

# bout de papier

Vol. 33, No. 1

CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN SERVICE  
LE MAGAZINE CANADIEN DE LA DIPLOMATIE ET DU SERVICE EXTÉRIEUR

MARCH / MARS 2024

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Valerie Raymond with Angela Bogdan

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LA DIPLOMATIE  
CULTURELLE**

Mes expériences en  
Colombie Pierre-David Jean

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TO REMEMBER**

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and the genocide  
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# The Challenges of the Foreign Service

**Lillian Thomsen**

Editor-in-Chief // Rédactrice en chef



**AS I WRITE THIS MESSAGE** at the beginning of the last week in January 2024, I continue to look ahead to another complex and unpredictable year. My colleague Zal Karkaria, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, provides his take in a feature piece, a view with which I find little, if anything, to argue about. As he writes, the past year has seen the Foreign Service of Canada put under a critical lens on more than a few occasions. It is unlikely this will change in 2024, particularly given that the Government will need to respond to the recommendations of the Senate Committee in June. There will be ongoing implementation of the transformation agenda at Global Affairs Canada, much of which will undoubtedly be subject to public scrutiny and commentary.

In this issue, we wanted to highlight the impact a career in the Foreign Service can and does have on individual officers and their nearest and dearest.

In this issue, we have tried to show the full range of the work done by the Foreign Service at home and abroad. We have also highlighted the impact a career in the foreign service can and does have on individual officers and their nearest and dearest.

Our cover story on the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami shows Canada's work on the ground in Sri Lanka by our High Commission under the leadership of Valerie Raymond, who died this past December. Valerie was succeeded as High Commissioner by Angela Bogdan, who continued to lead the implementation of Canada's humanitarian and development projects with a focus on women's health and livelihood. Angela worked with Valerie to put together this compelling article.

We also have a haunting piece by Jessica Mills on the Rwandan genocide and its impact on her life and work. In addition, there are excerpts from two books: one on Asia-Pacific strategy, the other a deeply moving piece by Roxanne Dubé, who lost one of her sons and saw the other incarcerated while posted in Miami. You will also find a thought-provoking article on the value of cultural diplomacy, an aspect of diplomacy on which we seem, over the years, to have blown hot and

cold (mostly cold). Interestingly, the US has resumed music diplomacy, sending American musicians to tour internationally funded by the State Department. I recall the rapturous reception given to visiting American jazz musicians and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company at my first posting in Warsaw during the Cold War.

We have a terrific story by Mark Seniuk, aptly titled "The Move from Hell," which is guaranteed to bring a smile and, probably simultaneously, a grimace to your face. More such stories would be welcome, as they serve not only to nurture our collective sense of Foreign Service life, but also to underline the practical challenges of moving from one place to another. We also have a review of *The Red Hotel*, a book that details the experience of foreign journalists holed up in the Metropole Hotel in centre Moscow during Stalin's era. As always, we finish with a column by the hungry diplomat, this time on the magical properties of butter, and another impossible puzzle by A Aalto.

For our next issue, which we hope will reach you by late May or early June, we would like to feature some fiction written by Foreign Service Officers and/or members of their families. We would particularly welcome submissions – and literary non-fiction is also welcome – from young people on the impact the Foreign Service "lifestyle" has had on them and how or if it has framed their own approach to their education and career aspirations. Pieces on personal experiences and policy will also be most welcome and, by way of example, there will be an article on the US State Department's "dissent channel." Please feel free to reach out to the editorial team by sending an email to [bdp\\_editor@pafso.com](mailto:bdp_editor@pafso.com) with your comments or suggestions. We would very much like to establish an ongoing dialogue with our readership as that is the best way for us to ensure we are meeting both your needs and your interests. [bdp](#)



## Interesting Times

**Pam Isfeld**

President, PAFSO // Présidente de l'APASE

**CANADA'S FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS** continue to live and work in "interesting" times. Events such as the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel and its terrible aftermath, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and tensions with India have created additional challenges in doing their important work for Canada and Canadians. A fractious zeitgeist that characterizes empathy and the ability to see many sides of an issue as a vice rather than a virtue, makes our work harder. We're also facing practical problems from burnout and understaffing to mouldy chanceries, bedbugs, and difficulties accessing primary medical insurance coverage abroad.

