more beautiful than all the rugged mountains and the smiling valleys!

As to me, I am enjoying only the latter, more modest portion of nature's beauties—but by way of compensation in limitless quantity—*à discretion*. “The great sandbox of the blessed holy Roman Empire's German nation,” as the good Mark¹⁴ used to be called, has led me into the deeply philosophical question: How is it, anyway, that, wherever there is a *mountain*, there must unconditionally be a valley somewhere, so that one can always enjoy both; but where there is *only a valley*, as for instance here in Hessenwinkel, there is—well,—*only valley*, and that's all there is to it! Can you solve this geological riddle for me? (But, please, don't you, by maliciously hinting at the genial nature of the question, call it a “psychological” instead of a geological riddle!). But to be serious: it is wonderful here: hours of woods, lakes—wherever you spit,—(pardon, it wasn't meant that way), and idyllic *quiet*. The advantages of these surroundings have gradually filled my soul. For, at the beginning I was still so over-tired mentally that an invisible paper hung suspended from heaven down to earth, as it were, interposing itself between my senses and the blossoming “object,” and I did not *experience* the beauties that struck my eyes and my ears, but merely *registered* them with the equanimity of a Baedeker. Every day I go on long hikes (I rise at—6! Carl, don't fall off the chair) and enjoy the devoted company of a quadruped

¹⁴ [The section of territory north of Berlin, once ruled over by the Margraves of Brandenburg.—Transl.]

sheared à la lion and called "Lump" (*les beaux esprits se recontrent*), who greets me every morning with joyous barking when "we" go out walking. Everybody observes and is surprised to notice that his intelligence grows visibly by virtue of his active intellectual intercourse with me, this despite the fact that I do not even make use of the editorials in the "Vorwärts" as an educational auxiliary, as I used to do with my highly blessed Mimi.¹⁵ Anyway, think of me here as in a sort of paradise before the ejection of Adam with family: at every step I meet all sorts of animals that I have otherwise seen only behind a lattice at the Zoo. Not to mention hares, my path is crossed daily by deer (*not* those married to Liebkn),¹⁶ squirrels and the like! I next expect some leopards, rhinoceros and bisons.

A propos, the other day, of course, I ran into an honest-to-God comrade, a real, actual comrade from the east side of Berlin, just as I was on a harmless stroll and as, deeply engrossed in the blue secrets of the heavens and the green secrets of the forest, I was strolling about miles away from every shadow of class consciousness. Unfortunately for me, he was even a comrade in the narrower sense of the word, in that our forefathers were of similar faith. He was naturally very happy about the meeting, told me a mass of class conscious news and promised unconditionally to visit me in the near future with several additional comrades. (Our forefathers used in cases of that kind merely to say "masloff"¹⁷ for short.) Still, he finally recompensed me for the pleasures

¹⁵ [Rosa's pet rabbit.—Transl.]

¹⁶ [The maiden name of Natalie Liebknecht was "Reh" (deer).—L. K.]

¹⁷ [Hebrew expression for much luck.—L. K.]

which I experienced and which are yet in store for me by telling me a new Berlin joke. It is this: in Berlin the "Montagsblatt" has been rebaptized and since the beginning of the vacation has been dubbed "Ode am Montag."¹⁸ Corking, eh? Now, quickly give me a kiss as my messenger's fee for bringing you this joke, and then adieu for the present—"Lump" is calling me and the "Lumpin" is always willing—to go out walking.

A *propos*, Luigina, what about our joint journey?¹⁹ The bureau will "sit" before the congress, on the morning of the 13th. I must therefore be there as early as the 12th and leave Berlin on the 11th. Can you arrange? Now one more kiss.—Pardon, one more thing: Clara has just written me that her Breslau case has been dropped! First result of the Königsberg fiasco, which is, however, not at all to Clara's liking, since she has been so happy in anticipation of the joint indictment with Comrades Schiller and Fichte!²⁰ I suppose the latter will be in bad spirits even in heaven, because they have missed out on a "divine" comedy! But now a kiss in all seriousness.

Your,

R.

¹⁸ [Montagsblatt, *i.e.*, Monday News or Monday Paper; ode am Montag, *i. e.*, Desolation on Monday. Ode is in turn a pun on Ede (Edward) Bernstein, then editor of the Monday News.—Transl.]

¹⁹ [To Amsterdam to the International Socialist Congress Aug. 14-20, 1904.—L. K.]

²⁰ [Clara Zetkin had been indicted for having "incited to class hatred and class struggle" in a speech at Breslau, in the course of which she had quoted from Schiller's poem and from Fichte's philosophical works. The indictment was withdrawn later.—Transl.]

Carl may have one also, if he cares to. The boys likewise.

22.

Undated. According to content: from
Hessenwinkel, beginning of August, 1904.

Dearest Luigina:

You don't send one word by way of reply, and meanwhile the time is passing. I am beginning to doubt whether you received my detailed letter. Therefore, once more the question: can you arrange your affairs in such a way that we may leave as early as the morning of the 12th? You see, I must attend a session of the International Bureau on the morning of the 13th, and since (on invitation of the Russians) I shall have one or two other meetings on the same day besides, I should prefer not to travel through the night (3. class), otherwise I shan't be good for anything the following day. I shall therefore leave on the 11.50 *noon* train (Friedrichstrasse station) on the 12th and arrive in Amsterdam at 9.50 P. M. Write me at once whether I am to order a return ticket (45 days) for you (36 M 40 Pf.—almost \$9.00); I believe one must order them a day in advance. As you had thought anyway of traveling through the night, would it not be possible for you to go by night from Gilgen to Berlin and to arrive there early on the 12th? To be sure, that will mean quite an exertion for you as well as for the children, but I know no other way out. I *must* in any case leave at noon on the 12th. Therefore, please send me word by return mail, dearest!

I was under high pressure all of last week: a meeting in Posen, one in Bromberg, then a family visit in Berlin

and even now much left to be done. Many thanks for the beautiful card from the boys and Miss Else. I regret that I can't fly to you, since I have gained weight and have become heavier by several grams. Meanwhile many hearty greetings to Granny, Carl, yourself, and the children!

A rivederci,
Your Rosa.

III

FROM THE IMPRISONMENT AT ZWICKAU TO THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

23.

[Note: Rosa had been imprisoned because of *lèse majesté* in Zwickau. When, on the occasion of King Frederick August of Saxony's coronation, general amnesty was declared (Oct. 15, 1904), she was set at liberty much against her will; she was unwilling to take advantage of it, but all her protests availed her nothing and she had to accept the amnesty which was so hateful to her.—L. K.]

Cell Nr. 7, 1.9.04 (Zwickau).

Beloved Luigina:

Many thanks for your card. Rest at ease about me; everything is all right with me; air, sun, books and amiableness on the part of fellow human beings surround me. Don't count much, however, on letters from me. I ought really to write but once a month, and oftener only in case something very important is at issue. But all letters addressed to me are, as I hope, delivered. Address: Zwickau, Amtsgerichtsgefängniss (county jail). Please see to it that this news reaches my home (Kranach street) also.

And now for two requests: please advise my brother, the physician (via 27 Anspacher street) *not* to come to

visit me; it is useless to try. Also, when my article appears, please send me a copy, also Carl's reply. In case, however, the editors¹ absolutely decline, Carl will please give the manuscript to Mehring.² Do write! My thoughts are with the Rhenish-Westphalian Coal Syndicate,³ my heart with you and in Holland.

Your ever and unshakably happy

Rosa.

24.

Undated. Zwickau 04.

Dearest:⁴ Many thanks for Carl's photo with the delightful dedication! The picture is excellent, the first really good portrait of him that I have seen. The eyes, the expression in the face—everything splendid. (Only the necktie, the necktie swarming with white beans, which fairly fascinate the eye!—a tie like that is reason for a divorce. Yes, yes, the women—even in the case of the most exalted spirit they notice the tie before everything else * * *). The picture gives me great pleasure. Yesterday the letter from grandmother arrived. She writes a dear message in order to cheer me up, but succeeds poorly in hiding her own depression. Give her my heartiest greetings; I hope she is in good spirits again; here at

¹ [The editors of the "Vorwärts."—L. K.]

² [Mehring was at that time editor of the "Leipziger Volkszeitung."—L. K.]

³ [A big strike of the coal miners had broken out as the result of a grave labor dispute in the Ruhr region.—Transl.]

⁴ [Up to now Rosa Luxemburg has used the more formal second person plural "Sie" when addressing the Kautskys. From now on she uses the familiar second person singular "Du."—Transl.]

least there is the loveliest weather. It seems, however, that as soon as I am away, the whole world is at sixes and sevens. Is it true what I have read in the *Tageblatt*—has Franciscus resigned? !⁵ But that would be a debacle—a triumph for the entire Fifth Estate. Was it not possible to keep him from taking this step? The whole affair really upset me and depressed me. And you don't even write me details about it, you terrible thing!

It is evening now, and a soft breeze is blowing into the cell from above through my dormer window. It touches my green lamp-shade lightly and softly turns the pages of my volume of Schiller, which lies opened before me. Beyond the prison a horse is being led home slowly, and its hoofs strike the pavement quietly and rhythmically in the stillness of the night. From afar, hardly audible, I hear the capricious notes of a mouth organ on which some cobbler's apprentice, ambling by, is blowing a waltz. A line comes to my mind that I read somewhere recently: "Imbedded amid the treetops—lies your quiet little garden,—where the roses and carnations long have waited for your love—imbedded amid treetops—lies your little garden" * * * I don't catch the meaning of these words; in fact, I don't know whether they have any meaning, but, together with the breeze, which fondly strokes my hair, they rock me, as it were, and awaken queer feelings in me. This gentle breeze—this treacherous little thing—it beckons me to go far, far away, I don't know myself where. Life is playing an everlasting game of hide-and-seek with me. I always have the feeling that life is not within me, not wherever I happen to be, but somewhere

⁵ [Franz Mehring, who in consequence of a quarrel had resigned the editorship of the "*Leipziger Volkszeitung*." —Transl.]

else, far away. Back at home, in my childhood, I used to sneak to the window in the earliest hours of the morning—it was strictly forbidden to arise before father—open it wide and peep out into the courtyard. To be sure, there was not much to be seen there. Everybody was still asleep, a cat walked gently on soft soles across the court, a couple of sparrows quarrelled with each other, twittering insolently, and Long Antoni, clad in his short sheep-fur, which he wore summer and winter, stood at the pump, resting both his hands and his chin on the broomstick, deep reflection being writ upon his sleepy, unwashed face. This Antoni, you see, was a man of higher instincts. Every evening after the gate had been locked he sat in the hall-way on the bench that constituted his sleeping accommodations, and in the twilight of the lantern spelled out the official "Police News," aloud, so that it sounded throughout the house like a subdued litany. He was guided by nothing save a pure interest in literature, for he did not understand a word and merely loved the letters for their own sake. Nevertheless it was not easy to satisfy him. When on one occasion, in response to his request for something to read, I gave him Lubbock's "Beginnings of Civilization," which I had just finished with a great effort as my first "serious" book, he returned it to me after two days, declaring that it was "no good." For my part, it took me several years before I realized how right Antoni was.—Well then, Antoni used always to stand there for some time deeply lost in thought, after which, without any previous warning, he burst out into a quaking, crackling, far-resounding yawn, and this liberating yawn always meant: now the work begins. I can still hear the drawling, clacking tone emitted by the wet, crooked broom as

Antoni drew it over the cobble stones and æsthetically and carefully drew delicate, even circles that looked like the fringe of Brussels lace along the border. His sweeping of the court was nothing short of a poem. And that was the nicest moment, too, before the empty, noisy, hammering life of the tenement house began. A consecrated stillness of the morning hour hovered over the triviality of the pavement, above in the window panes there glittered the early gold of the young sun, and high above there floated rosy-cheeked, dainty clouds before they disappeared in the grey heaven of the metropolis. At that time I had the firm conviction that "life," "real" life was somewhere far away, beyond the roofs. Since then I have been traveling to find it. But it always hides behind some roof or other. Was it, after all, nothing but a hallucination, and has real life remained right there in the court, where we read the "Beginnings of Civilization" for the first time with Antoni?

I embrace you affectionately,
Rosetta.

The Basle "comedy" brought me real pleasure.⁶ Wullschlaeger,⁷ who receives the blessing from Rome, and beside him *son excellence* Millerand,⁸ who sings hymns of

⁶ [Evidently refers to the fact that the International Association for Labor Legislation met in Basle (in 1904) and that at the end the Italian delegate, Soderini of Rome, thanked the Basle Government for the reception.—L. K.]

⁷ [Wullschlaeger, a Swiss socialist and governmental counsellor in Berne.—L. K.]

⁸ [Millerand had evidently—I have not been able to find this out exactly—said something complimentary to the German social policy.—L. K.]

praise to Berlin! * * * What are those words of the old convent hymn: *Et pro rege et pro papa bibunt vinum sine aqua*. Cheerio! The world is getting more beautiful all the time!

25.

Undated. According to content Zwickau 1904.

Dear Carolus:

Thanks for the information. I, too, had not expected much from the Press Committee.⁹ I shall now refrain for the present from publishing the article, for I can well understand that a press discussion can't be conducted adequately from the prison cell. There is one thing, though, that I want to urge most earnestly upon you: write a few words to Plechanow¹⁰ (his address, if necessary, is to be found in my home), in order to inform him as to the fate of the article; he is waiting for its publication. Will you do that? Thank you in advance! Reassure him that later, when I am free again, we shall certainly find an opportunity to raise the whole question and to say the right thing in our press. (Tell him, too, that the executive committee of the party is on *our* side.)

So you now have other fights to fight! I am quite happy about this, for it shows that these dear people felt our victory in Amsterdam quite severely. As far as I can judge the situation, they intend to have their revenge at Bremen—and that is a broth that we shall salt good and hard for them! That's why I am vexed at your envying me the cell. I don't doubt but that you will

⁹ [Of the "Vorwärts."—L. K.]

¹⁰ [One of the founders of the Russian Social-Democratic party.—Transl.]

hit Kurt,¹¹ George¹² & Co. quite thoroughly on their so-called heads. But you must do it with spirit and joy and not as though it were a bothersome intermezzo, for the public always senses the spirit of the combatants, and the joy of battle gives resonance to a controversy and ensures moral superiority. To be sure, you are now quite alone, as I observe; August¹³ will surely remain in the vineyard of the Lord till Point 18, and Arthur dear¹⁴ and Pauly dear¹⁴ are "elegiac," as you put it. Would that thunder and lightning struck them seven fathoms deep into the ground, if they can still be "elegiac" after such a congress!!—between two battles, when one is happy to be alive! Carl, this present "brawl" is certainly not a forced skirmish, fought out in the grey atmosphere of listlessness, such as you have been compelled to fight many a time in recent years! The interest of the masses is astir again; I feel it even here, penetrating through the prison walls. And don't forget that the *Internationale* is now looking with bated breath upon us—I should rather say, upon you, for the starting point of the whole controversy is Amsterdam. I am writing you all this not to stir you up to rebellion—I am not so devoid of good taste as all that, but rather to make you *happy* at the controversy, or at least to transmit *my* joy to you, for here in No. 7 I can't do much with that commodity.

Do you know, I have thought a great deal about Amsterdam, about the general position of the international

¹¹ [Kurt Eisner, later premier of the short-lived Bavarian Soviet Republic.—L. K.]

¹² [George Gradnauer, Saxon socialist leader.—L. K.]

¹³ [August Bebel.—L. K.]

¹⁴ [Arthur Stadthagen and Paul Singer.—L. K.]

movement and the prospects of our Marxism in the *Internationale*. There is so much to say to you about it, but that must wait. The moral of the whole story for me is this: there is an immense amount of work *to do* and especially an immense amount *to study*—I mean the movement in the different countries. I have a feeling that we (the Germans) will gain a supremacy and influence even by the mere *knowledge* of the movement in the other countries; and on the other hand I feel that we shall strengthen our position (in the narrower sense) within the *German* movement by our very approach to the *Internationale*. In a word, I am happy to be alive.

Please send me your articles, *but in the form of clippings*. I am sure that Clara is not “elegiac” but appreciates her contact with you and me. Both of you will have hot days ahead in Bremen. Do arrive at an understanding with her in time; one can depend on her. I should so much like to have a letter from *her*. *A propos* of the 4th Volume,¹⁵ when will it appear? You see, I should like to write a review of it; a number of thoughts about this material are crowding into my head.

And now to you, dearest Louise, or rather, now only to you, for this whole letter is for you too. Oftentimes you understand my mood better and more quickly (if there is anything to “understand”). There was so much I wanted to write, and yet I must be so brief! Well then, only this much, that your letters put me in the sunniest frame of mind. Thank you a thousand times for every word. You are giving me such a vivid picture of your surroundings! Send the heartiest letters from me to Holland. Write often, but only when you *like* to—don’t

¹⁵ [Kautsky was at that time preparing the fourth volume of Marx’s “Capital.”—L. K.]

force yourself to. I kiss you all and the boys. Greetings to Granny.

Your
Rosa.

Louise dear, write to Troelstra and tell him that I shall embrace the first opportunity to visit Frau Sjoukje¹⁶ when we get there. You may send a photograph perfectly safely. Write me two words immediately from Bremen¹⁷ as to what the situation there is.

26.

Undated, Zwickau, second half of September 04.

Can you imagine, dearest, how one feels when one receives letters like that last one of yours and is unable to sit down at once to reply? That is certainly adding cruelly to the punishment. In return, however, O how thankful I am to you when a sunny greeting like that casts its rays in here! The Sunny Child¹⁸ which you sent me has reached me safely and I can never tire of looking at it. It is a wonderful face; the oval especially reminds me of the Mona Lisa Gioconda.

Bremen makes an excellent impression upon me even as seen through the Mosse-rag¹⁹ upon which I am dependent. As regards the Max episode²⁰ I had to tell

¹⁶ [Troelstra's first wife.—L. K.]

¹⁷ [Socialist party convention at Bremen, Sept. 18-24, 1904.—L. K.]

¹⁸ [Photograph of Troelstra's daughter.—L. K.]

¹⁹ [Refers to the "Berliner Tageblatt," owned by Rudolf Mosse.—L. K.]

²⁰ [At the Bremen party convention an exceedingly sharp vote of censure, introduced by Bebel, was passed against Max Schippel by a vote of 234 to 44.—L. K.]

myself with a sad smile that Nemesis in this case as so often otherwise strikes not the most guilty nor the most dangerous, but the least clever. What will he do now? I think he will say despite everything, "I'll stick to you all the same." In any case, as far as I can judge it, the general spirit is excellent. Of course, many things look very different from a distance. I am very curious to know what an impression Carl brings home with him. You will hear about it, of course; do write me soon. You know that every, even the smallest detail is of importance to me.—That you had not gone to Bremen surprised me, though at the same time it filled me with secret joy. One is so petty-minded: just think, because I could not be there I felt comforted to think that you, too, remained at Friedenau; it seemed to me as though you were *nearer* and I not so lonesome! How childish! How is Granny? Has she settled as yet? Give her my cordial regards. Cruel one, why don't you send me the "wintry" picture? My guess is Granny. Have you explained to Troelstra and Mrs. Sjoukje that I am unfortunately unable to reply to their splendid letter? Aside from this, not a word from Holland! "Presageful angel" that I am, I took with me, as reading matter for my leisure hours, "your" Schiller,²¹ Vols. VII-IX: the history of the defection of the Netherlands. I am almost tempted to cry out with Marguerite of Parma, "And I wasted so much warm

²¹ [Rosa had a queer aversion to Schiller, for which she assigned the still queerer motive that her mother had doted on him and she therefore could not stand him because of a childish spirit of opposition; besides, he seemed too "unmodern" to her. I was able gradually to persuade her that Schiller was precisely the right man for her, and gradually she developed into a great Schiller enthusiast.—L. K.]

love upon this faithless people! Do you, as my faithful Alba, invade this apostate country with your mailed fist and remind it of its duties, of its vows." But no, rather let their evil deeds ripen, and when we two go to Amsterdam in January or February, the United Netherlands are to be conquered for the second time! No quarter will be given.—Have you read Leop. Schmidt's article on the opera in the *Tageblatt*? I was very well satisfied. But what will Herr Hans,²² who was so delighted at his Hülsen,²³ say? Even at this distance I felt by consulting the program that there is "nothing doing" now as before with the opera. Perhaps you are surprised to hear that I am thinking of music in my confinement. As a matter of fact, I am thinking about *everything*, and especially of joyous things. Do you know what picture of the future gives me the greatest recreation? When I picture to myself how you and I are going to "bum" in Amsterdam! That will be an awfully fine "escapade." And the gang there must invite us to the opera—that will be a part of the tribute to be levied in connection with the coming re-capture of the country.—Day before yesterday I found a frozen June bug, a belated postscript to a summer that has passed, down in the courtyard that constitutes my "garden" for walking about. Of course I brought it to the nearest first-aid station—to a warm window in the kitchen, but I know nothing about its further fate. Yesterday, in the same courtyard, I found

²² [Brother of Karl Kautsky, who was at that time royal theater painter at the Berlin Royal Opera.—L. K.]

²³ [Count Hülsen, of an old Prussian aristocratic family, was a favorite of Emperor William II. He was then general manager (intendant) of the Royal Court Theatre.—Transl.]

a tiny, pearl-grey, soft little feather, which in my ornithological feeble-mindedness I diagnosed as belonging to a young dove. Young Bendelein²⁴ would certainly be in a better position to inform me as to who handed this anonymous visiting card to me. I had intended to send him the little feather with this letter as a "document humain" in these inhuman times, and therefore carefully took it with me into my cell after my constitutional, but now I've lost it after all. Bendel will no doubt wonder how one can "lose" anything in a cell that is 7 of my steps long and 4 wide. Alas, little Bendel, in so small a cell one can even lose a large object, as happened, for instance, on one occasion with my patience. It was a dank, rainy day and I looked in vain in my cell for the escaped one. But just then a bright letter came from Friedenau, and immediately I found her—this good-for-nothing lady lay close beside the letter on the table and sulked. I send you all heartiest kisses. Give my best regards to Franciscus and poor Paul.²⁵

Your Rosina, Rosetta, as you please.

Dearest, perhaps you will write to Paris to inquire about Louise Guesde²⁶ (Rue Rodier 5). She was dangerously ill and I am concerned about her.

27.

Post card No. 1, undated,
Post mark Friedenau, 25.7.05.

To all the Kautskys in St. Gilgen, Salzkammergut.

My most beloved:

Thanks for the two cards. I had not intended to write

²⁴ [Bendel, youngest son of the Kautskys.—L. K.]

²⁵ [Franz Mehring and Paul Singer.—L. K.]

²⁶ [Jules Guesde's daughter.—L. K.]

you, although I yearn very much for St. Gilgen, because during vacation one should be freed of all fetters and hear nothing that may remind him of the other 11 months.—Here the weather is “abscheusslich”²⁷ as Henriette puts it, seven times daily sun and rain alternate; with apprehension I think of you, Carolus, and the weather in Gilgen.—Clara is very much excited about the “persecution” in the “V” (Vorwärts) and asks whether the party executive will let matters continue that way. As far as I am concerned, I note with pleasure how our friends, the enemies, make fools of themselves, for a “tone” like that can only harm the “V,” in that it will disgust the workers.—With a gentle blush I must now, in closing, confess what, after all, cannot be hidden long from the world: there has been a little increase in the family—Puck²⁸ is with me for the vacation. How are the beloved boys? I always incline especially toward “boyishness” and have a special longing for the three.

Many kisses,

R.

28.

Post card No. 2 of same date.

My beloved!

This genuine representative of the fair sex of course does not remember until she climbs the stairs as she returns home, that she has forgotten the main point:

²⁷ [“Abscheusslich” mispronounced for “abscheulich”—abominable—by Henriette Roland-Holst, a prominent Dutch socialist, now communist.]

²⁸ [Her rabbit.—L. K.]

Dearest Lulu, please write me at once—with Fritzi's²⁹ help—1. the exact address of her *Pension*, 2. what she must pay there, 3. conditions of being received there, 4. approximate number of boarding house guests, 5. what one can learn there—whether possibly the mysteries of sewing and cutting can be probed into. I haven't seen the Wurms³⁰ since then; instead, however, I saw Bertha³¹ several times. * * * Hannes³² was here several times. He sends heartiest greetings, on Monday he will mount his nag and his cannon in Munster. I am very curious about Granny's ambassador. Is he young? Good looking? Unmarried? Interesting? I could use all these qualities to good advantage (as well in my own case as in that of my *entourage*). But though he be old as the rocks, toothless, bald, deaf and hunch-backed—I shall receive him with open arms, as a messenger of the beloved Gans K.

Always entirely your

Rosa.

Hilferding has disappeared, Block is considering bringing a notice into the official gazette (on account of Henri-

²⁹ [Fritzi Kautsky, niece of Karl Kautsky.—L. K.]

³⁰ [Emanuel and Matilde Wurm, both prominent in the German socialist movement. Emanuel, who died in 1920, was national food minister during the revolution, November and February, 1918-19. Matilde is now a member of the German Reichstag.—Transl.]

³¹ [Bertha Thalheimer, sister of the editor of the "Rote Fahne," official organ of the German Communist Party.—Transl.]

³² [Hans Diefenbach, M. D., sergeant of the reserve with the field artillery, who had just been summoned to the colors.—L. K.]

ette's review). Don't you know what route the deserter may have taken? ³³

29.

Undated, probably Friedenau, Summer of 1905.

Dearest Carolus:

I am herewith sending you the prattle of Uljanoff (Lenin), the last lines of which concern you. I deem it necessary that you send a few words of correction to Huysmans ³⁴ for the information of the Bureau; ³⁵ you may remark casually that my article ³⁶ was not *pour la désorganisation*. That isn't important, though.

Many thanks to you, dearest Lulu, for your letter. I don't want to write much to you, for your vacation is not to be disturbed by any qualms of conscience. I must ask you, however, to be so awfully good as to send me the address of the *Pension* where Dieuwke Troelstra * is stopping. Fritzi's is no good in Hans' opinion; therefore be good enough to send me the other; if you don't know

³³ [Dr. Rudolf Hilferding, minister of finance in the first Stresemann cabinet, 1923, was at this time on the editorial staff of the "Neue Zeit." He had previously been threatened with expulsion from Germany for having dared to teach a course at a German workers' school although he was an Austrian.—Transl.]

