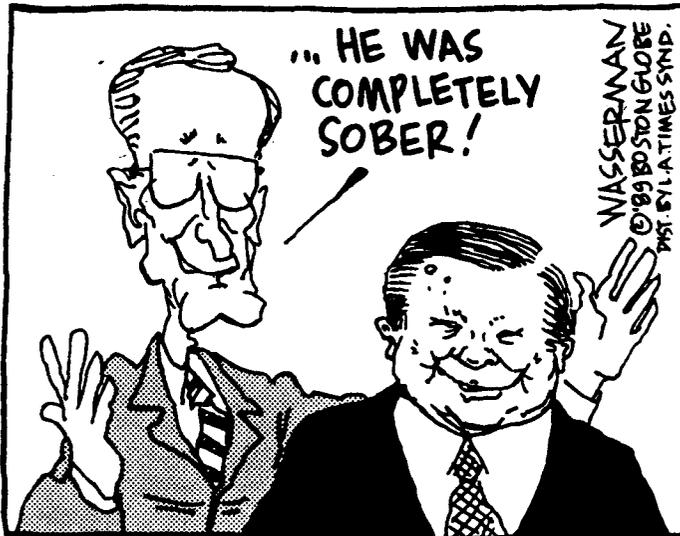
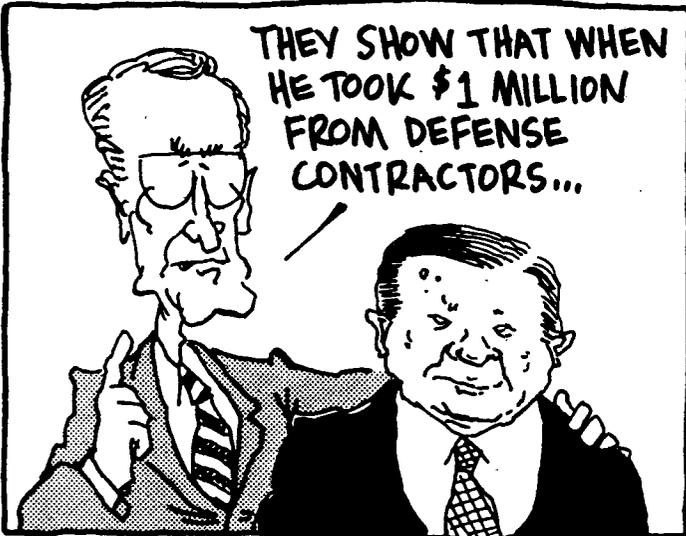
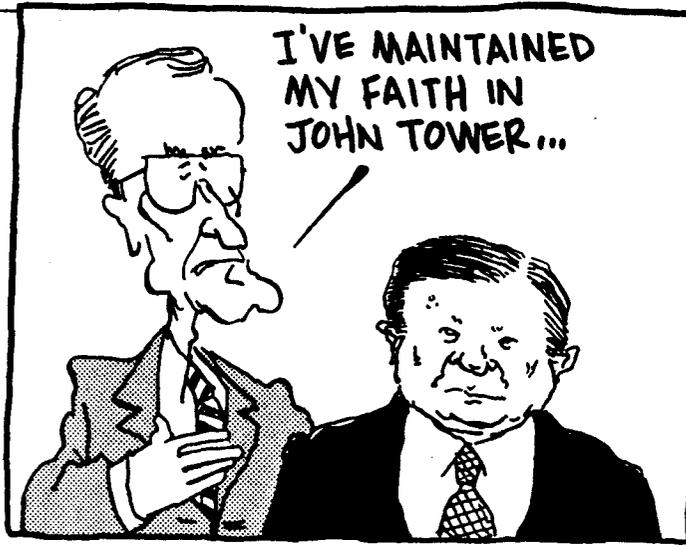


EDITORIAL



Tower's fall symbolizes crumbling of Reaganism

It's been a pleasure to see Senate Democrats standing in firm opposition to the nomination of John Tower as secretary of defense, but depressing that the great bulk of their public comments, and even more of media attention, focused on his drinking and "womanizing." The defeat of the Tower nomination marks the end of congressional acquiescence in the Reagan policies of the last eight years and a recognition, however tentative and obscure, that the Reagan and Bush military policies have reached a dead end. Eight years of growing military expenditures and steady slashes in environmental protection, education, housing and health care are approaching crisis levels, while the ideological justifications for military Keynesianism ring more and more hollow.

