

## MIDEAST

By Dilip Hiro

L O N D O N

**T**HE U.S. AND ISRAEL ARE OUT to humble Syria—by war, if need be. They have decided to mount a series of bombing raids on Syrian-supported and Syrian positions in Lebanon. Within a day of his return to Israel from Washington, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir ordered one such mission. It knocked out a Syrian radar station along Beirut's Damascus road and prepared the way for a subsequent raid by 28 U.S. war planes on Syrian positions in the Shuf mountains, during which they used anti-personnel bombs.

This was a result of the secret deal worked out by Shamir and Reagan during Shamir's recent visit to Washington—a deal that was soon leaked to a select coterie of journalists by administration officials in a barely disguised attempt to intimidate Syria.

In return for undertaking this task for the U.S., Israel has already received ample rewards: conversion of American loans to Israel into grants; a committee to work out details of treating Israel as a free trade area by the U.S.; a new strategic cooperation committee to plan storing American weapons and medical supplies in Israel and conducting joint naval and air exercises in the eastern Mediterranean. (See *In These Times*, Dec. 7.)

The U.S.-Israeli deal is being trumpeted as a victory for George Shultz, Robert McFarlane and James Baker over Casper Weinberger, William Casey and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is a victory of politicians, tuned to the needs of Reagan's forthcoming election campaign, over technocrats.

In reality, however, it fits in well with the Reagan administration's overall view of the Soviet Union as an "Evil force to be combatted," and its propensity to treat regional conflicts in strategic terms of East-West confrontation. Such thinking leads to a routine description of the Syrian regime as a puppet of the Soviets—to be overthrown (ideally) or to be derided and humbled (at the very least).

But it does not change a basic fact of Mideastern life: Syria is the key country in the region; and its president, Hafez Assad, has Syrian interests—and these only—at heart.

Syria's strategic importance is underlined by geography. It shares borders with Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon and Israel. Historically, Syria has dominated the Arab heartland since the rise of Islam in the seventh century. It is currently ruled by Assad, a politician who has few rivals in shrewd toughness in the region. It has a standing army of a quarter-million that can be trebled in an emergency. And its military is equipped with sophisticated Soviet weaponry.

Oddly enough, the Israeli and American actions of the past few years have inadvertently boosted Syria's importance. Once the U.S. and Israel had weaned Egypt away from the Arab League by offering it a bilateral peace treaty with Is-



'ONE... TWO... OK, WHERE'S SYRIA?'

## U.S.-Israel actions have molded Syria into Arab power

rael in March 1979, Syria's standing in the Arab world rose sharply. As the only large, front-line Arab state facing Israel, Syria became the recipient of generous financial aid from the oil-rich Gulf states. With these funds, Syria could afford the most expensive weapons from the Soviet arsenal.

But for Israel's expulsion of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from Beirut in August 1982, Assad's long-held objective of controlling the PLO would have remained out of reach. The PLO was available as an independent entity only as long as it could function as a state within a state. In the late '60s it did so in Jordan. After the Jordanian civil war of September 1970, it found a base in Lebanon, a country with a traditionally weak government.

Having lost its headquarters in Beirut for its various activities—ranging from running schools to maintaining an army—the PLO became a target for take-over by an Arab state. With Egypt out of the Arab League, the only other countries capable of providing shelter and direction to the PLO were Jordan and Syria. Given the lingering bitterness among Palestinian ranks about the Black September in 1970, Jordan was not a serious possibil-

ity. That left Syria.

Syria had other advantages over Jordan. With the PLO's departure from Beirut, its civilian apparatus disappeared and its military wing became all powerful. Since three-fifths of the 11,000 Palestinian fighters evacuated from Beirut opted for Syria, and since many of those sent to other Arab countries gravitated to Syria, and since the Assad regime was the main source of arms for the PLO, Damascus soon replaced Beirut as the hub of Palestinian politics.

By securing the expulsion of Yasir Arafat and his forces from Tripoli, with the active support of anti-Arafat Palestinian fighters, Assad has added one more notch to his power in the Arab world. With this, he can not only claim to hold the key to peace in Lebanon, but also to settlement of the Palestinian problem.

