

Lebanese numbers exaggerated

Passions at heart of Lebanese conflict

Michael Monastyrskij
While statistics alone do not describe the hardship in Lebanon, their use can enflame or temper the passions that are at the heart of the conflict, says York professor Howard Adelman who visited Lebanon in August.

But it would seem everyone does not share Adelman's belief in the importance of exact numbers. "I hear you have a calculator for a heart," one reporter told the journalist.

Adelman was met with derision, when, after a talk given at York by Israeli anti-war activist Yossi Schwartz, he related an anecdote to illustrate how difficult it is to interpret raw information.

"This intellectual objectivity in the face of such barbarity is nauseating", came the sharp rebuke from a young South African. "You don't blame the victims. Apartheid is Apartheid is Apartheid, you condemn it. Zionism is Zionism is Zionism, you condemn it."

But Adelman passionately believes "this intellectual objectivity can affect the 'barbarity'".

"In such a violent situation you can add to the violence by distorting the facts. Statistics don't go to the heart of the matter, and I emphasize heart; passions do. Passions are all right, but they can be tempered or enflamed by the use of statistics. If your facts enflame those passions you're adding violence.

"The Palestinians already feel badly done by, with regard to the Israelis, and when they hear an exaggerated casualty number, it increases their bitterness. When the Israelis and some Lebanese hear the same inaccurate figure, they say the world is going to lie about us any way, so why worry about what it thinks."

The philosophy professor, whose visit was sponsored by York's Refugee Documentation Centre, also points out, "Inaccurate statistics distort the relief effort. People were saying there was too much powdered milk. There certainly wasn't any shortage of emergency supplies.

"Later on, when the time for rehabilitating the country comes, it may become more difficult to obtain supplies, although I'd like to look optimistically on the situation.

"Once people find out the figures are exaggerated, they become cynical. It's important to keep people concerned, so they will continue to help in times of real need."

And the figures reported early in the conflict by government agencies and the media were exaggerated. Before the siege of Beirut it was reported there were 600,000 homeless and displaced persons, but, according to Adelman, "a more accurate figure from Southern Lebanon, including Lebanese and Palestinian homeless is a maximum of 50,000".

Although he was unable to confirm the source of the original figure, Adelman thinks it is based on a U.N. Food and Agriculture Agency statement that 600,000 people were affected by the conflict. The statement was then picked up by the International Red Cross, who reported it accurately.

"People, mostly Israelis, were saying the number was a lie spread

by Yasser Arafat's brother, who runs the Red Crescent Society in Lebanon. But as far as I can tell, it isn't true."

Adelman asserts, "The media isn't so much culpable of distorting figures, as it is of not checking up on statistics that are given to it. They must be much more careful and critical in accepting numbers.

"It's like a broken telephone. When children play telephone with tin cans and string, the message gets distorted along the way; that's exactly how it happens."

Before returning from the Middle East, Adelman met with U.N. officials, where he heard what may be another example of the broken telephone.

"I heard, although I couldn't verify it, that Pol Pot, who was supposed to have killed over a million people in Cambodia, only killed 200,000.

"As my son pointed out, any one who would kill 200,000 people is mad. But many people will compare 200,000 people to over a million, and will say, things aren't as bad as we thought."

Lack of information hurts student participation

Paul O'Donnell
The Faculty of Arts Council, a standing committee of the York University Senate, is suffering from a lack of student participation, says student senator Marty Zarnett.

Zarnett attributes the lack of involvement to the amount of red tape and paperwork facing students when they return to school. "Students don't know what's available."

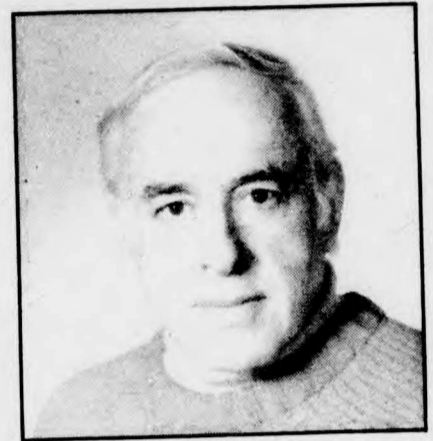
The result is the loss of a student point of view on a Council, the committees of which are designed to enable professors and students to have an equal say and vote. "York University is a student oriented school, yet not enough consideration

is given to the daily problems facing students," says Zarnett.

Citing the example of a student forced to continue a course, despite being too ill to drop it before the deadline, Zarnett argues that student representation might have swayed the Petitions Committee.