In short, it's time for substantial cuts in military spending and a reorientation of federal spending priorities, and John Tower was not the man for this. Pitifully few senators addressed the issue of Tower's indebtedness to military contractors—though he is known

in the Senate as "a man who never met a weapons system he didn't like." In private, though, the issue was much more prominent in many senators' minds. One reason not much was said on this, as Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) commented, was that while Tower did a little work for the million dollars he got from military contractors, "the rest of us take political action committee money" and expect to be trusted as having no bias toward the donors.

In fact, of course, our entire government has been corrupted by the military-industrial complex, and our entire society has been distorted as a result. The Reagan military policies were justified ideologically as an attempt to bring back the glory days of American imperial ascendancy, but times are changing. The American empire is in sharp decline, threatened more by its capitalist rivals in the Far East and Europe than by world Communism or Third World revolutionary nationalism. And as a result of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union, the popular perception of threats to Western security from the Eastern devil is eroding.

It's difficult to say how much of this was in the minds of the senators as they voted Tower down. But there is no doubt that their commitment to a militarized economy and aggressive counterinsurgency only a couple of years ago would have made such an act impossible. That's progress. ■

George Bush-John Tower mystery unravelled

Why is George doing it? What does he have to gain from his dogged defense of sleazy, money-grubbing John Tower? You may have been wondering about this and casting mental aspersions on the president. But you would be wrong to do so, because, in a way, this is Bush's finest hour. It proves that there is honor among—well, politicians.

The real issue is not the president's defense of his would-be secre-

tary of military procurement, but why Bush has not yet rewarded ex-Sen. Ed Muskie. Or have you forgotten that Muskie—along with Gen. Brent Scowcroft, now Bush's national security adviser, and Tower—was a member of the Tower Omission? The three-members of the Omission, you may recall, were President Reagan's official whitewashers of the Iran-contra affair. George owes John. And he's doing his best to pay him back for not saying anything in the Tower report about the then-vice president's role in that affair (see *In These Times*, March 11, 1987 and Feb. 10, 1988). But to be consistent, he should offer something to Muskie. If not, it's just partisan politics as usual. Maybe, after Tower tipples—er, topples—Ed will get the nod. ■

The Machinists Union is fighting for our lives

In a very real sense, the machinists striking Eastern Airlines and the pilots supporting them are fighting to maintain the lifeblood of our nation. In all other modern industrial states the basic transportation infrastructure is considered as vital, and therefore inviolate,

as arteries in the human body. Here, under the Reagan and Bush administrations, the airlines upon which Americans depend for their peripatetic way of life have become mere Monopoly-board tokens to be played with or discarded in the hope of a quick profit. But speculative economics deflate at 35,000 feet. On your next trip would you rather read about Frank Lorenzo's latest triumph over his employees in the pages of *Fortune*, or enjoy an airline on which workers are doing their best and being properly recompensed for providing safe, reliable and comfortable travel? Not merely on ideological grounds, we support the unions in this contest. ■

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
 Managing Editor: Sheryl Larson
 Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide, John B. Judis, David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil
 Assistant Managing Editors: Miles Harvey, Peter Karman
 Culture Editor: Jeff Reid
 European Editor: Diana Johnstone
 New York Editor: Daniel Lazare
 In Short Editor: Joel Bleifuss
 Copy Editor: Mary Nick-Bisgaard
 Editorial Promotions: Maggie Garb
 Researcher: Joan McGrath
 Interns: Kira Jones, Michele Mozelsio, William Siegel, Ray Walsh

Art Director: Miles DeCoster
 Associate Art Director: Peter Hannan
 Assistant Art Director: Lisa Weinstein
 Photo Editor: Paul Comstock
 Typesetter: Jim Rinnert

Publisher: James Weinstein
 Associate Publisher: Bill Finley
 Co-Business Managers: Louis Hirsch, Finance
 Kevin O'Donnell, Data Processing Accounting
 Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey
 Office Manager: Theresa Nutall

