

Things may change someday

When a woman hears footsteps

As Halifax continues to grow, dramatic differences emerge between the city that it was twenty years ago and that which it has become.

Many of these differences are positive, but sadly these modern changes are also accompanied by increased crime and violence.

There was a time when people could walk freely, knowing their neighbourhoods, feeling safe — this after all, was home. Today Halifax is still home, only now we cannot afford to maintain that false sense of security. It is hard to believe that a place with such 'small town' charm could possibly play host to the menace of 'big city' danger. Nevertheless it is here, and it is time to face the harsh reality that Halifax after-hours poses a very real threat to us all, men and women alike.

But when a woman hears footsteps, she experiences a sensation unique to women — a sensation no man could ever understand. In an instant, you feel your heart in your throat, your muscles tense up, your eyes dart everywhere, your mind races, a chill shivers

down your spine, and you quicken your pace. This all occurs in a split-second, a chain reaction. Don't think that this is an isolated incident, it happens to us every day. It kicks in like a sixth sense for danger, your body is automatically jarred by fear.

I am outraged that I should have to be so sensitive, so easily frightened. I am saddened and angered that women need to rely on their 'survival instincts' in order to make it home safely from the bus stop. I feel confined when I cannot go for a walk past dusk because it would be taking too much of a risk. I am scared to be alone in a dark parking lot while fumbling to find my car keys for fear that someone may be lurking in the shadows. Or once inside the car, what if someone is hiding in the backseat? It overwhelms me to think of the horrors that await. I, like all women, am determined to live my life to the fullest, but frankly — we are afraid.

As those footsteps approach, you naturally assume you are in danger. A wave of relief washes over you as you see the jogger pass

by or watch the stranger behind you turn up a different street. "You're okay," you tell yourself.

'This is a woman's plight, but it is society's crisis.'

Luckily you are, this time. But therein lies the fallacy, it is not okay. We cannot continue to gamble with our safety Russian roulette style. That feeling of learned helplessness, the accep-

tance that being harmed is 'hit-or-miss' has already made women victims. We have been robbed of our confidence.

Although I am guilty of having placed myself in countless potentially hazardous situations, thankfully I have never been a victim of violence. Someone I love was not nearly so fortunate. She was savagely attacked at 9 pm. in the heart of a residential zone, yet no one heard her desperate cries or saw her terrifying struggle.

Pacing the waiting room in the emergency ward, I realized that I will never be able to feel the same way again. I will feel far worse

because that nightmare is etched in my mind. Now I shudder at the slightest sound that startles me, it's not just footsteps anymore.

This is a woman's plight, but it is society's crisis. There are outlets that can help. Self-defense courses and victim support groups have been very successful. It is painful to know that it has taken personal tragedy to alert me of the dangers that surround us: We must exercise better care and try to restore Halifax to 'the way it used to be.' No one's last thought before falling asleep should have to be "Thank God, I made it home."

Elaina Bhattacharyya

l e t t e r s

Leiten up

Dear Editor:

Re-writing the history of the Palestinian conflict has become the practice of Israeli propagandists, and Ms. Leiterman's letter (Jan. 25) is just another example. Her letter is laden with mythology and diatribe, but I will content myself with dealing with one point only.

She charges the PLO with terrorism and claims that the Mossad and Israel are innocent of such atrocities. The facts are contrary to this. The actions of the state of Israel, since its creation, and those of the Zionist terrorist gangs (The Stern, Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Hagannah) that brought it about, testify to its long-established and innovative record in creating terrorism, not only in the Middle East but on the international scene.

The first act of air piracy in the history of international civil aviation was carried out by Israel in December 1954 when a civilian Syrian airliner was forced down in Tel Aviv and its passengers and crew held hostage for days despite international condemnation. Israel's Prime Minister at the

time, Moshe Sharett, described that in a letter to his Defence Minister, Lavon, on Dec. 22, 1954: "I have no reason to doubt the truth of the factual affirmation of the U.S. State Department that our action was *without precedent* in the history of international practice."

The first act of shooting down a civilian airliner was deliberately carried out by Israel when a Libyan airliner was shot down, at the direct order of Prime Minister Golda Meir, in February 1973, killing 107 of its passengers and French crew.

The first murder by letter bomb was carried out by Yitzhak Shamir's Stern terrorist gang, killing a young British student, Rex Faran, in May 1948. Many similar acts followed.

Israel's terror was not restricted to Palestinians and Arabs but included its own closest, unquestioning supporter and "ally," the United States. In 1954, Israeli secret agents bombed the U.S. Information Office and diplomatic mission in Cairo and Alexandria, in an attempt to blame it on the Egyptians.

Zionist terror did not spare Jews. In 1940, Menachem Begin's Irgun terrorist gang bombed the ship *The Patria*, in Haifa harbour, carrying Jewish refugees,

killing 252 Jews, to blame it on the British for political gain.

In 1950-51, Israeli agents were dispatched to Iraq where they *blew up synagogues* etc., killing Jews, to encourage Jewish immigration to Israel.

Israeli terrorism against Palestinians continues in the West Bank and Gaza. Killing journalists, maiming mayors, and beating children to death is only a small part of Israeli continuing terror in the indiscriminate bombing of Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese villages in Lebanon. Add to this, the massacres, amongst others, of Deir Yassin, Quibya, Sabra and Shatilla and the bombings of Baghdad and Tunis, and the continuing assassination of Palestinian intellectuals in Europe and the West Bank, and this will tell you what international terrorism is all about.

The Canadian historian Dr. Frank Epp wrote:

It is true, of course, that terrorist acts have been perpetrated by people identified as Palestinians. But there is another terrorism which is more vicious and brutal, that of dispossession and displacement forced upon the Palestinians.... However, terrorism meted out by the Palestinians, regrettable as it is, is minute by comparison with that which has been inflicted on them. The mass media have failed to make this point adequately.

This is merely a brief glimpse of Israel's "proud" record of terrorism, for which it has received repeated condemnation in the United Nations. It behooves Ms. Leiterman to check her facts, instead of regurgitating Zionist propaganda.

Yours sincerely,
Ismail Zayid, M.D.

continued on page 13

Clare Murray Fooshee

POETRY PRIZES

For a poem or group of poems (maximum 5)

First prize \$200. Second prize \$125

Third prize \$75

DEADLINE MARCH 15, 1990

Rules and regulations must be followed and are available at the English dept.

Graduation Portraits



by
J. Adams
of Halifax

Master of
Photographic
Arts

10⁵⁰ plus tax

Sitting fee includes your proofs to keep plus one yearbook print

423-7089

982 Barrington at Inglis

422-3946

First Baptist Church Halifax

1300 Oxford Street (across from Shirreff Hall)

Sunday, February 4

10:30 am. Communion Service

Sermon — *Every Day Living For Christ*, Rev. John E. Boyd

Music — Byrd, Willan, Howells, Oldroyd, Handel

12:00 pm. College and Careers Luncheon

Wednesday, February 7

7-8 pm. *Our Spiritual Journey — Creativity*

Rev. John E. Boyd, Minister

Rev. Adele Crowell, Associate

David MacDonald, Director of Music