IN THIS ISSUE

With American intervention in Haiti underway as this issue went to press, its focus on low-intensity conflict is timely and appropriate. The conflict in Haiti, one of several crises the United States is trying to grapple with simultaneously, typifies the international security problems of the post-Cold War era. That a new approach to national security policy is needed has been recognized for several years. But, as Robin Montgomery points out, it may not be so easy to make sense – not to mention policy and doctrine – out of the new security paradigm: peacetime engagement. He urges caution before embracing the premises of peacetime engagement which, he asserts, contain the antecedents for greater global instability, with unpredictable consequences for American national security policy.

That small wars can exert significant influence on the character of conventional military forces is the subject of Stuart Cohen's article. The Palestinian *intifada* has affected the strategic priorities of the Israel Defense Forces, as well as their operational doctrine, force structure, morale and initiative. Most important, by exacerbating national divisions over the Palestinian question, the *intifada* undermined the IDF's traditional nation-building and unifying role in Israeli civil-military relations.

Israel's cultural sensitivity to terrorism was one of the factors which shaped the response to the *intifada* and thus contributed to the outcome. The contrast with Canada could not be more striking. Jeff Ross' article points out that Canada has experienced much more terrorism since 1960 than most Canadians probably realize. Even so, that experience has been small compared to that of some other states, and considerably less deadly and costly. With few exceptions, the most notable being the October Crisis of 1970, international terrorism exerted a minimal impact on Canadian political culture. Ross' article, which draws upon a rigorously constructed data set, offers several reasons why Canada was spared the worst ravages of international terrorism.

If peacetime engagement has displaced low-intensity conflict as the new Washington buzzword, it has not superceded its relevance as a subject of scholarly inquiry. Charles Townshend reviews three recent works in the field, and finds each wanting in certain respects. He concludes with a plea for intellectual clarity in the use of the term low-intensity conflict, something he feels was lost when Frank Kitson's concept crossed the Atlantic more than a decade ago and mutated into a political rather than an operational formulation. Here one detects the hint of an (unconscious) echo of Montgomery's concern about building a whole new paradigm on uncertain foundations. At the very least it indicates that there is considerable scope for new scholarship in this still relevant field.

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 the University of New Brunswick.
