

10/04/1970,

Dear Mr Lake,

Translations only very rarely, usefully with some ancillary reason (sic.). I've kept the ballade for publication (sometime over next few issues) - it is successful, though the satiric edge is a bit coarse I think. I've never consciously refused a poem because I disagree personally with what it says. I wouldn't be that it couldn't happen in extreme cases (a hymn in praise of soviet prisons or of soviet [unidentified] in Prague, or the extermination of Jews?)/ But how many political poems are any good anyway - it is a hard genre - & of these how many are pro-totalitarian or pro-inhumanity? As regards your cuts(?): they aren't all mine, but they don't put you outside Quadrant's pale. (I add my own comment as follows:- Anti-war: clearly a morally tenable position nowadays though I still think it unrealistic and not morally required. Anti-censorship: I find it impossible to discover a clear consistent theoretical to practical line & every(sic) those who can. My position is that of a majority sentiment in the country still warrants some restrictions they are entitled to have keen, though with respect for the senior intellectual interest of minorities. But this is not a clear position. Anti-capitalist: this would be easy if socialism eh.. were not demonstrably worse in experience. Anti-communist = anti totalitarian. Anti-pollution: yes emphatically even though the issue will be used as a mask for other purposes by some forces. But that is by the way). Yours sincerely, James McAuley.