The Syrian leaders see the present development as logical, both historically and geographically. They know how in 1920 the French created the artificial state of Greater Lebanon by adding to the tiny Christian district of Lebanon, Muslim areas to its north, east and south, thus trebling its area and doubling its population. Not surprisingly, Syria's acceptance of Lebanon as an independent republic

fell short of full recognition. Syria refused to open an embassy in Beirut. Lebanon reciprocated. The situation is indicative of the special relationship that exists between the two neighbors, with Syria acting as the Big Sister. For instance, President Elias Sarkis, who ruled Lebanon from 1976 to 1982, was a Syrian nominee.

Little wonder then that Assad found it hard to recognize Amin Gemayel or his brother Bashir—nominees of Israel and the U.S.—as the new president of Lebanon. But in the end he did. He was expected by Washington and Tel Aviv to accept the Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 1983—a handiwork of the U.S. which kept Syria out of the negotiations.

Assad objects to the May 1983 pact. He cannot allow joint Lebanese-Israeli patrols in south and east Lebanon which extend to the Syrian border. And he refuses to put Syrian forces in Lebanon on par with the Israeli troops when it comes to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon. The Syrian troops, he argues, entered Lebanon as part of the Arab peacekeeping force provided by the Arab League and requested by the then Lebanese government. Israeli forces marched into Lebanon as an army of aggression.

But argument counts for little in today's Mideast. And Assad knows it. That is why he signed a 20-year Friendship and Cooperation Treaty with Moscow in October 1980. The treaty stipulates mutual consultation "in the event of a situation jeopardizing the peace and security of either party."

That is why a year later the Syrian and Soviet navies conducted joint exercises along the beaches between Baniyas and Tartus. The Soviets have stockpiled weapons.

*Continued on page 8*

**JERUSALEM**—At the end of the 1982 Lebanese war, Amin Gemayel's government increasingly distanced itself from its former Israeli patrons, who had underestimated even these rightist Christians' long-term dependence on their ties with the Arab world. This in turn meant some kind of understanding with Syria. Damascus was thus able effectively to veto the May 1983 pact between Israel and Gemayel before the ink was dry.

Around that time, Israel made a final attempt to provoke a confrontation with Syria—to force it out of Lebanon. The two armies faced each other in the Bekaa Valley on high alert for several weeks. But lacking the necessary support for such a move from what it saw as a weak-willed government in Beirut and a naive administration in Washington, Israel eventually backed off.

Thus, after a year in Lebanon, Israel essentially returned to its pre-1981 policy. Dreams of a united, Christian Leb-

## Where Israel fears to tread

anon in alliance with the Jewish state were abandoned and Israel accepted a *de facto* partition between a patchwork of ethno-religious regions in Syrian and Israeli spheres of influence. Israeli leaders eagerly sought to withdraw most of their ground troops, looking to expand the Sa'ad Haddad militia that policed the border region between 1978 and 1982.

But a funny thing happened on the way to Israel's retrenchment along the pre-war lines. The U.S. established its own military presence in Lebanon, ostensibly as part of a multinational peace-keeping unit. Before long, the declared aim of supporting the coun-

try's "legitimate government" came to mean taking sides in the continuing civil war, against the various forces opposing the Lebanese right.

The U.S. Marines and Navy became increasingly committed to propping up Gemayel. By late summer, the Reagan administration was begging Israel not to withdraw from central Lebanon. But at least partial pullback could be put off no longer.

The ensuing renewal of civil war further weakened Gemayel, leaving Syria poised to reassert and even enhance its influence over Lebanon. And Israel was quite willing to accept such an outcome—it even helped the forces of Syrian ally, Walid Jumblat, consolidate their hold in the area it abandoned—as long as Damascus would more or less agree to stay out of the south and perhaps restrain the Palestinians.

But considering the increased American commitment to Gemayel, and given

the Reagan administration's views on dealing with Soviet allies, the U.S. saw Syrian gains as a direct challenge. The suicide bombing raids in October, whether or not Syria was expressly involved, provided a convenient excuse to move. Waiting for (and probably encouraging) France and Israel to bomb first allowed Reagan to assess world reaction to the contemplated new aggressiveness.