³⁴ [Camille Huysmans of Belgium, for many years secretary of the Socialist International.—Transl.]

³⁵ [The International Socialist Bureau, or executive committee.—Transl.]

³⁶ ["Questions of Organization in the Russian Social Democracy," which appeared in "Iskra" and the "Neue Zeit."—L. K.]

* [Daughter of Pieter Troelstra the Dutch socialist leader.—L. K.]

it, send me Mother Troelstra's address, so that I may inquire of her.

There has been a mishap in the family: Puck fell down the stairs and broke a paw. Hence: anxiety, the doctor, poultices, sleepless nights, etc. Things are already going much better, but the beast gnaws through her bandage every few moments and even the carpet-beater won't help. Yes, do write me *when you expect to return*. Many kisses to everybody.

Your Rosa.

30.

Cracow, Aug. 10, 1905.

care Mrs. Warschawska,³⁷ ulica Szlak 5.5.

Dearest Lulu:

To your surprise and my own I am now sitting in Krohkew, and am about to send you a birthday kiss from the beautiful Jordan Park on the shores of Mother Vistula. Unfortunately I am much disturbed by the circumstance that I don't know where my thoughts and my wishes are to look for you: whether in the Tyrolese or in the Friedenau Alps. Through my sudden departure I am as though cut off from the world, and I don't know whether or not you have replied to Friedenau to my question about your return. I deem it safer, nevertheless, to send this message of love into the rough mountains, though I should like to emphasize once more that you, my dear, must next time really pick out a handier and safer date for your birthday,—one that does not forever keep floating about in space, deceitfully and waggishly, somewhere between vacation and non-vacation, between

³⁷ [Her childhood chum.—L. K.]

the Tyrol and Schöneberg. I embrace you and “squeeze thee” together with your spectrum firmly to my heart and observe that I have taken the liberty of showing you a little palpable attention on the occasion of your birthday, in that I have quickly had a couple of rails laid between our two houses during your absence, so that we may at last hasten to each other with desired speed. I have personally observed the growth of this symbolical representation of the *liaison* of our hearts from day to day and with all my seven senses. The result of this and other similar circumstances was that I suddenly decided to hasten somewhere for my recuperation, at least for two weeks. I was all packed and ready to go to Clara—at least I had prepared Puck for this—when at the last moment Mrs. Warschawska enticed me to visit her out in the country, but before I arrived, the country had been changed into the City of Cracow, and here I am! Besides, this is the third night that I “haven’t closed an eye,”—in most terrible reality at that, and not merely in my dream, like Rebe Pawel.³⁸ For, I wasn’t the only living creature in the bed, but was treated as “obnoxious foreigner” by its hereditary inhabitants in such a fashion that I finally had to yield and take to flight from the “mattress vault.” And now, after all these sleepless nights, I am fidgety, feverish, and my heated imagination goes astray into entirely unwonted fields. You see, I dream incessantly—so vain have I become, just imagine!—of a beautiful new dress richly ornamented with tresses! People here show me the grave of Kosciuszko, the tombs of the Polish kings, the old *alma mater* Cracow and other highly “patriotic” objects, but I continue

³⁸ [Paul Axelrod, a Russian socialist leader, in whose insomnia Rosa had no faith.—L. K.]

to think secretly, "Oh, how much I should like to have tresses here or there!³⁹ Or else—be in Friedenau, far away from the beloved fatherland."

By heaven! I would give ten fatherlands for an existence without bedbugs.

I suppose Hans has written or told you how we went on one successful and one unsuccessful escapade. He intended to leave immediately thereafter and not return until you were back. I'll tell you many a funny thing when we meet again. From Hans, the vice-sergeant of cavalry, I have already received a long, very dear letter which I shall show you later. Bertha, too, has left. I hope you will all return refreshed and happy. I shall return from the Cracow adventure about the 21st. Until then, a hearty embrace and kiss to you as well as all the rest from

Your

Rosa.

31.

Undated, from Friedenau, in
all probability Fall of 1905.

Dearest Mrs. Kautsky:

Now what do you say—I am finally forced to communicate with you by this "no longer unusual route," although Karl was here today, and my silly goose has just started out for you. But my head, my head! * * * Well, then: 1. Dearest—"help! help!" Once more, do send a last inquiry to Karpeles,⁴⁰ whether Mrs. Kass-

³⁹ [A Jewish joke about a huckster plagued by lice who, in order to be able to scratch himself uninterrupted, finds all sorts of subterfuges.—L. K.]

⁴⁰ [Benno Karpeles, at that time in a leading position in the Vienna Cooperative Society.—L. K.]

jusz ⁴¹ is to *ogni speranza lasciare*,⁴² for the gawk is silent as Moltke.

2. "Give a shove!" At the same time, dearest, gently poke Natajche ⁴³ in the ribs by asking her whether she would be ready at Wertheim's ⁴⁴ to put in a warm recommendation for Mrs. Kassjusz as floor walker (God have mercy upon me for this syntax). If so, whether Mrs. Kassjusz is to come there for a personal interview and when. I wanted to do all this myself, but verily, I don't get around to doing it—simply impossible. I must therefore bother you. But such is life and the way of the world: hunger is tormenting Mrs. Kassjusz, Mrs. Kassjusz is tormenting me, I am tormenting you, now do you torment that man Karpeles and Natajche. Somewhere, I trust, the sum of torments will be balanced in a final account.

I bless you for the good deeds of which I have herewith sketched the plan for you, and I kiss you and your orphans heartily. Your unforgettable—I meant of course to say your incorrigible—but I so often hit the wrong key.

Rosa.

⁴¹ [Mrs. Kassjusz, widow of the Polish comrade, already previously mentioned. She was to obtain a position in the Cooperative Society through Karpeles—L. K.]

⁴² [Italian for "abandon all hope."—L. K.]

⁴³ [Nickname for Mrs. Natalie Liebknecht.—L. K.]

⁴⁴ [Famous Berlin department store.—Transl.]

IV

THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

1905—1906

32.

[On Thursday, Dec. 28, 1905, the whole Kautsky family had accompanied Rosa to the Friedrich Street Station (Berlin). With a heavy heart we took leave of her as she departed to "go to work." She was in a happy mood, as though she were going to a dance. Every one of us was anxious to show her some attention: Granny gave her a blue cape that she had always admired very much, Carl covered her with his big, warm plaid so that she might not suffer from the cold, I put my watch around her neck, since she had complained that she must go to the revolution without knowing "what hour had struck." She herself possessed nothing but a miserable little time-piece that was forever in need of repair; she took such a special fancy to mine—as indeed she did to many things belonging to me—because my initials from the time of my girlhood were the same as hers (Louise Ronsperger—L. R.). The watch was destined to play an historical role afterward, for it was the same time-piece that was taken from Rosa by Lieut. Krull before or after she had been murdered.—L. K.]

Souvenir Post Card from Illowo (East Prussia)
post marked 29.12.05 Friday 12 M.

My most beloved:

Here I am, not "moulding people," to be sure, but eating "Schnitzel" with potatoes. All night I have bummed between Alexandrowo and Thorn and am tired as a dog. I am waiting here for the train to Mlawa. As to what's next—this is still unclear. No hope of a vehicle till Sunday on account of Schabbes.¹ Instead a train is to leave for Warsaw today—under military escort! You may paint for yourself the tragi-comedy of the situation in the latter event. The whole train is to be filled with soldiers, and among them—in all likelihood as the only other passengers—myself * * * This joke of history may, however, easily become a serious matter, in case there is a *rencontre* en route with striking railway men. I hope I won't be received in W. with Brownings!

Many kisses!

R.

Give my regards to Pauly and explain to him why I couldn't say good-bye to him. In Alexandrowo² everything went smoothly.

33.

Souvenir Post Card from Warsaw post marked
18.12 (Russian calendar) 1905. Saturday.

My best beloved:

I arrived safely last night in a train escorted by the

¹ [The Jewish Sabbath.—Transl.]

² [Then the frontier station between Germany and Russian Poland.—Transl.]

military, and unheated and without light. Out of fear of "surprises" it proceeded at Granny's pace. The city is practically dead, general strike, soldiers wherever you go. The work is going well; I begin today.

Many hearty greetings,
Your Rosa.

34.

Warsaw, 2.1.06.

My best beloved:

I am writing quite briefly, because I have very little time. Until now I have been trying to get my bearings on the position of our work and on the general situation, but now I am plunging into active work. To characterize the situation in two words (but only for yourselves): the general strike has just about *failed*, most of all in St. Petersburg, where the railway men made no real effort to carry it through. (The information supplied by Deutsch³ was therefore fishy. Everywhere people are hesitant and in a state of expectancy. The reason for all this is the simple circumstance that the *mere general strike alone* has ceased to play the role it once had. Now nothing but a direct, general fight on the street can bring about the decision, but for this the right moment must be prepared more carefully. This expectant condition of affairs may therefore continue for a while, unless indeed some "accident"—a new manifesto, etc.—brings about a spontaneous and sudden uprising.

On the whole the work and the spirit are good; one must explain to the masses, however, *why* the present general strike ended without any visible "results." The organization is growing by leaps and bounds and every-

³ [Leo Deutsch, Russian revolutionary.—L. K.]

where, and yet it is in rather much of a mess, because everything is in a state of flux. Chaos is worst in Petersburg. Moscow stands its ground much better and the fight in Moscow has advanced the general tactic to a new position. There is no thought of leadership from Petersburg; the people there localize their point of view in a most ludicrous manner (this, by the way, finds expression in the line of argument developed by D. [Deutsch] when he asked for material aid for Petersburg alone. From their own standpoint this was most unwise, as I had to say to myself afterward: in St. Petersburg alone the revolution can never triumph; it can now succeed only in the country as a whole.)

And now I turn to you with the following requests: 1. Please send me the article by Mehring at once by registered mail addressed to Dr. J. Goldenberg, Wierzbowa 9 (for me in an inside envelope), direct to Warsaw without routing it via Thorn as intermediary. 2. Louise dear, speak at once to Freythaler of the *Vorwärts* and have him send me two copies of the V. daily as printed matter addressed to: Redaktion der Bibliotheka Naukowa, Warsaw, Nowy Swiat 37. I am under the impression that he gave instructions to that effect once before, but, owing to the strike of the postal workers, only one number has arrived; besides, I now need two copies, both to be sent as printed matter. 3. Be so good as to give this same address with a similar request for two copies to be sent as printed matter to Mehring, so that I may also receive the L. V.⁴ To the same address please send me every week the *Korrespondenzblatt* of the General Committee, together with *Soziale Praxis*. We need these for the trade union organ that is to appear now.

⁴ ["Leipziger Volkszeitung."—L. K.]

I need the latter *immediately*; please send the last numbers if you can still find them. 5. Be so good, Louise dear, and look for a little paper bag with blue stars in the drawer of my writing desk, right in front; it contains various printed items. Send it to me as a sealed registered *letter* to the address given above (Nowy Swiat), by express post, addressed *to me*. 6. *On top of* the writing desk, next to the bust of Voltaire, among the heap of papers there is a longish little paper bag with a Russian manuscript, containing 116 numbered pages of writing. If you don't find it there, you will probably discover it higher up, next to the marble head, or else in the drawer. If you find it, send that also as a sealed registered letter care the Nowy Swiat address, **for me**. If it is too heavy, break it up into two letters.

I have again loaded you up with requests, but I know that you will cheerfully do all this. My dear, it is very nice here. Every day two or three persons are stabbed by the soldiers in the city; there are daily arrests; but aside from that it is quite gay. Despite martial law we are again publishing our daily *Sztandar*, and it is sold on the streets. As soon as martial law is abolished, the legitimate "Trybuna" will appear again. For the present, the printing of the *Sztandar* must be accomplished in bourgeois print-shops by force, with revolver in hand. The meetings, too, will begin as soon as the condition of martial law is ended. You will then hear from me! It is savagely cold, and one travels about solely by means of sleds.

I must close. Many kisses to both of you and to the boys. Heartiest greetings to Granny, Hans, Mehring, and Singer and my colleagues. Write *at once* how you are and what, in general, is happening—how things are

faring in the V., and whether August hasn't scolded. Address ordinary letters to Goldenberg, with an envelope addressed to me on the inside.

Cordially, your

R.

35.

Warsaw 11.1. 1906.

Dearly beloved:

Hearty thanks for your two (alas! so short) letters, which I awaited with longing. I did not telegraph you, because M. [Marchlewski] was just then to leave for Berlin; his journey, however, as is wont to happen, was delayed for several days. I hope that he brought you my greetings and that he asked you to send me the things requested as registered *commercial papers*. Everything can then be easily sent in two envelopes. We have received one issue of the V. (the "red" issue, two copies), but since then—nothing! The gods and the cossacks may know the reason for this. The thing I am most impatiently waiting for is Mehring's article, which prevents us from publishing that by Karl. Can it be that M. hasn't even written it? I am writing him with this same mail; please, Louise, stir him up also. During the last few days a member of the O. K. (of the *Menschinstwo*)⁵ was here. I squeezed all sorts of information about the situation out of him and shall use it for the V. As for the rest, I have the praiseworthy intention of writing regularly for the "Neue Zeit," but more along

⁵ [Organizing committee of the Mensheviks.—L. K.]

the lines of interpreting the events, for which purpose the V. is not well adapted. If one only had a little more time!

From the Moscal ⁶ I learned, by the way, that Parvus ⁷ has given up both the chairmanship and his seat in the Council of Delegates ⁸ after he found himself in the minority in a question during the course of the last general strike. The question under discussion was as to how the unsuccessful strike might be infused with new life. P. suggested to follow the example of Moscow and proclaim an armed uprising to save the situation. All were agreed to the idea, but the majority was convinced that for the moment it was impossible of execution. P. declared that he realized that he had over-estimated his knowledge of the situation; he was anxious above all to learn more about it and therefore resigned, in order to devote himself to his paper, which is tremendously successful. At this moment, by the way, *not a single newspaper* of the Social Democracy appears in all Russia; likewise all democratic and even colorless and reactionary papers are forbidden! (That our *Sztandar* nevertheless appears *daily* and is sold on the streets, you know from Marchlewski.) Momentarily the situation is this: On the one hand it is generally felt that the coming phase of the fight will be that of armed *rencontres*. About Moscow I have learned much and *the most encouraging things imaginable*. (As soon as I have

⁶ [The man coming from Moscow.—Transl.]

⁷ [Pseudonym, of Dr. Helphant, a Russian comrade now living in Berlin.—Transl.]

⁸ [The first council of workers' delegates in Petrograd, operating during the first Russian revolution.]

detailed and reliable reports, I shall write you.) Suffice it for the present to say that in Moscow one may record a victory rather than a defeat. The whole infantry was inactive, as were also the cossacks! Cavalry and artillery alone are still "capable of fighting." There was a *minimum* of losses to the revolutionaries, the whole of the tremendous sacrifice was borne by—the bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, by people wholly unconcerned in the affair, inasmuch as the soldiery simply fired blindly and destroyed private houses. Result: the whole bourgeoisie is furious and in revolution! Money is being contributed by it in quantities for arming the workers—of *leading* revolutionaries almost *nobody* perished in M. The Social Revolutionaries bungled the job right at the beginning with a "closed" conference. The whole fight was conducted by the Social Democracy. On the other hand the douma and the elections are on the program. You know the execrable election law. Added to this is the circumstance that martial law is not to be abandoned for the duration of the elections! One would think that under such circumstances *participation* in the elections would be even more self-prohibitory than at the time of the Bulygin⁹ douma.

⁹ [Bulygin was minister at the time of the so-called Bloody Sunday (January 22, 1905) on which Father Gapon led the workers before the Winter Palace for the so-called "Water Consecration." The workers were to present a petition drafted by Gapon, but cossacks and soldiers instituted massacre among the defenseless and unsuspecting paraders. Bulygin proposed the creation of a douma (parliament) with advisory but not legislative powers. His plan was never realized. The revolution of October, 1905, came and now Prime Minister Witte created a douma with legislative powers and elected upon a much broader basis though not yet upon the basis of universal suffrage.]

Well, there you are: the S. D. in Petersburg has voted to *participate* in the elections, and that, too, with a crazy, artificial plan. People are to vote in all classes (as you know, there are four classes of voters in the province!). But on the basis of universal (not existing) suffrage. Moreover, only the candidates up to the highest class are to be elected, but these are *not* to choose representatives for the douma, but * * * to seize the power of government in the province. The devil take it, I can't even repeat this nonsense. That is the victory of the "Iskra" faction over the "Lenin" faction, about which they are very proud. Unfortunately I could not go to Petersburg in time, otherwise I should have peppered this "victory" for them. Now we other "peoples" are in a foolish position. As a matter of fact this artistic plan, too, will simply break down in practice, since a general mix-up must ensue even at the first rush to the voters' meetings, in the course of which the whole electoral campaign will change over into a direct fight. But out of consideration for our solidarity with Petersburg it won't do very well to offer a separate and different solution, yet we cannot be a party to such nonsense. Well, I suppose we shall, after all, stick to simply declining to participate in the elections on the grounds of the four-class system and of the continuation of martial law.

I shall go to Petersburg several weeks hence. Early in February the two factions will hold their first joint constituent party convention. Of course I want to go there. In this connection it occurs to me that it might be advisable for the German S. D. to be represented at this convention, in order to establish the connection of the German party with the revolution more firmly. That

would also have a wholesome effect upon the factions and their possible frictions. In as much as nobody will go to Petersburg from Germany under existing conditions and nobody knows Russian, the executive might possibly commission me to represent Germany at the same time. I shall be there anyway, so that *no expense* would arise for the executive. If you, Karlchen, think well of this, please talk to the fathers about it, for I don't like to do it myself; I don't want them to think that I care personally about it. But you would have to attend to it quite soon; the date has not yet been set and may easily be advanced.

I have already written a pamphlet, which is now in print, about the general situation and problem. In addition a *German* weekly is to be started at Lodz, likewise a *trade union* weekly. I am therefore anxiously waiting for the *Korrespondenzblatt* and other trade union organs (Austrian).

Personally I don't feel quite as I should like to. I feel somewhat weak physically, but that is improving a bit already. I see my brothers and sisters once a week. They lament very much about it, but *non possumus!* How are all of you, my beloved? What are you writing, Carolus? How is Würmchen? How is it with the V.? Has Block¹⁰ been engaged as yet? How are Granny and the boys? In the midst of all the trouble here I must constantly think of all of you, dear Lulu. Please do write me soon. With a thousand kisses and regards to all,

Your R.

¹⁰ [Hans Block of the "Leipziger Volkszeitung" was to take Rosa's place on the "Vorwärts."—Transl.]

Undated, January, 1906. Warsaw.

My beloved:

Your letter, Carolus, with Job's post concerning Lulu¹¹ reached me only last night. You see, yesterday we had our "hoodoo" from morning on. A search at the printing plant, arrests, the closing of the printery. All in all, though, everything came off pretty luckily. Nobody came to grief. And today a new print-shop has already practically been captured, so that I must sit down at once to write an article for the 22.¹²

The news about Louise has given me the greatest concern. Gastric fever is no joke. I went to the post office today to ask you for news by telegram, but the damned local post office has no telegraph department. There is only one telegraphic bureau for all of Warsaw and that is located somewhere with the devil, miles away from here! This inquiry by letter will therefore have to suffice. I beg of you most urgently to write me *at once* and exactly how L. is, what the doctor says, whether the fever is continuing, and how high it is. Dearest Carolus, you don't have to lose any time over it yourself; Felix and Karli are big enough to write me a letter and to report to me about their mother. Boys, sit down on your pants and write me. In all probability the sudden change from frost to warm weather, which

¹¹ [I had fallen seriously ill with typhoid.—L. K.]

¹² [The anniversary of the great demonstration of the Petersburg workers before the Winter Palace, which ended in a massacre. The demonstration took place on Jan. 22, 1905, and may be considered a forerunner of the first Russian revolution.—L. K.]

has also taken place here, has been the cause of her taking cold.

Louise is a thousand times right in citing me to Berlin. I should steam there at once, except for the fact that I must first finish several things here and then possibly be present in Petersburg at the family celebration¹³; that is important and of general interest, for I should like to scold about a number of things there. But what I am willing to do is to *write* for the "V." and in that way help it out. Unfortunately one is so taken up here that it is almost impossible to think of anything else. But I'll do it.

Marchlewski is very enthusiastic about his reception with you and about the spirit breathing in your home. He could not help but observe that there is a different "breath" there than elsewhere with the good, honest comrades in Germany. *A propos*: hurray for Hamburg!¹⁴ I was proud and happy to read that. I hope that won't be the end of it and things be allowed to go to sleep. I suppose the Fathers are already busy putting on the brakes. * * * The good result of M.'s trip, thanks to your assistance, has pleased me greatly, it is *very à propos*.

I quite share your opinion about Franciscus' letter. We shall of course publish only your article. It will do by itself and will render us real service. The Russians, who were told about it, are awaiting its publication

¹³ [The congress of the Socialist Party.—L. K.]

¹⁴ [On Jan. 17, 1906, a general strike, combined with a monster demonstration before the city hall, took place at Hamburg in protest against the proposed bill for making the terms of voting less favorable than in the existing law.—L. K.]

impatiently, as they want to use it in Russian. I must go to work, therefore let me close for the present. *I am waiting for news.* A thousand kisses and greetings for you, poor Lulu, for you boys, for Granny and Hans,

Your R.

M. had reported Luise's illness as something quite harmless, as a light case of influenza which was already in process of improving. It was your letter that upset me.

37.

5.2. 6.

My very most beloved:

I have not given a sign of life for a long time and no doubt you are angry with me—and rightly so. In my defense, however, I can cite the unceasing troubles and the “insecurity of existence,” from which one suffers here constantly. I can't well describe all the details here; the main point is: unusual difficulties with the print shops, daily arrests, and the threat of shooting all who are taken into custody. Two of our comrades had this sword of Damocles suspended over them for days; it seems, however, that matters will rest there. Despite everything the work progresses lustily, great meetings take place in the factories, handbills are written and printed almost every day, and the newspaper appears almost daily, albeit amid sighs and groans. A little conference has just taken place in Finland, in which all parties took part. It was a new edition of the “bloc” idea and of course went into the discard. At least one had the opportunity of taking a closer view of the situation in Petersburg. Unfortunately the real picture looks

like a veritable taunt at the latest correspondence from Petersburg in the "Leipziger Volkszeitung!" Indescribable chaos within the organization, factional splits despite the union, and general depression. Let's keep this to ourselves. In any case, don't take it too seriously. As soon as a new wave of events reaches them, the people there, too, will step more lively and briskly. The pity of it is that they still waver so much and are so little dependable and firm *on their own account*. The family party will take place somewhat later than intended; in any case, sincere thanks for the greetings from the old folks, which I shall transmit in due time.

The thing that constitutes the sore spot of our movement in Petersburg as well as with us is the colossal spread of unemployment, which causes indescribable misery. I had intended to write only a few lines by way of introduction concerning the situation, in order to come to the matter that interests me most at this moment, but I see that in this letter, too, the "events" threaten to swallow me up; I will therefore call a bold stop and at last emerge as "human being" with the question: how are you, dearest Lulu?! To be sure, Carolus wrote me several times reassuringly, for which I am thankful to him. Nevertheless anxiety gnawed at me amid all the commotion here, even if I did not get to writing. As to *what* was the matter with you so suddenly, that I don't know to the present day. It must certainly have been something execrable, if it has such after-effects. Are you able to stir out of the house? Have you been weakened much? Look here, all the years that I was with you, you were always in good health and spirits, but hardly do I go out into the world—when, suddenly, you fall seriously

ill! How many times have I thought during my work here: were I over there, I should like to sit with you for a few hours every day and be your devoted nurse! Well, I hope you don't require nursing any longer. If it is at all possible for you, do write me a few lines as a sign; it will give me such pleasure! The rest of you are, I hope, well. That the boys haven't written me till now grieves me not a little. We don't receive the "V." at all, and the "L. V." only very irregularly. As far as I am concerned, the next days will decide whether I shall leave from here for Petersburg for a short time or whether, indeed, I shall first go for two months *ad penates*—to you. Frankly, the only thing that draws me there personally is you, for otherwise, to tell the truth, the thought of the treadmill and of the discussions with Peus and Rexhäuser¹⁵ is horrible!

To pick up the thread again: the unemployment—*voilà la plaie de la révolution*—and no means of curbing it! But in connection therewith there is developing a quiet heroism and a class consciousness of the masses that I should very much like to show to the dear Germans. Everywhere the workers *of their own accord* make such arrangements as, for instance, having the employed give a day's wages each week to the unemployed. Or, where employment is reduced to four days per week, they arrange things in such a way that nobody is dismissed, but all work several hours less per week. All this is done so simply, so smoothly, and so as a matter of course that the Party receives word of it only in a casual manner. As a matter of fact the feeling of

¹⁵ [A discussion concerning the political neutrality of the trade unions.—L. K.]

solidarity and of brotherliness is so strongly developed among the Russian workers that one cannot help but be surprised even though one has personally worked to develop this feeling.—And here is an interesting result of the revolution: in all factories committees elected by the workers have come to life “all by themselves,” which decide about conditions of work, employment and dismissals of workers, etc. The employer has actually ceased to be “master in his own house.” Herewith a curious little example: the other day a factory management wanted to punish several workers for being very late, but the committee prevented this; thereupon the manufacturer lodged a complaint with the Committee of the Social Democratic Party, saying that the factory Committee was not “acting in accordance with social-democratic principles,” for the Social Democracy favored diligent and honest fulfillment of obligations! And so in instance after instance. Of course, all this will in all probability be very different after the revolution and after the return of “normal conditions.” But these conditions will not pass over without leaving their marks. For the present the work accomplished by the revolution is enormous—deepening the cleavage between the classes, bringing conditions to a sharp issue and clearing them up. And all this is not appreciated abroad! People think the struggle has been abandoned, but it has only gone down into the depths. And at the same time the *organization* progresses untiringly. Despite martial law trade unions are industriously built up by the Social Democracy—quite in due form: with printed membership books, stamps, by-laws, regular meetings, etc. The whole work is conducted just as though political freedom were already a fact. And the police is, of course, power-

less against this mass movement. In Lodz, for instance, we already have 6000 enrolled members in the social-democratic union of the textile workers! Here in Warsaw: 700 masons, 600 bakers, etc. In Petersburg, on the contrary, the work is said to have gone "underground," for which reason it is now at a standstill. And they are absolutely unable over there to issue a paper or even hand-bills. I should certainly like to be there in order to investigate all this. Unfortunately I must close, therefore one more request: Dearest Carolus, send us 1600. M. immediately from the Main Account¹⁶ by check made out to the name of: Otto Engelmann.¹⁷ Send it by registered letter to the usual address. Haste is necessary! As concerns that letter from Vilna, everything is in order. A thousand kisses and greetings to you all, especially to you, dearest Lulu. Do write me very soon!!!

