

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.

BETRAYAL

IN THESE TIMES HAS BETRAYED ITS own cause. In a full-page advertisement, "We're the Tobacco Industry, Too" (ITT, Oct. 17), the Labor/Management Committee of the Tobacco Industry attempted to justify its existence.

There are several offensive statements in the ad. First: "Everyone knows there is a controversy over smoking." Wrong. There is no controversy. Cigarette smoking directly causes lung cancer and emphysema and contributes to heart disease, atherosclerosis and many other diseases. The tobacco industry tries to dispute the facts, but it can't be done. Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of morbidity and mortality in the U.S.

Second: the ad tries to elicit sympathy by stating that the tobacco industry creates jobs. Nobody can dispute that statement, but I don't believe we can rationalize the continued production of a harmful product on that basis. If it were so, we could justify the production of millions of nuclear arms on the basis of the jobs it would create.

Third: a tear-jerking phrase about how the tobacco industry makes the difference between "poverty and dignity" for many. I would not want the suffering and deaths of so many on my conscience, no matter what the monetary benefits. It is disappointing that a newspaper dedicated to a popular movement for socialism should succumb to capitalistic pressures.

—Kerri Hesley
Galveston, Texas

AND OUR MOTHERS WERE MENSHEVIKS

JAMES WEINSTEIN'S STATEMENTS CONCERNING the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg case should have prepared me for the depths to which the editorial policies of *In These Times* have sunk, yet I was unprepared for the cynical manipulative advertisement (ITT, Oct. 17). No amount of money should have been

enough for you to allow your pages to be used by the corporate owners of the tobacco industry in such a misleading and reprehensible manner.

At the risk of restating obvious facts. There is no "controversy over smoking." All scientists not in the employ of the tobacco industry are in agreement that smoking causes lung and other cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease and a variety of other ailments. To imply a controversy on this issue and place the question of job security against the public's health is appalling.

The next week I expect you will secure major financing from the Reagan administration for a similar advertisement for the MX missile or chemical warfare toxins. I believe you owe your readers an explanation and apology.

—Peter Orris
Chicago

GAS OVENS

THAT AD YOU ACCEPTED FROM THE American Tobacco Company seems to make nonsmokers guilty of trying to put a lot of poor, hard-working folks out of a job. Well, those who placed it are, in my estimation, mass murderers who have killed millions over the years. I see no real difference between those workers in the tobacco industry and those "innocent" people who tended Hitler's gas ovens at Auschwitz and Buchenwald. These companies are in the death business and those who work for them are willing accomplices.

And by accepting their advertising, ITT is accepting blood money. Suggest you review the 1983 statistics on lung and cervical cancer for women, since they've "come a long way." Humphrey Bogart, Nat Cole, John Wayne, Steve McQueen—all dead from cigarette smoke, murdered, and the killers are still free.

Why no wrongful death suits against American Tobacco and R.J. Reynolds?

—Jay Kennedy
Albany, Calif.

LESS APPEALING

EXACTLY WHAT ORGANIZATION IS IT that bought the full-page ads (ITT, Oct. 17, 31) and how much did they pay you for them?

Can we expect ads from other big job-producers such as the nice nuclear power people, who undoubtedly have a company union around somewhere that they could put in front of a camera? Or how about the Army, which does such a great job hiring all those minority kids and unemployed? They could even beat the progressive record of the Tobacco industry, with their history of anti-Nazi work and all.

So how about it, you Independent Socialist Newspaper folks? Does this mean I won't need to respond to any more appeals for funds? I still would hate to see you fold, but not as much as before you ran that thing.

—Robert Roth, M.D.
Onawa, Iowa

Editor's note: The Tobacco Industry Labor/Management Committee paid for the ads. It is financed by the Tobacco Institute, which is financed by the tobacco companies. They paid \$990 for each of two ads. We netted \$1,683 after the agency commission. I hope we can expect other big company ads. If we get lots of them we won't have to ask our readers to make up our expected operating deficit of \$190,000 next year (down from \$218,000 this year and \$300,000 last year). Of course, if our readers would send us enough money in addition to their subscription cost, or if we could quickly get 10,000 new subscribers, we wouldn't have to take ads from industries that produce unhealthy products.

We can't imagine a single reader starting to smoke, or deciding not to stop because of the Tobacco Workers' ad. But we do think the ad raises an issue that is equally important when we oppose the MX and the arms race in general. That issue is conversion to socially useful work for the people employed in such industries.

POST-ELECTION ADVICE

AFTER HIS POOR PERFORMANCE DURING the recent debates, Ronald Reagan needs to boost his "macho" image. What he can do to rally patriotic Americans is to invade that tiny country of Haiti and liberate its poverty-stricken people suffering under a brutal dictatorship. No elections there! But oops! He cannot do this. In Haiti there are presently about 60 American corporations, reaping huge profits because of semi-slave labor, but no labor unions, no minimum wage laws, no safety requirements for workers—a paradise for big

business! And most of these corporations relocated to Haiti leaving behind thousands of unemployed Americans, increasing the numbers of families living in poverty in this, the richest country in the world. There is no "threat to national security" there.

