

XS: PC

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May 31, 1978

John Ross
IMG Political Committee

Dear Comrades,

At our last Political Committee meeting we discussed your letter of March 28, 1978, concerning your theoretical magazine, International.

After considering the pros and cons of the various alternatives you put forward, and our own political needs here, we reached the conclusion that we should go ahead along the lines of your "option #1" rather than trying to move towards a magazine with a joint editorial board for which we would try to build a sizable circulation in the U.S.

The considerations you raise about the difficulties of trying to combine the needs of a national and an internationally oriented theoretical magazine are valid. We also understand the factors that lead you to conclude that the IMG is not in a position to publish a journal designed to maximize international circulation, and that you must concentrate on building an adequate circulation base in Britain.

Given those basic guidelines for editorial decisions, it seems to us that the magazine would not be able to meet our needs here.

In your letter you outline what you consider to be five possible problem areas where there might be divergent assessments about the character and content of the magazine. We want to emphasize that we do not see any major obstacles in the first four. That is, our conclusion is not based on any political disagreements with the proposals you make.

The concept of a magazine centered on questions of political strategy would correspond to our general orientation as well. Polemics with the parties of the "Eurocommunist" current, a highly polemical content in general, and the inclusion of nonmembers of the Fourth International on the editorial board would probably not pose any insuperable obstacles either.

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But, even after all those questions were ironed out, the balance of each issue would of necessity be strongly weighted towards maximizing the British circulation. Under those circumstances we think the circulation base in the United States would remain limited.

We will, of course, still want to contribute articles from time to time, and advertise International in the U.S. as you suggest in your letter. But this would be on a different scale than what we had discussed if we were to proceed with a joint magazine.

In our discussions in the Political Committee we also felt strongly that we need to speed up our timetable for reinstituting a theoretical magazine oriented towards our political tasks in this country. We don't know yet how rapidly we will be able to do this, but we hope it will be in the next year. It seemed to us that we should not begin a major undertaking of the kind we had discussed in relation to International, unless we envisioned it as a project of longer duration.

Until we are able to relaunch our own theoretical magazine, especially, we would like to utilize International as broadly as possible in this country, circulating it through our bookstores and branches. We could also consider contributing from time to time articles of interest to readers in both the U.S. and Britain.

Once we are able to publish our own magazine, there would still be a need to collaborate and coordinate material. Some material appropriate for International would also be useful for us. We should be able to save duplication of work in translating material from other languages, for example. The same might be true of material written in English that would be appropriate for publication in both the U.S. and Britain.

We hope these proposals will be agreeable to you and will provide the basis for fruitful collaboration in advancing International and, we hope soon, our own theoretical magazine.

Comradely,

Mary-Alice Waters

Mary-Alice Waters
for the Political Committee