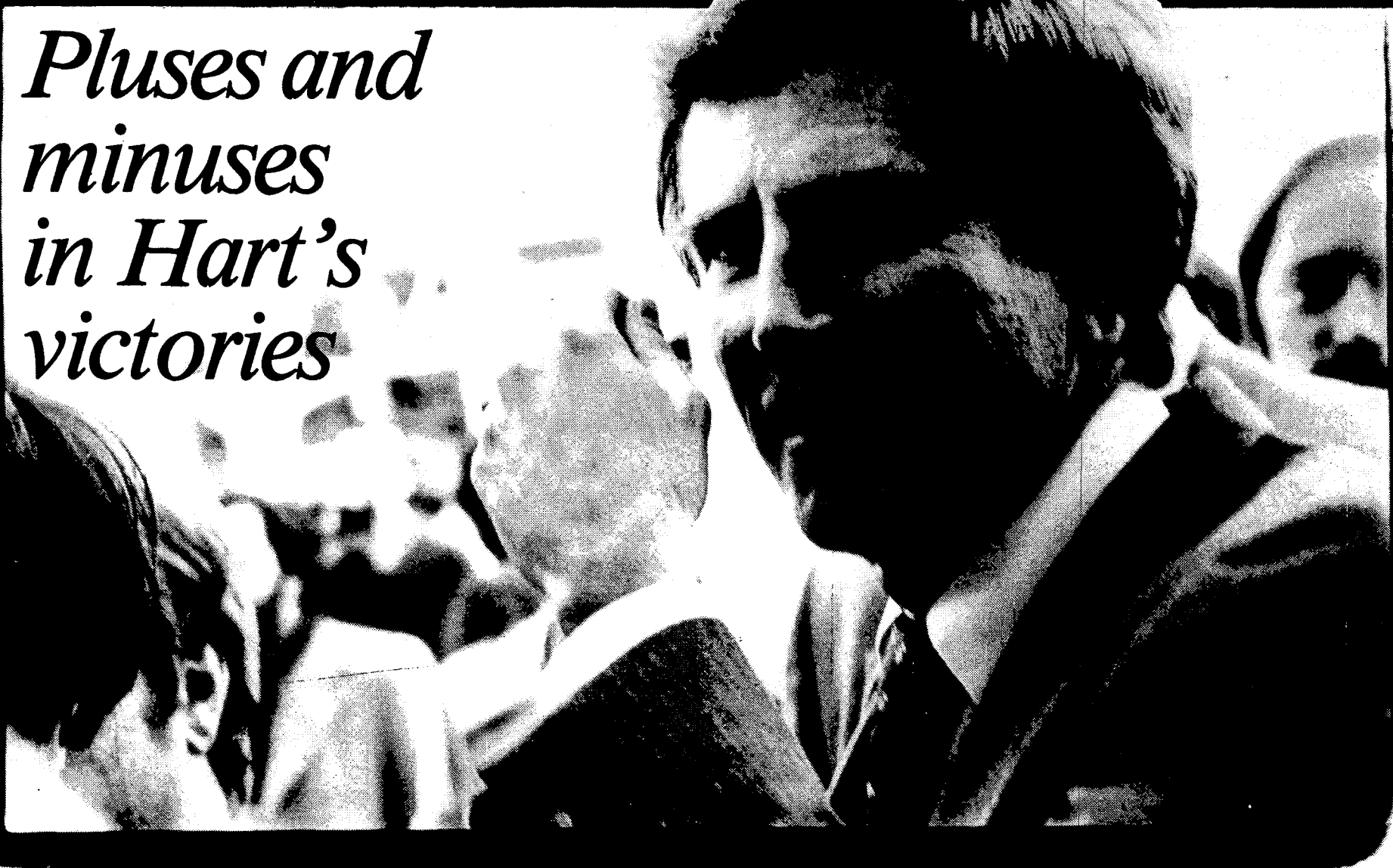


## EDITORIAL

# Pluses and minuses in Hart's victories



Gary Hart's lightning surge to the head of the Democratic pack is only the most recent of a long series of events illustrating the dissatisfaction most Americans feel for their leading politicians. For just as Jimmy Carter won the nomination in 1976 by running against Washington and then went on to win in November by running as not-Jerry Ford, and just as Ronald Reagan won in 1980 because he was not Jimmy Carter, so Hart's string of victories is primarily the result of his not being Fritz Mondale.

