

# IN THESE TIMES

Editorial

## PLO & Israel are on no-win treadmill

The PLO commando raid in Israel on March 11, and Israel's response with a massive invasion of Lebanon, reaffirms our view that there can be no peace in the Middle East without a mutually satisfactory settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

That will require that each side recognize the national entity and rights of the other. This means each recognizing the other's right to statehood and moving toward neighborly relations of trade, friendship and cooperation. We think that this is the best, and probably the only, way for Israel to achieve lasting security for itself, and for the Palestinians to be accorded their just national rights.

The PLO and Israel seem to act upon worst-case scenarios that each writes for the other. The ghastly and tragic deaths of about 40 Israeli civilians resulting from the PLO raid momentarily rallied world sympathy for the Begin government's hard-line negotiating stance at a time when support for it was eroding both at home and abroad, most notably in the U.S. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon promptly squandered that sympathy just as the PLO had probably hoped it would.

By the cruel outcome of its recent raid, the PLO risks losing international support for its claim as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people with the capacity to govern. By the Lebanon invasion, which has added at least 100,000 more homeless people to the Middle East refugee problem, and by the refusal to negotiate along the lines of UN Security Council Resolution 242, Begin's policies are leading to the disaster of over-extended expansionism, internal strain, and international isolation.

A change in Begin's policy or a new Israeli government capable of changing that policy is a necessary step to Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation. The alternative is an endless bloody treadmill that must make losers of the currently strong and weak alike.

## Red Brigade helps Italian ruling class

The rising incidence of terrorism in western Europe has made it an urgent political question for socialists, as for others.

With the bogey of "international communism" all but exhausted as an ideological club against social change, partisans of capitalism have seized upon the bogey of "international [red] terrorism." They are doing their best to conjure a public image that equates terrorism with the left.

Every bogey has some basis in reality, and this one is buoyed by such leftist terrorist activity as that of the Baader-Meinhof group in Germany and the Red Brigade in Italy. But it is well to remember that in this century, including the post-World War II decades, right-wing terror against the left has far exceeded leftist terror against either the right or the established order.

"Moderate" governments in the western world bear a heavy responsibility for a political environment conducive to terrorism. They have routinely employed police and military terror against colonial peoples; they have engaged in criminal acts against their opponents' lives

and liberties both abroad and at home; they have conspired, with money and arms, to subvert democratic processes; they have leagued with underworld, provocateur and vigilante elements against the democratic rights of reformists as well as revolutionaries.

In going far toward criminalizing their own organs of legitimacy, "moderate" western governments have contributed to a moral climate of cynicism that leads people to believe in the legitimacy of the criminal. Such governments, too, and the political parties running them, by upholding an economic order depriving millions of security and opportunity, and falsely identifying that order with "democracy," discredit democracy by making it appear to be incompatible with social justice. It is in the soil of such "moderation" that the seeds of terrorism grow.

Seeking to understand the roots of terrorism in the western world, however, is not to justify it. Right-wing and conservative terrorism has its origin in the conditions historically normal to bourgeois society—in the strategies of class, race and imperial domination, in the "morality" of treating other people not as ends but as means to wealth and power. The origins of western left-wing terrorism cannot be found in the broad socialist ideological tradition—including its Marxist, Leninist, or Maoist trends which have always posed popular revolutionary discipline against terroristic acts. The origins of left-wing terrorism lie, rather, in succumbing to the bourgeois syndrome of manipulating people like exchangeable things.

The role of terrorism—right or left—is to strengthen the hand of reaction. By destroying, disrupting or discrediting democratic processes, it deprives the working class and its allies of a basic weapon against capitalist power. By short-circuiting the freest exercise of political debate and organization, it raises not the consciousness suited to popular self-governance, which is essential to socialism, but the mortal enemies of such consciousness—fear, panic and hysteria. Terrorism undermines the people's self-confidence and throws them into the arms of those promising security, law and order. Since the preservation of capitalism requires a restricted or dormant democracy, terror-

ism plays the capitalist game.

Terrorists of the left do not pose the question of peaceful *versus* violent revolution. There can be no socialist revolution of either kind without a self-confident, highly conscious people prepared to vindicate their democratic rights to a fuller humanity. By their professions and their deeds, the leftist terrorists proclaim themselves revolutionary surrogates for what they regard as the passive or duped "masses." Their lack of confidence in and contempt for the people's self-governing capacities are the mirror image of the bourgeoisie's fear of it.