Bon nombre de ces enjeux ont été exposés dans le rapport que le Comité sénatorial permanent des affaires étrangères et du commerce international (AEFA) a publié en décembre et dans lequel, en se fondant sur les témoignages et les leçons apprises, il formule 29 recommandations visant à faire en sorte que le service extérieur de notre pays soit « apte à remplir sa mission ».

Some of the Committee's recommendations, such as regular recruitment and training roadmaps, are already under way at Global Affairs Canada. However, others, like emphasis on foreign language training, are at risk in the current cost-cutting environment. The Government's response, due in June, should outline how priorities are set and funding allocated. As always PAFSO's priorities remain the health, safety, and professional effectiveness of our members, and respect for the negotiated provision of the collective agreement.

I was particularly pleased to see the Committee's recognition of the need for "a complete modernization of the Foreign Service Directives to align with the current and evolving realities faced by Canada's public servants and their families." In our last Triennial Survey, taken in 2021, a majority of PAFSO members identified the FSDs as a major irritant, and even a disincentive to postings. This was quite shocking considering that the FSDs are explicitly "designed to provide a system of allowances, benefits and conditions of employment that, in combination with salary, will enable departments and agencies to recruit, retain and deploy qualified employees." Sadly, we expect to see even higher levels of dissatisfaction when we launch the new survey early this year.

Our Labour Relations team hears often from members who are unable to get support for their spouses or families, whose

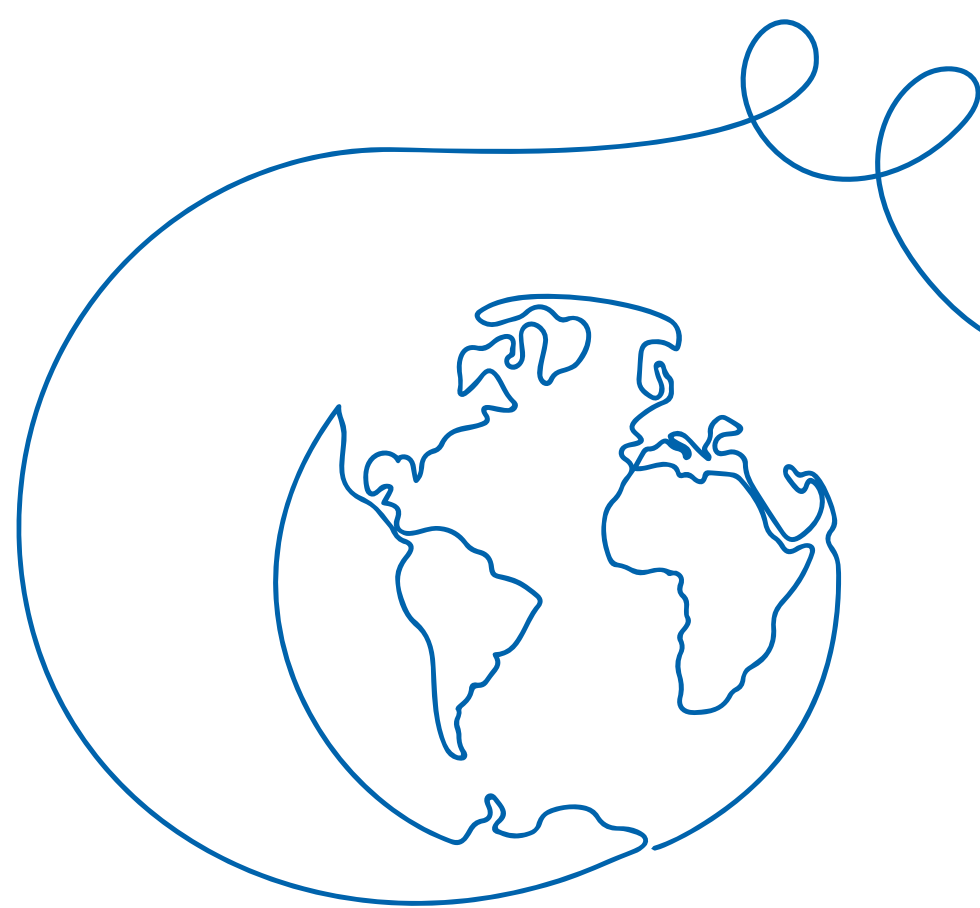
allowances are improperly calculated – sometimes for years – and who are subject to decisions that cost the taxpayer more in the long run. We do our best to get them the support they deserve, but the official resolution processes are long and arduous, and many situations could be avoided with the application of a little compassion and common-sense discretion. We know that this framework frustrates the Employer as well, so perhaps this report will provide the impetus for change.