The official American justification for its December bombing raid—that missiles were fired at reconnaissance planes the day before—was even weaker than the reasons given in the past for Israeli retaliatory sorties, which until this year were officially frowned upon and sometimes condemned by Washington. Thus, Israel's leaders are pleased by the latest developments. And if the U.S. really does try to follow through and push Syria out of Lebanon, Israel can be counted on to cheer, but mostly from the sidelines.

—David Mandel



# Mideast

Continued from page 7

pons at Syrian ports and airfields. These stocks include at least 1,000 tanks, enough to arm 75,000 combat troops. Since Syria's weapons are almost exclusively Soviet-made, the two forces would have little difficulty in coordinating their operations on the battlefield.

Even when there was no formal treaty between Syria and the USSR, Moscow offered its troops to aid the Syrians in their fight against Israel. This happened during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Two days after the ceasefire, Mustapha Tlas, Syrian defense minister, told a Kuwait-based newspaper that the Kremlin had been prepared to send 55,000 Soviet soldiers to fight alongside the Syrians during the war.

In an interview with a Beirut-based weekly on November 18, the same Tlas discussed the possibility of attacks on Syria by the U.S. and Israel. "When the Americans attack us, we will respond with all suitable means," he said. "We have pilots who are ready to launch suicide missions over American warships."

Tlas confirmed that the Syrian military has Soviet-made, ground-to-ground missiles with a range of 180 miles, which could strike deep into Israel. "Let the Israelis attack Damascus. They will see what happens to Tel Aviv," he said. "We have missiles that can strike anywhere in Israel and every stone in the Negev." Israeli nuclear installations are located at Dimonia in the Negev desert.

A week later Novosti press agency in Moscow distributed an article by Pavel Demchenko, a Soviet specialist on the Mideast. "Damascus is an ally of Moscow," he wrote. "They have a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Hence, Syria—which enjoys all-round support of the USSR—cannot regard itself alone in any situation. Aggression against Syria is an extremely dangerous venture."

At a press conference in Moscow on December 5, Soviet spokesman Leonid Zamyatyn condemned the American air attacks on "the Lebanese national and patriotic forces and Syrians," and America's "aggressive intervention" in Lebanon. "Our support and sympathy are wholly on the side of the Arab peoples," he said.

The Syrian and Soviet statements have been made partly to ward off military actions by Israel and the U.S. But what happens now that the U.S. has gone ahead with bombing raids? Three possibilities exist: the superpowers escalate the conflict to a global war; one or the other party backs down (a repetition of the Cuban missile crisis of 1963); the superpowers agree to talk (a replay of what happened

during the October 1973 war). The first possibility, with its inherent threat of nuclear holocaust, is unthinkable. The second is unlikely: the USSR is no longer militarily inferior to the U.S., as it was in 1963, and the U.S. will certainly not back down.

So that leaves the third possibility: a reconvening of an international conference on the Mideast, co-chaired by the U.S. and the USSR—with all the parties to the dispute participating—to hammer out a comprehensive peace settlement concerning the Palestinians, the Lebanese, the Israelis and Syria's Golan Heights.

The Syrian and Soviet statements were warnings against further escalations of military action by Israel and the U.S. But what if the two countries persist in these tactics and the conflict draws in the USSR? What then?

Dilip Hiro's latest book is *Inside the Middle East* (McGraw-Hill).

# Deficit

Continued from page 3

and the editor of *The AEI Economist*. Stein argued the problem of deficits required an assessment of national priorities. He listed four possible priorities for economic policy:

- increasing military strength
- assistance for the very poor
- provision of growth by investment
- maintaining the consumption of ordinary Americans

Stein said that he gave the highest priority to the first three and the lowest to the fourth. He maintained that the way to reduce the deficit was to increase taxes on the income of average Americans.

According to Stein, military spending must be increased because the U.S. "is threatened." And he dismissed any significant reductions in social spending. "We've had three years of 'paving waste, fraud and abuse,' and we should accept the fact that there isn't a whole lot left."