In the massive demonstrations following the Red Brigade kidnapping of Aldo Moro, the Italian working class has said "no" to terrorism and to those who would anoint themselves as the people's benevolent grand inquisitors. It has said "yes" to the democratic struggle for the socialist transformation of society.

The Italian working class is asserting its right to make its own revolution—and the impossibility of its being pushed, or putched, into it. It is emphasizing what we believe all socialists should remember, that in the modern capitalist world terrorism is not the road to revolution but the servant of reaction.

## Soviets defile selves by denying rights

By decree of Leonid I. Brezhnev the Soviet government revoked the citizenship of Soviet expatriate cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife Galina Vishnevskaya, a former Bolshoi Opera soprano. (Five days earlier a similar decree revoked the Soviet citizenship of Pyotr G. Grigorenko, a former Soviet general.)

The decree justified the action on the ground that Rostropovich and Vishnevskaya had "engaged in unpatriotic activity and defiled Soviet social reality and the title of citizen of the USSR." The gov-

ernment newspaper *Izvestia* denounced the two as "ideological renegades" who had brought harm to the prestige of the USSR."

The Soviet government action is an exercise of arbitrary power wholly inconsistent with democratic principles.

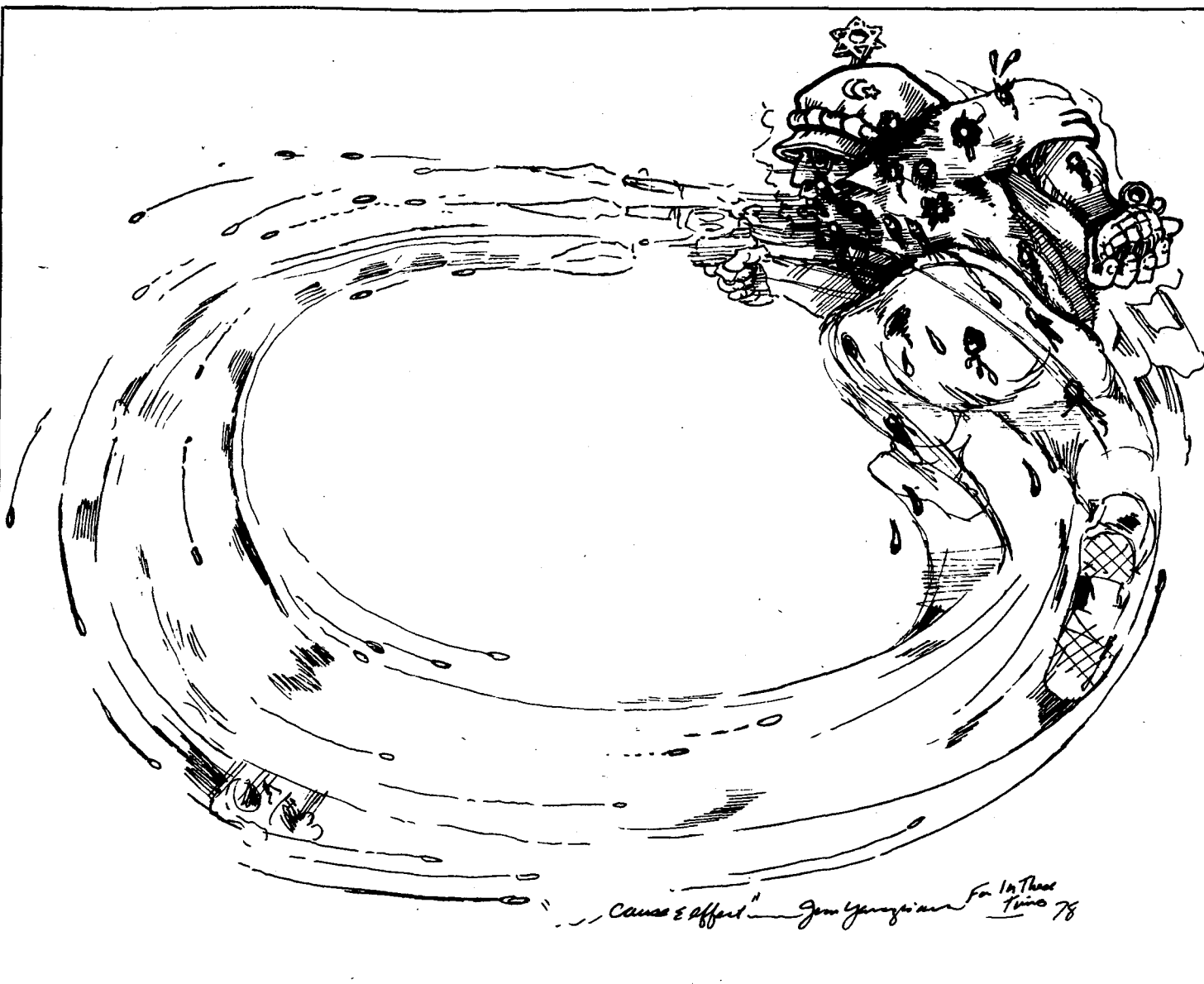
The deprivation of certain citizenship rights upon conviction of felony after a fair trial is widely recognized as consistent with a democratic polity. But government power—by executive decree, star chamber, or otherwise—to revoke citizenship and render a person stateless and homeless, because of beliefs or associations is sheer tyranny.

