

Oct. 2nd, 1944

Dear Mr. Loewi,

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Now I will tell you how I became a publisher.

First, it was an old passion of mine, and I always waited for the moment in which it would be possible to express a free opinion; second, being not very optimistic in the future of the antique art market, I wanted to do something which would guarantee a regular income, so that I could be in an almost independent position also in the case of a long period of depression; third (you will think I am crazy, but I must tell you the truth) I hoped = and still hope = to make enough money as a publisher to start a collection of my own. In fact, in the latter years, I became more and more a victim of the bacterium well known to you; so that, for instance, I feel shivers at the mere thought that I should part with some of the paintings I love the most (perhaps some day I will become a good client of yours).

Therefore, I started almost two years ago, together with a friend of mine, a little publishing business, which grew very quickly, so that at a certain moment, we had five weekly papers, now partly interrupted owing to the lack of paper. Immediately after the Allies' arrival, I created a big weekly political magazine, called "Cosmopolita", of which I am the editor myself. It has been a great success and it is generally considered the best paper of this kind ever existed in Italy. We are publishing now a weekly "Cine=Novelle" of a lower standard, and a fortnightly "Specchio di vita femminile" intended for female readers. Before long, we'll bring out a divulgative "Cinematografia", also weekly, and a weekly "Realtà": the latter will deal with technical, scientific, economical and educational matters. We are also planning a very popular illustrated weekly review, of the "Domenica del Corriere" standard, and hope to restart the issue of a very nice magazine for children "Carosello", which we already published before.

The name of the editing concern itself is "Cosmopolita": it is established in very beautiful premises in the old Palazzo Lazzaroni, 26 Via de' Lucchesi. Its staff includes now 25 people. Its nominal paid-up capital is 500,000 lire. The president is old Prefetto Luigi Maggioni, who, as you know, has been also the president of the "Antiquaria" since its creation; vice-president myself, and manager my friend Enrico Allulli. An American, who has been living in Rome for many years, Mrs. Edith Handley, is associate-editor in the business.

As you see, our greater activity is devoted to the publication of periodical magazines, which grant a quicker circulation of money, make large funds available every week and give almost immediate benefits. Nevertheless, I didn't forget the publication of books, and three groups of works are being printed, i. e.:

- a) an art collection series, beginning with a big work by Pallucchini, concerning the paintings in the Galleria Estense, Modena; "I Manieristi", by Giuliano Briganti; "Bernini pittore", by G. Grassi. These three works are almost ready and will be followed by a book containing "Essays" by Roberto Longhi and an opus of G.B. Tiepolo by Morassi. Before the communications with Northern Italy were interrupted, I had agreed with Morazzoni a series of very detailed handbooks intended for the art collector, which he should direct;
- b) a series of political works, which includes short biographies of Churchill, Roosevelt, etc. and detailed essays on political doctrines (liberalism; socialism; communism etc.). In a bigger political collection, we have published "Hitler told me", by Rauschning, which will be followed by "German revolution of destruction" by the same author, and by "The Japanese Threat", by Upton Close.  
In the same collection I am preparing the publication of two works by Count Carlo Sforza: "We; the Italians" and "The Yugoslav problem";
- c) we have also published some books for children and an English grammar, and are preparing the "Biography of God" by Nardelli, and the biography of the poet Trilussa.

As to the copyrights, it is true that Italy is not in a position as to pay very much for them, but this is not a good reason for neglecting it at all. As you used to state, even a small cow... We are now asking through the Società Italiana degli Autori (which conveys to the American authors and publishers all the requests for translations and transfer of copyrights made by Italian publishers) the copyrights for Italy for some American books, among which are: Emil Ludwig's "Roosevelt" and John Hersey's "A bell for Adano". I would highly appreciate your assistance in this connection, as the affair ~~is~~ based on the very slow system of the Società Autori threatens to be a failure.

Besides the few copyrights requested through the Società Autori, I am also deeply interested in some of Borgese's or Salvemini's works (I was the only Italian publisher who dared to report in full extent the Declaration of the Italo-Americans, which appeared in "Life" of June 12th, 1944), some biographies of movies stars or works written by celebrities in the field (I would also like, for instance, something similar to an up-to-date Cecil B. De Mille's "Hollywood Saga"), all the "thrillers" and detective stories available (especially those which appeared in the States in the three or four years past), all books for children which got success in America, first of them the whole Walt Disney's production. The latter interests me greatly, both as a publisher and as a representative for Italy. Further more, fiction books for grown-up boys and girls, and works from which movies were derived. Also espionage books and first-hand disclosures on the coulisses of the present war would be of great interest. I cannot give you more details, because, unluckily, I have no catalogue of the American literary production in the last four years: but all that can be sold easily interests me greatly. I believe your cooperation in this field can prove a big success. I

would also undertake the publication in Italy of American magazines and reviews.

With the liberation of the whole of the country, the market will result considerably enlarged: in the cultured regions of the North are living people who were kept in the dark of the literary production of the United Nations for many years. As to the prices, I will tell you that I suppose a book like Welles' "The Time for Decision" can be sold in Italy at 150 lire; a crime-book at 25/30 lire. The Società degli Autori propose that the authors of books translated into Italian and published here be paid with a 10 % on the price of sale. The total issue of the books is to be checked by the Società degli Autori itself.

I have a very winning slogan to induce the authors not to sell the copyrights to their usual publishers. It is the following: "DON'T COLLABORATE WITH COMPROMISED PUBLISHERS". With the exception of Einaudi, Turin, possibly all the other publishers in Italy = the names of whom you know very well = collaborated with Nazifascism, putting their concerns at the service of the enemy's propaganda machine. A special law just issued provides the appointment of government commissioners to take over the Italian publishing concerns guilty of collaboration. There are many reasons which support entrusting the books to "Cosmopolita": the moral reason of establishing connections with publishers who never yielded to Fascism, started their activity in the new democratic climate and have become the greatest publishers in Rome; the fact that, owing to their collaboration with the enemy, the former publishers have lost all of their prestige and enjoy no more favour from the public; the fact that, with a government commissioner at their head, their business activity will be seriously hampered. Among collaborators, Mondadori occupies a top-rank.

Count Carlo Sforza, the High Commissioner for the Defascistization, has given preference to me for the publication of articles and works of his: among the latter, his "Noi Italiani" and "The Yugoslav Problem".

As to the condition of a quick printing, I can say that the problem of printing is a most difficult one, owing to the lack of power and the scarcity of paper. But, thanks to my good connections with the Vatican spheres, I could secure a large scale stock of paper, and, having entered contracts with five of the most important printing shops in Rome, we are in a position to exploit at full maximum the possibilities of power distribution in the town.

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Most Sincerely Yours

