

## EDITORIAL

This is the first issue of *Conflict Quarterly*, the journal of the Centre for Conflict Studies at the University of New Brunswick, and readers are entitled to know who we are, what we stand for, and how this journal will be edited. The Centre was established in January 1980 to study all types of political violence and coercion short of full-scale war — terrorism, propaganda and subversion, theory and practice of ideological conflict and war-by-proxy — with particular reference to conflicts directly or indirectly affecting Canada. Research at the Centre tries to be objective, and is free of government influence and party political bias. One of the primary objectives of the Centre is to raise the level of public awareness of these unpleasant but important subjects, which in the past we have all tended to ignore. We believe that informed understanding provides the first line of defence and paves the way to rational and effective responses. This journal, then, is essentially a source of information and ideas. Equipped with the facts, readers will be better able to form their own conclusions.

The Centre stands neutral in the democratic struggle for power and influence between political parties and special interest groups that respect and observe democratic principles. The Centre is opposed to those who seek to emasculate, by-pass or extinguish the democratic system, whether they be individuals or groups inside this country, factions abroad, or nations bent on imposing anti-democratic political patterns. We are critical of authoritarianism and hostile to totalitarianism, racism and the casual use of violence for political ends. We do not espouse an ideology, believing that by their nature all ideologies are intolerant, careless of human values and truth, and ultimately destructive. We do however have a philosophy, which will emerge from articles in *Conflict Quarterly* over the course of time.

The executive editorial board is composed of the three principals of the Centre for Conflict Studies — David Charters, Dominick Graham and Maurice Tugwell, who are severally and collectively responsible for content. The advisory editorial board provides international and interdisciplinary advice and insights. *Conflict Quarterly* will be guided by these scholars, but they should not be held responsible for the detailed content of this journal, since time does not allow all material to be scrutinized by the whole board. Contributions from other scholars working in the field are welcome, in English or French, and are published under authors' names: we do not accept anonymous work. This journal is written for the general public, and our intention is to combine scholarship with plain expression. One thing we can promise our readers: *Conflict Quarterly* will not hedge its bets or mince its words. We believe our subject is too dangerous to be dealt with by evasion or half-truth.

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This journal goes to press shortly after Canada's Prime Minister, Mr. Pierre Trudeau, had told French radio audiences that the West could not win a political

or military victory over the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. "I don't think we can help the Afghan rebels militarily in any useful fashion", he remarked. And he continued: "If to help them means helping to kill them, I don't find that useful; if to help them means involving the whole world in a new global and possibly nuclear conflict, then I don't find that wise either."<sup>1</sup>

This issue of *Conflict Quarterly* includes an article on Afghan resistance which argues that the West has a moral obligation to support the nationalist cause. In another piece, an author explains that the West does have an option other than being Red or Dead, and that this consists of resisting Soviet aggression at all levels and in all its manifestations. Appeasement, not resistance, is the road to the apocalypse. In 1940 the US Ambassador to London reported that Britain's hopes of resisting Nazi Germany were nil. We do not doubt the sincerity of Mr. Trudeau's views on Afghanistan but, if the same philosophy had been applied in 1940, Canada and the United States could have argued with equal force against helping to kill Royal Air Force fighter pilots, and the Nazis might have won. When people are willing to risk their lives in a worthwhile cause, a refusal to provide moral and material help for fear of offending the aggressor can only be interpreted as a selfish and short-sighted act.

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1. Associated Press report, (Paris, June 16, 1980).