As long as the Soviet government retains such power, the Soviet political system cannot claim to be republican. For by subjecting people's beliefs and associations to extreme penalty, the Soviet state violates the fundamental republican principle of the sovereignty of the people. We expect a socialist society to honor that principle and fulfill it far beyond the real capacities of capitalist societies.

The Soviet Communists cannot have it both ways. They cannot appeal to principles of socialist internationalism while violating principles of socialist democracy and undermining the confidence of people in other lands in socialism as a progressive and more democratic alternative to capitalism. As long as they continue on the latter path, the Soviet Communist party must be regarded as subordinating the principles and the cause of socialism to their interests as a national ruling party.

An American government that revoked the citizenship of dissenters—Vietnam war opponents, for example, or critics of American society—would immediately, and rightly, be understood as retrograde and tyrannical. Such a denial of fundamental liberties and human rights would be widely condemned by leftists. The standards by which we judge a socialist government should be no less demanding.

By such undemocratic practices the Soviet government and Communist party, not the Rostropoviches or the Solzhenitsyns, "defile" their country's "social reality" and "the title" of Communist party. The government and party make themselves "ideological renegades" to the cause of world socialism—and to Soviet socialism as well.





# Letters

## Nice spooks

**K**AREN WYNN'S SPECIAL REPORT on the CIA (*ITT*, Mar. 15) is disappointing. Are we supposed to feel sorry for these upper class "old boys" of the CIA? I'm afraid she has swallowed, 101 percent, the self-serving nonsense of her "Connecticut source." (Isn't it possible that he might have his own special axes to grind?)

Furthermore, she tries to convince us that these older "impeccable lineage," "old line" characters were sincere people pursuing idealistic ends. They were "liberal" rather than "conservative" in their "overall outlook." This, or the well-known results of it, conflict with the most casual reading of what the CIA was doing from the late 1940s on, LSD experiments and all. (Even the *New York Times* series was better than this!) Her column belongs in *Dissent* or *The New Republic*, not *ITT*.

—Richard Du Boff  
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

## Read before knocking

**W**ELL YOU FINALLY GOT MY wanger boiling enough to write a letter. As a feminist who reads *Family Circle*, I strongly doubt that the authors of "The House of Mirrors, American Women as Reflected in the Magazines They Read" ever looked inside.

Beyond the "pretty" cover and the misleading name, this magazine has some meaningful content. While it does not have a political orientation, it offers consciousness raising articles to the group it seems to be aimed at—the average North American woman. The non-use of the generic "he" is just one of the attitudes that sets *Family Circle* apart from the other women's magazines in its class. The inclusion of crafts and cooking sections does not preclude it from being a feminist publication. Carol Becker and Janet Stevenson should read *Family Circle* before they judge it.

—Judy Sennett  
Ashland, Ore.

## It's a hell of a way to write an editorial

**I** WAS APPALLED TO FIND THIS item tucked into your editorial: "Women Take the Lead" (*ITT*, Mar. 8), "...radical feminism that emerged in the 1960s and, based on biological determinism, defined 'the enemy' historically as nature itself, embodied in maleness..." What gobbledeygook!