Quoique l'appareillage sous-tendant le service extérieur soit très important, AEFA n'a pas pour autant hésité à poser un diagnostic sans équivoque concernant un autre problème fondamental : un manque de sensibilisation de la population au travail essentiel que nous exécutons. Affaires mondiales Canada doit exposer clairement les raisons pour lesquelles le rôle que le service extérieur joue fait une différence pour les Canadiens et les Canadiennes, dissiper les fausses idées au sujet des carrières dans le service extérieur et promouvoir le respect pour les connaissances et les compétences des diplomates.

I hope GAC will also take AEFA's advice on the need for an advisory group to assist with the implementation of the report's recommendations. As the principal advocate for the interests and concerns of current serving Foreign Service Officers, PAFSO must be included among the "internal and external representatives, including current and former Global Affairs Canada employees, as well as parliamentarians, academics, and civil society representatives." It will be important to ensure that the implementation is firmly grounded in reality and respects the long-term interests of the Foreign Service community.

In 2025, PAFSO will celebrate 60 years "protecting the status and standards of our profession," and maintaining and promoting the effective functioning of the Foreign Service of Canada. We are planning a number of activities to mark this important milestone, including a book on the untold stories of Canada's Foreign Service officers, and **bout de papier** is key to our strategy. Editor-in-Chief Lillian Thomsen, Deputy Zal Karkaria, and staff members Eric Schallenberg and Adam Beauchemin are already implementing a vision for the magazine that showcases all aspects of this great career. I hope you find it useful as you continue to navigate our increasingly "interesting" world. [bdp](#)





ADVICE FROM FARAWAY PLACES // CONSEILS VENUS DE LOIN

# It's Time to Listen

**Zal Karkaria**

Deputy Editor-in-Chief // Rédacteur en chef adjoint

IN 2023, CANADA'S FOREIGN SERVICE came under the microscope. From responding to crises in Sudan, Gaza, and Israel to managing the rapid deterioration of relations with India, to addressing a ballooning inventory of visa applications, there was no shortage of attention on the work of Canada's diplomatic service.

In addition, two detailed reports touching on the need for reform in Canada's Foreign Service and at Global Affairs Canada came out last year: the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs Report, *More than a Vocation: Canada's Need for a 21st Century Foreign Service*, and GAC's own *Future of Diplomacy* paper. They collectively proposed dozens of recommendations while asking if Canada's Foreign Service is prepared to deal with the current global environment. The Senate report was unequivocal, stating that "the Government of Canada needs to reinvest in Canadian diplomacy to ensure that GAC and the Canadian Foreign Service are fit for purpose and prepared to meet the complex global challenges of the decades to come."

These analyses are timely, though it's clear the "complex global challenges" are already here and they are multitudinous, as our members are aware. Daily diplomatic reporting from our missions is surely streaming into Ottawa inboxes warning of democratic backsliding, disinformation and foreign influence campaigns, barriers to trade, gross human rights violations, and forced migration flows, amongst other potential threats to Canada and Canadians abroad. It's our job, after all, as Foreign Service Officers, to provide policymakers and political masters alike with information and advice needed to address the aforementioned challenges.

This information should inform how Canada navigates a world where the rules-based international order – upon which Canada depends for its prosperity and security – is under serious threat. Authoritarianism is on the rise, upending our relationships with countries we assumed to be not just democratic, but among our best friends. Simultaneously, the use of force as a tool for political, economic, and territorial gain

is increasing. Wars in Ukraine and Gaza dominate our social media feeds, but conflict also rages in places too often forgotten by the media, but dutifully covered by Canada's diplomatic representatives, with Sudan, Ethiopia, Myanmar, and Haiti being just a few examples.

