Israel is responsible for escalation of violence

To the Editor:
The MIT Committee on the Middle East strongly condemns the Israeli bombing attack on PLO headquarters, and subse-
dquent Israeli threats toward Jor-
dan. The attack was conducted by American-made F-15s, within Tunisian territory, and resulted in seventy-three deaths. Israel justi-
fied this attack as retaliation for the recent murder of three Israe-
ils in Cyprus. We are opposed to all acts of violence in the region and do not wish to distinguish Is-
raeli acts of violence from other acts, but believe that there is an im-
portant difference between state violence and the violent acts of individuals or small groups. Is-
rael's policy of retaliation has not eliminated terrorism or done any-
thing to solve the causes of terrorism, but has resulted in fur-
ther escalation of violence.

The attack closely followed the visit to the United States by King Husseini of Jordan, during which the Reagan administration praised efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East; how-
ever, the threats against Jordan by Defense Minister Rabin, the day after the bombing, show an obvi-
ous intention to undermine any peace process and to destabilize

the politics of the region. This at-
tack was just another political ef-
fort, like the invasion of Leba-
non, designed to increase humili-
tations and to diminish possi-
bilities for peace.

Apparently suffering from se-
tilation-envy, Reagan initially con-
cluded the attack, thus dis-
regarding his own statements about peace and showing the

Arab world his lack of credibility. The administration did manage to abstain during the UN Secret-
ary-General's vote (amidst apologies to American Jewish leaders), but this will not diminish Arab skep-
ticism of the real American posi-
tion on peace in the Middle East.

The results of these acts were displayed by the Achille Lauro highjacking, and then the stra-

tiated highjacking of the high-
jackers. In the midst of the amm-

ity, charges, and counter-charges, the path to peace is again diver-
ted, and the path to war more likely.

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