Your R.

¹⁶ [During Rosa's absence we had taken the fund for the Polish party over onto our own bank account. During the Spartacus disorders in 1919 the Lieut. Krull who is mentioned earlier and who was ransacking Rosa's home and conducting a search in it, found a bank book there in the name of Karl and Louise Kautsky. This induced him to entice Kautsky into the Moabit barracks on the excuse that Col. Reinhard demanded certain information of him. Arrived there, Kautsky was turned over to a certain Sergt. Penther, who declared him to be under arrest because "he had financed the criminal operations of Rosa Luxemburg." Penther is the same "honorable" man who afterwards played such a prominent part in the murder of 32 sailors who were shot in a most cowardly manner, though innocent, by reactionary officers who suspected them of being rioters.—L. K.]

¹⁷ [Leo Jogiches.—L. K.]

38.

Undated; received 13.3.06.

My best beloved:

On Sunday, the 4th, in the evening, my fate overtook me: I was arrested. My pass had already been visaed for the return and I was at the point of leaving. Well, it will have to do this way too. I hope you won't take the matter too much to heart. Long live the Re * * *! together with everything connected with it. In some respects I even prefer sitting here to * * * arguing with Peus. I was found in a pretty untoward position. But let's forget about that. I am sitting here in the city hall, where "politicals," ordinary culprits and mentally unbalanced are all crowded together. My cell, which is a jewel with its present trimmings (an ordinary single cell for one person in normal times) contains 14 guests, fortunately all of them politicals. Next door to us, on either side, is a large double cell. In each of them about 30 persons, all mixed. I am told that these are really conditions approaching paradise, for formerly 60 sat together in one cell and slept in shifts, a few hours each, during the night, while the rest "went walking." Now we are all sleeping like kings on boards, on top of each other, next to each other, packed like herrings, and we manage nicely—unless indeed extra music is furnished us, as for instance yesterday, when we received a new colleague, an insane Jewess, who kept us breathless for 24 hours with her lamentations and with her running about in all the cells, and who made a number of politicals cry hysterically. Today we are finally rid of her and there are only three quiet "myschuggene"¹⁸ with us.

¹⁸ [Yiddish for crazy.—Transl.]

Such a thing as a constitutional out in the courtyard is unknown here, instead the cells are open all day long and one is permitted to walk about in the corridor throughout the day, in order to mingle with the prostitutes, to hear their beautiful little songs and verses and to enjoy the odors of the likewise wide-open.—All this, however, merely by way of characterizing the conditions, and not my own spirits, which are always excellent. For the present a veil is drawn over me, but I suppose it won't last long; they won't believe me. Taken by and large, the matter is serious, but we are living in times of commotion, when "everything that exists is worth perishing." That's why I don't believe at all in long-term notes and obligations. So be of good cheer and don't care a hang. On the whole everything went *excellently* during my lifetime. I am proud of it; it was the only oasis in all Russia, where despite pressure and oppression the work and the fight progressed so briskly and lustily and with as good results as at a time of the freest of "constitutions." The idea of obstruction, which will be a model for other times in the whole of Russia, is, among other things, our work. My health is quite all right. I suppose I shall soon be transferred to another prison, since my case is serious. I shall then send you news soon. How are you, my dearest? How are you and the boys and Granny and Hans? Give Friend Franciscus my best regards. I hope things are going well again with the "V.," thanks to the firm Block.¹⁹ And now some requests of you, Luiserl: 1. Pay my rent, I shall pay back everything promptly and with many thanks. 2. Send an

¹⁹ [Hans Block, who had been called to the "Vorwärts."—L. K.]

order for 2000 Austrian crowns at once to Mr. Alexander Ripper in the printing establishment of Theodorczuk, Cracow, Ulicia Zeilona No. 7, giving as the name of the sender that of Mr. Adam Pendzichowski. Leave *all further possible demands* from that quarter unheeded. 3. Likewise an order to Janiszewsky, Printery at Berlin, Elisabethufer 29, from Adam, for 500.—M. 4. Pay out no money besides this without an *order from me*, unless possibly from the separate, though never from the main account. Possibly upon demand of *Karski*,²⁰ otherwise not. Not from the account with Hans, either. 5. Ask for our share from the Old Folks and from Huysmans, and deposit with the main account.

Dear Karl, you must for the time being take over the representation of the Social Democracy of Poland and Lithuania in the Bureau. Send formal word there to this effect; possible travel to sessions will be refunded you. 7. My arrest may not be published until the complete unveiling. After that, however—I'll let you know when—make a noise, so that the people here may get a scare.

I must close. Thousand kisses and greetings. Write me direct to my address: Mrs. Anna Matschke,²¹ City Hall Jail, Warsaw. Remember, I am an associate editor of the "Neue Zeit." But of course, write decently. Once more: greetings. The cell is being locked. I embrace you most heartily.

Your Anna.

²⁰ [Marchlewski's pen name.—L. K.]

²¹ [Rosa's pass to Poland was made out in the name of Comrade Anna Matschke.]

Undated. Received 15.3.06.

Dearest Karl:

Only a few lines. I am well; today or tomorrow I shall be transferred to another prison. Now just one request: one of the arrested men here is the correspondent of the "L. V.," Mr. Otto Engelmann²² from Berlin (you know him, of course, he is the blond gentleman who lived in Kranach street for a long time). Now, in case the editors of the "L. V." should be asked whether this is right, they should confirm the fact that he actually went to Warsaw several months ago as their correspondent (in case the inquiry is made *under another name*, they are none the less to reply affirmatively). I have already received news from my family and regret very much that it takes my case so tragically and incommodes you all so much. I am perfectly quiet. My friends insist at all costs that I telegraph to Witte²³ and write to the German consul here. I wouldn't think of it! These gentlemen may wait for a long time before any social democrat will ask them for protection and justice. Long live the revolution! Be happy and of good cheer, otherwise I shall be seriously angry with you. The work outside is progressing splendidly; I have already read new issues of the paper. Hooray!

Yours with all my heart,

Rosa.

Write letters direct to me; after a few days you may address: Pawlak Prison, Dzielna street, Warsaw, for the political prisoner So-and-So.

²² [Alias for Leo Jogiches.—L. K.]

²³ [Count Witte, the Russian premier.—L. K.]

40.

Warsaw, 7. IV. 06.

Beloved:

For a long time I haven't written you. In the first place, because I was given hopes from day to day that I might possibly be able to telegraph you, "Auf Wiedersehen!" and secondly, because I was very industrious and yesterday completed the third pamphlet since staying here (two are already being printed, the third will be "inked" in three days). In my former quarters it was unthinkable to work, hence I had to make up for lost time here. Besides, I really have only a few hours in the evening at my disposal—from 9 o'clock to about 2 at night; for during the day from 4 o'clock in the morning on there is a hellish noise in the whole house and in the yard: the "common" colleagues are forever quarreling and screeching, while the "myschuggen" ones have attacks of madness, which of course in the case of the fair sex usually vent themselves chiefly in a remarkable activity of the tongue. N. B. I have proven here, as well as at the city hall, to be an effective *Dompteuse des folles*, and I must put in my appearance daily to quiet down some rabid orator who brings all the world to distraction with a few soft words (evidently this is an *hommage involontaire* to an even greater gift of gab!). So that I can collect my thoughts and work only late at night, and that meant that I partly neglected my correspondence. News from you always gives me great and lasting joy, for I keep reading your letter through several times until a new one arrives. Henrietta's dear message, too, gave me great pleasure. I would write her especially, except that—yes, except that today I have once again been given flowers "for the last time"

(I really receive fresh flowers here almost daily) * * *
 So let us see what happens tomorrow. I am rather skeptical and continue with my work as though all this didn't concern me. * * * Your letter, dearest Lulu, was brought me today. You are touching upon the question of my flat. I should like to ask you to continue advancing the rent for it. I am so happy in anticipation of the hope of being once again in my "red" and "green" rooms. In any case I needn't move before the late fall, and need not give notice until July 1st. By that time I shall have clear sailing ahead of me and can make my decision. As far as my plans for traveling are concerned, things stand as follows: in the very near future (in reality by Easter) I must urgently look, not for a milder, but for a *much rougher* climate; I suppose I shall choose the slightly circuitous route of the black-white posts.²⁴ But I shan't remain there too long—only about three weeks. And after that—where? Of course I have no thought of evading the Weimar uncle,²⁵ no matter what his intentions may be—provided only—as is often wont to happen, he leaves me unmolested for a while and delays meting out the thick end.²⁶ (A plastic picture!) To fall into his hospitable arms without any interlude—for a thing like that I certainly haven't the time now, and

²⁴ [Refers to the Prussian black and white posts at the frontier.]

²⁵ [The prosecuting attorney. A case was then pending against her. It will be observed that Rosa Luxemburg uses veiled language throughout these prison letters, for reasons of censorship.—Transl.]

²⁶ [Literally, "shoves the thick end on the long bench." Two figures of speech are mixed here: the "thick end" that is supposed to come after the lighter beginning, and the German proverbial phrase for delaying: "to shove upon the long bench."—Transl.]

more important matters claim my attention. Therefore, my beloved friends, try to find out through well-versed Thebans, not what final result is in store for me, for that is a matter of utter indifference to me, but whether I shall not, just as soon as the tip of my nose begins to smell royal-Prussian liberty (with me the nose always projects before everything else), be seized by that self-same nose and be "put into the cooler" for my escapade. That is the only point that interests me.—I shall have heaps to tell you about my "travel impressions" when once we are together again, and we shall laugh ourselves crooked, especially the boys. I find everything here very jolly. Especially do I take a thievish delight in all the "indecencies" that I manage to send out daily and that are returned to me again after a day or two "black upon white."—The only melancholy news is that coming from the North Pole (Petersburg). Authentic news—which unfortunately reports a big hullabaloo and the absence of any decisiveness or "pep." "Thither, thither would I go as soon as possible" * * * *Kreuzhageldonnerwetter!* I believe I would shake all the people there and stir them till they were blue and brown! I hope I'll have a chance to do so.—Oh, what an ass, what a rhinoceros I am! I forget the most important thing until the end: I am of course reading your "Ethics" for the second time; I asked for and obtained it at once when I was buried here. I take delight in every line and congratulate you! Keep one copy with dedication ready for me. I embrace and kiss you all heartily, Granny, Carolus, Lulu and all the boys with Hans at the head. (Provided you find that his morals can stand this one more blow.) Moreover, "this kiss to the whole world" that is asking about me.

Heartily,

Your Rosa.

Write soon.

An especially cordial greeting to Friend Franciscus and his wife. How is the "L.V?" I hear nothing about it here.—That August can talk the people into a swoon, I long ago foretold—now we have it! I have an idea, however, that this case of fainting was intended to save the Paladin from a political fall and to place him back on his feet, which were already shaking. Do you know what name was mentioned most frequently in the city hall in the "political"? No. 3? "Kautsky." You see, several translated pamphlets of this gentleman were in circulation, and as 15 souls, thirsting for knowledge, vie with each other in languishing for them, not a quarter of an hour passed without one's hearing from every corner. "Don't you know where Kautsky is?" As there seemed to be no end to this, I was tempted several times to call out, won't you stop with your stupid old Kautsky? But I kept silent. Only once, when this question was asked five minutes past 10 at night, I could not contain myself any longer and called out: "Oh you young fools! I know where Kautsky is—he's lying in bed and snoring so hard that the walls are shaking."

As far as my finances are concerned, just leave them in your personal care and stick to the slogan, "Not a man and not a penny to this system!"

41.

Undated. According to content:
Warsaw, April, 06.

My beloved:

I have received your letter of the 16th. Just write me anything and everything in the same way and by registered mail; that will do very nicely. Conditions here

are incomparably better, similar to those in Zwickau: quiet and orderliness, solitude; I get more to eat than I need, also a chance to walk daily. The main thing, however, is: frequent connection with the world of human beings, so that I am in constant touch with the friends and—am able to write! I have no idea how things stand, but my friends hope soon to see me with you. I hear that Ede has put in a warm word for the douma. If I could but get the fruits of his mind into my fingers, I should like to pick them to pieces in the "N. Z." It is very embarrassing to me that my relatives have made such a fuss over my case and have even dragged it before our Patres conscripti;²⁷ I should have vetoed that. But a person who is "sitting" is robbed at once of his rights as an adult person not only by the authorities, but also by his own friends, and is treated without any consideration for his own inclinations. In any case I should like to beg of you, dearest Carolus, most insistently, not to turn to Bülow²⁸ by any chance; in *no case* would I like to be under obligations to him, for in that case I could not afterwards talk as freely about him and the government in our agitation as I ought.—From the situation as a whole one can gather that in Russia, too, the "elections" are going by the board. Against 9/10 of the elections the Russian workers have declared a boycott, and that, too, contrary to the directions of one-half of the S.-D.! The masses here have once again proven wiser than their "leaders." From the first (until now the only) No. of the new Russian party organ, issued

²⁷ [The executive council of the German Social-Democratic Party; Rosa used to call them "the fathers."]

²⁸ [Prince von Bülow, the then imperial chancellor.—Transl.]

at the end of February, I gather that the confusion and the vacillation there are terrible. Knight "Georges"²⁹ of the sorry Figure has contributed busily to the failure of the party. I should like *at all events* to be there during the family celebration (in most beautiful May), in order to jump right into their midst with a fiery *Donnerwetter*. I hope I shall keep my wings till then.—A thousand thanks for all the loving kindness you are showing me, and many hearty greetings to all, especially to Friend Franciscus and wife, to Clara (is she well?), your *Gens* I embrace firmly, all the way from the bald head of the family and the patriarch Granny to the smallest boy.

Always,

Your R.

Local papers publish the news that I am to be court-martialed. I know nothing about it to this moment; so rest at ease, presumably it is a hoax.

42.

Warsaw, 8.7.06.

My beloved:

To-day for the first time I am in a position to write you a few lines. From the first moment on there has been lots of running to do, partly in connection with my, partly with our affairs, and as I am somewhat weak physically, every trip quite exhausts me and I get no further than some necessary, urgent work. I received a letter from August with directions to visit you. I am just writing him that this suggestion cannot be carried out without further ado; but I shall know during the

²⁹ [George Plechanow, noted Russian socialist theoretician.—L. K.]

next few days whether I can undergo a cure or not.—The general situation is excellent, and the only quacks are, of course, our friends, Georges & Co. My palm is itching to square accounts with them. As soon as I have a safer roof over my head (which has grown much grayer) than I have at this moment, I shall begin at once to work to beat the band, and above all flood the "N. Z."—I have just written to Stengele,³⁰ although I fear that the matter has already been settled; your letter of the 14.4, dearest Lulu, as well as that of Granny came to my view only just now, for in the recent interval all written communication has been interrupted. I received a telegraphic inquiry from Arthur Stadthagen yesterday as to where I was living. I don't know what it's all about. Well, more in the near future, when once I know what is going to happen with me and to me. Meanwhile many hearty kisses and greetings to you all and a slight request of you, Lulu: write me at once, dearest, where the keys to my house are, for my sister-in-law is going to Thuringia at the end of this week and she would like to spend several days in Berlin at my home. As soon as I am *au bon port*, I shall at last stop bothering you with all these things. Once more a thousand greetings and kisses to you, Carl, Granny, Hans and the boys! Your R. This letter will be posted in Germany.

43.

Undated. In all probability July, 1906.

Dearest Lulu:

Only two words to you in a hurry. Tomorrow, Sunday, my brother will be in Berlin for a short time at the

³⁰ [Editor of the Hamburg "Echo."—L. K.]

Hotel Brussels (Georgenstrasse near the Friedrichstrasse station). In case you have not yet sent away the packages of commercial papers, be good enough to send them to him with a short letter in which you request him in my name to take these things with him personally in his satchel. I won't write to him, because he runs about all day in the city and would probably not receive my letter until fifteen minutes before train-time. But be so good as to send them in such a way that you will know for sure whether he received them or not. He will in all likelihood leave on the 7 o'clock train, just as I did. A thousand kisses and greetings.

Your R.

44.

Undated. Summer of 06, probably July 18,
from Warsaw.

My dearest:

Yesterday I received a detailed letter from the Wurms, the first since my liberation! And from this letter—and not till then—I learned the terrible news of Luise's dreadful fall!³¹ Alas, dearest Lulu, you see how right I was in my instinctive aversion to the damned bicycle, which I now positively hate! And how queer! During the many years that we were together, so to say, everything went well, and you were a picture of health; but hardly do I leave for a few months, than one misfortune after another hails down upon you! I am almost growing superstitious and am beginning to think that I daren't leave unless I take you along. I hear that you have already over-

³¹ [I had fractured my leg in a fall from a bicycle.—L. K.]

come the worst with your customary braveness and good humor, nevertheless upon reading the news of it I felt the whole terror of it just as though this dismal matter had only just happened! Be sure to write me how you are and how you all are! Or rather, don't write, but wait for a new address from me, for I am at the point of leaving Warsaw, and I shall write you the moment that I have reached my goal. Emo (Wurm) has sent me a detailed report about the happenings within the party during recent weeks, for which I am immeasurably grateful to him. As I am writing him under separate mail, I am quite willing to take a hand in the debate about the mass strike, but everything must be postponed until I am in a more comfortable position. Many thanks for the telegram. With a thousand hearty kisses and greetings to all of you, to Granny, the boys and Hans,

Your R.

45.

(Kuokkala, Finland) 11.8.06.

My beloved:

I am writing direct to Friedenau in the hope that you are home again. Today is your birthday, Lulu, and I am not even in a position to send you a decent, long, and cordial letter! My nerves are quite shattered after the four weeks in Warsaw—by the endless running about to the authorities, the ceaseless anxiety as to whether, when and where I would go and the like. Since yesterday I have been here, under careful surveillance, to be sure, ever since boarding the train, but, I hope, out of range. I have seen our friends in Petersburg and talked to them, and shall see them rather frequently here (an

hour away from P.). Pawel Axelrod is likewise near here. The general impression of confusion, of disorganization, and above all of lack of clearness in their conception, in their tactic, has completely disgusted me. By God, the Re. (Revolution) is big and strong, provided the Sd. (Social Democracy) does not smash it! I have already informed Wurm of my address by telegram and have asked him to send me the "N. Z." (since New Year's). I am busily getting ready to write. Wurm wanted me to take a hand in the discussion about the G.-St. (General strike). I should gladly do so, but for this purpose I should have to get the most important things that have been written up to this time (I mean the *latest* discussions). Could you not send me these, dear Carolus? Also, I am waiting to receive a clear and definite answer at last as to whether and when I may return to Berlin. From Arthur's³² last letter (written about four days ago) I gather that his apprehensions rest not upon any positive material, but only upon general, vague precaution. But I can't wait that way long. Can't somebody simply ask and find out whether a warrant of caption has been issued against me, and whether immediate seizure is to be expected? The only thing that persuaded me not to go home at once was a piece of information received the last moment, to the following effect: A *very high* R. (Russian) official who was in immediate charge of matters, has confided to a friend that the governor-general had an understanding throughout with the Prussian authorities in the R. (Rosa) case, and that, when R. was still in prison, he was given to understand by the other side that they wished to see R. set free and immediately expedited to the frontier,

³² [Arthur Stadthagen, her attorney.—L. K.]

but that this should be done before the Reichstag convened. This last clause makes the whole matter suspiciously likely. Dearest Carolus, inform August about this, but in strictest confidence, and ask him whether I am to take the warning seriously or not. You see, I am getting impatient and am tempted simply to start off on my own. At any rate, I want at all costs to be at Mannheim³³ and for that reason return ten days earlier in order to visit Posen and Bromberg. Dearest, do take up this business energetically and let me know definitely whether and when I may return, and whether these are not mere shadows that I am supposed to evade. I am waiting most anxiously for a clear and definite answer. If a power of attorney from me is necessary, I shall be glad to sign it as soon as I have a blank. Arthur mentions something of the sort, but fails to send me any, and meanwhile the time passes.

A further matter, the very thought of which embitters my life, is the question of my home and of the load which I have placed upon you because of it. Since I did *not* receive your letters, dearest Lulu, in W., I don't know at all what you wrote me about it. I should like to keep the flat (for where am I to go with my belongings; besides, I want and hope to sit in Friedenau again some time and to be able to work); the money you advanced will be paid back to you with a thousand thanks; I am beginning forthwith to work and thereby also to earn money. I shall soon have to ask you to send the money from the bank; the largest part of it has already been spent, only our friends, moved by pure "piety," did not want to draw upon the money from

³³ [Where the party convention of 1906 was held.—L. K.]

Berlin without my knowledge and helped each other out with money borrowed privately. I shall, of course, have to pay all debts immediately, which will require about 25 thousand even as things are now. But I am waiting with this till I have a better address than is at my disposal at present. I shall write you more particularly in this matter.

I am awaiting a detailed letter from you with the greatest longing! Our correspondence has really been interrupted since the middle of April. I have a thousand things to tell you and to ask of you. Above all: how are you? How is everything with you, dearest Lulu? How is your leg? Are you quite recovered?

How did you spend the vacation? How are Granny, Hans, and the boys? I am anxious to hear about each and every one. Do write, my dear friends! As soon as I am immersed in work again, I shall regain my good spirits. *A propos*, tomorrow I shall see the fatty.³⁴ Since January he has been confined, and is soon to be sent quite far away to effect a cure,—poor fellow! I want to visit him, *coûte qui coûte* and am already very happy in anticipation of it. Tanja³⁵ was in Warsaw the other day, but I was unable to see her because on that very day I had to leave W. hurriedly and look for a more quiet nest. Karski's wife told me that she had to leave Odessa before the pogrom and flee; she is in great need but for the moment I don't know exactly where she is. The "other one" is here, but I haven't seen her. I must close for today. I had really imagined I would write only a few lines! And now, Lulu beloved, a thousand silent

³⁴ [Parvus.—L. K.]

³⁵ [Parvus' first wife, Tatjana.—L. K.]

embraces for your birthday and many hearty kisses for *all* in the *gens*.

Your Rosa.

Address: Finland, Kuokkala, via Helsingfors, Pest-schanaja Doroga, Datscha Tschernigo No. 4, for Felicja Budilowitsch (that's all!).

46.

Post Card from Kuokkala (Finland)

Post marked 13.8. 1906.

Dearest: Yesterday I wrote the first detailed letter. Now but a few words in addition. I was in Petrograd yesterday and saw the fatty as well as Leo D. (Deutsch) in the "pen." They were highly delighted at the meeting, as also was I. Both are in good spirits and health; Leo sent special regards to you, he took with him the most beautiful memories from Friedenau. Tomorrow both are to go on a journey to * * * Turuchansk (look for it on the map of Asia, on the river Yenisei, near the North Pole, a terrible place!) for three years. (Let us hope they will be back in less than three months * * *)³⁶ Wjera³⁷ is still in my immediate neighborhood, but I haven't seen her as yet. The fatty has grown thinner, but is full of energy and good spirits. I am yearning for news from you.

A thousand kisses and greetings!

R.

³⁶ [Parvus and Deutsch were banished to Siberia.—Transl.]

³⁷ [Wjera (Vera) Sassulitch, one of the highest esteemed among the veterans of the Russian Social Democracy. She was famed for having made an attempt upon the life of General Tupoff, whom she succeeded in wounding with a revolver.—Transl.]

I am waiting for the material which is to help me in discussing the mass strike!

N. B. Dearest Carolus, please send me the No. of the "N. Z." containing your big *article on Schiller* right away. Don't forget!!

47.

Picture Post Card from Kuokkala (Finland)
dated 20.8.06.

My beloved: I have written you three times already, but haven't received a sign of life from you, though I am waiting most anxiously for it. Through Pawel I learned that we are to receive 10 brown rags³⁸ from the old folks.³⁹ Be good enough, Lulu, to collect the money; on the strength of the news we have already borrowed 10 thousand. The transfer of the money must unfortunately wait until the coast is clear, for to send money to Russia now is a most doubtful matter. So please deposit the money as usual in the bank; we shall have to get along with loans for the present. How are you? What are you doing? Do write!!! I have already received several letters from Wermche (Wurm); they gave me great joy. Write, my beloved, write a few lines, all of you!

With a thousand greetings and kisses!

R.

48.

22.8.06.

Dearest Lulu:

At last a dear, long letter from you after so long a period of anxiety and waiting! A thousand thanks to you for the joy which, however, is unfortunately much

³⁸ [Brown, German 1000-mark bank notes.—L. K.]