Though these conflicts may unfold far away from the idyllic banks of the Ottawa River, many have proven to have important indirect impacts on Canada. Wars disrupt supply chains, impact inflation, and disrupt trade; hybrid warfare undermines democracies and stokes societal divisions; wars also cause unimaginable human suffering and lead directly to forced migration, an area where Canada does play a leading role on the international stage.

Indeed, recent years have seen the emergence in Canada of migration responses to high profile global crises. Hastily crafted, bespoke public policies have been implemented to create pathways for the victims of natural disasters and wars from Afghanistan to Ukraine to Gaza to Turkey. While the humanitarian impetus is understandable, a delicate question emerges: are these special programs replacing a more fulsome foreign policy response to an increasingly dangerous world?

I raise these points because Foreign Service Officers at both IRCC and GAC might have some advice and knowledge on these issues (along with colleagues in the wider public service). They are well-positioned to weigh in on these matters, possessing frontline experience and having a presence in hotspots around the globe. It's experience that could be better leveraged.

However, our counsel appears to be valued less and less. Increasingly, it is ministerial staffers and interest groups that appear to be the ones influencing foreign and migration policy. Is that because the Foreign Service is not – to borrow the phrase used in both reports – fit for purpose? Or is it because the advice being provided is not what decision-makers – including the senior ranks of the public service – want to hear?

Canada's Foreign Service can likely do with re-tooling. Investments in language training and emphasizing subject matter specialization over a "generalist" approach are two obvious reforms. Detailed recommendations flow off the pages of both 2023 papers and should be taken seriously by management and working-level staff alike. The Foreign Service must demonstrate that it can adapt to remain



**ZAL KARKARIA** has been a Foreign Service Officer with IRCC for 17 years. He has been posted to Nairobi, New Delhi and London and has undertaken various assignments at IRCC headquarters. Last year, he joined the **bout de papier** team as Associate Editor-in-Chief..

relevant to ensure it's providing the high-quality advice policymakers require in order to steer Canada's foreign and immigration policies.

However, if change is implemented to serve a culture that downplays the advice of front-line officers with on-the-ground experience – a system that instead continues to concentrate authority in the upper ranks of the public service and the unelected officials and interest groups with whom they increasingly interact, then the impact of any reforms may be minimal. Let's hope that's not the case.

