

Persuasio is Latin for persuasion and through this column Excalibur hopes to encourage thought and discussion about current issues. As often as possible, the first article on a subject will be followed the week after by an article expressing the opposite point of view. We invite you to bring letters and suggestions for topics to 111 Central Square.

This week's column was written by Professor Howard Buchbinder a member of the committee of concerned Canadian Jews and a

# Persuasio

## An offensive war

former chairperson of the York University Faculty Association. The article was prepared before the murders, which occurred in the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps

I write these comments from the perspective of a Canadian Jew with a long standing belief in the validity of Jewish aspirations for self-determination.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon represents an offensive war with political aims which have little to do with either Israeli security needs or continuing self determination for its people. The image of Israel as an embattled, endangered, vulnerable state is contradicted by the force and power of the Israeli military. From a military standpoint there is little doubt that Israel qualifies as a major power. Certainly there is no match for this power in the Arab world. That is why the Israeli government now prefers to portray itself as being faced with the might of Soviet weaponry and forces. It seems essential to maintain the image of helplessness and vulnerability.

The Israeli invasion, ostensibly launched to secure "peace for the Galilee", was preceded by ten months, during which there were no incidents on the northern border. There were no deaths. If anything the situation was more relaxed. The cease fire appeared to be holding. It seems strange that the Israeli government chose this moment to invade Lebanon. Israel's motivation is made more confusing by the fact that the shooting of the Israeli diplomat Argov in London was given as a reason for the invasion.

The government explained the scope of the invasion by saying Israel wanted to establish a "terrorist" free sector extending some 40 kilometres from the Israeli-Lebanese border. Yet the invading army did not stop there. It continued to Beirut, and even further north. Its goals appeared to expand as the army moved northwards.

There appears to be ample documentation of the extensive use of weapons such as phosphorus and

cluster bombs. These are "anti-personnel" weapons. This is a rather clinical way of describing weapons that are designed to inflict maximum suffering by tearing and burning flesh. If, as the argument goes, the PLO had surrounded itself with Palestinian and Lebanese "hostages" one can only conclude that these people were, in Israeli eyes, expendable. It is argued that thus are the fortunes of war.

It is difficult to conclude from the above that the reality was, or is, a weak, vulnerable state fighting for its life against an overwhelming military threat. There is little question that Israeli citizens and diplomats have suffered over the years from terrorist and guerrilla activity. There is also little doubt that the State of Israel faces a situation of unrest in the territories occupied since the '67 war. The military and civilian government apparatus in those territories is hard pressed to maintain order. In this sense there is mounting pressure on the Israeli government. The annexation of the Golan Heights and the anticipated annexation of the West Bank and Gaza have further exacerbated the tension.

Of course, the refusal of the Israeli government to recognize Palestinian aspirations for national self determination and their refusal to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the political expression of those aspirations is at the root of the problems which have faced Israel on the northern border and in the occupied territories. It is also a major factor underlying the decision to invade Lebanon; a military action geared to wipe out the PLO (or at least remove it as a factor in Lebanon and on the West Bank), rearrange the organization of forces in Lebanon and possibly pave the way for annexation of the occupied territories. (I have chosen not to discuss the role of U.S. interest in the region).

The changing Palestinian response to Israeli intransigence has ranged from declaration and threats to wipe out the State of Israel to indications that mutual recognition

and adjoining states could be a possibility. The PLO's military response has indeed involved terrorist actions in Israel and in other countries. Generally speaking terrorist acts are associated with violent acts on the part of small groups against an established order, which often involve the lives of innocent people. However when similar acts are carried out by the legitimate forces of a legitimate state they are not called terrorist. Is the Israeli invasion of Lebanon a form of state terrorism? Is either form justifiable? Certainly Prime Minister Begin must understand how the anger and resentment of having one's national aspirations denied can lead to terrorism. It led him to terrorist acts, not only against the British military forces, but against Arabs. (Even Jews were casualties in the days preceding the establishment of the State of Israel.)

The unfolding dimensions of the Israeli invasion appears to reflect political goals, which go far beyond securing the northern border or revenge for an assassination attempt. The people of Lebanon appear to be expendable to the process. Whether the suffering is measured in hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands the aims remain the same.

Many Jews are upset by other Jews who publicly criticize any actions by the State of Israel. Many Jews have responded to views such as I have presented here by invoking the memory of the holocaust and suggesting that Jewish survival is at stake. There is no doubt in my mind that violence and loss of life will continue as long as the struggle with the Palestinians is not resolved. That is one reason I hope there can be an early resolution to that struggle. It was the lesson of the Zionist experience that taught the world that Jews were not going to lie down and be trampled upon and would struggle against all odds for self determination. We now need to recognize that others can approach their struggle for self determination with the same tenacity.

**ASTROLOGY CHARTS  
FOR WOMEN  
INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION  
423-1931**

**ATTENTION YORK SOAP FANS**

# GENERAL HOSPITAL

- PENCILS
- TOTE BAGS
- SOAP
- SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- SHIRTS
- BUMPER STICKERS
- PYJAMAS
- FLOWER POTS
- KEY CHAINS
- PUZZLES
- NIGHT GOWN
- SCRATCH PADS
- BOOK COVERS
- SHOE LACES
- POT-HOLDER
- NOTE PADS
- APRONS
- STICKERS
- BUTTONS

**Great Christmas Gift Ideas For All Soap Lovers**

**and more!**

For a More Complete List of Items & Prices

WRITE TO: **DAYTIME ENTERPRISES**

P.O. BOX 2070

DOWNSVIEW "C" M3W 2S8

(Please enclose 50¢ for postage and handling)

**Live Instant Daily Update On General Hospital Find out when your Favorite Soap Stars Will Appear in Toronto Call 4 pm. to 10 pm.**

**665-0437**

# You.

You're a graduating MBA student, with 2-4 years of significant financial work experience. You're decisive, articulate, analytical and ambitious.

Or:

You're an undergraduate with consistently good grades, an interest in finance and money management and sensitive "people" skills.

# Us.

We're Canada's First Bank.

We're 28,000 people in over 20 countries around the world—and assets exceeding \$65 billion.

We have training programmes and a wide variety of challenging and rewarding opportunities for people with high potential.

We're coming soon to your campus. Want to talk? Your Placement Officer has complete details.

**We want you for what you are. And for what you can be.**

**Bank of Montreal**