The only support for the administration's position came indirectly from William Niskanen, a CEA member. He argued that to reduce deficits one had to change fiscal processes, not merely priorities. "We have to put in place processes that will survive a change in administrations," Niskanen said.

He advocated the line-item veto, which would allow the president to veto single items in the budget without vetoing the entire budget submitted by Congress, and the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

Schultze was the token Democrat at the panel discussion on the economy. While agreeing with Feldstein's view of deficits, Schultze resisted being the only panelist to call for reductions in projected military spending.

Instead, Schultze confined himself to warning that if deficits were allowed to mount and if, as a result, the industrial core of the nation, which is vulnerable to imports, declines, policymakers will face "protectionist pressures" and the call for an "industrial policy," both of which Schultze opposes.

## Democratic dilemmas.

Some Democrats, including the House Democratic Caucus, have proposed that Democrats make budget deficits the major issue in the 1984 campaign. But except for centrists like Schultze and Glenn, the issue creates as many problems as it might solve.

If the Democrats attack the Reagan administration for causing the deficits, they must pose some solution of their own. The obvious one is to reduce military spending, but in the wake of the Grenada invasion and the Beirut bombing, many Democrats have become reluctant to buck Americans' renewed enthusiasm for their military.

To single out military spending for reduction, and not merely a reduction in its projected rate of growth (as Glenn and Walter Mondale do), one must also propose an alternative foreign policy to that followed by the Reagan administration, which few Democrats appear prepared to do.

The other possible solution for deficits is to raise taxes. Democrats have shown little enthusiasm for Republican proposals for a regressive flat rate tax or for a tax surcharge, but they have not developed a progressive tax increase proposal that could be used in the 1984 campaign. As Missouri candidates told the House Democratic Caucus representatives who met with them in St. Louis, complicated tax reform doesn't fly very well in campaigns.

But there is a deeper problem with deficits as an issue. The deficits debate has occurred within the given framework of an economy that is no longer capable of producing full employment without inflation. Schultze and AEI's Rudolph Penner, who was recently appointed director of the Congressional Budget Office, now define "high employment" (they no longer use the term "full employment") as 6 percent, which just a decade ago was regarded as recession-level unemployment.

Those who now argue for reducing the budget deficit are in fact arguing for slowing down the present recovery. Either raising taxes or cutting spending (including military spending) will reduce consumer demand, which will slow industrial expansion. As all the economists at the AEI panels admitted, the deficit is a short-term economic stimulus.

The argument over the deficit is between those who advocate slowing the present recovery, in which unemployment is still at 9 percent, in order to prevent the

long-term erosion of our economy, and those who want to ride the current wobbly recovery and worry about the consequences later.

This is the problem: the cause of the fiscal dilemma posed by high deficits is not fiscal policy. In the '30s, economists finally acknowledged that the capitalism of the U.S. and Europe had reached the point where, left to their own devices, they would plunge into deeper and deeper depressions.

In the '80s, economists are slowly realizing that the Keynesian/monetarist/supply-side economy of the post-World War II era, left to its own devices, is sliding into a downward cycle of deeper recessions and aborted recoveries.

High deficits and interest rates are effects, not causes of this decline. They are the result of the government and economy trying to sustain levels of social and military spending in the context of a private sector that is no longer capable of generating sufficient jobs and income to meet these commitments.

In this sense, it doesn't matter what happens to Martin Feldstein.

# Women

Continued from page 5

tion for all politicians was impossible to ignore. Party activity and loyalty was frequently touted as one of the primary routes to leadership. The greater role the Republican Party plays in recruiting women to run and in providing them with funds was also apparent even though only 40 percent of all women state legislators are Republicans.

Nonetheless, most of the grumbling in the ranks of forum participants was by the roughly 150 Republican women. The conservative women complained in the final wrap-up session that the speakers were liberals—for example, they all supported ERA and women working. "The fact that only 11 percent of all children have one parent in the workforce and the other at home should be a cause for national alarm," state Utah Republican Sen. Dona Wayment.

Republicans supporting the ERA complained that their party's lack of support for it and other women's issues left them in the cold. At a breakfast sponsored by the Republican National Committee (RNC), about two-thirds of the Republicans attending the forum directed their frustration at presidential assistant Robert Carleson after he gave what many felt was a boring lecture on the administration's accomplishments that ignored women's issues.