—Abe Morochnick
Chelsea, Mass.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

NEIL MILLER'S ARTICLE "COMING OF AGE in the '80s" (ITT, Oct. 17) is typical media mythmaking or cocktail party pontification. He should go out and talk with some of the many groups of teenagers who do not fit the conformist specifications he outlines.

What about the encouragingly great number of young men who refuse to register for the draft? What about the very substantial number of young women who are joining and working in peacemaking initiatives? What about the tremendous interest now in periodicals and books that propose and discuss alternative ways of life? What about the rise of liberation theology of a liberal and even radical nature in many denominations?

Dissatisfaction with the status quo and thrusts toward a different future take a great many different forms over the years. Let's look at the present situation's positive and constructive efforts a little more often. They should be encouraged.

—Alfred McClung Lee
Madison, N.J.

HEADS UP

NEIL MILLER'S "COMING OF AGE IN the '80s" (ITT, Oct. 17) was basically sound and sensitive. But he ignored one critical difference between the experience of Vietnam-era students and Reagan-era students.

Put simply, Vietnam-era students graduated into a prosperous economy in which a college degree in any field nearly guaranteed a good job. Reagan-era students are graduating into a stagnant economy in which most college degrees have little value. The current generation is more career-conscious than its predecessor as a matter of necessity.

News accounts of the prosperity and cynical materialism of young Harvard MBAs obscure this fact. A segment of today's graduates are welcomed into high-paying jobs. Ivy League graduates in fields such as business, law and engineering have no financial worries. But reality for the majority is different.

Examples of that abound in most fields. Now, as always, there is a sharp line separating winners from losers in our economy. But in the '60s, college graduates were nearly automatically on the right side of the line, so it was possible for them to be idealistic and non-conformist. In the '80s, most graduates are on the wrong side of the line. Of necessity, they are forced to extreme concern about their careers.

Vietnam-era leaders like Abbie Hoffman should consider this before making callously insensitive remarks about the morals of contemporary youth. This generation is no less idealistic than the prior one, it just has far less freedom to devote its energy to anything beyond survival.

—Richard H. Gibson
San Francisco

CORRECTIONS

Additional information on the two films reviewed in *In These Times*, Oct. 10, is as follows: the film *A Time of Daring*, Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. South, #1319, New York, NY 10003. The film *Guazapa*, Northstar Productions, 3003 O Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007.

In David Ost's piece on Poland in the same issue (ITT, Oct. 10), the headline read: "Business as usual now in Poland." It should have said: "Business as unusual now in Poland." We apologize for the confusion.

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By E. P. Thompson

DIALOG

Diana Johnstone has END wrong

MAY 1, LATE IN THE day, because of transatlantic post, express my dismay at Diana Johnstone's report on the Perugia Peace Convention, "Is the European peace movement a dead END?" (ITT, Aug. 22). The dismay is the greater since European peace activists regard *In These Times* as a friend and have benefited from Diana Johnstone's writings in the past.

On this occasion she has not done her homework and has got a lot of things wrong. She is right to draw attention to the resurgence of West European nationalisms—sometimes in an "anti-American" Euro-Gaullist form—that are now touting the Western European Union (WEU) as the possible nucleus for a third nuclear-armed bloc, a mini-superpower.

Most of us have sympathy for the points made by Roland Vogt, of the West German Greens, at his Perugia workshop, but it is altogether wrong to present him as a lonely voice, opposed to the European peace movement's other con-

Her report on the Perugia meeting last summer left an impression of greater differences than actually exist between the West German Greens and the rest of us.

cerns. (In fact, Vogt distinguished himself at the Berlin Convention last year by sallying out with Petra Kelly on a peace mission into East Berlin that some other delegates thought was provocative!)

The attempt to exhume the long-buried corpse of the WEU is being watched—and contested—by all major West European movements. It is the theme of an *END Journal* article by Mike Gapes, "European Defense—enhanced security or a new arms race?" (June-July 1984), and has been the subject of sharp attention in recent writings by Mient-Jan Faber and Mary Kaldor—who Johnstone sets up as supposed opponents to the views of Vogt. This is not wholly honest, since in a statement to which Johnstone objects, Faber and Kaldor also explicitly state: "We do not wish to substitute a British and French or even a West German occupation for occupation by the superpowers."

We will continue to watch the WEU, although there are some reasons to suppose that this ugly disinterment will never walk. Those who have watched the savage in-fighting within the European Economic Community (EEC) will know that faction-fighting in the WEU will be protracted for years. Margaret Thatcher and her ministers remain deeply suspicious—ironically, because of their deeply-Atlanticist posture: they prefer to be second fiddle to the U.S. in NATO to being third fiddle to Germano-Gaullism. The publics of the nations fringing West Germany—West as well as East—are not standing up to applaud the notion of a revived West German militarism.

Unfriendly attitude.