³⁹ [The party executive.—L. K.]

beclouded by the distressing news about your leg. I felt certain that the matter had long been put in order. Wurms wrote so confidently when you were in the Tyrol and a fractured leg is usually cured without difficulty albeit with much pain! The suggestion that our Süssmann may have bungled the job gives me such a scare that I don't dare believe that it may be true. But, dearest, what a fool idea to call Süssmann in on a fractured leg! He is good for tummy-ache and the like, but he's certainly no surgeon!! How could you treat the matter so lightly? *Who* has you in charge now and what prospects does he open to you? Write me *at once*, for I am much worried. And remember that I like to see you compete with me in all matters except that I won't stand for any in the matter of limping! Just you leave this entirely to me—this "waddling." (You remember who called my graceful walk by that name?) And now, on top of it all, you have so much running around to do, to which I contribute a goodly share! How much I should prefer to be in Friedenau now, to relieve you of this running! Well, from Arthur I have already received three letters, in each of which he assures me that I am not to be expedited back (a thing of which, of course, nobody dreamed) in case I return home, and that he is waiting for my power-of-attorney, which I had already sent him three days previously. I entertain the same doubts as you in *Puncto Arturus* but, out of the same considerations that weigh with you also, cannot turn to some other star at the same time. So let's have patience! I have gained so much practice recently in this burgo-master's virtue that it seems like a normal state. The "printed matter" package containing Schiller has reached me. Many thanks! I am still waiting for the

trade union series (it is to appear in Polish in leaflet form). Also received the "Vorw" (containing a selection of articles regarding the discussion); I have already snooped around in them and "I feel ill at Plevna."⁴⁰ (But don't tell anybody!) The "N. Z." hasn't arrived yet; Uncle Dietz is in no hurry. At least, dearest, send me the issues with Henriette's and Carl's articles.—I haven't seen Koll,⁴¹ nor do I know her address. I avoid society as much as possible as I am really voraciously hungry for work. Among other things there are prospects of my earning several milliards here, which fact gives me courage to ask you also to pay my bills with Godfather Tailor and with the blessed Sheik.⁴² As for Wiethölter,⁴³ give him 25 M. *at the outside* and let him give you a receipt. (I also do it that way.) Don't give him any more under any circumstances and tell him I shall soon return home and settle the balance myself.—As for sending larger amounts here from the bank, this is proving more and more difficult in view of the events at Warsaw. I advise my friends rather to help themselves for a while longer by borrowing, rather than risk a big loss in transmission. All people with money in Poland are sending their funds abroad, so that I would rather not tempt the devil. Just think, Parvus is to be

⁴⁰ [A joke circulating at the time of the Russo-Turkish war, when the Tsar besieged Plevna and was thrown back by the Turks. The newspapers then wrote as follows: "The Tsar writes to the Tsarina, 'I feel very ill at Plevna.'"—Transl.]

⁴¹ [Alexander Kollontay, now Soviet ambassador to Norway.—Transl.]

⁴² [Her grocery-man.—L. K.]

⁴³ [A tailor in Friedenau (the God-father Tailor above referred to).—L. K.]

sent away today; I received the news yesterday; but I can't see him again. Put a notice about it in the "V." in case none has as yet appeared there. "Let them burst"—the Heines, Hués,⁴⁴ and whatever else the rabble may be named. There is still a slight hope that he may be recalled, together with several others, while en route, for all of them are witnesses in the pending trial of the "Council of Workers' Deputies," and the state's attorney's office is considering the question as to how these witnesses may be gotten hold of.—What you write me about Wermchen⁴⁵ is most distressing; poor Karl! I have resolved to help him as much as possible when once I am back in the region of Friedenau; at least while Wurm is away on leave.—I haven't an inkling about the School for Agitators and Editors⁴⁶—what is it and who's behind it? Write me, dearest, as soon as you find a moment's time. Only one letter has gone astray here so far, and that is certainly like paradise.

With a thousand embraces,

Your R.

49.

Kuokkala, 26.8.06.

Dearest: Your registered letter was not only received but answered immediately. Also, I followed it with a post card, on which I thanked you for the articles about

⁴⁴ [German comrades of the right wing of the party, so-called reformists. Otto Hué was president of the German Miners' Federation until his death in 1921.—Transl.]

⁴⁵ [Wurm was very ill at that time and had to take a half year's leave of absence.—L. K.]

⁴⁶ [The later Party School.—L. K.]

Schiller. I have also received the "Neutrality" series from Stuttgart, as well as the things from the "Vorwärts." If Uncle Dietz fears for the "N. Z." let him refrain from forwarding the issues. In that case, however, I should at least like to have the last numbers, with the articles about the Mass strike (Henriettá's last and Carl's). I am in great excitement about them. To send the whole volume of the "Neue Zeit" at this late date will soon not be worth while. I am hoping that within three weeks I may personally rush into your arms as well as into those of the "Neue Zeit." That is, if * * * yes, if Arthur really succeeds in arranging the matter. I sent him the power-of-attorney long ago, but he had me address it to his home in Berlin while he now writes me that he will stay in Helgoland until 6.9. Is that to imply that he will not take the necessary steps until then?—I don't know. I am writing him today likewise. (I wrote to Franciscus at the time I replied to you.) Anyway, I have resolved simply to pack my trunk after three weeks and to sail homeward no matter what may happen. My stay here is being of great service to me; in coming in contact with the people I learn to know the movement as one can never learn it by merely reading printed literature; by personal contact one can, besides, accomplish many a thing. On the other hand my correspondence with Warsaw and with my relatives is in exactly the same position as your correspondence with me used to be: the letters go astray and one never knows whether one will receive an answer. They write me, by the way, that there is positive danger of one's life at every step there now (which fact of course makes me itch to go there at once! It is ten times more interesting than in this sleepy Petersburg, where not a man on

the street recognizes that there is such a thing as a revolution.)

I am anxiously waiting for news from you and from all of the family.

A thousand kisses,
Your R.

50.

Picture Post Card with Kautsky's picture,
from Kuokkala, 3.9.06.

Dearest Karl:

I chanced to find you here accidentally with a dear lady and comrade,⁴⁷ who embraces you forthwith (since it is *par distance*—you see, she is married) and who wants to give you pleasure with yourself.

A thousand greetings,
Your R.

I wrote two letters to Lulu and am most anxiously awaiting further word from her. Today I received your letter with enclosure, dearest Carolus, many thanks! I shall write you in detail tomorrow. Many kisses for Lulu. Clara likewise wrote me today. She is urgently calling on me to assist at the "Rhenish music festival."⁴⁸ You bet, I will! * * *

51.

View Post Card from the Party Convention
at Mannheim, 1906.

To Mrs. Minna Kautsky, I embrace you, Granny, for the present on paper, but soon in reality.

The boys, too. Your Rosa.

⁴⁷ [The artist Cavas-Zaroudny, with whom Rosa lived and who painted a portrait of her.—L. K.]

⁴⁸ [The party convention at Mannheim.—L. K.]

View Post Card from Maderno on Lake Garda, beginning of December, 1906.

To Mrs. Minna Kautsky. Dear Granny: here we are (*i. e.*, on the reverse side) and you can imagine the surrounding panorama from this little picture without in any way exaggerating. All this time the weather has been splendid and while I am writing, the sun is burning my back as in August. Roses, laurels, honeysuckle, heliotrope trees grow abundantly out in the open; on the mountains round about there are forests of olive trees and clusters of cypresses. The world is beautiful, only we are "wünscht." (Colloquial for dissolute.)

Hearty greetings,

Your Rosa.

Undated. About the second half of December, 1906.

Lulu, I am writing you in the train with a borrowed lead pencil, during our crossing of the Brenner. I am writing to give you the urgent advice to remain in Maderno *as long as possible*. I see only now how difficult it is for me to return northward. Every jerk of the train, every turn of the track away from the south, cuts deep into my heart. Never before was it so hard for me to leave the south. So be wise and enjoy it as long as you possibly can. There you have sunshine, quiet and liberty—the most beautiful things in life (excepting sunshine, storm and liberty); so absorb as much of it as you can. On returning over the Brenner you, too, will think of it. Be brave and of good cheer.

Your R.

V

UP TO THE WORLD WAR

1907—1914.

54.

Switzerland, Easter, 1907 (on Lake Geneva).¹

Dearest Luise:

I did not add a postscript to Karl's letters and cards, because he usually sends them off without me. Besides, I was for several days taken up with my article on Poland, which, I am glad to say, I sent off yesterday. It so happened that we had bad weather during these very days, although even then we regularly went out for a morning walk of 2-2½ hours. Karl struggled against this during the first days and made a fuss about anything we undertook. Anyway, he was very tired at first. Now he feels refreshed and well.

I am awfully glad that you are working so energetically for us (Poland). You see, your sphere of activity is ever widening, and we have both already brought you so far; during the Easter days I, too, wrote for the same review² till 12 o'clock at night.—I am chagrined to think

¹ [Rosa had gone to Lake Geneva with Kautsky for her health.—L. K.]

² [At that time I contributed regularly to the Polish review, "Przegląd Socyaldemokratyczny," the organ of

that I did not prevent you from offering yourself to Schulz (Heinrich Schulz) for the work in French. It is pure philanthropy and you will squander your scant time by doing it. You must head more directly for work for the party, and if you attend the next course at the party school, and write, besides, for the "Gleichheit" and for us, and make translations now and then, there isn't any time left at all for such things as foreign language lessons. I should like to have you concentrate your time and energy from the very first upon two things: writing and agitation in women's circles, which constitutes good preparation for further work. Anyway, we shall talk about all this soon.—Thanks for Bredow Nr. 2.³ Arrived punctually today. As concerns the letter from Wiesbaden, that can wait till my return. Do not ask L.⁴ about the keys; anyway, never mention me and say nothing to him about me (about my arrival, etc.) otherwise you may unwittingly stew a mess for me. I embrace you many times, likewise your boys.

Your R.

It is wonderful today.

55.

Post Card from Friedenau to Vienna, 22.2.08.

Dearest Lulu: I have just received your letter with the article ⁵ and have immediately read both. The article the Lithuanian and Polish Social Democracy already mentioned.—L. K.]

³ ["The Breeches of the Knight of Bredow," by Willibald Alexis.—L. K.]

⁴ Leo Jogiches, with whom she had a personal difference at that time.—L. K.]

⁵ [The article which I sent Rosa for criticism was the first of a series of eight articles concerning the feeding of

is *very good* and I shall give it to Karl right away to read. (I was with him the day before yesterday.) I shall write to Clara; you don't have to hurry too much, by the way, with the second article; it will simply be translated ⁶ whenever you send it in. I suppose Clara is just about down and out after her last strenuous work. As you intimate that I am to get another letter, I won't answer today's for the present, except merely to say that I am extremely happy that you are working so industriously and ably. You even surpass my expectations about the *beginnings*, and I am sure a lasting gain will come out of the whole affair! With a hearty embrace,

Your Rosa.

56.

(Undated—according to content: beginning of 1908. Written in Friedenau and addressed to Vienna.)

Dearest Lulu: I have just found the enclosed illustration ⁷ in the "Weltspiegel." As far as I remember, you paid no attention whatever to *Denmark* in the "Gleichheit." You might write at once to *Knudsen* and ask for the necessary material for writing a supplementary article. It will certainly suffice to address the Editors of Socialdemokraten, for Knudsen, Member of Parliament, Copenhagen. Many kind regards. Write soon!

Your R.

children at school. They appeared in "Gleichheit."—L. K.]

⁶ [For the Polish Review.—L. K.]

⁷ [A picture of child-feeding in a Copenhagen school.—L. K.]

57.

View Post Card from Colberg, Postmarked 12.6.08.

My beloved: The Baltic is a trough and Colberg is a dirty hole. But I have found the very best thing here that was to be had: a very quiet hotel near a park and at the strand. I am somewhat tired from running about, therefore merely hearty greetings herewith to all of you from Gustav's wife.⁸ Park Hotel. My sister sends kindest regards.

58.

Dated 1.5. (1909) from Degerloch
(near Stuttgart).

Dearest Lulu: I have not written you until today because I have lived here as in a prison since my arrival; *i. e.*, I made up my mind to finish my work (for our Polish review) before I even raised my head from the writing desk. I actually worked throughout the 2½ weeks, all by myself up in the room, and not down in the garden, where there is much diversion, got up at 6½, stopped working only in time for supper at 7 and went downstairs solely for my meals. My work progressed splendidly, and I have managed to cover two and a half printer's sheets of manuscript. I am sending the manuscript away today; that's why I feel relieved and am writing letters that I neglected all this time to write. Tomorrow I am going on—for the first to Zurich. I have such a longing for sunshine and warmth! Here it has

⁸ [Gustav Lübeck, with whom she had entered upon a sham marriage. When traveling and stopping at hotels, Rosa was fond of registering, not as Rosa Luxemburg, but as Rosalie Lübeck.—L. K.]

been cold and rainy all the time. Today it is even snowing. Nevertheless, the garden and the forest are wonderful, everything is in bloom, and the air and the rest have done me a world of good. I have recuperated well, in spite of my arduous way of life.

Now I am going on and you ask me where. Yes, but that is just what I don't know myself at this moment. I have firmly made up my mind at last to finish and prepare my historical work about Poland for the printer this summer (*i. e.*, the work which Friend Franz so unconcernedly plagiarized and copied).⁹ For this purpose I need a lot of material from Polish history, and I can find this only in the Polish library at Rapperswyl near Zurich. Now the question arises whether the people there will possibly let me take the books to Italy or whether I shall be compelled to use them right on the spot, in other words, to settle down somewhere near Zurich and go to Rapperswyl for my work. That point will not be determined till Zurich and for that reason I can't say anything about it for the moment. I only hope that I can win the management of the library over, so that I may go to Italy. I shall then write you about my further fate.

I have not yet heard from Clara as to how she fared in Berlin; she returns from London tomorrow. I am merely waiting for her arrival, otherwise I should have left today.

⁹ [In 1902 Franz Mehring published the "Posthumous Writings of Marx, Engels and Lasalle" with introductions to the various articles. For one of these introductions, to an article about the Polish question, he used a MS. that Rosa Luxemburg had given him with the request that he express his opinion about it before she published it.—L. K.]

What are you doing, anyway? How are you all? How have the seniors and juniors profited by the vacation? In the course of a few days I shall send to Karl for the "Neue Zeit" an article about important matters. Hannes is here, he turned up here quite suddenly yesterday. But I haven't found out much about you from him, he seems to be quite buried in his medical studies and to have lived "monk-like."—I was very happy that Clara brought you a few days of pleasure; without her there is a void here that one feels very much.

My steady companions in the room consist of a whole family of cats: the local Mimi with two charming kittens that are most promptly fed by me, put to bed and awakened. As to what is to happen to these educational beginnings after I leave—my heart bleeds as I think of it * * *

I kiss you heartily and embrace you all. If you write immediately, address Zurich, *Poste restante*. If not, I shall have to send you my address later, when once I have acquired such a thing. Once more: a kiss in devoted love.

Your R.

59.

Genoa, 14.5.09.

Dearest Lulu:

Here I am—in *Genova superba*, as the city calls itself, while the Tuscans hold a different opinion and say that one finds here *mare senza pesce, montagne senza alberi, uomini senza fede et donne senza vergogna*.¹⁰ I incline to

¹⁰ ["A sea without fish, mountains without trees, men without fidelity, and women without modesty."—L. K.]

the viewpoint of the Tuscans, with this difference, however, that I also find the *uomini senza vergogna*,¹¹ at least in the shops, where they always cheat me on the price and, moreover, always manage to smuggle a few counterfeit coins into my change.

Aside from this, the city is delightful, superbly located, extending in amphitheater form upon the narrow coast of an expansive bay, protected in the rear by beautiful hills, each of which is crowned by a fort, and each standing out in sharp contrast to the Italian sky. Down below, in the harbor, there is the usual confused jumble of ships, barges, elevators, dirt, smoke, narrowness, and commercialism. The narrow streets are filled with skyscraper-like houses for the most part scratched-up, two or four windows wide, adorned from top to bottom with laundry of many hues and colors, so that every whisper of the Zephyrs causes shirts, *Gatien* (drawers), stockings full of holes, and similar insignia of spring to flutter and flap in the wind. The streets situated higher up the hill-sides are reached from those on a lower level by means of charming *vicoli* or *scalite* that one encounters every few steps,—that is, narrow lanes that are quite dark, evil smelling and just wide enough to permit one's passage to be barred by a lightly swaying *cittadino* (citizen) who, with his back slightly turned away from the public, is performing his "devotion" and seeing to it that the lane shall always remain damp and the air not become too dry. In the somewhat wider streets, on the other hand, one must attempt to navigate amid two-wheeled carts—I have seen no other kind here—drawn by two mules and one horse harnessed lengthwise, that is, one before the other. These prefer to drive to the left rather

¹¹ ["Men without shame."]

than to the right; so that a well-disciplined Reichs-German man of culture is quite frequently surprised to feel the loving breath of a snout or the extreme end of a whip cracking behind or over his head. For, such a thing as a separation of sidewalk for pedestrians and street for vehicles is prohibited here as something undemocratic, and it is left to every creature to elbow its way through life and through the lanes.

I have observed that there are three favorite occupations among the Genoese: standing about with hands in the trouser pockets, and a pipe in the mouth, while watching some fellow human being, such as a harbor worker or a ground digger, with quiet sympathy for hours at a time as he is engaged in his work; again, expectorating about every fifteen minutes, not, however, in as simple and formless a manner as with us, but rather artistically, a long, thin stream exuding from the corner of the mouth to the accompaniment of a short, hissing sound, without the artist's moving his head; finally, getting shaved,—not, however, in the morning, but rather in the evening. From seven to ten or eleven at night one can or rather must admire, in all the streets, right and left, in the open shops of the *parruchieri* (barbers) (every third Genoese is a *parruchiere*, the other two are swindlers of uncertain occupation), sitting figures that are enveloped in white robes, and that seem to study the dirty ceiling with philosophically upturned noses, while an agile, black-eyed youth dances about on their visages with fingers that are not exactly white. As to other curiosities, it is to be noted that salt is a luxury, as a consequence of which fact bread is unsalted; besides, no yeast is used, so that its taste is about that of the mixture with which we cement the windows in the north

during the winter. For some reason or other for which I cannot account, sugar costs 55 centesimi (eleven cents) per pound. That is, the "pound" in Italy contains only 350 grammes, as I discovered only after a number of distressing experiences. As a result, the *cameriere* (waiter) in the café regularly forgets to bring the sugar bowl when serving, and by the time you have had an opportunity to call his attention to this small detail, your tea has become cold. Finally, as for the railway trains—these come and go at a normal delay of one or two hours. Hence, when a naive Indo-German from the north of Europe arrives at the last moment (according to the *orario*) (time table), bathed in perspiration, and jumps into the compartment, he has plenty of time to cool off and quiet down; for, after another half hour has passed, the guard calls "*partenza!*" (departure) with a sonorous voice, only to disappear in the buffet the next minute with the engineer. After another half hour both reappear on the *perron* (platform) visibly refreshed and in the best of spirits, and the train then really begins to move. (I had an experience like this yesterday, when I went on an excursion into the *Riviera levante* and, on account of the delays, arrived at my home at 2.30 in the morning.) Above all this an eternally blue sky keeps smiling, and already I understand why it smiles. By the way, it smiles only insofar as it does not rain!

*Ecco una breva macchietta*¹² of my impressions. As far as I am personally concerned, I received a favorable reply in Zurich: I am permitted to order all the books from here, but it must be done through one of the state or city libraries. That ties me somewhat to Genoa. But although I have found an attractive room in a good

¹² ["Herewith a brief sketch."—Transl.]

location, high above the city, I think nevertheless that I shall get tired of the life here quite soon and probably go somewhere to the seashore. Unfortunately this is not as easily done as one might imagine, this I learned yesterday when I made my first inquiries. Either one finds regular health resorts, like Nervi, which are an abomination, or else dirty, hot towns where at best one can find only whole apartments without service and without meals. Then, too, there is no real strand, since the coast is quite rocky and steep. Still, I suppose I shall yet find something. On the whole I like the life and Nature very much, but the ocean is the main thing—and it is superb. I can see it all day long from my room, and I never tire of gazing upon it.

But now, how are you and yours? No doubt you are attending Clara's lectures; do write me details about them. Since I don't know where Clara is stopping, I am enclosing a letter for her herewith. And by the way, while working away here I have an idea for you, a theme for an independent task—a little study suited to the "Gleichheit" or the "N. Z." in which you can use your knowledge of the English language to good advantage and which certainly will not exceed your modest self-estimate. Anyway, I am chagrined to think that you permit one dry translation after another to be loaded on to you. What do you get out of it? What do you learn from this mechanical drudgery? It's really a waste of your time and strength. We'll talk or write about my proposal as soon as you have finished with that slop and are ready for work again. Now a few favors for my work: I suppose Gertrude (her servant girl) left my keys with you; please be good enough to send me from my library (left side of the large book case): 1. Bücher's

Entstehung der Volkswirtschaft. 2. Ingram's History of Political Economy. 3. Webb's History of the Trade Unions. In addition, please be so kind and copy the following for me: 1. From Roscher (let Karl give you his *Nationalökonomie*), his *definition*: what is national economy; most likely it is at the beginning of his course. I need only a few sentences, but quoted verbatim and exact title of the book. 2. From the *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, Schmoller's article about national economy, you must find the passage in which the old fool asserts that the science of national economy had its origin in the financial and bureaucratic needs of the modern state in the 18th century. I need only that one passage. I am sure you will gladly assist me. It will be a real help to me, for the library here is something fierce; works of this kind are simply not to be found in it. One more favor: couldn't you copy a table for me of the exports and imports of Germany during any one of the recent years? But the table must be itemized, so that one may see what kinds of goods come whence and what kinds go whither. (Merely kind of commodity, country, and value in money or weight.) In case this causes you the slightest trouble, let it go to the devil. I'll manage to get along without it.

And now, be sure to write how you all are. How are the boys? Pardon me—I mean the *ex-muli*¹³ (what are they now—*asini*?) and the little scalliwag? How is *Carolus magnus*? Write me *poste restante* (*si fermax in*

¹³ [Boys who were just graduated from the grammar school, but who have not yet entered the university, are called "muli" in Germany. Rosa refers to the two oldest Kautsky boys.—Transl.]

posta)¹⁴ but *by registered mail*, otherwise it is uncertain. Be especially careful to register the books.

Hearty kisses to all of you.

Your R.

60.

Undated post card. Levanto, post-marked
11.6.09.

Dearest Lulu: The package of books arrived *today* (the stamps have been wisely removed, so that I cannot ascertain the date of cancellation). Many thanks. I now hasten to request you once more to send me the little quotation from Schmoller's article on National Economy in the *Handwörterbuch*; you see, you made a different excerpt from the one I need. I did not want his definition of national economy, but the passage in which he declares why national economy did not become a science until the 18th century (namely, because of the needs of the governments, the modern, centralistic bureaucracy). Be so good as to send me this excerpt, but this time in a *letter*! I shall write you in detail today or tomorrow, this only provisionally for your reassurance with reference to the fate of the books. Lavoisier was right indeed: nothing is lost of the substance of the world, only it sometimes travels damned slowly. Heartiest greetings to you all. In haste,

Your R.

Another important matter:—of a business nature! Toward the end of the month or during the first days of July you will receive a French manuscript from France, intended for me. In that case be so good as to

¹⁴ [Equivalent to our general delivery.—Transl.]

deliver it at once to L.¹⁵ for our review. L., by the way, will call of his own accord, he is waiting for it. So please don't forget. One more kiss!

61.

13. (probably 6.) 09.

Dearest Lulu: I received both your cards today—of the 9. and 11., together! Meanwhile you know that the package has arrived and are therefore reassured. I haven't written for a long time because I had to slave away meanwhile and had one or two business letters to attend to daily besides. I therefore had no real leisure to write you as I wanted to. Also, waiting for the books made me impatient and "grumpy," as Franz would say, and you know that I don't like to show myself when I am out of sorts. Today there is sunshine again—within me and about me. As a matter of fact we had a whole week of rain, thunderstorms, cool winds and stormy sea. Today, suddenly, there is azure-blue sky, radiant sunshine and a deep blue ocean with whitecaps that glitter in the sun like snow. On the whole it is much cooler here than I thought and than one usually imagines. A friend writes me from Switzerland: it is beyond me how you can stand it now at the Riviera! I had to laugh, for to judge by the news received from acquaintances, it is much hotter in Switzerland now than it is here. Levanto is a tiny little nest, two hours away from Genoa, and as I did not know at the beginning whether I would stay here—conditions were totally strange to me—I did not give you the address right away, nor did I give it to the Friedenau post office, since Levanto is unknown in the

¹⁵ [Leo Jogiches.—L. K.]

wide world—(thank God!)—and the letters might possibly wander somewhere into the Orient. But I have remained here after all and am also receiving my mail, albeit with swinish tardiness.

Now as for your and my plans. I am almost certain to go to Switzerland in July, and I hope that it can be arranged for us to meet there. It is self-evident that I shall notify you at once as to where I am going, as soon as I know it myself. For the moment I can't make up my mind, but I imagine it will finally turn out to be my beloved Lake Lucerne; only I fear, judging by long experience, that I shall roast there much more than here in Italy. Where do you intend to spend the three weeks in Switzerland with Karl? Write me about it immediately in case you have your eye upon something definite; that will probably help me make my plans. Also write me exactly when Karl will arrive in Genoa with Bendel—or are they going directly from Marseilles to Switzerland? Also, on what freight steamer they will travel (is it really a freighter? In that case the journey may be endless). Just wait till we all meet in Switzerland, won't it be one joy and one talk-fest!!

My present nest is charmingly located on a little bay, fortunately without a harbor, so that no fishermen's barges or sailboats profane the view as in Sestri Levante (where Gerhart Hauptmann *sta lavorando nelle tranquillità lucida et fragrante*,¹⁶ as I have learned from the Secolo). Nor is it located along the tourists' highway, like the Ponente and the Levante as far as Sestri, where the automobiles speed past and smell past. The little burg is surrounded by soft Apennine Hills which, covered with olive trees and sweet pines, afford a green of all shades.

¹⁶ "Is at work in the lucid and fragrant stillness."

