

IN THIS ISSUE

As Israeli forces complete their withdrawal from Lebanon three years after the invasion, many Israelis and others are weighing the costs and benefits in order to assess what the operation accomplished. One possible outcome, and hardly a desirable one from the standpoint of Israeli security, would be the replacement of the Palestinian guerrilla infrastructure in southern Lebanon with that of the extremist Shiite Muslims even more fanatically anti-Israeli than the Palestinians. This raises the obvious question: did the invasion of Lebanon enhance Israeli security? Two articles in this issue cast doubt on that proposition.

Bruce Hoffman, asserting that the principal objective of the invasion was to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Lebanon, argues that the Israelis only partially succeeded in this mission. The PLO's operational capability was temporarily neutralized and its always delicate unity undermined, but the invasion did not reduce substantially the number of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israeli or Jewish targets. Jerome Slater, who views Israeli objectives in Lebanon as being more wide-ranging — including driving the Syrians out, and stabilizing the Maronite Christian regime — feels none of these have been attained. Indeed, he believes that even the minimal objective of security Israel's northern frontier has failed. He argues further that Israel's multiple problems — political, military, economic — jeopardize fundamental American interests in the region, and that the United States should use the leverage it can exert to enforce a peace settlement on Israel.

With considerable world attention recently focused on the famine in Ethiopia, Vincent Khapoya and Baffour Agyeman-Duah offer a timely analysis of recent superpower competition for influence in the East African region. They conclude that the significant intensification of superpower involvement in this region's conflicts since the mid-1970s will tend to polarize the region ideologically, subject it to proxy conflicts, and contribute to the diversion of limited resources from economic needs to military requirements. Finally, Colin McIlheney offers a companion piece to Arthur Aughey's study of the politics of the Ulster Protestant paramilitary groups (published in the Winter 1985 issue). In this assessment of the military role of Protestant paramilitaries, McIlheney traces the evolution of the movement from its heyday in 1972-74 — when it was deeply involved in sectarian violence and politically strong enough to bring about the collapse of the power-sharing arrangement — to the present, when only the violent path appears to offer the opportunity to exercise influence. McIlheney concludes that, "For the Protestant paramilitaries the political road has proved a disappointing blind alley."

The opinions expressed in the articles, reviews and other contributions are those of the authors alone, and do not necessarily represent those of the Centre for Conflict Studies or of the University of New Brunswick.