Important questions, certainly for peace activists on both sides of the Atlantic. But what turned me off was the lack of friendly understanding in Johnstone's report. In smart journalese, Faber and Kaldor are sniggered at as "two movement stars." Readers are not told that Mient-Jan Faber is the secretary of the Dutch Interchurch Peace Council (IKV), which

is the most influential of the Dutch peace movements that together have secured a victory in postponing deployment of cruise missiles. Nor are they told that Kaldor is the editor of the *European Nu-*

clear Disarmament (END) Journal, which has, over two years, established itself as one of the most thoughtful and best-informed organs of the peace movement anywhere—a journal Johnstone



might read with more care.

There are other examples—the suggestion that French CODENE "is almost invisible in the battle against French or other nuclear arsenals" is grossly unfair. I am described as being the proponent of the view that Western peace movements should take up issues of "human rights" in the East as an opportunist ploy to "improve their credibility at home," prove that we are not "Moscow's stooges" and gain "favorable media coverage." I can assure Johnstone that I have never written or said anything of the sort, and that I have not noticed any "favorable media coverage." Since I have been identified with causes that for 40 years have not drawn media favor—opposition to wars in Korea, Kenya, Cyprus, Vietnam and the Falklands—such opportunism is not likely to influence me.

Perugia confusion.

I also found the Perugia Convention confusing and found some delegates over-excited about East-West relations. But Johnstone misreports the positions of major peace movements on the problem of Europe. While the American and West European movements are allies—and, I hope, try to understand each others' positions—this does not mean that we face identical problems or have to follow an identical strategy. Americans confront their superpower-opposite; they must feel it to be their first duty to restrain their own military, both in its prodigious arms procurement and in its adventures in Central America and the Middle East. We share these concerns and we support you without reserve.

Europeans, however, occupy a different political space. Cruise, Pershing and also SS-21s on our soil are symbols of the superpowers' hegemony over client states. There is a powerful public in East Europe trying to edge away from Soviet hegemony, just as West European nations are seeking to edge away from that of the U.S. The peace movement is looking—not, of course, to a West European military bloc (WEU)—but to a possible healing process, East and West, between the blocs: not to "rolling back" the frontiers

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Point slid past Thompson

By Diana Johnstone

APPARENTLY THE PROVOCATIVE expression "dead END" really upset some people in British END, and E.P. Thompson wants to assure everyone that END, and in particular the *END Journal*, are still alive. Fine and good.

The provocation was meant to provoke critical reflection, not anger. It seems to have missed its mark. Thompson rushes to the defense of leaders (himself, Kaldor, Faber) instead of addressing the issues I tried to raise. It doesn't seem to me that the leaders in question require such vigorous defense—certainly not from what I said about them. Does calling people "movement stars" imply "sniggering"? Perhaps from the vantage point of certain movement stars, it does; I wouldn't know.

But Thompson caricatures what I said. For example, here is what I actually wrote about him: "E.P. Thompson in particular got END into the business of 'contacts' and 'dialog' with Eastern European peace movements on the basis of an undeniably accurate political observation: the Eastern European human rights situation is a serious problem to Western European peace movements because it provides the best reason for Western Europeans to fear Soviet mili-

tary power and thus accept military buildup in their own countries." What is so "unfriendly" about that? Thompson may not like my journalistic summaries, but there is no accusation of "opportunism" in what I wrote. That was not what I was driving at.

Perhaps not having grasped my point, Thompson trots out arguments left over from some other polemic, such as the one about "saying 'ditto' to every agenda proposed by state-endorsed officials from the East and, in effect, becoming auxiliaries of Soviet diplomacy." This is totally irrelevant to my objections, but after more than 30 years of Cold War, maybe the arguments all begin to run together.

My intention.

The question I meant to raise was essentially one of timing. The 1983 Berlin conference was primarily devoted to East-West problems and that was fine: The people who came—and the program—were prepared for it. I believe it helped advance awareness of the East-West dimension.

Perugia was supposed to be more about the North-South dimension. In its article "Signposts to Perugia," the *END Journal* noted that "the problems and tensions in Europe pale into insignificance when one considers the possible threats to world peace that are contained within the Mediterranean area." Instead, the East-West problem again

overshadowed the rest. This happened in part because, despite the presence of some specialized panels on North-South problems and the Mediterranean, the movement's most prestigious leaders, those who command large audiences whenever they say something, again focused their attention on the East-West dimension.

This was a serious missed opportunity. The North-South dimension is *not* thoroughly understood throughout the peace movement. It would have been important to raise awareness of the North-South aspect of the Western European Union, the world role of the projected European nuclear superpower.

Concentration on the East-West problem would have been justified by some new breakthrough. But my impression was that old arguments tended to be rehearsed with increasing heat and little new light. The dialog with official Eastern European peace council representatives lacked focus and caused more division and distrust within the Western peace movement than it seemed to be worth. The unofficials couldn't come. My suggestion was that it would make more sense in the future to try to structure East-West contacts around specific problems, such as industrial conversion.

In his heated polemic against Norman Solomon in *The Nation* (April 16, 1983), E.P. Thompson wrote: "My argument

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