It is very quiet here, only the tragic creaking of a mule's voice is heard from time to time, as are also the insistent cries of the muleteers. As for the rest, a few sleepy figures stand before the entrances to a few stores on "Main Street," and children play in the sand or white-red cats sneak across the street from one garden-fence to another. The center of the town, however, is a four-cornered *Piazza Municipale* around which is erected the Main Building with its galleries. In it you find everything that stands for authority, rank and state: the post office, the garrison (I suppose 6 soldiers with 2 officers), the *podestá* (the mayor), the customs office, and, of course, beside it a marble "memorial tablet" with two slightly projecting ledges on the side. Before this "tablet" some passer-by or other is always standing with his back turned to the square, while otherwise the sun alone casts its rays upon the empty square. In the midst of the latter is the statue of Cavour, representing "the greatest dummy of the XIX century," as the inscription wittily informs you (*Al piú grande statisto*).¹⁷ Otherwise one sees nothing except that the *lavandaie* (laundresses) are forever kneeling and washing by the narrow brook under three large cedar-trees, while the men would rather gossip than do anything else. Before my *albergo* (hotel), for instance, any two or three citizens will take posture or sit down on a protruding ledge and with the greatest of relish gossip for hours, while I boil inwardly, since this untiring babble of voices disturbs my trend of thought and I am tempted rather to throw down my work and sit down in the sun myself. In the evening, when it is cool, every living creature goes walking up and down "Main Street," innumerable black children engage in

¹⁷ ["To the greatest statesman."]

games, and the "ice cream man" with his little cart does a land-office business. I, too, buy 10 centesimi's worth of ice cream cone from him every evening, provided I succeed in wedging my way through the children that besiege him. Intellectually two persons stand out visibly above the rest: the post office official, a fat, round, swarthy, blooming young man, who during the hours after duty is the head and idol of the local *jeunesse dorée* in his white shoes and Garibaldi hat set at a bold angle; in the evening, surrounded by friends, he tells jokes that I don't understand and spreads good cheer and, as I fear, some free-thinking and cynicism about him. An entirely different sort is the apothecary, who, to be sure, is also in his best years, but who is pale and sullen and always has several equally serious men as well as the priest with him in his store. These sit with their hats on and discuss politics. They do this even when the druggist is away, for without him, too, they manage to entertain themselves well and to read the papers in his store. Twice already I have bought tooth powder from him, and every time he had to be called by one of the politics-talking gentlemen of the Clerical Party. Every Sunday there is a procession in which children, women and old men, garbed in black, participate; but the procession drags along lazily, the singing comes to a stop every few moments and the spectators laugh; "Signor Gesù" (Lord Jesus) who is dragged along on a long plank makes an unhappy face, as the radiant sun offends him and tickles his nose. This matter is not always as harmless, however, as it looks. Do you know where the storm and the rain came from last week? I read about it today in the *Secolo*: in Porto Maurizio on the Ponente a solemn procession had been arranged *per*

scongiurare la siccità.¹⁸ And in the face of this one is not to believe in the divine Misericordia? Of course the drug store triumphed and with a cold smile looked in the direction of the post office party. At the same time giant placards of the Social Democracy concerning the 1st of May are in evidence at all corners. Nobody gets excited about it—possibly nobody got excited about it on May 1st, but I don't know about that. Alas, the world is not perfect! Everything might be so splendid, only—only * * * First of all: the frogs. As soon as the sun sets, frog concerts such as I have never before heard in any country begin on all sides. Even in Genoa I experienced this surprise, for which I had looked least on the Riviera. Frogs—all right, as far as I am concerned. But *such* frogs, such a broad, snarling, self-satisfied, stuck-up croaking, as though the frog were the first and absolutely most important person! * * * Secondly—the bells. I have high regard and love for church bells. But to hear them ringing every quarter of an hour, and an irresponsible, absurd, childish bim-bimbim-bambambam at that—it is enough to make anybody crazy. Every Sunday and especially on Corpus Christi these thin bells wallowed for joy like pigs and couldn't do enough of it. And thirdly—thirdly, Karl, when you go to Italy, don't forget to take a box of insect powder with you. Otherwise it is wonderful here.

Carolus, a matter of business, in closing. Herewith the title of a new book by Lenin¹⁹ (his pseudonym is Iljin); he is anxious to have the book noted among the works

¹⁸ [To adjure the drought.—L. K.]

¹⁹ [W. Iljin, "Materialism and Empiriocriticism," critical remarks concerning a reactionary philosophy. Moscow, 1909.—L. K.]

received. As far as a review of it is concerned, don't ask it of anybody; I shall probably be able to recommend somebody to you, you might otherwise unwittingly give offense to the author. But enter the book *immediately* among the "books received" and also in the Literature of Socialism.

And now I kiss you, one and all, and you, Lulu, especially.

Your R.

62.

Undated post card, post-marked Levanto 18.6.09.

Dearest Lulu:

I wrote you in detail a few days ago. For the present I want merely to make the following proposal: inasmuch as I shall be in Switzerland by July 1, you might come there at once to meet me and wait for Karl and Bendel. You may take your work with you, and we shall both be industrious. Agreeable? If it's all the same to you where you go, I shall give you more exact information later. I am just about thinking of Gersau, where it is cheap, quiet and beautiful. Write me at once whether you accept the plan. If yes, then make your arrangements at once for July 1 or 2, for I shall certainly be in Switzerland by that time. A kiss to you and to all,

Your R.

63.

Undated post card cancelled Levanto 22.6.09.

Dearest Lulu:

I received both your letters; enjoyed the indignation

of the Grand Inquisitor²⁰ over my corpulence immensely, and am happy at your readiness to come to me in Switzerland. Now, since the place where we both are to locate is quite immaterial to me, and the Walensee is so cheap, just you telegraph me wherever you want to go and when you are coming. I must know this in order to give my address to different people and also to you upon leaving. I should like to have you there by 1.7., therefore come!

Kisses to you all from

Your R.

64.

Undated. According to content: Walensee, Switzerland, Summer of 1909.

Dear Carolus:

No sign of life has emanated as yet from you in Friedenau, but I must bother you already.

The editors of our Polish review, in answer to your letter concerning Machism²¹ reprinted in it, have received a sharp attack upon you as well as upon the editors (on account of their approving footnote). The author is that same Malecki—a Pole—who at one time published an article in the "Neue Zeit." We must publish it, of course, which means, naturally, that "batrachomyomachy"²² will have been introduced into the ranks of our party. It is necessary, however, to counter this offensive with

²⁰ [Karl Kautsky's party nickname.—L. K.]

²¹ [In the July number of the periodical, "Kampf," Vienna, 1909.—L. K.]

²² ["Frog-mouse" fighting.—L. K.]

several strong comments. The editors will have a few things to say on their part, but for *you*, nobody can answer but yourself. I have translated the article almost verbatim and enclosed it herewith; be so good and sit down on your trousers (if you prefer, on your panties) and write us a reply of 2-3 printed pages. But do this as soon as possible, for this bagatelle won't take much of your time and energy. To hurry matters, send your reply direct to the editorial offices, to Leo: Mr. K. Krzysztalowicz, Steglitz, Hotel-Restaurant Schlosspark, Room No. 4. Drop me a line by post card, informing me whether you are doing it.

Your "kille"²³ left today.

My greetings to you and a kiss upon your bald-head, you lovely boy! Regards to Wurm. I am writing to Felix.

Your Rosa.

65.

Post card, undated, post-marked Dortmund, 13.4.10.

Dearest Lulu:

Everything is going splendidly; I have already had eight meetings and six are yet to come. Everywhere I find unreserved and enthusiastic agreement on the part of the comrades. Karl's article²⁴ calls forth a shrugging of shoulders, especially have I noticed this in Kiel, in Bremen, in Solingen with Dittmann. The jolliest part about it is that Clara writes me that the district secretary, *Wasner* (!) in a public meeting expressed his sur-

²³ [Yiddish for kindred or relationship.—Transl.]

²⁴ [Kautsky's article concerned the question of a mass strike.—L. K.]

prise about Karl's action in sharp language. Anyway, I knew right away that I would not get the proof sheets; Karl wants to make it impossible as long as he can for me to reply, nor is it "Wurm's fashion," as you surmise, to have the article²⁵ appear in two issues, but rather Karl's "fashion" to the same purpose. Tell him that I well know how to estimate the loyalty and friendship involved in these tricks, but that he has gotten his foot into it badly by so boldly stabbing me in the back.—How are you? How is my Mimi? (her cat). Do write me a line here care Haenisch (Dresdenerstrasse 16), I shall remain here till the 16. and am going to neighboring places from here.

A kiss and greetings to you and the boys.

Your Rosa.

66.

View post card, undated. Post-marked
Aeschi (Switzerland) 9.8.10.

Dearest Lulu:

The sign of life from you, for which I had been waiting so long, has given me the greatest joy. You are mistaken, I am filled all this time with the "most human" of feelings, but unfortunately I have nobody on whom to vent them.—It is very beautiful here. Although the weather is very changeable, there is no slow, continuous rain, but the thunder storms, which are our guests almost every day, are quite beautiful. At best my whole vacation will last 3 weeks, partly because of the steep price (I must pay 7 francs for a little hole, albeit with a heavenly view), and partly because relatives may put in

²⁵ [Rosa's article, "Ermattung oder Kampf."]

their appearance * * * At the latest, therefore, I shall be at home by the 16. And you?

Hearty greetings and kisses,

Your R.

67.

Undated. Post-marked Friedenau 9.9.10.²⁶

Dearest Lulu:

Whatever you consider to be right will no doubt be right. That my feeling toward you is always the same, you know. But that you feel so miserable grieves me. You really have no reason; you may not, you must not take a gloomy view. Take everything calmly, especially—preserve your cheerfulness! That I may not comfort you and cheer you up this time, is hardest of all for me. Farewell and be happy.

Your Rosa.

68.

Post card, undated. Cancelled Friedenau
21.2.11.

Carissima:

I was very happy to see at least an ink-sign from you, after you disappeared from my horizon so suddenly. I hope you will refresh and re-invigorate yourself again for a few months. Meanwhile Clara has been here for

²⁶ [These lines are evidently a reply to a letter of mine in which I gave expression to my pained feelings at her decision to stay away from our home for the present because of her political differences between her and my husband.—L. K.]

two days that were completely taken up with sessions of the honorable K. K.²⁷ It is impossible to describe the horror of these sessions in writing, one can hardly do so even by telling about them. Besides they ended like the Hornberger Shooting Match,²⁸ so that the only result was—an indescribable nausea for Clara and indirectly for me. “Otherwise I am well”—only the crazy weather—cold storm for days—gets somewhat on my nerves. I am now working at geology and find great delight in it; one’s horizon widens visibly. On Sunday we went out walking in the environs of Friedenau with Hannes, and then read a book of Hafiz’ poems (the original Hafiz, who inspired Goethe to write his “Divan” poems), of course in German. In this case, too, the original is more beautiful than the imitation. Hans worked at the uplift of the race²⁹ on Sunday, I have not seen much of him.

69.

Undated. Summer of 1911.

Dearest Lulu:

I had to go to Colberg for two days when your letter arrived, hence the delay. I am firmly entrenched here and am not thinking of traveling (except for purposes of propaganda). I feel quite well and sprightly and am diligently at work despite the heat. To be sure, usually *not* for the “L. V.” Nevertheless I am herewith enclosing a little dart that once again netted me much love with

²⁷ [Control commission, of which Clara Zetkin was a member.—L. K.]

²⁸ [A proverbial German expression meaning much ado about nothing.]

²⁹ [The Society for Racial Hygiene.—L. K.]

the party executive; you needn't subscribe. By the way, the "Vorwärts" took a stand immediately according to this article, of course without mentioning the reason which prompted it.

I, too, hear but little from the Russian din of battle. Leo³⁰ is so taken up there that he hardly has time to catch his breath. His address is: Monsieur J. Goldenberg, for Leo, 39 Port Royal, Paris.

The energetic stand taken by the trustees has had a good effect upon Lenin & Co.: they have yielded and have abandoned the plan of breaking up the newly created institutions. This, however, produced a veritable delirium with the Mensheviks. Now suddenly—after they had for 1½ years declared it impossible—they are calling a plenary session of the C. K. (Central Committee) or the party convention on their own hook, which fact is of course merely to help the split, and they insult the Bolsheviks, the Poles and the United-Front-Committee in an unbelievable manner. Our friend Trotzki is revealing himself more and more as a bad actor. Even before the technical commission has achieved its financial independence from Lenin, and has been placed in a position possibly to give its money to the "Pravda," Trotzki opens a most uncalled-for attack against this commission

³⁰ [The Social Democracy of Russia, split up into various factions, had united at a congress, but as none of the different wings had any confidence in the union, a certain party fund was turned over to the safe-keeping of three German comrades: Kautsky, Mehring and Clara Zetkin. Soon thereafter the newly established union went to pieces again, and now each of the different groups made its claims upon the party fund known in an impassioned manner. This letter and the one following deal with these developments.—L. K.]

and against the whole Paris conference in the "Pravda!" He insults the Bolsheviks and the Poles directly as "party splitters," but has *not one syllable* to utter against Martov's pamphlet against Lenin, which surpasses anything that has ever existed in point of meanness and baseness and which evidently aims at splitting the party. In a word, it is beautiful. If only the conference materialized! Yet, in spite of everything, the unity of the party can still be saved, provided both sides are *compelled* to call the conference jointly.

As far as the picture³¹ is concerned, I am anxiously waiting to hear Hans' opinion.³² My only fear is that you have influenced him in a manner that is too favorable to me. I don't get to painting at all now. Clara will come here in a few days. Hannes³³ left yesterday, again *parterre*,³⁴ as he was wont to be. Write me a line soon again.

I kiss you heartily.

Your R.

70.

Undated. According to content from Friedenau,
middle of August, 1911.

Dearest Lulu:

I awoke with a jolt today: I am tardy for your birthday! I simply cannot tell you how hurt I feel about

³¹ [Rosa had been seized by a veritable passion for painting and had done several excellent paintings in oils.—L. K.]

³² [Hans Kautsky, painter.—L. K.]

³³ [Hannes Diefenbach.—L. K.]

³⁴ [Low in spirits.—Transl.]

it. But I have several excuses. For the past five days I have been wanting to begin the letter daily, but it is as though an evil spell had been cast. Since the proclamation of the party executive protesting against the Morocco affair, I have been receiving telegrams and special delivery letters daily from all sides, with invitations to address meetings, all of which, however, I decline, but which for that very reason require more time for writing letters excusing myself. In addition, my brother and his wife blew in on me yesterday. Besides, a special messenger arrived from Hamburg: Wilhelm (Emperor William II) is going there, so of course I am supposed to go there also. And that, too, precisely on the day on which I am to move! This chagrin alone could make me a republican. But I accepted. Besides, Ida (her servant girl) is turning our house topsy-turvy in anticipation of our moving. Is it any wonder, then, that I lost my head? Therefore, let me embrace and kiss you at this late date and don't be cross with me.

How are you otherwise? Since the brief card I have received nothing from you. Shall we chat a bit about the heat? I suppose you are expecting to find a charred corpse, a withered skeleton, that vaguely reminds you of the dear features of your sainted friend from Cranach street? *Platzen sollst Du, Herr Richter-Leben.*³⁵ While I am not a Catholic, I am jolly as can be and in good

³⁵ [A quotation from a Jewish anecdote which delighted Rosa. The anecdote: a judge examines a Jewish-appearing prisoner: "What's your name?" Ans. "Levi." The Judge: "I thought so. Where were you born?" Ans. "In Kishinev." The Judge: "I thought so. Your profession?" Ans. "Commercial traveller." The judge, "I thought so. Your religion?" Ans. "You will burst, Mr. Judge, but I'm a Catholic."—Transl.]

condition, get up at 6 o'clock, take cold baths (tub) twice daily, feel quite refreshed and work so that the fur flies. Anyway, I find that Berlin is a very pleasant city, even during the greatest heat,—provided one doesn't see it, like myself. Clara was here, but as usual only cinematographically,—I saw her speed by. She is in good condition and good humor, although she felt ill several times.

The affair of the Russians gently casts its shadows upon both her and my "vacation." *Nota bene*, the honored "depositors"³⁶ had a fool idea with that plan of a conference of "all wings," as I think in my heart of hearts, irresponsibly! Are all three of them to have a liver attack, as one of them already has it by way of advance?³⁷ For that will be the only practical result of the "conference" according to my firm conviction. At this conference, naturally, only a handful of fighting cocks *living abroad* would rival in clamoring for the ear and the soul of the German trustees, and to expect anything of *these* cocks is pure delusion. They are already so involved in quarrels and so embittered, that a general confab will merely give them an opportunity to unburden themselves of their old, oldest and freshest insults, so that oil will merely be poured into the flames. *The only way* to preserve unity is—to bring about a general conference with delegates *from Russia*, for the people in Russia all desire peace and unity, and they are the only power that can bring the fighting cocks living abroad to reason. Therefore, to do nothing else than to

³⁶ [The three trustees selected by the Russians and previously mentioned: Kautsky, Mehring, Zetkin.—L. K.]

³⁷ [Kautsky was very ill at that time.]

insist upon *this* general party conference and as for the rest, to hold ears, eyes and—noses shut, would in my opinion be the only correct attitude to take. Unfortunately the idea of that new conference with the Germans has already caused great confusion among the Russians. Trotzki brags in “strictly confidential” letters that *he* is the big man who will get everything back on the right track, the Mensheviks who stick to him have taken courage and are boycotting the general party conference that has been prepared, and the Bolsheviks together with the Poles were greatly confused by this gossip. Well, I hope that all this will blow over, but meanwhile I, innocent lamb that I am, am also being bombarded with special delivery letters and telegrams; I am to explain whether this or that is true and how this or that is to be understood, and on top of it all I don’t know anything myself. “Nice is different,” our poor Paulus was in the habit of saying, and in this, as in so many other things, he was right.

As for the rest, the town here is empty. Hannes is in Flims. *A propos*, he has sent me his portrait by Zundel³⁸ for purposes of comparison,³⁹ at which I am very happy. You will see it here.

When are you coming, anyway? My moving must be postponed on account of “Emperor’s” and will in all likelihood take place the 30. Are you coming for the women’s conference? Just imagine, I have become a feminist! I received a credential for the conference and must therefore go to Jena, but previously, by way of

³⁸ [Clara Zetkin’s husband, the painter Zundel.—L. K.]

³⁹ [Rosa had also painted a portrait of Hannes Diefenbach, now in the possession of Hans Kautsky in Vienna.—L. K.]

heightening the relish and of shortening the journey, I am to address a voters' meeting in—Düsseldorf. Drop me a line.

I send you many kisses. Greetings to the boys.

Your R.

71.

Undated. Post-marked Berlin-Südende, 9.1.13.

Addressed to Vienna.

Dearest Lulu: The lines just received from you gave me great pleasure, for I could read them with a quiet conscience. When at the end of December Rosenfeld came to see me about the school, and to press me for the course,⁴⁰ my first word was: Mrs. K. (Louise Kautsky) must take part, whereupon he replied: of course. Since he arranged the matter, I depended upon him. Now he declares that out of delicate consideration for Granny's ⁴¹ death he did not want to broach the matter to you until your return here, and now it seems that his wife wrote you about it after all. The project is to have its beginning a week from next Saturday, by which time I hope you will be with us. *I* certainly am not in a hurry about it.

Anyway, I had intended to crawl out of the affair, for I expect precious little to come of it and am exceedingly tired. But Kurtchen R. . . again today came gasping and storming into the Party School and succeeded in

⁴⁰ [A number of party members of the left wing had requested Rosa to conduct a private course on Marx.—L. K.]

⁴¹ [Mina Kautsky, mother of Karl Kautsky, died at the end of December, 1912.]

pressing me, weak woman, flat. It is to begin sooner, for it seems that Mrs. R. . . and Dr. R. . . with wife have fallen in love with Marx's "Capital." Your presence there will be a comfort to me. Therefore write whether you will be here by the 18., if not, write to Rosenfeld and demand postponement, it will be agreeable to me. By the way, I shall begin by reading to the company that first section of my Introduction to National Economy which I read once upon a time to an acquaintance⁴² of mine on the shores of Lake Lucerne. Perhaps, therefore, the *da capo* does not attract you and you will just stay away from the first "lesson." Now then, give us the high-sign as to how the affair is to be arranged. I have already written you that my child (her cat) and I are waiting for you. Pieck⁴³ is of course waiting for you on account of the decision regarding the educational secretaryship. The chances seem to concentrate upon two applicants: P. himself and Dittmer of the communal workers' union. I absolutely don't know D., but P. seems very well suited for exactly this position, better than for politics. He is energetic, possesses initiative and great enthusiasm and idealism, and is a diligent reader. I think that this time you can support him with a good conscience.⁴⁴ As far as I know, Däumig also favors him. Whether the trade union folk will stick to Dittmer is doubtful, for he has had an internal row there, I am told. The matter is

⁴² [The "acquaintance" was myself.—L. K.]

⁴³ [Pieck, at that time right-hand man of Heinrich Schulz in the educational committee of the Social-Democratic Party, was anxious to become educational secretary.—L. K.]

⁴⁴ [I was a voting member of the educational committee at that time.—L. K.]

therefore not clear and your presence might be very important. The meeting is to take place in about eight days.—From Clara I received a detailed letter after a long silence, a letter, however, that is in very much of a minor key, as indeed all news from her has been of late. I am more and more under the impression: she is actually at the end of her strength and ought to take a thorough vacation and rest up somewhere in the south, in the sun. But in her case you can talk as though you were addressing a wall. Hopeless case. But the last time she was here she looked positively pitiful. Your Christmas present gave her much pleasure, in all likelihood she wrote you about it herself.

For the moment I am resting up after the book ⁴⁵—by doing Polish work (last night, for instance, until 12 at night)! I am really quite fagged out, for the numerous proof readings in addition to the school have made heavy inroads upon my health. But my Poles will not take a “no” for an answer and I must therefore plunge into affairs of my fatherland. As far as the book is concerned, my mind is already through with it. Exactly as with the pictures I paint: several days of joy and then—finish; I don’t think of them any longer.

One sees and hears nothing of your relatives. I suppose you were told about the Christmas celebration on the 21. Your Felix was very *galant* then, accompanied me home and intended to come and see me, but the matter has rested there since then. Hannes D. has announced himself with a long letter and three gigantic folders on Michelangelo. He is in Stuttgart, writes about himself in falsetto (where the shoe pinches him,

⁴⁵ [Her work, “Die Akkumulation,” the accumulation of capital, “Vorwärts”-Verlag, publishers, 1913.—L. K.]

in the stomach or elsewhere, I don't know), but for the present mentions nothing about his immediate plans. I spent the holidays very quietly with Mimi and Gertrude at home, and read a bit to myself from Schweitzer (the commentaries to which, by Mehring, are very beautiful), from Sophocles and Calderon.

I have a veritable thirst for classical literature, evidently as a reaction after all the national economy that I have had to swallow. On Saturday I attended Don Juan, with a guest from Sweden in the title role. The guest had wonderful legs in tights, but was otherwise a disappointment (as is mostly the case with Don Juans, is it not?) Whether Halensee⁴⁶ still exists—haven't the faintest idea. I kiss you and wait!

Your R.

72.

11.7.14. From Friedenau to Rome.

Dearest Lulu:

At last I have received somewhat more comforting news about your condition!⁴⁷ So long a period of grave anxiety, then hope, then anxiety again, and at last another ray of hope! Keep it up, dearest. Improve your health and then return to us, healthy and hale, as we are used to have you! I refrained so long from writing because I feared that my lines might arrive at your sepulchre of mattresses at the wrong time. Now I have faint hopes again that you are in a condition to welcome my greetings and that you will have a brief note sent me through one of your family, so that I may have the

⁴⁶ [A section of Berlin, where Hans Kautsky lived.—L. K.]

⁴⁷ [I had typhoid fever.—L. K.]

quieting assurance that you are on the upward grade. How much I should now like to be with you, nurse you and cheer you up! Unfortunately I lack two little items to make this possible: money and time, especially the latter. I must remain chained to the hot sultriness of Berlin, like Prometheus to the rock, although I have stolen nothing from nobody! You ought also to get out into nature, to the high, quiet mountains, as soon as possible. Now then, a thousand greetings and embraces in the glad hope of your speedy and final recovery! We shall then see each other again and chat long and heartily, as is proper. Regain your health and be cheerful!

Your Rosa.

73.

Post card to Rome, from the International Socialist
Bureau at Brussels, 18.7.1914.

I wrote you the other day. I hope you are well! I embrace you fondly!

Rosa.

VI

LETTERS FROM PRISON DURING THE WAR

1915—1918

74.

From the Barnim Street Jail, Berlin.
18.9.15. (To the City Hospital,
Frankfort-on-Main.)

My dear Lulu:

Once again I am writing you on the occasion of a little jubilee: to be sure, it isn't a birthday, but exactly seven months have passed since I was "pinched." Your letter and your picture have given me the greatest joy throughout this time. So vivacious and warm and full of life! That's how I know my Lulu and love her. So you have recovered splendidly—how glad I am! After Hans' reports I really did not dare hope for this. I also am very much opposed to a revolutionary invasion of your gall bladder;¹ this time I favor a "strategy of weakening,"² for an incision would certainly be a leap into the

¹ [Serious gall bladder complications arose with my case of typhoid fever and the physician was anxious to remove my bladder.—L. K.]

² [Refers to a phrase in Karl Kautsky's article, "What Now." The phrase, "strategy of weakening," displeased Rosa.—Transl.]

dark, which the professor who is so fond of operating had better first try on himself.

And you are right: what is a human being without a gall bladder? And especially now—to get along without a gall bladder *now!* No, even an angel can't do that, and you and I don't ever want to be angels.—How touched I was and how proud I feel that you are reading my “perpetration”³ with interest! But I had to laugh at your reservation that I must not dispute with you about it. Do you really think that I still have the book even slightly in mind? At the time I wrote it I felt as though I were intoxicated.—I swear to you that from beginning to end this has been the first draft that I gave to the printer without rereading, so completely had it taken possession of me. Exactly like my sudden passion for painting six years ago, when from morning till night I did nothing but dream of painting. But after that the book was finished and done for and completely dismissed from my mind; I now specially read over the part you referred to, just to see what it might be that you liked there; quite strange it now seemed to me. I suppose this is due to the fact that it was such an impressive experience for me. Two years ago—this you don't know at all—I had a different “bug”: in Südende⁴ a passion for plants sized me; I began to collect, to press, and to make botanical studies. For four months I literally did nothing but stroll leisurely through the fields or arrange and select from what I had picked up during my wanderings. I now possess twelve books packed with plants and am doing well at “orientating” myself with reference to the “native flora,” *e. g.*, in the

³ [“Die Akkumulation.”—L. K.]

