

## A Letter from the Publisher

When the Middle East was on the verge of a second war, TIME's readers were among the first to know. "TIME has learned . . . that Iranian forces are massing for a full-scale invasion," the magazine reported two weeks ago. "Units from all over Iran . . . are moving rapidly into place." The exclusive story was the work of Time Inc. Senior Editor Murray J. Gart and TIME Correspondent Dean Breilis, who also spent five hours interviewing and touring Baghdad with the man who is the object of Iran's attack: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. What Saddam Hussein had to say in TIME ("The chances for peace appear slim") turned out to be all too prophetic.

Last Tuesday the Middle East's second war began. Gart and Breilis had traveled to Amman to interview King Hussein of Jordan, a close ally of Iraq. "The King likes and respects TIME, and knew both of us from previous meetings," says Breilis. Says Gart: "He didn't show it, but the King was a busy, deeply disturbed leader. Fellow Arabs were taking a beating, and he could not do much about it."

After the interview, Breilis returned to Iraq. He was the only Western correspondent in Baghdad when the invasion was

launched. He was met there by TIME Photographer Peter Jordan, who had accompanied Breilis and Gart the week before and stayed in Iraq as the threat of invasion increased. When Iran attacked, Jordan was the only Western journalist at the scene of the fighting near Basra; he had been in the border area for two or three days. Says Jordan: "There was the odd shelling, and gradu-



Breilis, Gart and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein

ally it got closer and heavier. There was also shelling in the vicinity of Basra and the neighboring town of Abu al Khasib. It was amazing to see how people just carried on in the midst of it all." Meanwhile, Gart went to Jerusalem and then to Cairo, where, with TIME Cairo Bureau Chief Robert C. Wurmstedt, he interviewed high-level Egyptian officials before returning to Jordan to talk with government sources close to the King.

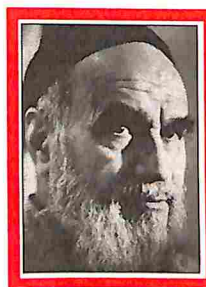
On the scene of the region's other conflict, Middle East Bureau Chief William Stewart notes a jarring contrast: "In East Beirut, there is scarcely a soldier to be seen. West Beirut is an armed camp."

Inside that camp, Correspondent Roberto Suro reports, "Beirut has changed my perceptions of many things. After all the car bombs, parked automobiles will always seem menacing. After all the air raids, the sound of a jet passing overhead will never be the same."

*John A. Meyers*

## Index

Cover: Photograph by Manoocher—Sipa/Black Star



**18**  
**Cover:** Ayatullah Khomeini sends his legions into Iraq, hoping to topple Saddam Hussein and threatening the moderate regimes of the Persian Gulf. As Israeli troops besiege Beirut, the Arab world is in disarray. See **WORLD**.



**8**  
**Nation:** George Shultz vows the Senate and joins the Reagan team. ▶ A doubtful idea whose time has come: the balanced-budget amendment. ▶ Freedom for 1,800 detained Haitians. ▶ The Chicago cop who cracked a police dope ring.



**54**  
**Extra Innings:** Over 40, Pete Rose of the Philadelphia Phillies and Carl Yastrzemski of the Boston Red Sox are the Boys of Indian Summer. Do the legs go first or does enthusiasm? Pete and Yaz are too busy hitting to wonder. See **SPORT**.

**32**  
**World**  
Honduras is drawn into the El Salvador war. ▶ Argentine P.O.W.s return home. ▶ The Queen receives an unexpected visitor.

**52**  
**Living**  
For 50 years, California's Lagunitas have brought famous paintings to life by posing in costumes and in the buff.

**34**  
**Economy & Business**  
Outside inspectors are called into the spreading Vatican bank scandal. ▶ Several of Reagan's policy advisers are leaving.

**58**  
**Music**  
Pausing in mid-tour, virtuoso R&B pianist Dr. John talks about funk, barrelhouse, boogie and New Orleans' wild side.

**40**  
**Press**  
In an unusual step, CBS airs a soul-searching memo on its controversial Viet Nam documentary, admitting some errors.

**62**  
**Video**  
Lights! Lasers! Inter-action! Videodiscs are proving to be a friendly technology with strong potential for teaching skills.

**41**  
**Medicine**  
Dieters are rushing to hoard starch-blocker pills in the wake of an FDA ban aimed at the latest get-thin-quick fad.

**63**  
**Show Business**  
Two trapeze artists from Mexico manage a near-impossible feat: the first quadruple somersault before a circus audience.

**42**  
**Religion**  
Becoming pastor of a black parish, a white theologian joins a major new clerical attack on South Africa's apartheid.

**64**  
**Essay**  
Is there any writer today whose silence would be considered a literary disaster? The question suggests a revealing game.

**48**  
**Theater**  
Japan's Grand Kabuki brings tales of triumph and tragedy to the U.S. ▶ George C. Scott turns to farce in *Present Laughter*.

**4 Letters**  
**42 Milestones**  
**43 Law**  
**44 Cinema**  
**47 People**  
**59 Books**



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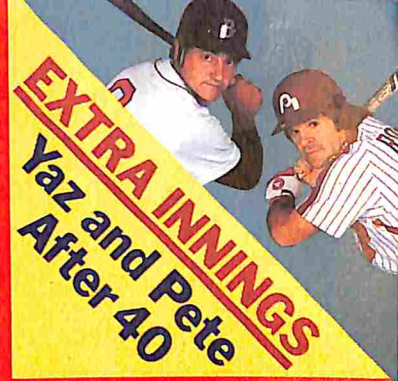
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# TIME

## IRAN ON THE MARCH

"This is a war  
between Islam  
and blasphemy."

—Ayatullah  
Khomeini



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