

As the tension rose along the Lebanese front, Syrian dictator Hafez al-Assad blustered that, "If a war breaks out, we shall see to it that it is a long war." The "tough" Syrian position followed by days an absurd hardline demand from Egypt that Israel restrict Jewish immigration for 50 years as a condition for peace.

Upon closer examination, however, the macho Syrian and Egyptian stands melt away. A Syrian diplomat revealed the truth behind Assad's tough talk: "Ha, ha, ha," he laughed when told about Assad's remark. "The purpose is to draw everyone into solidarity to get the Geneva talks going."

Behind such obvious instances of Rockefeller-rigged staging of a confrontation, there certainly exists the very real chance of a war if the Soviets should leave an opening. The rumored attack on Lebanon, unlike past situations, would now involve the immediate participation of Soviet-armed Syria after the unprecedented alliance formed this week between Lebanon and Syria. The traditionally neutral Lebanese have now involved themselves in another Mideast war trigger via the embryonic alliance with Syria, thus considerably raising the stakes on an Israeli attack on Lebanon.

WEST GERMAN PRESS AND MEDIA COVER OPENING OF ELC CONFERENCE

Dec. 21 (IPS)--Representatives of the official West German press agency, the DPA, attended a press conference immediately preceding the opening of the European Labor Committees' Strategy for Socialism Conference in Wiesbaden, West Germany this morning and filed a story on the conference over the DPA wire. Regional radio and television broadcasters also attended, and a report on the conference has already been carried on radio stations in northern Germany.

In addition, at least two unofficial representatives of the West German Social Democratic and Communist Parties are in attendance at the conference. Both describe themselves as journalists.

According to preliminary estimates, more than 300 European socialist organizers have gathered in Wiesbaden to plan ELC strategy for building the international united front of working class forces--represented in embryonic form by the pro-ELC Unity for Socialism tendency in the European mass working-class parties --into a political strike force capable of putting an end to the Rockefellers' immediate threat to human existence.