⁴ [A suburb of Berlin.—Transl.]

local hospital-court, where a couple of bushes and plentiful weeds are flourishing, to the joy of the chickens and myself. Thus I must always have something that takes complete possession of me—swallows me up, as it were—however unbecoming this may be for a serious person of whom (to her misfortune) people always expect something clever. You, dearest, likewise refuse to hear anything about my “happiness in obscurity,” and have naught but derision for it. But don’t you see, I just must have *somebody* who will believe that it is only by mistake that I am galivanting about in the whirlpool of history, and that I am in reality born to mind geese. So you must believe it, do you hear? And I absolutely can’t agree to your writing me resignedly that you “mayn’t be anything to me.” Yes indeed, you are and shall be—the haven (excuse me!) into which I can run from time to time when the devil is secretly taking me, so that we may then chat and laugh together and have Hans⁵ play the Figaro to us. For of course, Hans Naivus must be there to listen, with his head inclined to one side in a melancholy fashion, how two clever women are prattling and to wink dreamily from one to the other. If, as I hope, you are in Berlin when I emerge from this hole, we shall immediately arrange for such a Saturnalia (with flax-yellow tea *à la* Hans).—What you reported about Felix was really reason for being happy; Karli hasn’t changed one bit on the little picture, and such a ragamuffin is already managing a hospital!⁶ And these are the saucy little scamps whom, only a few years ago, we saw romping about with shirt-tails fluttering behind

⁵ [Hans Kautsky.—Transl.]

⁶ [Kautsky’s second son was assistant surgeon in the city hospital at Frankfort-on-Main.—L. K.]

them, and who now, suddenly, want also to be regarded as grown up, a fact which reminds us indelicately that we are growing old. But let's not care about this and, in defiance of everybody, remain young, won't we? Your Bendal,⁷ by the way, I saw every Sunday last winter in my class in Neukölln⁸—which was very nice indeed. And how are Hans' boys and girls? Just think, shortly before my arrest I received some letters from Medi;⁹ I want to get in touch with her again later.—

Clara's affair gives me great concern, for I am entirely in the dark as to what is to happen to her. Thank God, I too, have a new care loaded onto me (on account of the "Internationale"¹⁰) which may possibly bring it about that I won't be able to stick my nose out of prison even by February. But, as good old Uncle Paulus (Paul Singer) used to put it, "let the events come to us."—Lulu, before you leave Frankfort, you must—in case you have not already done so—pay a longer visit to the Palm Garden. I was there on the occasion of my lawsuit last February and took in the hot-house. It is beautiful as a dream in its first pre-spring verdure, and so nicely appointed that one can sit there and chat, especially in the primrose section! You see, my botanical passion is still with me (and has already outlasted many others). And for you I am not keeping a "wee little corner" in my

⁷ [Benedict, second son of Kautsky, national economist.—L. K.]

⁸ [A working-class section of Greater Berlin.—Transl.]

⁹ [Miss Martha Urban.—L. K.]

¹⁰ [An indictment on account of her article appearing in "The Internationale," which was forbidden by the censors, but one issue of which appeared under her and Frank Mehring's editorship.—L. K.]

heart, you sheep, but you share the parlor with Mimi, from whom, by the way, I have just received a charming photograph. Write soon, dearest, I embrace you a thousand times. Hearty greetings to Hans and the rest of your boys!

Your R.

75.

Berlin, December 25, 1915.

To the Editors of the "Neue Zeit."

Comrades: In February Franz Mehring will be 70 years old. I should like to ask whether you would like to have me write a short article of about 1½ printed pages, for this occasion and how long before I should have to send it in.¹¹ I cannot send this inquiry openly to you, since the article would have to be in your hands before my liberation (18.2) and I am anxious to publish it without having it censored here. (It would appear, of course, only after my return to freedom).

For this reason I request you to send me the reply by the same route.

With socialist greetings,
Rosa Luxemburg.

76.

From the Barnim street Jail, 27.12.15.

Beloved Lulu! Your love message brought me both joy and pain: joy at having a sign of life in hand again from you and thus feeling your nearness; pain, because we were

¹¹ [The editors had already arranged with Eduard Bernstein about a birthday article for Mehring, and it was Bernstein who wrote it.—L. K.]

unable to see each other and you got excited about it. I sense from your letter that your nerves vibrate very easily and that your golden good humor, such as you displayed in earlier letters, is miserably shipwrecked at the slightest contact with "reality." Such vexations are entirely foreign to me; I have so trained myself in firm equanimity that I swallow everything with the gayest mien, without as much as winking. If I could but make you calm and "fortified," you poor dear! But that can't be done here. I fear that you, especially, will suffer disappointment if we can only greet each other conventionally for a quarter of an hour with guards watching us. You would naturally have been a better advocate of your wishes than our good Weinberg,¹² but consider carefully whether the whole matter will not excite you more than it will satisfy you.

That you and Hans got up a Christmas present for me and took so much pains to do it, has warmed my heart. I haven't received it as yet, but I am happy in anticipation and thank you a thousand times. I recall the various beautiful and happy evenings in Halensee, where we were so jolly under the fir-tree with your "bunch." Perhaps it will happen accidentally that I won't sit in the "pen" next year, and the world will perhaps accidentally still be standing, even though only on one leg—then we shall assemble again at Halensee. Until then we shall *certainly* see each other, and often, too. Here, too, you will in all probability be permitted to see me before January is over, if you personally make application (in writing) for it and if you are not afraid of a disappoint-

¹² [Dr. Siegfried Weinberg, her lawyer, to whom I had turned unsuccessfully in the matter of permission for a visit.—L. K.]

ment. You can't imagine how I yearn to sit with you on the soft, broad sofa and to listen with you as Hans plays something good to us. That Faisst,¹³ to whom I owe my acquaintance with Wolf, died at the very beginning of the war, you no doubt know; it happened a day before Jaurés death. Now Vaillant's¹⁴ death has shaken me badly. You remember, no doubt, that I was on especially intimate terms of friendship with him, more even than with Guesde. I had a deep and sincere admiration for the old man, and I retain this feeling for him in undiminished manner despite everything. Clara, too, was deeply stirred by this matter. Hannes has in all probability written you how ill Clara has been and how serious her condition is. Everybody was forbidden to write her anything that might excite her or cause her exertion. I therefore prefer to send her nothing but a brief greeting (especially since objective limits have been set to my writing here); under these circumstances it is probably better for you to wait about writing her. When I get out, I hope to visit her and shall then pick up the threads orally. Dearest, be quiet and cheerful and receive herewith a thousand greetings and kisses for the new year and share them with Hans and your boys. *Happy New Year*. In spite of everything! *Guadamus igitur*—"as long as we are young and foolish." I shall be with you in thoughts Sylvester eve. Once more I embrace you heartily.

Always your Rosa.

Give the enclosed letter to the Pater Familias.¹⁵

¹³ [Faisst, personal friend and promoter of the composer Hugo Wolf.—L. K.]

¹⁴ [Vaillant and Guesde, French socialists.—L. K.]

¹⁵ [The letter which follows next.—L. K.]

77.

Barnimstrasse 10, Berlin No. 43, 27.12.15.

Official Stamp 6.1.16.+

To the Editors of the "Neue Zeit."

Comrades: I am engaged in writing a counter-criticism in defense of my book on "Accumulation" and should like to ask whether you would be ready to publish this work as a supplement to the "N. Z.," especially since it is in the main a reply to the criticism by Otto Bauer¹⁶ published in the "N. Z." I estimate that it will be 4-5 printer's sheets long. My observations will be conveyed in the most popular manner possible, without any mathematical schemes, and will be calculated to give the wider public an idea of the problems involved and an insight into their practical, political significance. At the same time I should like to request you kindly to inform me how much time, in that case, I should have in which to furnish the manuscript so that it may reach you in time for the next supplement.¹⁷

With socialist greetings

R. Luxemburg.

¹⁶ [One of the best known present leaders in the socialist movement of German Austria. Foreign minister in one of the early cabinets following the revolution.—Transl.]

¹⁷ [The editors replied as follows:

To

Mrs. Dr. R. Luxemburg.

Berlin, 6.1.16.

Dear Comrade Rose:

The publishers have informed us during the summer of this year that, in order to keep down expenses, we may no longer print supplements, nor are we to exceed 32

From the Barnim street Jail, 20.1.16.

Beloved Lulu: You are very much mistaken if you think that your visit has not been as refreshing and given as much joy to me as it did to you. And "trifles" don't exist for me as far as you are concerned; everything is important and of the greatest interest. Only, during the brief time I could unfortunately not learn everything I wanted to know from you.

But I have convinced myself that you are at work again, active and cheerful and just as of old, and that fact has given me great joy. About everything else—soon, in full freedom. Dearest, it is really *better* that we wait four more short weeks and then sit on the "red sofa" at Südende with the kind assistance of Mimi. That your visit might in any way tire me or be an exertion for me, as you fear, is of course out of the question. But "on general principles" I should prefer to be modest and contain myself in patience until the end.

You are asking whether I am making any plans with reference to a milder climate for recuperation. "Ask the horse," replied the Sunday rider when people asked him whither he was galloping. You forget that different gen-

pages per number—which hardly gives us space to discuss the questions of the day thoroughly. Under these circumstances it is unfortunately impossible for us to publish as extensive a contribution as you offer us. As to what the conditions with reference to space will be after the war, that, of course, it is impossible to foretell now.

With friendly greetings on behalf of the editors of the "N. Z."

E. Wurm.]

tlements are interested in me: for instance, the state's attorney at Düsseldorf, the local state's attorney, Comrade von Kessel,¹⁸ etc. Whether they can spare me in the Mark in the immediate future or not, and what their intentions are with reference to me—that is something that we'll have to see as it develops. Hence I cannot be so indelicate as to simply make "plans" over their heads. I can't deny that I have just about had my fill of the gray-colored Berlin sky and that I would have no objection to breathing a different air for even a brief time; but if, as does not seem unlikely, nothing comes of such a plan, we shall have to bear this as well. Südende, too, is "a pretty piece of country." You have never really appreciated the natural beauties of that region, I hope you will soon make up for lost time. At least write me another line meanwhile. I hug you many times.

Your Rosa.

Many thanks for Dietzgen's little volume, also for the greetings.

N. B. We entirely forgot to talk about little Kate.¹⁹

79.

10, Barnim street, 13.9.16.

Carissima,

I really don't know where my thoughts are to look for you now (your last sending bore the post mark Krummhübel). In any case I trust these lines will reach you.

¹⁸ [The highest commanding officer in the Mark, the province in which Berlin is located.—L. K.]

¹⁹ [Hans Kautsky's youngest daughter.—L. K.]

Your birthday greeting on the 11.8. brought me rather sad joy: for the first time I could not even send you a letter; I am permitted to write but two letters monthly, added to which is the time it takes for them to travel—four days to three weeks * * * I hope you have gained something out of your summer and have recuperated nicely.

I now have a request to make. You know about the Korolenko translation on which I am at work. Could you look about for a publisher? I am hardly in a position to stir here. Dietz has declined, just as I expected. There remain therefore only bourgeois publishers or possibly the "Neue Welt" or Döscher in the "Vorwärts." Turn in my name to whomever you consider best (only not to Diedrichs in Jena). For your information the following: the exact title is "The Story of My Contemporary." In reality it is an autobiography of Korolenko, an excellent work of art, at the same time a first-rate cultural and historic document; it embraces the period of liberal reforms under Alexander II, the Polish uprising, the first oppositional and revolutionary stirrings in Russia, and thus reflects the transition from the old feudal Russia to the present capitalistic. Moreover, the scene is laid in Wolhynia, in other words, in the western border provinces, where Russian, Polish and Ruthenian elements make a curious mixture. Size 28 printer's sheets. Hannes Diefenbach acted as godfather to the first chapters. I know that he would be pleased. Ask him whether it is possible to send him the continuation out to the front, *i. e.*, whether between his ever equally victorious spring and autumn offensives and defensives he would find leisure to read this thing and of course to return it soon. You see, I have great respect

for his literary taste, and for him it would be a change from his rough warrior's task. Write soon, for then I shall receive the letter "in due time" * * * I embrace you and send many greetings to all Hans-es, including the young painter and your boys.

Your Rosa.

Many thanks to Hannes for the "Triumphgasse."²⁰ What is his address, anyway, I have already forgotten it.

80.

From the jail in Wronke. 3.12.16.
(Stamped by the censor: Berlin Com-
mandery, released for forwarding.)

Dearest Lulu! I hasten to reply to your letter; I was very happy to see a line from you after so long a lapse. Many thanks for the trouble you took about my translation and for your good success. More than a week ago I sent 10 sheets (printer's sheets of the original) in manuscript to the commandant; you (or Mathilde J.) (her secretary) are in a better position to persuade him to hurry his examination of it than am I on this Robinson's Island. The manuscript is addressed to Mathilde; you see, she is bound first to type it, but as the publisher is waiting for sample pages and I—if I may flatter myself have written pretty clean copy, I would request you not to wait for the typed copy but to pass the manuscript on in my own handwriting. I must leave it to you to determine how much and what to send to the publisher; as far as I am concerned I would rather have him see everything, so that he may form a thorough opinion. Above all you must read it yourself and write me at

²⁰ [A novel by Ricarda Huch.—L. K.]

once what impression the original and the translation made upon you. I am very curious to know! This is the very autobiography with which I had hoped to incite *you* to a similar attempt. In handing over the manuscript remember one thing: this is my only copy, therefore impress most deeply upon the gentleman²¹ who is taking such a kind interest in unimportant me, not to lose any of it. Also tell him that I reserve the right to make a final revision of the translation, but that this can only be done after some time has elapsed, after the immediate impression (linguistic) of the original has been obliterated; for the present the manuscript is too "fresh from the cow."

Now for another request.

Korolenko's father had the bad habit of using the phrase "the patient tries to teach the doctor" every few moments. This has about the same meaning as the German "The pot wants to teach the potter," or, "The eggs are trying to be cleverer than the hens." I regard the frequent use of proverbs, especially of self-made ones (for a proverb like the one used by K. Senior doesn't exist in the Russian language either) as literary insipidity; on the other hand there is a certain personal note, a little intimacy in this trait. I have therefore translated the phrase verbatim. Should this, however, seem too "Greek" to unaccustomed German ears, I give you *pleins pouvoirs* to substitute the German proverb about the pot and the potter for the sentence. In that case, however, *everywhere!!!* As far as the conditions of publication are concerned, I have no suggestions to offer. You know that in money matters I am about as intelligent as a new-

²¹ [Leo Kestenbergh, manager of the Paul Cassirer publishing house during the war.—L. K.]

born calf (somehow I just can't get away from cow metaphors today!); I rely entirely upon Mr. Cassirer or upon his representative who is so favorably inclined towards me. And therewith enough about business. Only let me know developments soon.

It is a real blessing that you have at last been delivered of your child of sorrows.²² I can well imagine what a visitation from the Lord it must be to have dear Riasanow as "midwife." I have a feeling that you will only now take an interest in all sorts of things, in fresh literary plans and in worth-while reading matter; I sensed how that load weighed upon you. It is unfortunate that you find no joy in this birth; but I imagine that you are still too keenly aware of and disgusted by the thousand and one disagreeablenesses of the task. When you examine the product from a distance, when you cease thinking of it as *your* work, you will like it, I'm sure. Anyway: what translator, yes, what author, who isn't a heifer (again I have reached the stables! . . .), ever looks at his work except with a gnawing feeling of being dissatisfied with himself, unless indeed he is a member of the Reichstag or a member of the general executive board of the trade unions, in which cases, of course, the above clause does not apply. * * *

As far as the world stage is concerned, about which you are groaning, it will soon become an harmonious whole again: for, after *everything* has been stood on end

²² [At that time I had just completed a big job of translation, which appeared in 1917 under the title "Collected Writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 1852-1862, 2 Vols. 530+551 pp. Dietz, Publisher. Edited by N. Rjasanoff. Translations from the English by Louise Kautsky."]

there will result a picture that is correctly put together. I suppose you have heard about the physiological experiment which consists in this—a man who has put on a certain pair of spectacles through which everything seems upside down becomes so “accommodated” after a time that he finds his bearings in every way and is able to move about just like a man with normal sight. To be sure, the experiment is said at first to cause considerable nausea. I am still in this stage of nausea. * * *

I am somewhat disquieted at our not hearing anything from Hannes for so long. I suppose everything will be cleared up about Christmas time, for he will surely come to visit his “old gentleman” then. In the near future I want to write him (*i. e.*, the young man, not the old gentleman) a letter which, wretch that I am, I have owed him for—two years, while the boy is getting writer’s cramp. You see, for him, too, I have serious literary plans. It would be a sin to have his pen exhaust itself writing letters to us both.

Tomorrow Figaro will be with you! You see, I am incorrigible, I have learned “nothing new.” “North and West and South are splitting, thrones are bursting, kingdoms trembling,”—and I am thinking of Figaro. Yes, and I am busily engaged in feeding wrens and magpies. The latter—my sole audience here—I teach the most revolutionary ideas and slogans and then let them fly away again! * * * But, the devil! They, too, will of course finally about-face to Scheidemann;²³ I have such

²³ [Philip Scheidemann has been socialist member of the Reichstag since 1903. In 1912 and 1918 he was vice-president of that body. In October, 1918, he became secretary of state without portfolio; on November 9, 1918, he became “people’s commissar.” In 1919, February-

a premonition already: after all, natural inclination is stronger than all acquired wisdom.

Write me soon what you are now doing and what Hans and his family are doing. You know that besides "things general" there is always a place left for things personal in my soul. And your place will always be reserved and kept warm. Farewell, I hug you heartily.

Your R.

Please do not address your letters direct to Wronke, but to the Commandery of Berlin (with an envelope inside addressed to me), that saves three or four days.

81.

Undated, according to content from the prison in Wronke, end of December, 1916.²⁴

Dearest Lulu! A thousand thanks and many kisses for your dear letter and the wonderful present from you and Igel.²⁵ I threw myself upon it like a starving man upon bread. Here all such delicacies for the senses make an even greater impression upon me than elsewhere, I suppose as compensation for the real life from which I am now cut off. I have not yet studied the collection in detail—I promise myself to do this in quiet and comfort during the holidays—but even the first cursory examination has been refreshing and stimulating.

How happy I am to think that you relish my Koro-

June, he was prime minister of Germany. Since January, 1920, he has been chief mayor of Cassel. A nationalistic attempt upon his life was made in 1922 at Cassel.]

²⁴ This letter was not censored, but was handed to me by a mutual acquaintance.]

²⁵ [A nickname for Hans Kautsky.]

lenko! So you think the translation will do? But please, please do correct everything that seems un-German or wrong to you, for it is really not necessary to conjure up the "home flavor" by means of slips of grammar. I agree of course to your alteration of the imperative in the proverb, only see to it, dearest, that you correct it *everywhere* and *before* having it typed.

The two volumes of your Marx²⁶ which are before me, give a real insight into the tremendous work you have accomplished; one cannot imagine this until one sees it actually before one's eyes. I could naturally not get to reading it carefully, all the more so since Sonia²⁷ was here; I have merely tasted here and there, but what I have read gives one the impression of extraordinarily worth-while reading (I mean the translation): one really does not notice at all that it is a translation, and that is the highest possible praise, just as the most beautiful dress of a beautiful woman is supposed to be that which one does not notice. I shall write you in greater detail (I shall soon have another opportunity) about the book, as well as about all sorts of other matters.

I am very, very much pleased at the news that you are again exchanging letters with Clara. She is now urgently in need of human kindness and warmth of heart and I know that your impulsive letters know how

²⁶ [The two volumes, mentioned in the previous letter, and entitled "Collected Writings of Marx and Engels." Among other things they contain the letters by Marx published in the New York Tribune concerning England, the Oriental question, Palmerston, the Russo-Turkish War, the Spanish revolution, etc. etc. The Militaria are from Engels.—L. K.]

²⁷ [Sophie Liebknecht, wife of Karl Liebknecht.—L. K.]

to radiate both. Therefore do write her much and often, that will be a refreshing south wind for her. Alas, there is so much to talk about in connection with all these things, but to *talk*, sitting arm in arm upon the sofa. For the present I must unfortunately close. I embrace and kiss you a thousand times. Many greetings to Igel and your brood! Merry Christmas to you all and a Happy New Year!!

Your Rosa.

82.

Wronke i P., Citadel, 26.1.17.

Official stamp: seen 27.1.D.

Lulu beloved:

Yesterday (in my absence) I was arraigned in Berlin, where no doubt I earned a few more months of jail. Today it is exactly three months since my imprisonment in the Third Division. In celebration of two such memorial days—of a kind that for years have been pleasantly interrupting my existence—you are to receive a letter. Pardon me, my dear, if I have kept you waiting for an answer; I have just passed through a short period of despicable cowardliness. We have had several days of icy wind and storm, and I felt myself so insignificant and weak that I would not leave my “pen” at all, for fear lest the cold weather might destroy me. When I am in such a frame of mind I naturally wait anxiously for a hearty, warm letter, but unfortunately my friends always wait for the initiative and the impulse to come from me. No one ever has the original and good idea to write to me of his own accord—excepting only Hänschen (Hans Diefenbach) who, however, evidently has grown

somewhat tired of writing "letters that failed to reach her" and that remain unanswered. Finally a letter arrived from Sonia L.; the ring to her correspondence, however, is always that of a cracked glass. So that, as usual, I had to recover by my own will power—and it is well thus. Now I am quite well again and in good spirits, only I miss you to gossip and laugh with, as only we two know how. I would certainly succeed in getting you to laugh soon again, although your last letters sounded alarmingly morose. Do you remember how on one occasion we returned from an evening at Bebel's, and at midnight the three of us staged a frog concert on the street? At that time you said that, when we were together, you were always intoxicated as it were—as though we had drunk champagne. That is what I like so much about you—that I can always bring you into a "champagne mood," when life seems to tickle one's fingers and one is ready for every tomfoolery. Supposing we do not see each other for three years: after half an hour it seems as though it had been but yesterday that we last met. And so I'd like suddenly to break in now upon Hans Naivus and to laugh at your family table as we did last June when Hänschen visited you (he wrote me afterwards that on the whole way to the front he had to laugh right out in the railway compartment, to the surprise of his comrades, to whom he surely "seemed like an idiot"). The time for real champagne is over, for a long time at least, since poor Faisst fell as the first victim of the world war;—over for champagne—over for Wolf songs. In that connection: I have a very pleasant memory of our last "spree." It took place last summer, when I was in the Black Forest. One Sunday

he came with Costia²⁸ for a visit, climbing up from Wildbad. It was a splendid day, and after the meal we sat outdoors, grouped about a battery of "Mumm"²⁹ bottles. We revelled in the sun and were very happy. The "noble giver" naturally drank most himself. Once again he experienced an "unforgettable hour," laughed, gesticulated, shouted and chased one effervescing glass after another down his broad Suabian "mug." He was especially amused at the Sunday picnickers who swarmed about us on the veranda. "Just look at those Philistines gaping at us," he kept exclaiming, enthusiastically, "if they only knew *who* is having a drinking bout here!" The funniest part about it all was the fact that it was we who were the real innocents, for the inn-keeper, as he himself told me in the evening, had somehow unraveled the mystery of my unfortunate "incognito"³⁰ and had retailed the news of his discovery to all his guests. The rogue served us with such peculiar smirks and pulled the corks with an extra loud report; the Philistines, however, as you might well imagine, were highly edified about this "social-democratic champagne-bout."

And now spring will let "its blue ribbon flutter" for the third time over Faisst's grave. (He sang this song³¹ very beautifully—much better than Julia Culp, whom

²⁸ [Clara Zetkin's younger son.—L. K.]

²⁹ ["Mumm" is a celebrated brand of champagne.—Transl.]

³⁰ [As has already been mentioned, Rosa never registered under the name of Luxemburg when travelling. At times even she went under the wildest faked names.—L. K.]

³¹ [Music by Hugo Wolf; words by Mörike.—L. K.]

we—don't you remember?—heard together in the *Singakademie*.) I suppose all inclination for music as for everything else has left you for quite a while. Your mind is preoccupied with worries about the wrong course history is taking, and your heart is full of sighs over the despicable conduct of—Scheidemann and comrades. And everybody who writes me, moans and sighs similarly. To me, nothing seems more ludicrous than that. Don't you understand that the general misery is altogether *too great* to bemoan it? I can give grief if Mimi is taken down with sickness or when something is the matter with you. But when the whole world is out of sorts, then I try merely to *comprehend* what has happened and why it happened; and once I have done my duty I rest content and recover my good spirits. *Ultra posse nemo obligatur*. And besides, *everything* is still left that otherwise gave me joy: music and painting and cloud and botanical excursions in springtime and good books and Mimi and you and many other things besides—in short, I am immensely rich and intend to remain so until the end. This complete yielding to the miseries of the day is something that I can't understand and bear at all. Just note how, for instance, a Goethe stood above events with his cool composure! Just think what he had to go through: the great French revolution which, seen at close range, certainly must have seemed like a bloody and entirely purposeless farce; and then from 1793 to 1815 an unbroken chain of wars, during which the world again looked like a madhouse let loose. And how quietly, with what mental equilibrium he at the same time pursued his studies about the metamorphosis of plants, about the theory of color, about a thousand and one things! I don't ask you to write poetry like Goethe; but

his conception of life—the universality of interests, the inner harmony—is something that everybody can acquire for himself, or at least strive for. And if perchance you should say, “but Goethe was no fighter in the political realm,” I reply: a fighter, more than anybody else, must try to rise above events, otherwise he will sink up to his nose into every little trifle. Of course, I am thinking of fighters of big caliber, not of weathervanes of the size of the “big men” who gather about your table and who, the other day, sent me a post-card greeting. Never mind—*your* greeting was the only one I really cared for among them all. And because of it, I am going to send you a little picture from my Turner collection one of these days. But don’t you dare turn me down, as some one did recently! Just imagine, at Christmastime I sent a beautiful picture from this collection to Leo, when I received the message through Miss Jacob: declined with thanks—this would be “vandalism”—the picture must be returned to the collection! I was furious, for here, too, I agree with Goethe:³²

“Hätt’ ich irgend wohl Bedenken,—
 Balch, Bokhara, Samarkand—
 Süßes Liebchen, Dir zu schenken
 Dieser Städte Rausch und Tand?
 Aber frage Du den Kaiser
 Ob er Dir die Städte giebt?
 Er ist mächtiger und weiser,
 Doch er weiss nicht, wie man liebt * * *”

Leo is neither Kaiser nor wiser, nor does he know “how one loves.” But we two know how, don’t we, Louise? And if in the near future I should take a notion to

³² [In the “West—Ostlicher Diwan.”—L. K.]

snatch down a few stars in order to present them to somebody as cuff buttons, I shouldn't want some cold pedant with raised finger to object and say that I was throwing confusion into all the school-Atlantes of astronomy!