In retrospect, it should have been no surprise that the Democratic voters would reject Mondale, whose position as front-runner was based in part on his organizational support from labor and various women's organizations, most notably NOW, but mostly on the fact that he was not John Glenn. Every pollster knew that Mondale's commanding lead masked a fundamental weakness—in their words, that his support was soft.

As long as his leading rival seemed to be Glenn, a military man who supports most of Reagan's foreign policy and military buildup, Mondale was able to maintain his lead among Democrats. But when the Iowa caucuses demonstrated Glenn's lack of popular support and the possibility of someone not identified as an insider emerging as an alternative, the floodgates opened and Hart swept on through.

There are pluses and minuses in Hart's victories and in the possibility of his nomination, but these have little to do with differences between Mondale and Hart on the issues or on matters of principle. The two are close together on the spectrum of American politics, and both are about as far to the left as one could expect a successful candidate to be in the present political situation.

The main plus in a Hart nomination is that he would have a better chance to defeat Reagan in November than would Mondale. We believe that Reagan is a lot weaker than most political pundits and various pollsters make out—especially if labor, blacks, Hispanics, women and the elderly can be brought to the polls in large numbers come November. But if Mondale is the candidate, Reagan can do a rerun of his 1980 campaign and survive

on his residuals. He'll have a much harder time running against Hart, who is not yet encumbered with the failure of his policies or his "new" ideas, but who will be able freely to attack Reagan in the name of freshness and youth.

The main minus in Hart's victories so far, and possibly in his candidacy, is that they will be seen as, and in some degrees may be, defeats for labor and for the organized women's movement. Labor's and the women's movement's attempts to secure positions of influence within a new Democratic administration have obviously suffered a setback with the popular repudiation of their man. And labor's popular image has suffered some from the campaign against Mondale as the candidate of "special interests"—as if working people and women, rather than the corporate giants that Reagan so openly serves, were narrow interest groups.

But if Hart wins the nomination he will need the active support of labor and the women's movement, as well as that of

## Like Carter and Reagan before him, Hart's success is due to who he is not.

Jesse Jackson and other black leaders, in order to prevail in the general election. And if Hart is elected, labor and women's and black organizations will have a freedom of action they would not have in a Mondale administration. They will be less constrained in criticizing the new president, because he will not be "their man."

As happens every four years, we are witnessing the process by which the Democrats put together their electoral party. This year it could be a bit further to the

left than in recent presidential elections because of the million or two new black voters and because both labor and women's groups are more actively involved. This electoral party is needed to mobilize votes, but it has rarely survived the election by more than a few months. Then the governing party takes over—a party that is strikingly similar in Democratic and Republican administrations, because it is the party of the corporate oligarchy that controls and sets our priorities as a nation.

Neither Mondale nor Hart appears inclined to challenge the traditional governing party, though both would allow for a bit more input from constituents of the electoral party. But for those who want to see a new and truly different set of principles governing our social policies, a victory for either Mondale or Hart is a necessary first step. As long as an administration like Reagan's is in office, the left has no space to develop on its own and still be relevant.

## Nicaraguan elections are a big step forward

The decision of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua to hold general elections on November 4 is unprecedented in the history of revolutions led by socialists. It is especially gratifying that the Sandinista leadership has taken this step in spite of the war being waged against it by Reagan administration surrogates from Honduras and Costa Rica, a situation that could well have served as a reason for indefinite postponement.

The elections, combined with an extension of the partial amnesty for opponents of the regime, should serve as a way of measuring the degree of popular support enjoyed by the Sandinistas. Everyone, even the Reagan administration, expects that the government will win a large majority when the votes are counted—which is one reason for the administration's refusal to welcome the elections or to commit the United States to acceptance of

their results.

There were no such hesitations among most other democratic governments. The socialist governments of Spain, Sweden and France, as well as the Socialist International all applauded the announcement of the November 4 elections. Representatives of Mexico, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic and Argentina saw potential in the move for a normalization of relations in Central America. Former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez observed that the United States now "should change its position on the Nicaraguan political process." And in West Germany both the ruling Christian Democratic Party and the opposition Social Democrats said they consider the announcement of the elections "an important demonstration of the Sandinista government's will to maintain a system of pluralist democracy."

