
**Letter to C.E. Ruthenberg,
WPA Executive Secretary in Chicago
from Alexander Trachtenberg,
International Publishers in New York,
Oct. 24, 1924.**

A document in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 330, ll. 34-35.

October 24, 1924

C.E. Ruthenberg
Executive Secretary
Workers Party of America
1113 West Washington Blvd.
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrade Ruthenberg:

I have your letter of the 21st inst. regarding your negotiations with the Labour Publishing Co. [London] for the publications rights of Mehring's *Life of Marx* in this country.

It is true that we have been contemplating to translate and publish the book. In a conversation with the representative of the Labour Publishing Co. we discovered that a similar task was contemplated by them. Correspondence with the English firm brought out the fact that tentative arrangements have been made with the party for the sale of the book in this country. The moment we learned this fact, we withdrew our offer. We decided to drop the project of publishing the book, though we were informed by the LP Co. that the translation which was made for them was very poor and that if we were to make our own translation and print the book, the LP Co. would buy sheets from us. The fact that the party was inter-

ested in the sale of the book through the Literature Dept. was sufficient reason for giving up our project.

When I wrote about the publishing plans of this firm, I stated among other things the following: "It is, of course, our aim to cooperate fully with the party in every way, and I expect to keep in touch with the Literature Dept. of the party every time we contemplate publishing something in which the party might be interested. We shall, of course, under no circumstances enter into competition with the publishing plans of the party."

Similar statements were made in my letters to Comrade [Nicholas] Dozenberg [head of the WPA Literature Department] when we were corresponding about this matter. I would not work for a firm if it should want to injure the party in any way. Com. [A.A.] Heller, I am sure, will discontinue his financial interest in it under similar circumstances. On the contrary, we hope to be of assistance to the party. There are books which the party would like to see published (I have in mind large books) but because of lack of facilities and involved risks, it cannot undertake the task itself.

While this firm is planning to embark upon general publishing, it will undertake to publish, among others, books of value to our movement. The possibilities of cooperation with the party may include special and cheaper editions of such books

under the party's imprint and for its own distribution. This firm is, of course, also planning to bring out books of a literary character and of general academic interest which the party would not be interested in even if it had funds to invest in their publication and had selling facilities to bring them before the general public.

Perhaps after election we can take up with the Literature Dept. the whole question of cooperation in a practical manner.

Fraternally yours,

Alexander Trachtenberg.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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