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Letter to readers

â,¬1600 will double the readership of International Viewpoint

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International Viewpoint's relaunch as an online magazine in January has been a staggering success. On average, just over 10,000 visits are made to the website each month. On some days, daily visits to www.internationalviewpoint.org exceed the paid circulation of the old monthly magazine.

[<https://npa31.org/IMG/jpg/webpage.jpg>]

However, we urgently need our readers' help in order to meet rising demand for the website. With the funding we hoped for, we can double the readership. Without the donations we need, the website will get overloaded and our ability to add new material will slow down. One of our readers has offered to double any donation this year. That means we need â,-1600 by the end of December to get on course to double the site's readership.

The need is there. Something like five-sixths of International Viewpoint's budget pays translators. The magazine fills a unique need to bring into English the viewpoints of socialist worldwide. We translate material written by socialists in French, Portuguese, Spanish, German, Italian, Dutch and other languages, so that you can read, in activists' own words, about the struggle in over 80 countries reported on by the magazine.

Because of the unique articles we publish, readership is now rising month on month. On average, we are now getting fifty percent more visitors each day than we were two months ago. In less than a year, the online International Viewpoint already has more readers than those of longer established websites, including those of our sister magazines, Inprecor and Inprekorr, those of the SWP and ISG in Britain, of the SP and SWP in the United States and that of the DSP in Australia.

However, the opportunity exists for International Viewpoint to do much more. The most widely read websites are those with the greatest financial and human resources. Many of the most widely read socialist websites are produced by small sects that, having little activity in the physical world, are able to focus their effort onto the virtual one.

The rapid rise in the readership of International Viewpoint, and of other Fourth International websites such as that of the LCR and Rouge, suggests to us that readers are looking for a non-sectarian revolutionary viewpoint. Some simple enhancements to our site would help us meet that need: more bandwidth, greater resources for faster translation; improved search facilities, a larger archive and a greater effort to encourage progressive websites to link to InternationalViewpoint.org.

With the right backing, we can double the readership. A realistic goal for next year is that will be an average of 20,000 visits each monthly. Last month there were 17,500 visits to the site. While that strained our resources, it showed what is possible.

Naturally, this success brings new challenges. Our current financial resources fall far short of those required to take advantage of the opportunity. Donations to the magazine are one-third of the modest amount we planned and hoped for. But those donations to the magazine are essential to fund the team that edit, translate and manage the site and also pay for the technology that powers the website.

Furthermore, our growing success deepens our challenges. For example, as time goes on, so the number of new articles and archived resources on the web site also increases. That means that the number of pages views by each individual visitor also increases over time, further testing the capacity of the computer and internet connection used to

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serve visitors.

To meet the needs of our growing readership, we need to turn around the fall in donations to the magazine. This year we have had larger donations from comrades in Detroit and Dublin, and from the Dutch and Turkish sections of the Fourth International. Many readers have also given smaller gifts using a donation button on the website. Indeed, most donors are now using the button, which uses paypal.com, including two monthly donors in Britain: one in south Wales and another in north London.

We need much more. We need £5,000 in donations each year to run the site. So far, we have had around one-third of that, just over £1,800. One of our supporters had made us an generous offer: he will double any donation made toward this target in November and December. If our readers can collectively donate £1,600, our supporter's doubling will allow us to meet our target for the year.

This is an exceptional opportunity: there are few areas where there sort of money would make such a sustained difference to the reach of the Fourth International. Please help us to double our readership.

To donate online, click on the 'Make a Donation' button on the left hand side. By post, send cheques payable to International Viewpoint, PO Box 112, Manchester M12 5DW, Britain.