Circulation Director: Chris D'Arpa
 Assistant Director: Greg Kilbane

Concert Typographers: Sheryl Hybert

In These Times believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700

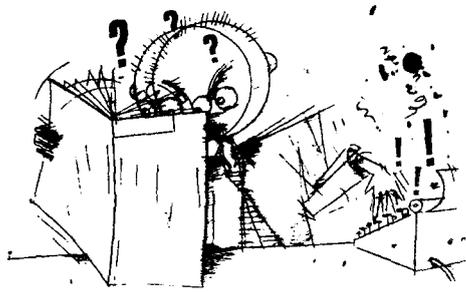
Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright 1989 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in the Alternative Press Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 1300 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL 60657. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$47.95 outside the U.S. and its possessions). Advertising rates sent on request. Back issues \$3; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs. Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

This issue (Vol. 13, No. 16) published March 15, 1989, for newsstand sales March 15-21, 1989.



LETTERS



Slanted

MAGGIE GARB'S ARTICLE CONCERNING ABORTION and post-abortion syndrome (*ITT*, Feb. 22) presents opinions cleverly disguised as fact and put them in a newspaper-like journal so that others would be inclined to believe them as fact. This kind of reporting is slanted so far to the liberal side that I wonder if there is anyone who wouldn't notice. Whatever happened to doing research on both sides of the argument? Or, if she is really writing true journalism, why does she just skim over the research that suggests that some women really do experience post-abortion syndrome? Garb seems to think that there is no one who would fall into that category. My sister experienced this and still remorsees over her abortions. This may not be a syndrome of itself, but I'd be willing to bet a lot of other women go through the same emotions.

Nobody that agrees with abortion seems to want to acknowledge that there are problems with it. But let's wise up. We all know there are problems with abortion, just as there are complications in pregnancy. Let's not slant the argument so that those people who want to protect the lives of the unborn are portrayed as underhanded liars who fabricate medical and psychological traumas to buoy their cause. Let's keep editorials on the editorial page and reporting in the news section of the newspapers. I'll bet my letter ends up on the editorial page. But then, I am not pretending to write a researched article.

The type of articles you print generally have been consistent, but since this article I don't believe I understand the philosophy of your publication. You seem to advocate the rights of the poor in Central America, be against violence, condemn acts of terrorism, praise peacemakers and focus on human rights. Yet you switch sides and print a cover story that supports the killing of unborn children. Please tell me how you can integrate these two into a cohesive philosophy.

Jim Anthony
Arvada, Colo.

Rabid

I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED TO READ THE RABID outburst by Maggie Garb on the abortion issue (*ITT*, Feb. 22). She displays so much of what she condemns in her opponents—frenzied unreasoning and muddy emotionalism.

Having been pro-choice for many years, I was turned around when a cogent, very basic argument was given to me for supporting the pro-life movement (though I am in little sympathy with much of the hysterical hypocrisy of the Right-to-Life organization).

Abortion is a human rights question—not a religious one.

Since *Roe vs. Wade*, women's rights have dropped like flies to support the original premise. Women no longer have the right to a full explanation of medical procedures from their doctors. (In the case of abortion only. No mention need be made of late term risks, nor of possible side effects. Even with minor plastic surgery a woman *must* be told of any risk, no matter how remote—or she may rightly claim malpractice if they occur. Abor-

tionists are exempt from this problem.) Women have no right to know about and guide their daughters' medical procedures. (In the case of abortion only. If a child needs a finger sewn, a tonsil removed, an eye treated, informed consent by a legal guardian *must* be obtained before work is started. For an abortion, which is at least as risky as a tonsillectomy, the consent is not only not necessary, but avoided.)

In congressional hearings not long after *Roe vs. Wade*, the question of when the exact moment human life begins was explored by top physicians and biologists from around the U.S. Everyone who testified, whether pro-life or pro-choice, said the same thing—human life begins at the moment of conception. Given this statement, it is inconceivable that any group that promulgates itself as one that upholds the rights of all against exploiters could possibly support elective abortions.

I would hope that Garb will educate herself on this question from a human rights point of view, and seriously think the consequences through to the end.

Patti Raynis
Sonoita, Ariz.