That afternoon at a Republican caucus, several legislators further complained that past telegrams and letters sent to President Reagan had gone unanswered

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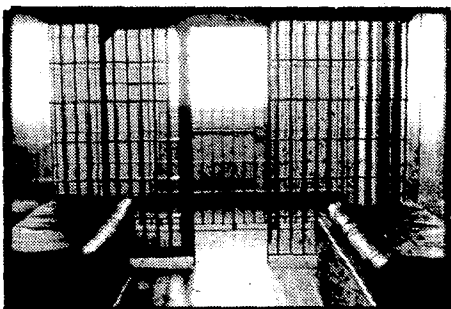
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## November

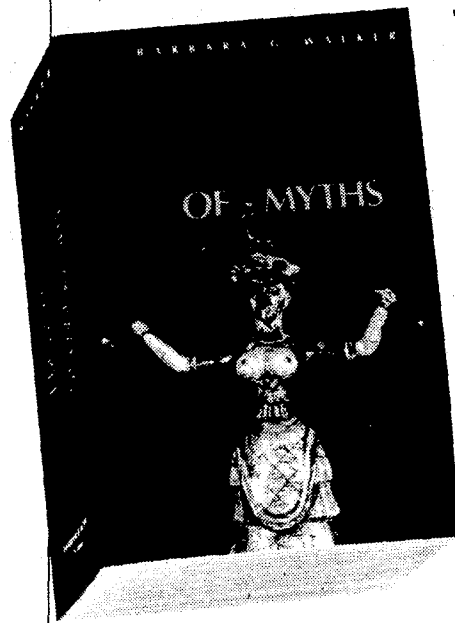
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1945—HUAC begins an investigation of seven radio commentators. HUAC spokesperson: "The time has come to determine how far you can go with free speech."

1968—At an RMN victory party, advance man J. Roy Goodearle: "Why don't we get all the members of the press and beat them up? I'm tired of being nice to them."

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and that he had declined to reappoint moderate Mary Louise Smith to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. "We have been left at the back of the bus by Reagan," stated Maryland delegate Connie Morrell.

Many urged that the Republican Party require that half of all delegates to their National Convention be women, as the Democrats do. But when asked if they would be delegates at next summer's nominating convention, the liberal Republican women said it would be futile to run, and they didn't expect to be appointed by their party leadership.

RNC Co-chair Betty Heitman greeted these complaints with dismay. While she defended the administration's record, she said that there has clearly been inadequate communication with liberal Republican women. Maine Congresswoman Olympia Snowe said she met with White House representatives once a week and would communicate their sentiments.

When the gender gap between women's and men's attitudes toward the administration was attributed to its lack of support for the ERA that night by moderate Republican Jill Ruckelshaus, the speaker at the well-attended American Express dinner, several Republican legislators walked out.

But others were more upset that the speaker coming the following night, Vice President Bush, had forbidden questions from the floor. They circulated petitions asking that questions be permitted, which were signed by more than 100 legislators.

After he was presented with these at a reception closed to the press, Bush relented and agreed to take questions from the floor. He kept his promise, but none of the floor microphones worked, so most participants and the TV equipment could not pick up the questions, only the answers. Rumors that the mikes had been cut off as a prerequisite by Bush to opening up the floor were roundly denied. ■

*Jo Freeman, editor of Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies, is now a lawyer in Washington.*

# Labor

Continued from page 2

Ray Rogers, who developed such a campaign in fighting textile giant J.P. Stevens, said, "It's unfortunate when workers think their only power is to withhold their labor or to demonstrate. You've got to take on the network of financial support for the company." Workers and their supporters could have demonstrated at the headquarters of U.S. Trust Company or Metropolitan Life, major creditors, or the Putnam Management Company, a major stockholder, he said. Individuals and unions could withdraw deposits, threaten to cancel pension management contracts or divest stockholdings as ways of pressuring the financial backers of the company. A conglomerate like Greyhound also has many highly visible consumer products that could be boycotted.

