

Most dangerous of all for the Middle East, the U.S. has deferred to the Revisionist government in Jerusalem, which is implementing its scheme for a Greater Israel oblivious to the costs to Israel's soul, to the Jewish people as a whole, and to U.S. and Western interests in the Arab Middle East. Sooner or later the United States will pay, and the price may well make the "loss" of Iran seem insignificant.

*Mark A. Bruzonsky, an Associate Editor of Worldview, has recently returned from a visit to Khartoum and Cairo.*

## EXCURSUS 3

### Richard O'Mara on CELLULOID AND REVOLUTION

Rarely do Americans learn the truth about events in Latin America. Perhaps they have never cared enough to demand it. And in fact there have been very few people around capable or desirous or influential enough to bring the truth home. Worse, there have always been those in high places bent on concealing it.

*Missing* was the first film in recent years to tell a believable story about events in a Latin American country—here Chile. Beginning with the kidnapping and murder by General Augusto Pinochet's soldiers of a young American expatriate following the coup against Salvador Allende in September, 1973, it lays open the connivance of American diplomats in Santiago in that deed. Jack Lemmon was the star.

Now we have a second film—*Under Fire*—which relates some of the events of the war in Nicaragua that succeeded in overthrowing Anastasio Somoza. Here, Nick Nolte is an itinerant press photographer with faint allegiance to anyone or anything and only the vaguest notion of journalistic objectivity. The weakness of his professional detachment is almost immediately obvious, for the film shows us his ready abandonment of objectivity in favor of deploying his considerable talents as photographer on behalf of the Sandinista revolution.

*Under Fire* has more excitement, *Missing* more suspense. But both films convey with great accuracy the ambience in which the historical events of Chile and Nicaragua took place. And though I don't know where *Under Fire* was filmed, I can report at first hand that the towns and villages it recreates—just so many piles of rubble—are to be found all over Nicaragua and El Salvador. Furthermore, these films indict quite openly the apparatus through which the United States asserts its hegemony in Latin America. This is, in fact, what sets them apart from other American-made films with a Latin American setting, and it is why they merit attention. They are, then, *political* films—actually, finely wrought propaganda. But to characterize them in this way is not to say they do not portray an accurate overall picture of events, even if they are occasionally less than accurate about specifics.

I think such films are needed—and in the United States needed more than ever before. They will, one hopes, offer a corrective to the attitude and simplistic worldview that linger even after the demise of John Foster Dulles—the sort of approach to Latin America and U.S. interests there that led to the CIA-inspired coup against the government of Guatemala in 1954.

It is easy to point the finger of blame at the man at the helm in Washington today, someone ignorant of Latin America yet—to borrow from Yeats—"full of passionate intensity"

about the place. But this is to miss the point or conceal it. In reality, the president has a constituency for the big-stick policy. As a candidate he received a feverishly favorable response when he laid a new claim to the Panama Canal, and he appears to have a constituency for an all-out assault against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Many in the United States, it seems, continue in their contempt for the little brown people south of the border and consider it perfectly correct to order their affairs for them. President Reagan is merely the heir of Teddy Roosevelt, who "took Panama," and of Woodrow Wilson, who vowed he would teach the Mexicans "to elect good men." When Ronald Reagan steps down from office, we might find ourselves with a leader who is less inclined to treat smaller, weaker nations with abandon. But sooner or later another in the Reagan mold may well be pushed forward—for the simple reason that many Americans look upon matters in the same way.

Still, there may have been progress. Twenty years ago such films as *Missing* and *Under Fire* would not have been made—at least not as competently or with such established performers as Lemmon and Nolte. Those films would not have been accepted by other than an audience of anxious ideologues seeking intellectual reinforcement of their views. And they certainly would not have succeeded as entertainment. *Missing* and *Under Fire* most surely do.

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## EXCURSUS 4

### Franco Ferrarotti on TERRORISM & THE CATHOLIC ETHIC

There is something unique about Italian terrorism. Certainly there are terrorists in Northern Ireland, in Corsica, in the Federal Republic of Germany. But the goals of these individuals and groups are fairly clear: national independence, regional autonomy, political opposition in a country excessively centripetal. In Italy, on the contrary, terrorism is at once ruthlessly active and purposeless. And it includes certain distinctive features that cannot be perceived anywhere else.

Italian terrorism possesses a religious connotation. It does not seem to be concerned with immediate political negation; it does not serve a practical goal. Rather, it appears to believe that only through blood and total sacrifice can the sins of the world be purged and purified. True, this is fairly universal as far as terrorism is concerned. But certain characteristics do appear exclusively Italian-Mediterranean and are typical of a Catholic culture. The *repentant terrorist*, or "Red Brigadier," is one such example—someone who not only confesses his crimes but gives names and places and, by cooperating with the authorities, is forgiven. In fact, examination of family background has revealed that terrorists come not only from the traditional Left but from all ideological "directions." Even more alarming is the discovery that many terrorist leaders are the product of a strict religious education, the scions of Catholic, rather archaic families with a conservative social and political outlook. Mario Moretti, indicted as the master-mind of the infamous murder of Prime Minister Aldo Moro, had been a protégé of a priest and was a religion instructor in a technical school.

For all terrorists, a great success involves a great danger.