

April 14, 1975

Dear Comrades,

I'm writing to give you a rundown on the tour so far -- a typewriter isn't available but I think my writing is legible enough. Tonight is the first break I've had in awhile so I want to get this written now.

I'm in New Zealand right now, having finished the Australia leg of the tour 4 days ago. In a word, it's been just great so far. The campus meetings in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide ranged between about 100-350. All of the campus talks in Australia were on the feminist movement and the public meeting talks were on Boston. The sizes of the public meetings (one in each city) were 30 (Adelaide), 50 (Sydney) and 80 (Melbourne). Comrades were really interested in the history and facts on the civil rights movement.

All of the discussions following the feminism talks were directed mostly at convincing people simply that the women's movement is a serious one raising valid demands. There was at least one right-to-lifer at most of these meetings, and a tremendous amount of interest in both Black feminism and the Edelin case.

Many people were shocked by some of the eyewitness stuff on Boston. Discussions following the Black struggle talks generally concerned the Boston events, things like the current status of organizations like the Black Panther Party, what's Stokely Carmichael doing, etc. Also these discussions usually included some heavy questions about the prospects for socialism, how the revolution will happen, is there a socialist government in the world today, etc.

The "dinner-dance" events in Melbourne and Sydney were quite successful, comrades felt. In Sydney, 65 attended and \$1800 was raised for the Direct Action fund drive. In Melbourne, \$1600 was raised and 120 people attended. The Melbourne dinner-dance was the best banquet I have been to in my life. It was fantastic -- they've got a comrade who's a baker who made the hors d'oeuvres and the deserts -- good music (the Harlem Jazz Band) -- and drink -- it was great. The comrades were so outnumbered that we were joking about feeling like we'd been invited to someone else's banquet. Anyway, I've gotten all their hints about their technique in building a successful banquet recorded and plan to transport them to the U.S.A.

The press in Sydney was nil. In Melbourne there was coverage in the three major papers and the two major T.V. stations. The press has been excellent here in New Zealand. A sizeable article was printed in the major paper when I got here. The tour was also announced on national T.V. with some footage of the first talk I gave. So the tour is really big stuff to the press here and there have been a number of interviews daily.

In New Zealand so far, the biggest meetings here have included

2/

a feminist reception/forum at which every feminist group of any consequence "welcomed" me to New Zealand. That took place in Auckland and about 200 people came. There was also a traditional Maori welcome by a group of Maori women at the thing, which was quite something. It involved a lot of singing, chanting and nose-rubbing (and I mean nose-to-nose rubbing -- apparently the traditional way of greeting and showing affection).

At Auckland University a few days ago I spoke to an audience of 400 on Boston.

The tour seems to be adding to the momentum of the building for the YS founding conference later this month. A number of people at each of the meetings so far have indicated an interest in attending the conference, including an 80-year-old woman who's giving herself a trip to the conference as a birthday present.

This country (New Zealand), by the way, is gorgeous. It's the kind of place that makes you glad to be alive -- blue sky, green, green countryside and just generally very pleasant and health-provoking. Big contrast to New York. The comrades have really organized quite a strenuous schedule for me. I'm enjoying it but you probably won't see me until the SWP plenum begins once I get back.

This tour so far has been a real politically educating experience, too. Not only are the comrades fantastic but speaking with them and seeing them in action has really broadened my perception and appreciation of our movement internationally. It's an experience that everyone should have.

Well, see you all in 3 weeks.

Comradely,

S/ Nan