The Grainer collection which you sent me gives me ever greater pleasure; I often turn its pages and thereby work up a constantly increasing hunger for others. Would it not be possible for Robert³³ to send me a few of his latest pictures through the next human being that comes to visit me here (as to whom the finger of Herr von Kessel will designate, you may learn through Miss J.)? I would guarantee their safe return; and I would get a thievish joy out of them! Anyway, couldn't Robert himself come to visit me? In that event he could probably carry out his intention of painting me, provided three or four sittings would suffice. My God, the idea appeals to me! As long as I am "sitting" anyway, I might as well sit for him! In any case the very sight of this dew-kissed youth with his beaming eyes would do me good. I am quite sure that he, as the son of the court painter at the royal theater, will get the permission, all the more so if Count Hülsen³⁴ will write a line. * * * This, of course, merely in fun; Hans Naivus will rather die than confess to the Count his friendship for the "firebrand." But I suppose Robert will get permission even without a protector.

Above all, how about *you*? Have you put in your application as yet? I should of course prefer that you come in spring when the country here looks more hos-

³³ [Robert Kautsky, painter, youngest son of Hans Kautsky.—L. K.]

³⁴ [Count Hülsen was then general manager of the court theater.—L. K.]

pitabile; it is said to be quite beautiful, according to people who have seen it. In view of the calamitous condition of the railroads and the rawness of the weather it would be far too risky for you now. But I shall unconditionally order your visit for the spring. You will be surprised at all that you will find about me: the black wrens attend me faithfully before the window; they know my voice exactly and seem to like it when I sing. Not long ago I was singing the "Countess" Aria from Figaro, when six of them squatted down upon the bush before the window and listened motionless to the end—it looked too "cute" for words. Then, too, every day two blackbirds come at my call; I have never seen any as tame; they eat from the tin before the window. For that reason, though, I have ordered a cantata for April 1st that will be a stunner. Can't you send me some sun-flower seeds for this little folk? And then—I also want to order one of those war cakes for my own "beak" that you sent several times before; it will give me a slight foretaste of Paradise.

Speaking of things high and most high: here is another matter that won't let me rest: it seems that even without any fault of mine the world of stars has got into disorder. I don't know whether, in the midst of all your anxiety about Scheidemann, you have noticed that an epoch-making discovery was made last year: an Englishman, Walkey, is said to have discovered the "center of the universe." This "center" is supposed to be the star Canopus in the sign of the zodiac Ship Argo (southern hemisphere), which is "only" 500 light-years away from us and is about one and a half million times larger than the sun. These dimensions don't impress me at all, I am quite *blasé*. But there is something else that worries

me: a center about which "everything" moves, transforms the universe into a globe. Now, I find it the top notch of absurdity to imagine the universe as a globe—as a sort of large potato dumpling or ball of ice cream. In this case above all others, where it is a question of the "whole," such symmetry of figure is a flat, petty-bourgeois conception. Besides, in that event nothing more nor less than the *infinity* of the universe goes by the boards. For, a "globe-like infinity" is nonsense. And for my spiritual comfort I absolutely must have something more than human stupidity to think of as infinite! As you see, I literally have "the cares of Herr von Kant." What does Hans Naivus or his learned *filius* think about this?

Now do write a decent letter immediately *de omnibus rebus*, otherwise I shall eject you from the main chamber of my heart, where you have a place directly beside Mimi, and put you into a side chamber.

Good Lord! I forgot the main thing: I haven't finished the translation as yet—only seven printer's sheets are still missing, but these, too, I shall first have to copy. Can't the publisher judge from the twelve sheets?

The finish at last. I embrace you.

Your
R.

83.

Wronke, 1.P. 30.1.17.

Dearest Lulu! For the present only business matters, quite briefly; for some time to come I may neither receive nor write personal letters, of which fact please take cognizance.—As for your questions: Korolenko is

living in Russia. I suppose he will have no objection to my translation, on the contrary, he will feel honored and pleased. As to whether his publisher can descend upon us and what the existing contracts signify,—that, like everything purely practical, is *terra incognita* for me. I should be glad to write a foreword on K's importance in literature, but find it impossible to do it here, without any reference material. It all depends, therefore—since the foreword need not be set in type until the very last moment—on when the book is to appear and whether I shall then still be in jail. For reading purposes I agree in recommending the chapter on "Father and Mother," also, possibly, the chapter about the Polish uprising. By the way, Hannes will be the best arbiter.—The book closes with K's graduation, a second volume hasn't appeared.—The size of the honorarium is, after all, a matter of indifference to me: you know that I have no knack for handling mammon.—I can't send you further installments of the manuscript direct; it must pass through the commandery. I shall now work at it busily and finish the job soon.

That you sent me no joint greeting from Sonia's birthday party pleases me greatly: All plural letters and cards fill me with horror, since they are for the most part noisy and banal as people usually become when they are gathered together in greater numbers. Only quietude and personal attention react beneficially upon me, you know how difficult it is for me to stand people's talking loudly * * *

And now, probably for some time to come, a hearty kiss.

Your R.

84.

Undated. From Wronke with the official mark, "seen D.7.2."

Dearest Lulu:

So you are quiet and cheerful again, I hope. With sympathetic understanding you have felt my pronounced sensitiveness, and I thank you for it. I have, as a matter of fact, become somewhat like a human being without skin: I shudder at every shadow that falls upon me. It seems that the year in Barnim street, then the four months of frantic work and now again seven months of solitude in various stages have not passed by without leaving their mark.

Do you know what idea is now pursuing and frightening me? I imagine to myself that I am about to go into a gigantic hall filled to overflowing, that the strong light, the babel of voices of the multitude strike me, and that the usual thunderous applause greets and accompanies me as I make my way toward the platform—and I have the feeling that I shall suddenly take French leave! I am seized with a *horror pleni* and even the prospect of sitting together with five or six friends and of possibly having to hear loud laughter is depressing. Oh, you have no idea what a torture it was, when after the year in Barnim street I had to receive 80 (literally 80) persons on the very first day and say a few words to each one of them. The memory of my cell seemed like a paradise to me. And now additional seven months have been loaded onto me.

But that makes no difference! I hope this fear will leave me, especially when warm weather sets in and spring comes at last. And it is then, precisely, that I

want to see you here—in *May*. I am making a certain very definite calculation in connection therewith, which will surely meet with your approval, after once we have had a chance to talk together here. So make your arrangements accordingly.

When I am with you again, you will, as usual, take me on your lap in your large, deep chair, I shall bury my head in your shoulder, and Hans will play us the Moonlight Sonata or the second movement from the Pathétique. Then everything will be all right again.

A thousand thanks for what you are doing for my Korolenko. But what am I saying! Hasn't it always been self-evident that you are showing nothing but kindness to me? A hearty hug to you!

Ever and unchangeably your

R.

85.

Louise K. by mail from Kruez.

Undated. According to content, March, 1917.

Lulu beloved! I have waited all this time to chat with you unhampered, for one cannot otherwise write just as one would like to, nor—can one talk that way. Remember this, so that you may not be disappointed or depressed, in case you find me somewhat ill at ease. * * *

Now, above all a thousand thanks to you and Igel for the wonderful book³⁵ with the affectionate dedication. It is giving me great pleasure and I cannot see too much of the beautiful pictures. I am already busy

³⁵ [We had presented her with a large ornithological work on her birthday, as she was so interested in birds.—L. K.]

reading in it, at first just a little chapter here and there (for instance, about the birds of passage), and after that I shall read it several times thoroughly from beginning to end. That is really a book for me. Also, many thanks for the wonderful cake. I have already eaten myself through half of this sweet mountain, strangely enough it tastes the better, the further one gets, and the last crumbs usually seem quite divine. That's the way it is with everything, isn't it?

But now about yourself, dearest. What about your frame of mind? Why this deep depression and gloominess? I thought at first that it was due to Hannes' departure, which had suddenly made you somewhat lonesome, and I hoped very much that his delightful letters would bring you much more comfort than mine could bring. It seems now, however, that the depression is continuing and this gives me grave concern. Is it due to the general condition of things? But in that first long letter you wrote so cheerfully and bravely about these things and stood so far above them that I was really pleased. Has it anything to do with your personal affairs or with your health? Of course, one actual glance at you with my own eyes will give me a quicker and safer reply to all my questions than your letters can, and I am awaiting your visit with growing impatience. And yet I am glad that it will be May before I am to have you here, for in this weather I should have grave fears about your health. I suppose you have heard what a bad cold poor Martha³⁶ contracted, and with you it is certainly no joke. Besides, I hope that I, too, may take a new lease of life with the coming of spring

³⁶ [Martha Rosenbaum, one of her favorite friends.—L. K.]

and thus be able to give you greater pleasure. In general—especially when I am quite alone—I am bearing up well. But as soon as any excitement comes, even though it be of a happy nature, my nerves give way very quickly. But that is merely a transitory condition: it was exactly like that a year ago. The eighth and ninth months are always critical. After that a reaction sets in of its own accord and my nerves recover again. Spring, especially, always works wonders. I don't know why it is so: the longer I live, the more consciously and deeply every year I experience the miracle of spring, then of summer, then of autumn. Every day is a wonderful miracle for me and I merely regret not to have time and leisure enough to devote myself to its contemplation. That is to say: for the last two years I have had time and leisure enough, but now I see only very little of all these splendid things. But to be free and stroll about out in the fields or even only in the streets, to make a halt before every garden during April-May, to gaze at the verdant bushes, observing how the budding leaves are turned differently in the case of each of them, how the maple tree strews out its greenish-yellow stars, how the first speedwell peeps forth from under the grass,—all this is honestly my greatest joy in life now, and I need, desire and yearn for *nothing* else, if only I can spend one hour per day in that way. Do not misunderstand me! I don't mean to say that I want to limit myself to this and would not like to lead an active, thinking life. I want merely to say that my *personal happiness* is satisfied in that manner and that I am thereby steeled against and recompensed for all sacrifices and struggles.

I experienced such a spring last year, and that, too—

I now recall it with pain—in part with Karl.³⁷ The poor fellow had, of course, always lived *ventre à terre*, in a gallop, in eternal haste, hurrying to appointments with all the world, to meetings, committees, forever surrounded by packages, newspapers, all of his pockets full of writing pads and slips of paper, jumping from the auto into the electric car and from the electric into the steam tram, his body and soul covered with street-dust * * * That was his way of doing, although in his heart of hearts he is of a poetical nature as few persons are and can take childish delight in every little flower. I had compelled him to enjoy the spring somewhat with me, to go on a hike a few times. How he revived! And now his picture is standing before me—Sonia had the splendid idea of presenting me with it for my birthday—and my heart is convulsed with pain every time I look at him.

Lulu, now for some business matters! So the publisher hasn't decided finally as yet? Despite 192 pages of translation and, above all, despite the name of Korolenko, which in itself really tells enough! * * * I am surprised, all the more so since he has already brought out such miserable translations as Galsworthy from the pen of "Lise Landau"! Well, I shall hasten as fast as I can. *In the near future* I shall send 7-8 printer's sheets more, but that, of course, must pass through the commandery. Please do write the publisher to take this into account. I am, after all, not in a position to dispose of my arrangements according to my wishes. Besides—do tell him this—I am *purposely* translating slowly, *i. e.*, I lay aside my first draft for quite a while, in order then to read it without bias and to gauge the

³⁷ Karl Liebknecht, then in jail on a charge of high treason.—L. K.]

German impression, away from the original. *That is absolutely necessary.* But I am diligently at work and shall send additional installments in proportion as I have them ready. That is all I can say, and I hope this will satisfy him. In any case write me what he replies.

Dearest, write soon again, short or long, whatever may be your mood. Don't refer to this letter; as for the rest, you may write about everything. And make your application *right away* about the visit. That always takes weeks, as you see in Hannes' case! And write me as soon as you receive word. I must unfortunately close, although there is so much I should like to chat about. But I hope to write you soon again. I embrace you heartily a thousand times. Give my warmest regards to Igel.

Your Rosa.

86.

Wronke, fortress, 29.5.17.

Official mark: seen D. 30.5

Dearest Lulu:

It is impossible for me to write to Fritz,³⁸ although I have been thinking about the letter continually for the last few days. The prospect that the letter will go to the general commandery and its delivery in all probability be prohibited, takes all courage from me and limits my expressions in such a manner that it would be impossible for me to compose the kind of message that alone would be a source of comfort to Fritz. Please,

³⁸ [Fritz Adler of Vienna, who assassinated Premier Stürgkh.—L. K.]

send him my warmest greetings and tell him that I would write him a long letter were I free.

As for yourself—hearty thanks from me for the pretty flowers.³⁹ I have personally planted them before my window and am deriving a lot of joy from them every day!

Unfortunately I am not in condition today to write you more or in better manner, please don't take offense and write me whenever your frame of mind permits, without waiting for me.

A kiss,

Your
R.

I have forgotten an important matter after all. As a testimonial to Clara from the women⁴⁰ I very decidedly suggest the gift of some book. What would *certainly* give her the greatest pleasure is something about Greek philosophy or literature (possibly Wilamowitz' Greek Dramas and History of Literature), or a good German edition of the Greek philosophers. She spends a lot of time on this now and has a *faible* for it. She would feel quite proud to receive something fundamental along this line. If not, then perhaps the large edition of "General Biology" which was written about by Lipschütz in the "N. Z." Such a standard work would also give her great pleasure.

³⁹ [I had visited her in May and before leaving left some pansies and forget-me-nots for planting in the jail.—L. K.]

⁴⁰ [On the occasion of Clara Zetkin's 60th birthday. The women preferred to present her with an artistic scroll.—L. K.]

87.

Post card from Wronke, 12.6.17.

Official mark: seen D.13.6. Dated 12.5.1.

Dearest Lulu:

Thanks for your lines. I am all the more curious about the report in the "Vienna Arbeiterzeitung"⁴¹ since the few quotations in the "Neue Zeit" demonstrate to me how wrong an impression is given by reports like that in the "Berliner Tageblatt." Couldn't one have the "Arbeiterzeitung" copied on the typewriter, or won't it simply be reprinted in Vienna, since there is such a demand for it? Please do not be angry, dearest, that I am so taciturn of late; you see, I don't feel well at all, and the worst of it is, I haven't the faintest idea why, for I am doing everything I can to keep up my health. My ailment is therefore evidently "a misunderstanding." Well, I shall have to wait patiently for better days * * *

In spite of everything wholly

Your R.

88.

Post card, Breslau, 12.8.17. House of Correction. Official stamp: Breslau commandery.

Dearest Lulu! Since I have been in bed for a week, I am able only today to send you at least a brief birthday greeting and kiss! I feel badly to think that I am not yet able to write a decent letter, but that will follow! This card is to give you a sign of life provisionally and to bind the torn thread of our correspondence together

⁴¹ [Concerning the trial of Friedrich Adler.—L. K.]

again. You see, since your card from the Tyrol I have not heard anything from you; I sent you a brief note from Wronke. I had word sent to you immediately about my transfer here. Here I was seized at once with a bad stomach attack, but I am already feeling better. Write soon, dearest, so that I may hear something from you. Above all, how are you and how are you feeling? A thousand embraces.

Ever

Your R.

My address: Breslau Commandery, for me (nothing more).

89.

Breslau, House of Correction, 10.11.17.

Dearest Lulu:

I have just received word that Hannes has fallen. For the moment I am unable to write more.

Heartily,

Your Rosa.

90.

Breslau, 15.11.17.

Dearest: Thank you for your brief message, which has put me to shame, since I had written you the terrible news so briefly and without circumlocution. But I received it in the same way and found: in a case like that, brevity and frankness are the most merciful things, just as with a difficult operation. I, too, am unable to find words about it.

I only wish that I could now be with you and Hans,

since I feel as though the atmosphere of love that emanates from the three of us for his person, might somehow keep him alive nevertheless.

I am still unable to emerge from the deep surprise: is that possible? It seems to me like a word that has been silenced in the midst of a sentence, like a suddenly broken-off chord which I still hear.

We had a thousand plans for the time after the war, we were going to "enjoy life," travel, read good books, marvel at spring, as never before * * * I cannot comprehend it; is that possible? Like a flower that has been torn off and trampled upon * * *

Dearest, don't lose your nerve. One must be proud and not show anything. Only, we must become somewhat more closely attached to each other, so that it may become "warmer." I embrace you and Hans in sincerest love.

Your R.

91.

Breslau, House of Correction, 24.11.17.

Dearest Lulu: I sent you a few lines recently. I am now seizing upon this opportunity, although it is difficult for me to write anything just now. With you, after all, I can speak of almost nothing except *him*, and on that topic there is nothing to say. I at least cannot formulate any words. Also, I must not think of it, otherwise I could not bear it. On the contrary, I continue to live in a dream as though he were still here. I see him alive before me, chat with him in my imagination about everything, *in me* he continues to live.

Yesterday my letter to him dated 21.10 was returned,

that is the second one. Letters that failed to reach him!

From his sister ⁴² I received a dear letter; she must be a splendid woman, after all she is Hannes' sister.

And how are you? How do you manage to live without all the boys? It must be very quiet and empty in your house now. How do you spend your days? I still see you before me as you were in Wronke in May. You had such a dear look then, such a fearsomely pained expression in your eyes. You did not see me as I watched you from my hiding-place, you walked straight across the courtyard into our "house" and carried the little travelling bag with gifts in your hand. I looked upon your dear face and thought to myself: how young are these grey-blue eyes, in which there lies so much restless, unsatisfied searching and such helpless pain, these eyes are 20 years younger than your appearance otherwise; they betray the fact that in your innermost heart you are still the groping, searching, fearsome girl. How much I love you precisely for this inner uncertainty! * * * I should now like to be outside, to sit and chat with you. Dearest, do not be discouraged, don't live like a frog that has been stepped upon! Look, we now have—at least here—such wonderfully mild spring days; the evenings with their silvery moon are so beautiful. I cannot see enough of it, when in the dusk I go walking in the prison courtyard (I purposely go in the evening, so as not to see the walls, the whole surroundings). Read something beautiful! Have you good books now? Please do write me what you are reading, perhaps I shall send or at least recommend you something beautiful that will cheer you.

⁴² [Mrs. Margarete Müller, née Diefenbach, of Stuttgart.—L. K.]

I am up to my neck in geology, which animates me extraordinarily and gives me much happiness. I am seized with fear when I remember how short a span of life still remains for me and how much there is still to be learned!

Are you happy about the Russians? ⁴³ Of course they will not be able to maintain themselves in this witches' sabbath,—not because statistics show that economic development in Russia is too backward, as your clever husband has figured out, but because the social democracy in the highly developed west consists of pitifully wretched cowards who, looking quietly on, will let the Russians bleed themselves to death. But such a collapse is better than to "remain alive for the fatherland." It is an historical deed, the traces of which will not disappear in eons of time. I am expecting many other great things during the coming years, only I should prefer to admire history not merely from behind iron bars. * * *

Dearest, be calm and firm, be cheerful despite anything—and write me soon. With an embrace,

Your Rosa.

When you write officially, do not make reference to this letter.

92.

Undated. From Breslau, 1917.

Dearest Lulu! Many thanks for Ede! ⁴⁴ Unfortunately, as you already know, I can write only the most

⁴³ [The Russian revolution of October, 1917, is meant.
—L. K.]

⁴⁴ [Eduard Bernstein's "Aus den Jahren meines Exils."
—L. K.]

necessary minimum of letters; under these circumstances one cannot really get into the right mood when writing. I hope, however, possibly to see you here soon, that would be wonderful. A hearty embrace for you and many greetings to your boys.

Your R.

93.

Wednesday, 19.12. From the Breslau jail.

Dearest:

While still under the impression of your dear, long letter, which I received today and which I have already read through several times, I hasten to answer you at once, in the hope of being able in the near future to transmit my epistle to you *sub rosa*. I was so happy about the letter! Not so much, however, about its undertone, which seemed somewhat cool and not very happy to me. It is as though a shadow had been cast over you, —I suppose it is Hannes' shadow * * * I understood that, yet I felt hurt. Again and again I read the letter through, in order to sense from it the impulsive, passionate and warm breath so familiar to me, which I always knew how to draw out of you whenever I picked at your heart-strings, and which satisfies such a want in me.

How is it, you sheep, that you still doubt my friendship from time to time? I was surprised, since I know that our relation is already founded as upon a rock, especially and doubly so since our loss of Hannes. What is it that again awakens doubts within you? Tell me, for I haven't the faintest idea. I write but infrequently, it is true, but certainly you comprehend that it is *exclu-*

sively the constraint from outside that hinders me and that makes me loathe to write. I cannot pour out my heart as I should like to, if I have to reflect while writing as to whether the letter hasn't already gone beyond the limits set, whether it isn't too long, etc. I must feel myself free, as now, to write as much as I like to, then only can I chat unreservedly.

Visits, of course, are also only half as much fun considering my condition. Only now, for instance, I can explain to you why your visit to Wronke, when you came the first time, was such a fiasco. Just imagine, when I entered the room I was taken by surprise to find entirely new regulations governing the whole procedure. Until then only one person had usually been left there to watch me, and I sat close to my visitors, hand in hand, and chatted undisturbed; suddenly I found a stiff double guard placed over us and a long table between you and me! I felt as though cold water had been poured over me, all the more so since not a word had been told me about the reasons for this aggravation (afterwards, indeed, I learned about the suspicion which our good M. had awakened by her *naïveté*). I was so enraged over this treatment, which *you* of course could not judge, that I decided in my first excitement to decline entirely and wholly to receive any visitors. Of course I could not intimate to you just what had taken place, and therefore seemed so unreasonably moody to you. It was not till the next morning that I quieted down sufficiently to tell myself that I mustn't care a rap about the whole matter, but rather enjoy your visit with all my heart. Here this matter is arranged quite amicably and simply and I should therefore like to ask you: when are you thinking of coming? You say nothing about it

in your letter and this gives me cause for uneasiness. Of course I don't want to vex you, but rather ask you to visit me only in case your health, time, humor, and other arrangements so permit and you really derive enjoyment from it. We could see each other about four times and I believe that faithful Igel would accompany you here, too. I recall even now how happy I was suddenly to espy him through the opening gate. Perhaps a similar impromptu could be arranged here, yes, I am sure of it. * * *

And now about Hannes, about our dear, tender, pure boy, like whom there is no second one on earth. That he left behind him something like notes or a diary or poems, I learned only the other day from a letter of our mutual friend Gerlach (you remember, he is one of the victims whom we dragged about with us at that carnival episode, when we ran about masked in Friedenau and stirred up sleeping burghers). G. was very close to Hannes and has collapsed completely over the blow. Now, this G. had many an opportunity at Stuttgart, where he is ill in a hospital, to chat with Hannes' "aunt," Miss Reich, who was his father's housekeeper, and, as it were, a second mother to Hannes. She told him quite a little about H.'s childhood and youth and also reported about H.'s literary legacy. Gerlach hopes to catch sight of the latter and of course to write me about it. And as for H.'s *poems*,—Julek's brother,⁴⁵ with whom, as you know, H. was on terms of friendship, wrote about these from Posen; it seems, therefore, that H. there spoke about his poems and possibly read some of them. I myself know nothing about this, except that he dedicated several poems in the style of Heine, humorous and light,

⁴⁵ [A brother of Julius Marchlewski.—L. K.]

to me. If I am not mistaken you are in correspondence with the Posen M.'s; perhaps you will be good enough to sound them along these lines and write me what positive information can be gained.

Hannes' sister had written me a dear letter, whereupon I replied to her just as heartily and in a manner that not only made it possible but almost imperative for her to get in touch with me again. But she remains quite silent. I don't know what to make of it. In any case the following occurs to me: when at last I am free, and assuming that the world is still standing, at least upon one leg, I should like to suggest to you that the two of us (Igel may of course accompany us) go to Stuttgart, in order to make the sister's acquaintance and possibly look around among the things left by him, and also to chat with his aunt. I should like very much to breathe with you the atmosphere of his closest surroundings among the things reminding us of him. Do you like the idea? There is something else I should like to undertake with you, that I had intended to do with Hannes. I don't know whether you know that H. was an enthusiastic admirer of Romain-Rolland. Especially his last letters were filled with Jean Christophe. He had persuaded me to read this work, had found therein a thousand mutual points of contact, devotion to Hugo Wolf, heart-strings between Germany and France, etc. I too learned to love him (Romain Rolland) and suggested to Hannes that we either travel to Paris together to make R.-R.'s acquaintance, or else invite him to come to Germany.

After all, we live but once and good men of this caliber are few and far between; why should one forego

the luxury of knowing them and of seeking spiritual contact with them?

The letter in which I offered the suggestion was returned with the black-rimmed notice of death. I am sure that H. would have agreed enthusiastically. Shall we not carry this idea out—"God willing?" Above all, you must of course read Jean Christophe—or have you already done so? In that case I am surprised that you mention nothing about it. Igel, too, *must* read it; that is something after his heart. Unfortunately only half of the work has as yet appeared in German, but these first volumes are the most beautiful ones.

This story of his youth and his life, written as it is so simply and genuinely, ought to stimulate you and awaken the firm desire at last to make a beginning of your own autobiography.

You are asking about Malvida Meysenburg.⁴⁶ I had just received it in the last sending from Hannes, but find it so insipid that I did not get further than the middle of the first volume. I find this person somewhat sentimental and lacking in taste.

I have nibbled here and there at Ede's memoirs; you are quite right, they are an accurate reflection of the author.

But you must read Korolenko and give me your judgment about the whole thing. I have recently sent the balance (50 pages of manuscript) to the chief command and am in hopes that they will soon be handed to Mathilde J. for copying on the typewriter. Let her then give you the entire work, read it as a connected story and let me know your impression as quickly as possible. *Nota bene:* I have, though with a heavy heart, had to

⁴⁶ ["Memoirs of an Idealist."]

sacrifice the entire closing section of the original, since it partly contained untranslatable matter (such as long Ukrainian poems) and partly kept referring to the Russian literature of the seventies of which the German reader, of course, hasn't the faintest idea, and which, besides, is decidedly inferior from an artistic point of view. I therefore closed with the death of the father, which seemed like the best close to me, since the father is the real central figure of this volume.