Inside Nicaragua, the opposition parties—the Social Christians, Social Democrats, Constitutionalist Liberals and the Democratic Conservatives—are leaning toward abstention. They are holding out for supervision of the elections by the Organization of American States (OAS), which was demanded by Secretary of State George Shultz, and categorically rejected as a denial of Nicaragua's sovereignty by Sandinista leaders. Members and leaders of the opposition who favor participation, like the president of the Constitutionalist Liberals, are being pushed aside, apparently so that the Reagan administration will have a group inside Nicaragua to use as legitimation for its refusal to recognize the elections as a major step in the direction it claims to want Nicaragua to take.

We do not know how fully open and democratic, even with the best of intentions, an election can be under the wartime conditions prevailing in Nicaragua. But we also welcome this indication that the principle of democratic pluralism is finally being recognized by socialists who have come to power through armed insurrection.



# LETTERS

*In These Times* is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## CIVIL EQUALITY

ALTHOUGH I DO NOT EXPECT MY supporters to agree with all my positions, I am distressed that Emily DeHuff (Letters, *ITT*, Feb. 29) invoked my name in opposing the Minneapolis Pornography Ordinance. Unlike DeHuff, I support the amendment to the Civil Rights Law that would make pornography a form of discrimination on the basis of sex and a violation of human rights.

Pornography is sexual exploitation, often of an unspeakably cruel nature, not a portrayal of "perfectly natural impulses" as DeHuff says. The sexual subordination of women, which is the essence of pornographic sex, is the opposite of equality. The whole meaning of my life as a feminist is the struggle for equality. In my view, pornography entirely subverts the efforts of women toward civil equality and equal protection under the law—the principles underlying the 14th Amendment. It is exploitation on the basis of sex.

The First Amendment does not guarantee the rights of men to buy and sell women; nor does it sanction, promote or protect the civil and sexual subordination of women; nor does it command women to acquiesce in our own destruction by accepting sexual hatred of us as public or private entertainment. Despite the First Amendment, women have been kept silent for the two centuries of this Republic through exclusion, discrimination and sexual assault; and the First Amendment has not been used to expand real rights of speech for women, minorities or the poor.

I am sorry that the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union did not see this new idea as an opportunity to expand civil liberties to women.

—Sonia Johnson  
Arlington, Va.

## MIMICS

WE FIND IT DISCONCERTING THAT recent *In These Times* coverage of the Mideast has been so superficial and cautious. Dilip Hiro's article (*ITT*, Feb. 29) on Lebanon was especially disappointing, mimicking as it did the anti-Arab racism of the establishment press.

Ignoring the increasingly apparent economic and anti-imperialist basis for the struggle of the Lebanese people against the Gemayel regime and his American and Israeli backers, Hiro insists on cutting the issue along religious lines.

According to Hiro, the Lebanese militia are good fighters because of "unquestioning loyalty" to leaders, "belief in reincarnation" and "religious martyrdom." If we wanted to read the "religious fanatics" spiel we would have picked up *Newsweek* or the *New York Times*. Is racism and anti-Semitism (the Arabs being a Semitic people) now "in" at *In These Times* also?

Certainly progressives would not characterize the followers of El Salvador's Archbishop Romero as fanatics. How long will anti-Arab racism distort our view of the conflict in the Mideast?

Can we afford to delay confronting the issues of U.S. imperialism, Zionist colonial aims, the revolutionary aspirations of Arab peoples and the Palestinian right to self-determination?

—Carla F. Wallace and Chris Cutells  
Louisville, Ky.

## ROUGE

PROF. JEFFREY COX OF THE UNIVERSITY of London (*ITT*, Feb. 22) expresses the opinion that Neil Kinnock, the Labour Party leader in England, "may lead a left resurgence." If he does, it will be a cosmetic effort under establishment auspices.

Kinnock represents chiefly organized labor, an aging and diminishing class. Tony Benn, whom Cox does not mention, and others represent the young, the unemployed, the underemployed, the non-white and women.

In a recent speaking tour of the U.S., publicized by the British Information Services, Kinnock spoke especially about the Northern Ireland civil war. He said that he favors the reunification of Ireland, but he offered no hope of its early accomplishment. He said: "The reunification is going to be extremely painstaking and take the most monumental act of reassurance over the next several generations." Meanwhile, with unemployment rates twice that of England and the suspension of civil liberties protections, the people of Northern Ireland—especially the ethnic group labeled Roman Catholic—are to suffer on and on.

