

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
February 13, 1975

TO ALL BRANCH ORGANIZERS AND SALES DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

Comrade Les Evans sent you a letter dated January 22, announcing plans to include the International Socialist Review in The Militant as a monthly magazine supplement. He indicated the advantages of the move: (1) a considerable increase in circulation; (2) more economic and efficient use of the resources of the two periodicals.

Since then we have received inquiries from various comrades asking for further clarification of the reasons for this step.

It was decided on primarily because of financial pressures. The party as a whole, including all of the publications it is interested in advancing, has been hit by rising costs owing to inflation and by falling income owing to the soaring unemployment. As has occurred in comparable situations in the past, we had no choice but to undertake a retrenchment. In carrying out the cutbacks, we have sought not only to inflict the least damage, but even -- where possible -- to gain some advantages.

In the case of the ISR, our objective was above all to save the magazine. A retreat could not be avoided because of the financial problem. In face of similar squeezes in the years gone by, the ISR has been reduced to a bimonthly and for a time even a quarterly -- not to mention reductions in the number of pages and size of the staff. In improved financial circumstances, the ISR and its staff have been expanded.

We discussed such alternatives, but ended up with the opinion that a better possibility exists in view of the circulation and size now attained by The Militant. This is to maintain the frequency of publication, but to handle the ISR as an independent monthly magazine supplement to The Militant. While maintaining the identity of the ISR, this will make possible a considerable saving in publication, postal, and circulation costs.

A very positive item in this solution is the step forward it will mean for The Militant. In previous retrenchments, it has been necessary at times to reduce The Militant in number of pages. In this instance the size of The Militant will be in effect increased through the addition of an attractive new feature. For the first time in its history, The Militant will have a monthly magazine supplement.

This is quite common among the big commercial daily newspapers, each of the major ones having a magazine supplement in their weekend editions. Among publications of the radical movement, it has been a feature of the Daily World, and before it of the Daily Worker.

As a follow-up to the previous expansion of The Militant, the addition of the ISR as a monthly magazine supplement will further improve its competitive position among the publications of the American radical movement as a whole. The consequences for increasing the

circulation of The Militant are obvious. The inclusion of a monthly magazine supplement of the quality of the ISR is a most attractive selling point to prospective subscribers. And increases in the circulation of The Militant will mean an automatic increase in the circulation of the ISR.

As to the length of time this arrangement will last (some comrades have asked about this), we can't make an accurate forecast. It will depend on general developments in the political situation in the United States, particularly as they are reflected in the growth of the Trotskyist movement and in the improvement of financial resources for the various publications. Meanwhile, if this move proves to be as successful as we hope it will be, steps can be taken to increase the size of the ISR as a monthly magazine supplement and to make it still more attractive to readers of The Militant and their contacts.

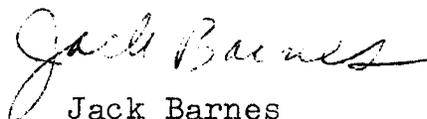
In considering how these plans might affect the various publications of direct interest to us, we did not overlook Intercontinental Press. Because of the important international role played by IP since it was founded in 1963, we feel that it is one of our special responsibilities to support it to the maximum and to help expand its circulation. We propose to continue to do this, and, if possible, give IP an extra boost.

All of you are aware of the excellent step forward made by IP in regularly supplying material in Spanish. That advance was made possible by the generous response of comrades to an appeal at the celebration of the tenth anniversary of IP for funds to initiate this feature. We have noticed many indications of how much this has been appreciated by comrades working in Spanish-language communities.

You are also aware, we are sure, of how steadily IP has increased the number of pages so that now its regular size is 32 pages and quite often it goes to 48 pages. Last year it published a rather amazing total of 1,888 pages.

IP also faces financial difficulties; but the business office thinks these can be overcome largely by increasing the price of regular subscriptions, provided this is accompanied by an increase in circulation. The proposed solution appears feasible to us, and we would like any ideas you have on the incorporation of this goal in our future sales and subscription campaigns.

Comradely,



Jack Barnes
National Secretary

P.S. I'm enclosing a copy of the editorial that will appear in the March issue of the ISR. The Militant also plans an article on the change in format of the ISR.

Editorial to appear in International Socialist Review

For forty years the International Socialist Review and its predecessors, New International and Fourth International, have occupied a special place in American radical journalism. We have sought to sow the seeds of serious Marxist theory that can serve as a guide to revolutionary action. Our contributors and our editors have dedicated their energies to the perspective of building a mass revolutionary socialist movement in this country that can overturn the system of private profit in its most formidable bastion. The warm response we have received from our readers convinces us that our time has been well spent and that our goal is a realizable one.

In the course of our forty years we have appeared not only under several names, but in various formats as well, from quarterly to monthly and from pocket size to our present eight by eleven. Now we are about to embark on a new publishing venture. This will be done in cooperation with the staff of the socialist newsweekly The Militant, with whom we have collaborated closely throughout our publishing history.

Beginning with our next issue the ISR will be incorporated into The Militant where it will appear as a regular monthly twelve-page magazine supplement. While this will represent a cut in the size of the magazine it will at the same time greatly increase our readership -- in fact, several times our present 8,000. This opportunity to reach a wider audience outweighs in our opinion the consideration of the reduced size of the magazine. Moreover, our perspective after some experience with our new format is to expand the magazine as The Militant grows.

All of our subscribers will receive The Militant from now on for the full duration of their ISR subscriptions, the weekly as well as the special monthly issue containing the ISR. If you are already a Militant subscriber, your subscription will be extended accordingly. For a limited time all our subscribers will also receive Intercontinental Press. After becoming acquainted with this weekly magazine of the world Trotskyist movement, you may want to take out a subscription.

We hope you will join us in our new venture and that this time next month will find you reading The Militant and Intercontinental Press along with your April ISR.

THE EDITORS