"I would never get into a strike situation or hard-nosed negotiation without knowing exactly what I'm up against—their strengths and weaknesses," Rogers said. "Every union research department should analyze corporate power relationships as well as industry trends." A central computer bank on union investments, insurance policies and bank deposits would facilitate cooperation.

Finally, he said, "Whenever they're asking workers for concessions, unions have to ask banks, stockholders and others for concessions as well. When a company is in trouble bankers always raise interest rates rather than lower them and workers are asked to take wage cuts."

Stanley Aronowitz, professor at City University of New York, believes that despite the concessions, ATU leaders were probably guided by a primary concern to "save the union. The strike had the appearance of an economic issue, but in fact Greyhound wanted subordination, for workers to give up their solidarity. The victory is survival, and I think Grey-

hound had something else in mind."

But the unions need to mount a massive campaign to reinstitute regulation or nationalize the passenger transportation industry, Aronowitz said, in order to take labor out of competition. A coalition of airline unions has begun pressing for renewed regulation of that industry.

Reaganism, unemployment, union concessions, deregulation, conglomerate mergers and divestitures all contribute to the climate that makes concerted management attacks on unions successful as union solidarity is threatened and public support is weak. Lacking a magic wand, labor has no choice but greater cooperation among unions in the U.S. and across borders, more broad-scale and well-planned initiatives against management, demands for greater labor control of both the workplace and corporations as well as public control of the economy, broader organization of workers—working or not, in unions or not, and the formation of more and stronger alliances.

Above all, labor must mount a political and intellectual offensive that justifies labor's demands and builds solidarity. That will take sweeping changes within labor, not simply good public relations or a Mondale victory. Is the labor movement ready and able? More 'Hound attacks are the alternative. ■

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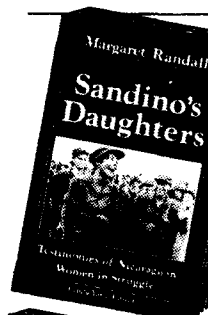
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# LETTERS

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## TWO MORE YEARS

WE ARE RENEWING—FOR TWO years this time. The money for the second year is money I would have used to renew my subscription to *Ms.* had I not felt over the past couple of years that they were becoming part of the problem with their "woman executive" slant. As a working woman with no ambitions to become management, I find your articles and viewpoints more useful to me than theirs, certainly now.

Thank you for the article on Edward James Olmos and Gregorio Cortez (*ITT*, Oct. 26). Your article and one in *Mother Jones* were largely responsible for my going to see it. I found it to have one of the more plausible treatments of prejudice that I have seen on film, i.e., the projection of one's resentment at one's own inadequacies (re success, education, mistakes one has made) upon the stranger. An interesting and thought-provoking film.

—Margaret Weller and Conrad Hodson  
Eugene, Ore.

## KENNEDY FROM CUBA

ESPECIALLY LIKED YOUR NOV. 16 ISSUE, including Eric Leif Davin's and Antia Alverio's article about the day Kennedy was shot, for which the authors questioned people about their reactions on that day.

But it would have been good to include an American residing in Cuba at that time, instead of just one of the founders of the Fair-Play-for-Cuba committee (because Oswald was said to be a member). As one of those Americans, here is my unsolicited contribution:

A friend phoned me to tell me. After initial incredulity, when we knew it was true, we shrugged our shoulders. All we could think of was that Johnson probably wouldn't be any better and maybe worse. We couldn't share the American public's adulation of Kennedy, having lived in Cuba since March 1962 and seen, on television, the miserable *vende-patrias* of the Bay of Pigs invasion who had been sent to Cuba by Kennedy.

We still had fresh in our memories the missile crisis of a year before, which we saw as the American president's responsibility. We knew that a direct invasion of Cuba was being prepared by his government; we knew that missiles were openly displayed on Cuba's highways—no secret, as the media in the U.S. made you believe—to warn him off, and we considered the final outcome a defeat for Kennedy's aggressive plans. The missiles served their purpose in making him promise not to attack Cuba. We also were able to see the Vietnam war from a different perspective, one in which Kennedy didn't exactly appear as a hero or even a humane or progressive figure.