—Alfred McClung Lee  
Drew University, Madison, N.J.

## BANANAS

NEW ORLEANS IS THE BANANA REPUBLIC. Toasts to Kalamu ya Salaam (*ITT*, Feb. 1) for breaking down the reality of New Orleans. Come Mardi Gras, the Worlds Fair, whenever, remember what he wrote. And whether you are in New Orleans, or anywhere else in the world, his analysis of despair is important for all freedom fighters and "arm-chair others" to use.

—Beth Butler  
New Orleans

## CLASSLESS

IN HIS REVIEW OF STANLEY ARONOWITZ' recent book (*ITT*, Feb. 29), Michael Harrington correctly suggests that "at a time when labor desperately needs debate and discussion—new departures in both theory and practice—there is not much going on." But he doesn't recognize the obstacles standing in the way of such an intellectual renaissance. "The stratum of middle-class intellectuals who identified with the unions [has] declined," he writes. But he doesn't draw the obvious conclusion that as a result there is little demand for insights from a new generation of socialist intellectuals committed to furthering the cause of labor. Certainly the vast majority of the membership of the DSA, which he leads, has no use for a class-based politics or perspective.

He argues that working-class intellectuals have been "weakened" because of the availability of college education. We should not forget, however, that for many students college compensates for the wasted years of high school: it is where one can finally learn to read and write. Moreover, it is a place to learn how to struggle. Those organizing against cuts in financial aid and affirmative action are receiving an excellent education.

—Jared Epstein  
Los Angeles

## QUERY

THE BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS in the process of preparing a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Socialist Hall in Butte. It was built in 1916 during the height of Socialist activity here. It is now a sporting goods store, but the plaque on the parapet of the facade still reads "Socialist Hall, 1916."

We are wondering how many, if any, other Socialist Halls or other buildings representing the Socialist era are either on the National Register or in existence in the U.S. We wrote the National Register and asked, but they do not have a data retrieval system that allows them to see if any of the over 50,000 structures on the National Register represent the Socialist movement. They recommended we contact a Socialist organization. As a subscriber to *In These Times* I thought your readers might know where we might turn.

Do you have any records that might help us out? Can you suggest where we might go for this information? It occurs to us that if there are not such other buildings surviving in the U.S., our Socialist Hall would be of national significance.

Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

—Fredric L. Quivik  
Butte Historical Society,  
Box 3913, Butte, Mont. 59701

## CARLO WOLFF REGRETS

I WOULD LIKE TO CORRECT ERRORS that appeared in my profile of novelist William Kennedy (*ITT*, Jan. 25):

Kennedy is an only child, not one of 10 children.

He and film director Francis Ford Coppola collaborated on 28, not 29 scripts for "Cotton Club" in Astoria Studio in Queens, not a Central Park South hotel room.

—Carlo Wolff  
Albany, N.Y.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may 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.

## BEQUESTS

When drafting your will, please consider making a bequest to *In These Times*.

For information contact:  
Felicity Bensch, 1300 W. Belmont,  
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## STAFF NOTES



Dolores Wilber, *In These Times*' long-time, award-winning art director has left the paper and taken a step upward. (She and Tom Greensfelder, also a former *In These Times* art director,

have opened a graphic arts studio on the third floor of our Chicago building). Even though we hope to continue to see a lot of her, we will miss having Dolores on the staff. Under her leadership the appearance of the paper, building on a strong foundation, improved steadily, as did the stability and professionalism of the art department.

Our new art director is Miles DeCoster, who has been associate art director for the past year. We expect Miles will put the stamp of his personality and imagination on the paper in the months and years ahead. Nicole Ferentz will now be associate art director.

Our new assistant art director is Peter Hannan. Peter is a painter and illustrator who, in addition to his other duties, will give us the capacity to do in-house illustrations.

Emily Young, our books editor and proof reader, has taken a three-month leave to go to Europe. Her replacement in the proof reading department is Barbara Schuler, who has been working as an intern and has written for us on nuclear power.

Jim Rinnert is growing increasingly restless on the typesetting console and hopes to win the Illinois lottery soon.

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