The work of the Council is carried out in committees such as Academic Policy and Planning, Tenure and Promotion, Curriculum Development and Petitions. At present, there are sixty committee positions available to students enrolled in the Faculty of Arts. Those interested can enrol for a seat on the Council after September 20. For information telephone 667-2438.

MODERN PROBLEMS



"A break in talking to each other is never the 'cause' of breakdown in a relationship. It is usually a late sign that a number of things have gone wrong already..."

My spouse and I don't communicate any more. Is this as serious as I think it is?

"Breakdown in communication" is a useless catch-all camouflage covering up a range of facts from an euphemism for cohabitational infidelity and no (more) sex at home to constant, horrendous fights. Somewhere along the line, the couple may have ceased talking to each other. The first thing to determine is what's really under the cover-up cliché and deal with it. The next thing, assuming that one or other of the dyad really did stop communicating, is to find out what the prior level of verbal sharing was; whether it was more or less mutual or initiated more by one partner than the other. Who stopped talking first or more, etc. And then delve into what's under those facts.

A break in talking to each other is never the "cause" of breakdown in a relationship. It is usually a late sign that a number of things have gone wrong already, like secrecy over extra conjugal excursions, loss of job, money, and/or a strain in the relationship.

So you're right to be worried. Not talking any more, especially exchange about the events of the day, thoughts, feelings but also a wider scope sharing (if that was the level achieved) means a break in the bond. It means a loss of affection, trust, interest in sharing or at least a mounting hostility that says, "Why the hell should I tell you anything? You don't care, or don't help or criticize, anyhow." The thing to do is take the bit and open up—if that's not too contradictory a metaphor!

How you do it is another skill. Instead of attacking how about saying, "What's wrong? I feel we are not talking together like we used to. Do you feel the same?"

Then sit down, it's safer that way.

Dr. Daniel Cappon is a professor of Environmental Studies at York University and a practising Jungian-trained psychologist.

Letters for Dr. Cappon should be sent to him c/o Excalibur, Rm. 111 Central Square, Ross Building. All correspondents' names are confidential.

Dr. Cappon's latest book is Coupling. Through this column, Excalibur hopes to stimulate discussion, and we encourage people with different opinions to write to the newspaper.

Employment centre on campus

Part-time work means survival

The following column was written by John Wilton Manager of the Canada Employment Centre in space offered to him by Excalibur. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of Excalibur.

"Jobs for students and students for jobs."

To sum it up, that is the purpose of the Canada Employment Centre on Campus. Whether it's part-time work during the school year, a full-time job after graduation or summer work between academic sessions, our goal is to place York students in employment as quickly and efficiently as possible.

At this time of year many students, after paying tuition fees and housing and books, come to the realization that a part-time job may be their only means of financial survival during the school year. In 1982 this is probably more the case than in the past because of the difficulty experienced by many

students in finding summer jobs. Right now we have many part-time jobs available to fit almost every student's schedule. If you're flexible as to the type of work you will do, there is no reason why you shouldn't be able to find part-time work this year. Last academic year we placed 592 York students in part-time jobs and we hope to do even better this year. In addition to the jobs listed with us, many organizations on the off-campus have used part-time help from York very successfully in the past and students get a good response from employers in this area if they go out and look for jobs on their own. The majority of jobs this year are in the restaurant, personal service and clerical fields, although there are a lot of sales positions and a few course-related and recreation part-time jobs available too.

Many students ask just what it is that employers are looking for when it comes to hiring part-time help. In our experience the employers is simply seeking a reliable, trustworthy, and

intelligent individual who is willing to work. In most cases the compensation is commensurate with the responsibility of the position and a real go-getter can make a good deal of money in a relatively short number of hours worked.

Some student see part-time jobs as a means of keeping them in school and certainly the financial rewards of working during the school year are extremely important. One thing most people overlook however, is the value of a part-time job when you start looking for a full-time position after graduation. Most employers regard part-time work no matter what the duties, as a solid indication of a student's initiative, ability and flexibility. All of these characteristics are highly prized by recruiters.

If you need some help finding a part-time job or just want to chat about employment-related matters drop in to the Canada Employment Centre, N108 Ross or phone 667-3761. Our hours are: Monday 8:30 am - 7:00 pm. Tuesday to Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm.

CYSF

The "CYSF Student Work Force" will be ACCEPTING applications from STUDENTS up until Sept. 17th/82.

The Workforce is comprised of a pool of 30 students from which various part-time CYSF and other positions will be filled.

Your '82 edition of *Manus* has more details but the jobs include bartenders, posterers, security ushers etc.

Fill in an application at CYSF, 105 Central Square—667-2515—and interviews will be held Sept. 20th and 21st.