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# Letters to The Times

## Iran-Contra Hearings Look Inside the Administration

David Aaron's concern about the Iran-contra players' "shameless tactics" before the congressional investigating committee ("Shameless Witnesses Disarm Truth," Editorial Pages, July 28) is well-founded. But, the real problem lies in the fact that these men could emerge as powers in our government at all.

Under Reagan, the "us against them" syndrome has been elevated to a near religion. A strongly felt need to react against those who put their dislike of us into action by taking Americans hostage, and the longer-standing (and also unspeakable) need felt by many to "cleanse" the national psyche of the humiliation of Vietnam were laid at the feet of a strong man—Ronald Reagan.

Reagan substituted violence for the difficult effort to understand today's world, and especially for patience and tolerance *vis-a-vis* certain developing nations. This is what strong men do, and there will always be Norths and Poindexters to serve them—without shame.

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