Of course we couldn't know then that he was on the point of changing American foreign policy, preparing for normalizing relations with Cuba and for a pullout from Vietnam. But we did suspect that maybe something of that sort must have caused the CIA to have him assassinated.

—Leonore Veltfort  
Oakland, Calif.

## SYRIA AND THE PALESTINIANS

NOTHING REVEALS THE HYPOCRISY of the Arab nations' call for Palestinian rights as clearly as Syria's current attacks on Palestinians in Lebanon. Syria is furious at the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) for maintaining independence as a Palestinian organization and for considering negotiating a peace agreement with Israel. To punish these sins, Syria—with the aid of a small group of Palestinians under its control—has bombed Palestinian refugee camps in northern Lebanon, killed hundreds of Palestinians and threatened to bring the bloodshed into the city of Tripoli.

Anyone who protested Israel's military actions in Lebanon or the murders by the Christian Phalangists of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla camps has the duty to protest now. Syria must leave the Palestinians alone and agree to withdraw from Lebanon when Israel does. All Americans should insist on an approach to Mideast peace based on genuine respect for the rights of both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs to personal safety, to nationhood and to security.

—Robert Skelst  
President, Chicago Friends of Peace Now

## PERSIST

IN MOORHEAD, MINN., I'M RECOVERING from a 10-month campaign for the Sixth Ward city council seat which I won with 54 percent of the vote and 10 out of 13 precincts. (Two years ago I lost the same race by 226 votes—so, you see, persistence pays in the end.)

The Nov. 16 issue reminds us that it is your eighth year of publication and you've moved beyond survival toward improvement and expansion.

Congratulations! It is wonderful and welcome to see a left project that has endured and grown. *ITT* was needed in the late '70s and is even more essential in the '80s. For neighborhood-based activists and city office-holders like myself, *ITT* plays a crucial role in informing us of the bigger picture.

Persist, persist, persist—hang in there through 1984 and beyond!

—Brian Coyle  
Moorhead, Minn.

## ROGUE PREZ

JOHN JUDIS' ARTICLE ON THE NOV. 12 demonstration on Central America (*ITT*, Nov. 23) brings out not only its inadequacies but his.

Judis' complaint? The small size of the *New York Times* article! Two, not enough Democrats, religious leaders and union leaders. On the unionists, we can agree. He quotes DSA [Democratic Socialists of America], "The complexion of the demonstration is too far left." Judis tries to date it, like *Newsweek*, by referring to its "'60s" aura. But he rejects the best of the "'60s" and embraces its worst. His objections center on the defense of the FSLN/FMLN, by talking about the need to have "broad demands to get out." This is the same position the '60s Socialist Workers Party took against their opponents on the left, who solidarized with the NLF. Things never change, do they?

He liked Peter, Paul and Mary, though. These too-familiar pacifists and their "ambiance" have no appeal to what Judis has called "Joe Six-pack." (Judis seems to be familiar with working people only by hearsay.) The demonstration should have had a decided labor and black focus, going after the rank and file, local union leaders and even national presidents more vigorously.

But the usual sectarianism of the moderates prevented this, at least in one cited instance. These half-hearted opponents of U.S. policy abroad refused to be associated with proletarian leftists and helped split the opposition. No accident during the new Cold War.

Fact is, though, moderation against Reaganism, whether about wage cuts, plant closings or *de facto* union decertifications and union busting or on international issues like Lebanon, Grenada and Nicaragua/El Salvador is more and more merely inadequacy. "Moderates" are being driven into silence or to the right.

The tide is running to the left because Reagan is no moderate. Unless you believe you can stop a rogue elephant with a slap on the wrist. Or counseling.

—Jillayne Holter  
Chicago

## DISASTERS

IF THE FILM *THE DAY AFTER* SPARKS any discussion among people about nuclear weapons and their use then perhaps it has been beneficial. However, why is it that people feel the desire or need to see portrayed what it would be like if there was a nuclear war? Must we have visual proof of the horror in order to be convinced that using nuclear bombs yields devastating results? If so, why not show the after-effects on real people in real places called Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Television networks have not shown the American people film footage that exists that shows what happened in these cities when actual bombs were dropped on living people. The results, able to be seen on film, are far more disturbing and more convincing than the recent film that has received so much attention. Fictitious disaster shows typically draw more viewers than documentaries. What does this say about what people really want to see?