If you want to swear at something you should do it in plain English instead of hiding behind this so-called intellectual language. The people who are being insulted and dismissed have the right to at least that much honest decency. A paragraph later you acknowledge the "insights, depth of feeling and militancy" of radical feminism, but your statement that socialist feminism has gone beyond radical feminism is not adequately defended—perhaps because you do not in the first place discuss in a meaningful way what you consider radical feminism to be.

It's a hell of a way to dismiss the most revolutionary thinking this culture has seen in many years. I think you should be ashamed of committing the same sin that good old capitalist academia implanted in your scholarly souls.

—Moochy Sweezy  
Joffrey, N.H.

## Too young to be so cynical?

**Y**OU CHILDREN OF THE '60S had it easy. You had a war in your time to make you strong and rebellious.

But what will become of the passive '70s child? We had no reason to march or even walk. Sure, there was Watergate, but it was rationalized as something every other President did. This one just happened to get caught.

While the '60s raised revolutionaries, the '70s gave birth to worms. We have nothing to do but drive around getting high, looking for something to do. Maybe we have pickled our minds till we see no justice or injustice. We cannot find jobs because we are too young and inexperienced—ridiculous since all we can do is get older and inexperienced. We complete the educational process and perhaps learn to read in grade school, screw in high school, and sodomize in college.

We reject both Christianity and atheism merely because we are unaware of anything beyond ourselves.

Victims of society? Culture? Or well-meaning parents who kissed our ass because they had to work their off in "hard times" thinking we would be made comfortable and secure? Well, we are. So comfortable we will not move off our lazy butts to change channels on the tube.

By the time we are in control of this society our heads will be so fried and our bodies so flabby, we'll simply forget to run the country.

It is distressing to think we will grow older but by no means wiser.

—Kittie Rogers  
Paragould, Ark.

## Let us be Americans

**"J**ULIUS HOBSON DIED MARCH 23." So began the obituary written by me and published by *ITT* a year ago. That story also quoted Julius: "What too many politicians don't realize is that true home rule" for the District of Columbia, meaning voting representation in both houses of Congress, "would take a constitutional amendment, and that's just too much hassle. Statehood would accomplish the same thing, and all that takes is an act of Congress."

The House has passed and the Senate has before it a constitutional amendment to give the District representation in Congress. It is in trouble getting the required two-thirds vote in the Senate, which wants two new, probably black, members like it wants junkets cut off, and the amendment would be in trouble getting the required three-quarters of states to ratify it.

Well, I hope the amendment goes through. But despite the ill-briefed opposition of Jimmy the Baptist, statehood would do the same thing with, as Julius said, a lot less hassle.

Administratively, the federal government already treats the District of Columbia as a state. Why not let us be Americans at the polling place as well?

—Joe Holt Anderson  
Washington, D.C.

## Smiles in the corporate boardrooms

**I** ENJOY YOUR NEWSPAPER BUT I am continually amused as writer after writer parrots the belief that a vote for a Republican is a vote for big business.

For many years I voted Republican when they were trying to run the country and the various states on a business-like basis.

However, about 20 years ago "Big Business" saw the light. While they perform behind a facade of Republicans they would be pretty sad if a conservative group ran the country. They finally realized that their prosperity and very existence, to a great extent, hinged on government spending. So, to fool the naive, they talk Republican while voting and praying Democratic. Why kill the goose that lays the golden eggs?

I, too, realized that my future and retirement depended on Democratic spending and I have seen the light also. Those people with all of the government contracts can't fool me.

You people better consider an adjust-

ment to your thinking. I am sure each edition of *ITT* brings smiles in the plush corporate offices.

—Robert E. Howell  
Emilonton, Pa.

## Dissatisfied

**I** WAS VERY DISSATISFIED WITH the political consciousness reflected in Jane Melnick's report on lesbian mothers (*ITT*, Mar. 8). A predominant theme in the article seemed to be that the children of lesbian mothers grow up to be heterosexual, so therefore it's OK for these mothers to be granted custody.

The implication of this is the old familiar anti-gay notion that heterosexuality is better than homosexuality. My view on this is essentially a "youth liberation" perspective—children should be free to create and express their own sexuality and the best parents are the ones who offer their children that freedom, not parents (lesbians or otherwise) who think they are more "successful" as parents when their children turn out straight.