Rational

THANK YOU FOR MAGGIE GARB'S FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE, "Abortion foes give birth to a 'syndrome'" (*ITT*, Feb. 22). Not only was it exceptionally well researched and well written, it revealed the shaky facts on which the right-to-life movement is based. Quoting "studies" and statistics, they exploit the power of suggestion in the hope that women will come forward as victims of "post-abortion syndrome."

Garb writes with a true sense of the issues, exposing the anti-abortionists' problematic arguments rationally. I am heartened to see *In These Times* covering abortion as a front-page issue. It's a discussion none of us can afford to avoid, and it is crucial in this political climate that we make ourselves heard.

I encourage all those who can to join the April 9 "March for Women's Lives" in Washington, D.C.

Barb Morrison
New York

Citizens Corps

I AM GREATLY SURPRISED BY JOHN B. JUDIS' ENDORSEMENT of the Democratic Leadership Council's proposed Citizens Corps (*ITT*, Feb. 15). The most objectionable thing about the DLC's proposal, as I understand it, is not that it asks citizens to take on social duty—an admirable request—but how it does so and who it asks.

The proposal would have vouchers earned through participation in the Citizens Corps replace other federal education assistance. There are two problems with this plan. First, the persistence of differences in educational opportunity has been and continues to be one of the grossest means of enforcing class-based privilege (surely Judis knows this). Countering those differences with direct governmental payments and low-interest loans should not have to be justified or earned by those who receive such aid.

This aid is truly an "entitlement," in that the recipients are entitled to the aid and should in no way be asked to justify it. Given the Reagan-era assault on college grant and loan programs and on education funding in general, now is not the time to put federal education programs under the heading of "a new social compact based on reciprocal obligation and civic duty." The proposal is especially odious considering the exploitative nature of requiring low-income would-be students to work at sub-minimum wage jobs in order to "qualify" for educational assistance—assistance best thought of as a corrective for the iniquities of our culture and not as "favors and privileges bestowed by government."

The second problem is the truly exploitative nature and intent of this proposal. The DLC plan would be just another impediment to education for low-income people; it would thus serve a function opposite its ostensible one, and make it easier than ever to keep the doors of higher education closed to all but the wealthy.

A Citizens Corps that would encourage and enable a cross section of able citizens to perform public works would be excellent. The DLC's proposal seems to be nothing of the sort. Instead, it would take an already inadequate (though easily justified) aid program and make it needlessly and counterproductively burdensome. I was much taken aback by Judis' support for this plan.

I should also add a word about the military aspect of the plan. The notion of assigning vouchers of greater value for military service than for civilian service is highly questionable, to say the least.

Benjamin Moss
Austin, Texas

Independent politics

RECENT LETTERS AND EDITORIAL COMMENTARY (*ITT*, Nov. 23, Dec. 7, 1988) have raised issues surrounding left participation in the Democratic Party and the role of third-party politics. Third-party candidacies, as *In These Times* pointed out, often can be characterized as token rituals rather than as efforts seriously contending for power.

Nonetheless, *In These Times* has overemphasized participation in the Democratic Party to the virtual exclusion of left third-party politics. Condemning all left third-party politics as sectarian comes uncomfortably close to mainstream trivialization of the left itself. To ignore or brush aside all left third-party campaigns or electoral efforts outside the Democratic Party is also sectarian.

Third-party or independent campaigns may be appropriate at times, particularly on the local level. "Non-partisan" electoral strategies, such as referendum and initiative campaigns, also deserve more attention than they have received either in *In These Times* or elsewhere on the left. At other times, particularly relative to national campaigns, it may make more sense for the left to participate actively within the Democratic Party.

Rigid adherence to one side or the other of this debate needs to be replaced with strategic and tactical flexibility. By way of one specific proposal along these lines, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and the Socialist Party U.S.A. (SP) should explore closer working relations, if not reunification. DSA's Democratic Party focus and the SP's third-party approach are complementary in a number of respects. The non-sectarian left would greatly benefit from strengthened ties between what are its two best and most representative groups.

Jay D. Jurie
Orlando, Fla.

Editor's reply: We regret having given the impression that we believe local independent or third-party election campaigns are poor strategy. Obviously, in such places as Burlington, Vt., and Iowa City—and in many other cities where independents can mount effective campaigns—party labels don't matter to the majority of voters, and primary elections are not important forums. In such cases it matters little how candidates are labeled.

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.

SYLVIA