—Susan Marvin  
Portland, Maine

## WAVING THE FLAG

JOHN JUDIS, ALTHOUGH SURPRISED by the large turnout in Washington November 12 (*ITT*, Nov. 23) felt the lack of media attention was due to the November 12th Coalition not having a broad enough base. Among other things, he mentioned that we looked like the "militant rump of the old anti-war movement," that there were too many leftist fringe groups, that we displayed "Peace Corps idealism" and that the speakers were not only not big names, but were from the liberation movements. He seemed to snidely criticize the pro-liberation sentiment of the march. I would therefore like to respond to that criticism.

In order to build a solid and long-lasting anti-intervention movement, I believe we must address the issue of "the other side." To white middle-class intellectuals strict non-intervention may make sense, but I don't believe it can be the basis for motivating people into a strong and effective movement.

As I went door-to-door in Urbana, Ill., this past summer and fall as part of the CISPES National Neighborhood Protest, the other side was one of the first issues people brought up. Whether I was knocking on upper, middle or lower class doors, black doors or white doors, people had their opinions about the liberation movements.

One does not have to proclaim that the glorious working classes of the

world should unite to destroy the monster of imperialism, which admittedly is what the Communist/Marxist-Leninist/Revolutionary/proletarian Leagues, Alliances and Pre-parties tend to do.

But if we expect the American people to take us seriously, we have to be honest. Whether we like it or not, non-intervention implies that "the other side" wins in El Salvador and consolidates in Nicaragua. If we do not want to be seen as liars or as fools we have to choose sides.

Like Judis, I was surprised to see so many people in D.C. Unlike him, I saw the "pro-liberation" mood as heartening. I felt I was there with 35,000 deeply committed people. I am certain that those who went home to Oberlin, Ohio, to Davenport, Iowa, and Kalamazoo, Mich., just as those of us who came back to Urbana, Ill., did so with a renewed and deepened commitment, and the certainty that what we are doing is right. And as I sat with the Urbana group between the White House and the Washington Monument, I felt it important to wave a Sandinista flag.

—Catherine Royer  
Urbana, Ill.

## DSA

JOHN JUDIS' REPORT ON THE FIRST DSA national convention (*ITT*, Oct. 26) was disheartening, and not altogether accurate. Judis observed a sense of frustration in the organization and a lack of clear direction, but failed to place DSA's search for strategy in context. Given the past several years of right-wing gains in both domestic and foreign policy, it should not be surprising that organizations are having difficulty developing a meaningful national strategy. This confusion was also present at this year's Midwest Academy retreat and many other left gatherings. However, DSA's continuing efforts to build strong local organizations and national coalitions indicates an effort to develop creative strategies in the face of great adversity.

Judis makes passing mention of DSA's local activities and avoids much of what makes the organization exciting. In Boston the local has been active in five city elections through its DSPAC, which supports both DSA members and non-members. Recently, the local published an analysis of Boston's power structure, *Who Rules Boston*, which will be sold throughout the city. The local's school attracted more than 100 new students this year and forums and debates on socialist theory and political strategy have attracted hundreds of participants. Boston DSA's members are active as union and community organizers, tenant leaders, elected officials and state policy makers.

As to the role that DSA should play in American politics, we do not perceive the confusion that Judis finds. DSA has never thought of itself as the organization that will lead the democratic left. We are largely an organization of organizers whose purpose is primarily to recruit activists, provide them a left political culture and context, develop a left public policy and help the broad democratic left grow while moving it leftward. If we undertake these activities it hardly leaves us little to do.

On the question of "Greens and Reds," most of us in the organization were not aware of such a division. In fact, many of us joined because the merger of DSOC and NAM combined the most sensible approaches of each. We do not see any contradiction between work in the "new social movements" and the labor movement or the Democratic Party. Nor do we see personal transformation and organizing around issues as mutually exclusive. DSA's ability to combine these approaches is the organization's unique contribution to the left.

—Jerome Rubin  
Boston DSA Executive Committee