I was insulted by the reference to Dr. Richard Green, a California psychologist, whose work in the area of sexual identity has been criticized by radical feminist writers. This man has made himself rich and famous by insisting on the anti-feminist, anti-gay notions that there is such a thing as gender confusion—I feel very sorry for the little sissy boys who are placed in his care for "adjustment." There are many lesbian mothers who hide their own sexuality from their children because of the fears and bugaboos raised in this article; a radical lesbian perspective would not promote these fears. A lesbian mother whose child emerges with a gay identity has at least as much right to be proud and happy as any other mother.

—Allen Young  
Orange, Mass.

## Jane Melnick replies:

*The article gives no indication that I share Dr. Green's political consciousness. An editorial cut, made without my knowledge, may have made it seem, to readers not in tune with the tone of the article, as if I had no opinion about the plight of lesbian mothers forced by the courts to prove that their children won't turn out gay. The excluded sentence was: "Thanks to Dr. Green's remarkable [i.e., weird] research, lesbian mothers have the dubious privilege of proving to judges that they won't 'visit their sins' on their children."*

*I was upset about this cut before Young's letter, but I do not think its omission creates a "predominant theme" out of touch with the rest of the material of the article. Reading such a political consciousness into it would be similar to concluding from Young's letter that he was launching a campaign against "sissy" boys.*

## WSP and SALT

**E** DITH VILLASTRIGO'S PIECE ON SALT (*ITT*, Mar. 5) contains several errors.

1. SALT II is not a "treaty limiting strategic offensive weapons." It is a treaty permitting the increase of a number of deliverable warheads, in terms of lethal power—power to kill—it will allow both nations to at least double their strategic capability.

2. SALT I was not only on "strategic defensive arms" it set limits on "strategic offensive arms."

3. The statement that SALT II limits "all" strategic weapons ICBMs and SLBMs and now "heavy bombers," MIRVs, strategic cruise missiles, is misleading. The number of Soviet MIRV weapons is increased from 250 to 1,200, and the Soviets are also permitted to MIRV submarine weapons, which are now single warhead. The U.S. is permitted to have cruise missiles of a certain range, which make it a strategic weapon, including "heavy bombers" doesn't make much difference; the important

thing is the number and power of deliverable warheads. No restriction is placed on lethal power, either on megatonage or accuracy.

4. The three-year protocol is the most disturbing part of the treaty. Not one weapon covered by that protocol will be deployable in three years. The protocol does not stop development of those weapons.

5. SALT II does not prevent development and deployment of Mark 12a, neutron bomb, cruise missile, or MARV.

6. SALT II will not stop the adding of "7,000 new nuclear weapons." Actually, if SALT II is approved it will increase the U.S. strategic arsenal from 9,000 warheads to 10,154, plus 2,000 cruise missiles, or a total of 12,154; and the Soviet arsenal will increase from 4,000 to 8,124. Total increase is 7,278 permitted under SALT II.

7. SALT II does not commit both powers "for the first time to negotiate substantial mutual reductions in strategic arms." Both powers are committed to do this under the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. Instead they have escalated, and will escalate again under SALT II.

On Feb. 20 a Women Strike for Peace/Women for Peace regional meeting was held in Philadelphia. It accepted the following statement on SALT.

"We support negotiations for genuine arms reduction between the Soviet Union and the U.S. The current SALT proposals do not accomplish this. Negotiations that allow an increase in weapons systems is not the direction toward peace. We support a disarmament race toward zero nuclear weapons."

"We propose substantive reduction in nuclear arsenals both quantitatively and qualitatively—the elimination of the cruise missile, stopping research, development and production of the MX mobile missile and other new weapons of mass destruction."

—Shirley Lens  
Chairwoman of Chicago area  
Women for Peace

## From Missouri!

**"D** OES LOW-LEVEL RADIATION kill?" (*ITT*, Mar. 22) only quotes technical and mathematical specialists who have their egos inflated and are serving their own interests.

Statistical correlations never establish cause, they only suggest problem areas. Anything can be proved from a little bit of random data. You would do your readers a service if you would show them how not to be deceived by statistics.

Nature tells us that people living in Colorado receive twice as much natural radiation as people living in Louisiana. Are people leaving Colorado? When the experts explain that, we'll be on the right track!

—William J. Mechem  
Chemical Engineer  
Argonne National Laboratory

*Editor's Note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.*

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