I am otherwise opposed to such arbitrariness on the part of the translator, but I saw no other way out in this situation and hope that you, too, will agree. I am corresponding directly with Kestenberg. He merely insists upon his pound of flesh: a preface from me, and I am making a desperate effort to gather some material for it.

I have an idea for a translation for you. In Barnim street I had ordered a book that seems very well adapted for publication in the German language: Julie de l'Espinasse, by Marquis de Ségur. It is a biographical-historical essay, an amazing story of a human life, and at the same time a most interesting cultural document. As you know, Mme. de l'Espinasse was the friend of d'Alembert and the central figure in the whole circle of Encyclopædists; the story is charmingly told. If you like the idea, I shall have the book sent me (I gave mine away), for it is unfortunately not to be had any more in book stores. I am sure that Cassirer *vel* Kestenberg would gladly undertake to bring it out, only I haven't the faintest idea as to how the question of translation rights now stands, especially not now, during the war with France. In any case, however, I believe that it would be a good thing if you were to have the manuscript ready, so as to be able possibly to publish it after

the war with the approval of the owners of the rights. I have no doubt but that you would find great enjoyment in the task (greater than in the Eastern Question).

Your Job's post about the educational committee hurt and offended me very much, for I am not at all in touch with the Teltow-Beskow folk, as you can imagine. Nor can I comprehend how *they* came to drop you in the election. Had you been elected by the T.-B.'s originally? I thought you were a delegate from Greater Berlin. Evidently you were merely a victim of your name this time. Do you still remember the "recommending" speech of Comrade Wulff on the occasion of your first election? There you have the counterpart.⁴⁷ * * * Unfortunately I can't do anything about it and believe me, I should have found many other points besides, where I should *like to* take a hand. . . .

Yes, the Bolsheviks! Of course they don't please me either with their peace-fanaticism. But after all—*they* are not to blame. They are in a straitjacket, and have merely the choice between two beatings and are choosing

⁴⁷ [If my memory serves me right, I had complained to Rosa about the fact that I had been dropped in the elections for the educational committee, and had assumed that this was done at the instigation of the super-radicals from Teltow-Beskow (a district on the outskirts of Berlin), for whom the name of Kautsky then had no pleasant ring, as he was regarded by them as too "moderate."

Rosa's reference concerning the first election recalls the fact that, when in 1911 I was proposed by Comrade Heinrich Schulz for membership in the educational committee at the general meeting of the association, Mrs. Wulff supported his motion by referring to the fact that "as the wife of Comrade Kautsky I would be especially well qualified for this office."—L. K.]

the lesser. *Others* are responsible for the fact that the devil profits by the Russian revolution. . . . Therefore let us sweep before our own doors. On the whole events there are glorious and will have incalculable results. If only I could talk with you and Igel about all these things, and especially, if I could but stir! But complaining isn't my long suit; for the present I am following events and am in strong hopes of some day experiencing something myself. . . .

There were, of course, a thousand things about which I wanted to tell you, my present studies, etc., etc., now that the gates to my heart stand ajar, but I must nevertheless close for today.

Only a word about the funny dream last night. (I have been sleeping very restlessly of late, and have palpitation of the heart.) I dreamed that I was to sing Hugo Wolf's "Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte" at a concert arranged by Faisst, and that I was to play my own accompaniment on the piano. Suddenly I remembered at 7 o'clock in the evening that I couldn't play the piano at all, then how was I to accompany myself? Thereupon I cut myself in the finger, making it bleed so as to have an excuse, and you ventured the opinion that on account of my wounded finger I could send my regrets for not participating in the concert. No, for God's sake, I cried, Faisst would be so angry he'd break with me. I must hurry and persuade my niece to accompany me! Then I remembered that my niece didn't play the piano either, but rather the violin, and I awoke in terror * * * I suppose it is the yearning for music that inspires such dreams. Laugh about it, as I did, and be embraced a thousand times.

Your R.

[Rosa's description of the double guard is quit correct. I was indeed taken aback by her evident excitement and still more so by her wish, categorically expressed, to let this first half hour's visit suffice, although the authorities had given me permission to visit her three times. I sensed immediately that there must be some special reason for Rosa's evident bad humor and decided to remain despite her desire that I leave Wronke at once, and to confer with the prison director, concerning whom I had already heard many favorable things through mutual friends. I found him in fact to be a high-minded, unprejudiced, chivalrous gentleman, who evidenced the finest understanding of Rosa's nature and peculiarities. I feel an honest desire and regard it as a debt of honor to take advantage of this occasion for thanking him for all his kindness and for his friendly endeavor to make Rosa's detention bearable for her. He encouraged me to stay and to wait until Rosa's nerves had quieted down, which in his opinion would certainly be a fact by the very next day, and explained to me that it was unquestionably nothing but the new system of watching the prisoners, inaugurated by an over-zealous female official who was consumed with a passion for denouncing and spying upon the inmates, that had put Rosa in bad humor and had irritated her. He was right—I remained and spent several beautiful and cheerful hours with Rosa.—L. K.]

94.

5.2.18. Breslau Commandery, postmarked 7.2.18.

Dearest Lulu: Once more nothing but a hurried line—for the present. * * * Many thanks for your letter and the picture of Hannes. I was startled painfully when I caught sight of it: upon no other picture did he look so unhappy and sorrowful; it seems as though he were here gazing fixedly ahead of himself in a premonition of death. Is that the *last* picture?

In view of good Kestenberg's lamento I have given my heart a poke and am now also translating the last seven printer's sheets of Korolenko (half of it is already finished). I should like to ask you to secure the following for this purpose:

1. Fr. Bodenstedt, "Poetical Ukraine," 1843;
2. Schewtschenko's Poems, translated into the German by Julia Virginia, published shortly before the war.

I do not need a Russian copy of Korolenko. The printing of course can't be undertaken until the whole translation has been completed, but I hope to be through with it soon.—I am awaiting the material for the preface, as promised by you, with joy and anticipation; above all, however, I should like to have an exact list of all the works of Korolenko that have appeared in *German*. That could be secured, could it not? If there is a possibility of your writing Kestenberg, ask him to bring me one or two pounds of hemp-seed from Switzerland, I need it for my birds. Otherwise I have no wishes and am satisfied with the world. For it does move after all! Kisses.

Your R.

95.

30.4.18. Breslau, House of Correction,
official mark: "Seen S. 1st Lieut." 2.5.18.

Dearest, but two words in a hurry, to send you the Beethoven⁴⁸ and to tell you that I was very happy to receive your letter. Tell me, shall you go to Vienna via Breslau? You might visit me in May. But perhaps you would prefer to do it on the way back. * * *

⁴⁸ ["Beethoven," by Romain Rolland.—L. K.]

I am reading the book about Korolenko and am very happy about it, I should so much like to have the other volumes of the same work (even if they do not deal with Korolenko). In case that is possible, give them to Matilde I., so that she may send them to me as the occasion presents itself. In case I should not see you before Vienna, write me a line from there. Also write me how you and Igel like Beethoven. I found the meeting of Beethoven and Goethe charming—so characteristic of both.

Dearest, farewell for today. A hug from

Ever your

R.

96.

From Breslau with the official stamp:

“seen 30.5. S. 1st Lt.” 28.5.18.

Dearest! Thank you for the card, even a wee sign of life from you affords me great pleasure. I can well imagine how your time is taken up and can understand why you dashed the beautiful plans of Igel's idyll to the ground, although I feel somewhat sorry for him and also for you. Only I could not understand from your card whether you are giving up the whole trip, or merely postponing and shortening it? I suppose the latter is the case! In case you go, I shall certainly receive news of it before you leave, shall I not?

Now about Korolenko! Just think what came to my mind today during a sleepless night: it suddenly became quite clear to me that I must not permit anybody to monkey with my manuscript! The thought is unbearable to me that I am to publish a work under my name

which is not *mine* to the last dot of an "i." It seems incomprehensible to me that I should have thought of this only now, but everything between us was always carried on with the usual haste and amid the joy of seeing each other again, so that I had no real opportunity to come to my senses. At any rate I am now firmly determined and clear in my own mind: I want to "publish" *telle quelle*—with all Slavisms and other beauty spots.

Therefore, please be so good as to give the whole mess "unsoured, undiluted, unsweetened," just as my noble countrymen used to swallow the rum, to Cassirer for publication and *vogue la galère*. What has been done till now, you will naturally let stand, but not a stroke beyond that. You will of course—and rightly so—take it amiss that I have robbed you of so much time till now, but unfortunately I can't change that and I merely seek comfort in the thought that you were interested in Korolenko anyway, and above all I was anxious to have your opinion of the whole matter. Once more, therefore: don't be angry * and quickly hand everything over to Kestenbergr.

* [At various times I had very carefully—so as not to awaken the suspicion that I dreaded the work and trouble—pointed out to Rosa that not only her name but also her beautiful German, marvellous indeed considering that she was a foreigner, and her brilliant style would protect her from all unfavorable criticism, and that every correction by another hand would be superfluous, yes sacrilegious.—Thus far, however, her fear of "Slavisms" and "Polonisms" as well as her painstaking conscientiousness had made her impervious to my modest hints. I was therefore not only "not angry" but most happy at her sudden and free decision to excuse me from active collaboration in the translation, a task that not

The material for the introduction ⁴⁹ will suffice and I thank you once more for everything I received. I don't want to become too "eloquent" and intend to be brief. I reported about this, by the way, direct to Cassirer. As soon as you have received the last installment from Matilde I. and have read it, please write me your final judgment on the work (also concerning the translation).

I am delighted that you liked Beethoven so well. Tell me, you never told me whether you knew Gorki's "Three Men." I should very much like to know what you think about it. To be perfectly frank, I was rather pained that this had to be offered to the German public just now, since it gives an entirely antiquated and therefore wrong picture of Russia. Write soon, even though it be only a brief line. I embrace you a thousand times.

Your R.

97.

Breslau, 25.7.18. (without official stamp).

Dearest Lulu! This morning I arose at half-past four, for a long time contemplated the greyish-white morning clouds high in the blue skies, also the quiet prison court-yard, still asleep; then I carefully inspected my flower pots, supplied them with fresh water, rearranged the vases and glasses that are always filled with cut-and-field flowers, and now, at 6 A. M., I am sitting at the writing desk to write you a letter.

Alas, my nerves, my nerves, I can't sleep at all. Even

only placed grave responsibility upon me toward both herself and her work, but also threatened to involve me in possible conflicts with her.—L. K.]

⁴⁹ [The introduction to her translation of Korolenko consists of an essay on Russian literature. It is among the finest studies of that sort in existence.—Transl.]

the dentist whom I visited recently made the remark quite suddenly, although I behaved like a lamb, "Well, I suppose the nerves are entirely shot to pieces?" But then, no matter.

Just 'fess up, you incorrigible one: you are already entertaining a thousand doubts and evil thoughts about me, because I haven't written you for so long? . . . I must look you straight in the eye, as the brave knight in the fairy tale does to the ogres; hardly do I turn away, than I am done for. I have naturally thought of you untold times meanwhile and have "mischievously" laughed over your distrust which has presumably been re-awakened, but I simply could not write you. Partly because I had already loaded my letter-account up heavily through the bombardment of corrections and the frequent interchange of messages with Kerstenberg, partly—"besides." Kerstenberg is now in Switzerland, the publishing house is also making a pause in its offensive of corrections—I don't know why—and I am thinking of the approaching 11th of August. * * * This time I want to determine in advance where my thoughts are to look for you on your birthday. Are you in Berlin, were you in Vienna, are you going anywhere for a vacation, how do you feel? About this and *quibusdam aliis* I should like to hear from you.

Clara has been silent for a long time, hasn't even thanked for the birthday letter, a thing unheard-of in her case. I cannot repress a fear arising within me. Can you imagine what it would mean if one of her boys or even both were to come to grief? Both are now at the front and there are bad days there now. . . .

I am full of courage as far as I am concerned. To

bear the sorrows of *others*, even those of Clara, if "God forbid" something should happen—for that I lack courage and strength. But these are merely my thoughts, ghosts. . . .

This psychology develops involuntarily when one sits in prison for a long time: one suffers from time to time from bugaboos, one awakens suddenly in the death-like stillness of the barred house with the firm conviction that a mishap has befallen this or that one of the persons one holds dearest. In most cases it proves to be pure imagination, a whim—sometimes— not. . . .

Anyway, the thought occurred to me today while I was arranging the flowers with the greatest care and was occasionally looking into the botanical atlas to determine some little point—the thought suddenly occurred to me that I am consciously misleading myself, rocking myself in the thought that I am leading a normal life, while round about me there is really an atmosphere of a world going under. Possibly it is especially the 200 "expiatory executions" in Moscow, about which I read in the paper yesterday, that have put me in this frame of mind. . . .

But, dearest, away with these thoughts, you shall not become discouraged! Take courage, we shall continue to meet whatever life has in store for us, come what may. Rely upon me, we shall get out of this mess together and never forget gratefully to enjoy the least of the good and beautiful things that are left to us.

I am enclosing a little flower from a large bouquet that I bought the other day as I went to the dentist. Do you know it? It has such pretty popular names: "Bride with Hair," "Maiden in Green," "Gretchen in the Bush." It must be an ancient decoration of the

peasant garden, for it serves in this part of the country as a means of preventing the cattle from being "charmed."

How are your boys? I was so happy at the jasmin blossom in your last letter and have preserved it well. My mind turns to this as I think of the oldest "boy," Grandpa Igel. What is he doing?

From Sonia I received a wonderful volume of Flemish tales, published by the Insel Verlag. There are things in it that remind one of Teniers but also of "Hell-Breughel." Do you know it? Write briefly, but soon! Briefly, because, you see I—am not the only one to read the letters. . . .

Yes, about Zenzi: ⁵⁰ I have thought of something nice, but it will have to wait a while.

Farewell, dearest, be good and cheerful.

With many a hug

Your R.

⁵⁰ [The factotum in the Kautsky household.—L. K.]

POSTSCRIPT

VII

POSTSCRIPT

With the letter of July 25, 1918, this collection closes, even though our correspondence, which was very active at that time, did not end there.

At the beginning of 1918 I had to leave Berlin, to visit my sons who were living in various Austrian garrisons. I went first to Prague, to my son Karl who was employed as a physician at the military hospital there. Punctually, on August 11, the never-failing birthday letter from Rosa reached me at Prague and from there I went to the Steiermark to my youngest son. Then I returned to Prague, which I left only on October 28, the day of the revolution in Bohemia, using the very last train that was permitted to depart under the "K. und K." ¹ government, so as to reach Berlin before train service stopped.

All letters that I received during those three months from Rosa had to be left behind on account of the strict control exercised at the frontier, and I believed them to be in good hands when left with my good landlady in Bruck-on-the-Mur in the Steiermark.

Unfortunately they were lost after all in the confusion and unrest of those exciting days—irretrievable treasures lost!

To be sure, they would hardly have added a new

¹ [The "Imperial and Royal" (Kaiserlich and Königlich) government of Austria-Hungary.—Transl.]

nuance to the character portrait of Rosa as it is plastically revealed to us in the writings here published, excepting possibly one single, little letter which she sent to me secretly and which threw light upon her mental condition at that time in a manner that my heart almost ceased to beat as I read it,—so frightened was I at the passion revealed to me by it, a passion that, as I observed, almost consumed this woman who otherwise knew so well how to restrain herself.

I had returned to Berlin at the end of October, and now the November events follow in rapid-fire succession. When Rosa emerged from prison, she was dragged into the wild maelstrom from the very first moment, fate left her never a moment for reflection, not the smallest pause for catching her breath after all the difficulties through which she had passed. With both feet she jumped into the revolutionary movement and was always found standing with Karl Liebknecht in positions where I never could follow her, despite my love and admiration for her.

While differences of opinion, that in a measure had really always existed between us, had never before interfered with and disturbed our relationship, and while formerly she had usually brushed aside objections on my part with a good-natured, "you sheep, you don't understand anything about this," affairs now had shaped themselves in such a manner that there could be only a "for" or "against."

To have remained entirely silent toward her during that situation, during which the course pursued by Rosa, and especially by Karl Liebknecht, with whom she identified herself outwardly, seemed so unspeakably fatal, would have been impossible for me; I should have run

the danger that she had regarded my silence as approval. On the other hand the times were too serious, there was too much at stake, one felt oneself too much involved in the historical events that were transpiring, to have been willing to be pushed aside with a joking word. Had I come together with Rosa, I should perhaps not have been able to avoid adjuring her to turn back from the road that in my opinion *must* lead her and others to destruction. But that such an attempt would be made in vain, of this I was fully convinced from the beginning, and therefore I renounced, though with a bleeding heart, every opportunity of being together with her, all the more so as we should never have been able to see each other and talk together without the presence of third persons annoying to me.

Thus it could happen that during those eight hot weeks during which she was permitted to live after her liberation, we did not see each other one single time, did not embrace each other one more time.

We did indeed exchange tender greetings through third persons, thereby giving weak expression to our yearning, and more than once she let me know that she was unable to understand why I did not hasten to her side. But however much I suffered from the separation imposed upon us by the conditions, I remained steadfast and kept away, waiting and yearning for the better time that might bring us together again.

Instead of the hoped-for reunion there came that day which even today seems to me like a wild, terrible dream. When the remembrance thereof overtakes me during a sleepless night, I am seized with a cold shudder and infinite sorrow fills my soul. Again and again Rosa's own words then recur to me, which she wrote when we

lost our dearest friend: "I am still unable to emerge from the deep surprise: is that possible? It seems to me like a word that has been silenced in the midst of a sentence, like a suddenly broken-off chord that I still hear. * * * I cannot comprehend it; is that possible? Like a flower that has been torn off and trampled upon. * * *"

And yet, despite all horror at the terrible deed, despite all sorrow over a friend who has been snatched away altogether too soon and who is lost to me forever, I must say that it was the sort of death that she herself wished for. Let it be recalled that she once wrote to Sophie Liebknecht: "You know, I shall some day die at my post: in a street fight or in the house of correction. * * *"

And therefore this death, notwithstanding all the horror of its attendant circumstances, seems nevertheless to me like a logical ending to the drama of her life, like something before which we stand in silence and in deepest emotion as before the great, implacable tragedy of an antique play.

What Don Carlos said of his friend Marquis Posa, is also applicable to her: her "beautiful course of life" has been sealed by "her beautiful, great death." Beautiful, because she died for her great cause, the liberation of mankind. Like a firebrand she carried light and warmth into a million hearts and awakened the spark of enthusiasm—like a firebrand she expired, but in a million hearts the spark that she fanned continues to glow.

I, however, cannot close this retrospect upon her life better than by quoting her own words: "I continue to live in a dream as though she were still here; I see her alive before me, chat with her in my imagination about everything, *in me* she continues to live. * * *"

Luise Kautsky.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

"Die Neue Zeit" was the scientific organ of the German Social Democracy. It was founded in 1883 by Karl Kautsky, to whom a number of the letters in this volume, especially the earlier ones, are addressed.

Karl Kautsky was born October 16, 1854, in Prague, but at an early age became a resident of Vienna, where he studied economics and history at the university. The uprising of the Paris Commune in 1871 made a deep impression upon the active mind and the revolutionary instinct of the young man, whose entire sympathies were with the Commune. Its heroic collapse touched him deeply. From then on he steeped himself in everything that he could obtain on the subject of socialism, especially the writings of French socialists or those dealing with the French revolution. In addition he read German writers, among them especially Heine and Boerne. Also, Darwin and Buckle (*History of Civilization*) exercised a great influence upon him. By 1874 his mind was made up to join the Austrian Social Democracy and to devote himself to its service.

As long as he was a student at the university, he worked for the Austrian and German parties anonymously and under the pseudonym of "Symmachos." By the time he had reached his twenty-sixth year, his first book, entitled "The Influence of Increasing Population upon the Progress of Society," appeared. In it he reveals

himself as adherent to the Malthusian theory and turns against Marx, whom he at first distrusted although he accepted two of his theories unreservedly—that of the class struggle and of the materialistic conception of history.

Disciple of Darwin that he was, the struggle of the races for existence had interested him greatly; now, however, the struggle of the classes took precedence with him over the struggle of the races as a factor of human development. Thus it was that he first became a Marxian as an historian.

The end of his university days had come and it was necessary for him to cast about for a calling—a thing that was by no means easy for a revolutionary socialist in Austria. Fortunately he received an offer to come to Zurich, where the rich German economist Karl Hoechberg, a pure idealist, had founded a socialist periodical and was looking about for co-workers. Hoechberg's private secretary was Eduard Bernstein, whose intimate friend Kautsky soon became. It was at Zurich, too, that the "Sozialdemokrat" was founded, since it had become impossible under the anti-socialist law of Germany to express one's opinion freely in that country. In this new organ all elements that were interested in the struggle were able to obtain a hearing. Kautsky felt overjoyed to leave the narrow conditions of Austria and to enter upon this large field of activity which also afforded him the opportunity of coming into closer contact with Marx and Engels.

In the spring of 1881 Kautsky for the first time went to London as an emissary of Hoechberg. The deepest impressions of his life were gathered there as a result of his intercourse with Marx and Engels.

He continued the work with Bernstein at Zurich until 1882, and then left for Stuttgart, where in 1883 he founded the monthly periodical, "Die Neue Zeit." In 1885 he settled down in London, in order to be nearer to Engels. Marx had died meanwhile. Besides enjoying the high intellectual pleasure of constant contact with Engels, he was also in a position to draw upon the rich treasures of the British Museum. The results of his London activity are embodied in two works, "Thomas Mann and His Utopia" and "The Class Wars of France,"—two books which Kautsky refers to as the most beloved children of his spirit.

In 1888 Bernstein and his associates on the "Sozialdemokrat" were deported from Zurich, and the organ was transferred to London. Bernstein was thus united with Engels and Kautsky and it seemed as though they were to remain together permanently. But the collapse of the anti-socialist law in Germany created a new situation. The "Sozialdemokrat" suspended publication. The "Neue Zeit" became a weekly and Bernstein one of its regular contributors. Kautsky moved on to Germany while Bernstein was compelled to continue to remain in exile in London. Kautsky's activities now underwent a transformation. The time for purely academic and literary researches was over. The "Neue Zeit" became a political organ, and Kautsky had to occupy himself with questions of the day.

But Bernstein, too, underwent a change after 1890. Under the influence of his British surroundings he inclined more and more toward the Hoechberg point of view and became allied with the Fabians. As long as Engels lived, this school of socialism did not have much influence; but when, after Engels' death in 1895, the so-called

"Prosperity Era" began, not only Bernstein but many workers gave evidence of a feeling of being satisfied with what had been accomplished.

There resulted the clashes between Bernstein and Kautsky, between revisionism and radicalism.

A decade later the historical situation again changed. The "Era of Prosperity" came to an end, and with it revisionism became pretty much of a dead issue. Now, however, the revolutionary movement in Russia showed signs of unusual progress. In fact, this country, thus far the citadel of reaction, became the most revolutionary land in Europe. This meant that the Russian socialists believed themselves called upon to assume the leadership in the socialist Internationale, and to apply to the rest of Europe crass methods based upon the backwardness of Russia. New problems thus arose for Kautsky: no longer was it the illusions based upon English conditions which Kautsky had to combat, but illusions harbored by a section of the Russian revolutionaries. This brought him in conflict with many comrades with whom he had thus far fought shoulder to shoulder against revisionism, among them Rosa Luxemburg, with whom he first took public issue in 1910 on the question of the general strike and its practical application.

While this fight was on, the World War came. It brought Kautsky into a position of opposition to the majority of the German Social Democracy. Though Kautsky could understand the anxiety of the German socialists to spare the people the terrors of an invasion and of defeat, he could not accept the unconditional granting of war credits, since he believed the German government to be responsible for the outbreak of the war and unwilling to strive for a peace of understanding.

He therefore joined the minority which, under the leadership of Hugo Haase, declined to vote the war credits, and which formed the Independent Socialist Party.

Within this minority party the same divergencies which had existed even before the war between the points of view of Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg, soon became noticeable. They were emphasized when, in 1917, the revolution broke out in Russia and the bolsheviks executed their *coup d'etat* through which they achieved their dictatorship. The whole working class of Europe at that time paid homage to the bolsheviks; Kautsky, however, was one of the few who from the beginning decidedly opposed bolshevism. Thus he became isolated within his own party, after having already parted company with the Majority Socialists, who in October, 1917, removed him from the editorship of the "Neue Zeit," of which he had been the incumbent for nearly 35 years.

When in November, 1918, militarism and Hohenzolernism broke down in Germany, a fundamental change of conditions presented itself to Kautsky. He now believed that, in order to ensure the success of the revolution, it was essential for the two socialist parties to unite and offer resistance to every attempt to introduce bolshevist methods into the German revolution. He therefore joined those Independent Socialists who demanded that their party form a joint cabinet with the Majority Socialists. He himself entered this cabinet as a "Beigeordneter" to Secretary-of-State Solf, *i. e.*, as an associate with equal powers and rank with the professional diplomat taken over from the old regime who then headed the foreign office. He was not able, however, to render much service of a practical nature, since the Independent Socialists, to his great regret, under the pressure of com-

munistically inclined members after but a few weeks withdrew their representatives from the government. Nevertheless he improved his position in the foreign office for gathering from its archives the documents concerning the outbreak of the war which in 1919 he published under the joint editorship of Professor Schuecking and Count Montgelas—two men assigned to him by the government as collaborators—and himself, and which he also used as the basis of his book, "The Beginnings of the World War."

For the present it seemed hopeless to try to bring about a union of the socialist parties and to oppose communism successfully. He was unable to prevent his party from leaving the Second Internationale and from establishing contacts with the Third (Communist) Internationale. He seriously considered resigning from the party altogether, when the request of the socialists of Georgia to come there for an investigation of conditions relieved him of the necessity of making an immediate decision. During his stay in Georgia a split occurred in the Independent Socialist Party of Germany, so that Kautsky found a totally changed situation upon his return. The communist elements had left and those remaining adopted a line of procedure that ran more and more parallel to that of the Majority Socialists, and that finally, with Kautsky's energetic aid, made the reunion of the two wings of German socialism possible in 1922.

From now on it was again possible for Kautsky to devote his whole time to the development of socialist theory. Recently he published a book on "The Program of the Proletarian Revolution." He is now at work on a book on historical materialism.



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