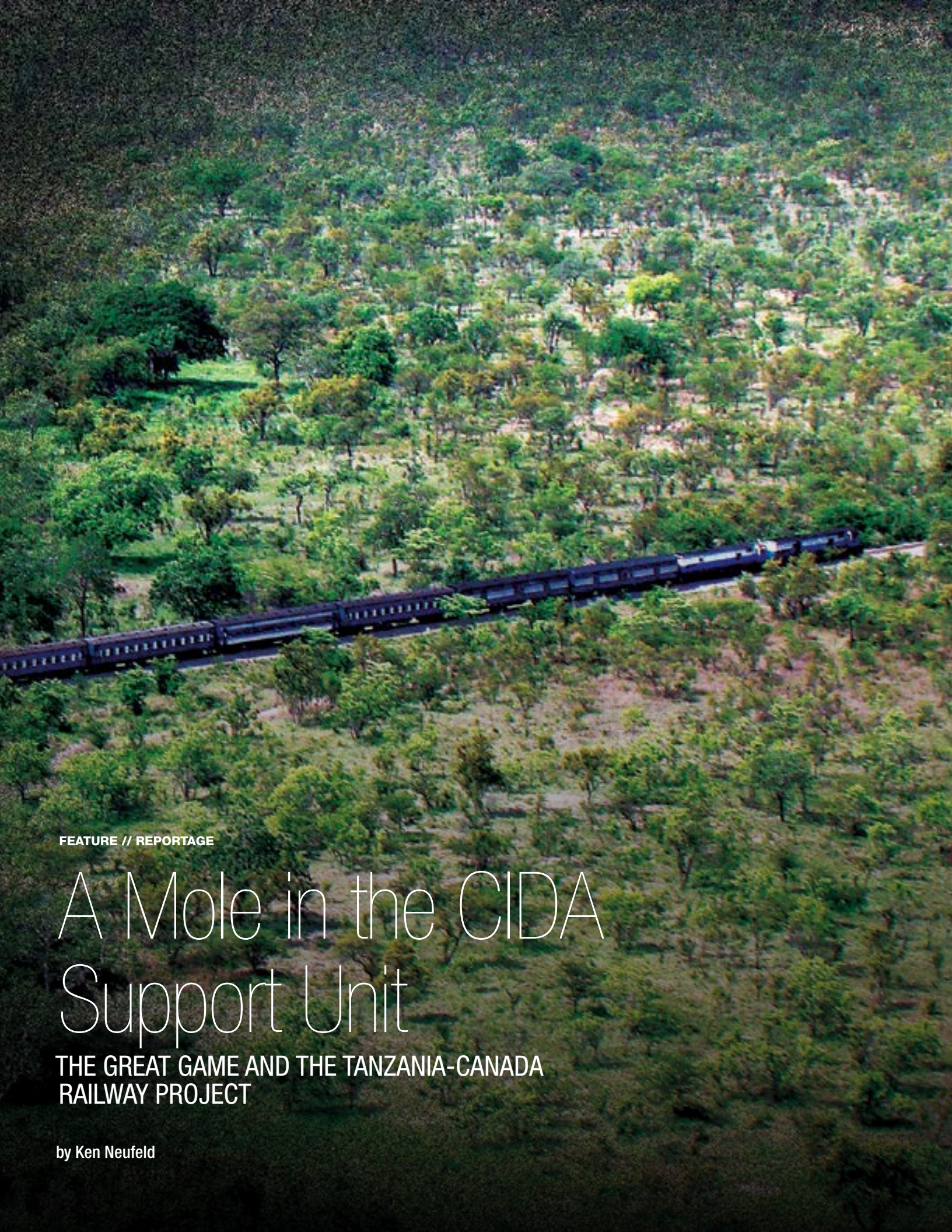
In this issue, Pierre-David Jean has some interesting advice of his own: don't cut back on cultural diplomacy. He provides numerous examples of cost-effective ways that Canada has been able to support its brilliant and unique cultural ambassadors internationally while raising the profile of our country in Colombia. He describes the important local relationships he's been able to cultivate via these initiatives, helping to develop valuable embassy contacts.

Pierre-David's article is an example of the type of content we welcome in **bout de papier** – it can be a space for your ideas, expressed through thoughtful, respectful pieces that have our country's best interests at heart.

The global challenges facing Canada are enormous and a lucid, robust response – including from our Foreign Service – is essential to protect and promote the interests of our country. But in our outsized bureaucracies or lonely international outposts, it can sometimes feel impossible for officers to be heard, despite the quality and creativity of the ideas being expressed.

We'd like to hear what you're doing (or would like to do) to serve our country internationally the most effective way possible. Send us a draft or a story idea at [bdp\\_editor@pafso.com](mailto:bdp_editor@pafso.com) – we're listening. [bdp](#)





FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# A Mole in the CIDA Support Unit

THE GREAT GAME AND THE TANZANIA-CANADA  
RAILWAY PROJECT

by Ken Neufeld

**KEN NEUFELD** is retired but still camping. His career meandered through a CUSO placement at a girls' secondary school in Iringa, Tanzania, the Wheat Project, CIDA, DFAIT, and GAC postings in Haiti, Peru (twice), Bolivia, Tanzania (again), Mozambique, and Afghanistan, with periodic stints in Gatineau and Ottawa for re-education. He is also blissfully married to Cheryl Frankiewicz.

The Cold War played out in the darndest ways. The competition between the West and the Soviet Bloc for hearts and souls of the developing world was intense and multi-faceted but did not necessarily garner headlines, except when real wars broke out. This tale is about one of the lesser-known consequences of that ideological struggle as it played out in Tanzania.

BY THE EARLY 1960S there were dozens of newly independent countries around the globe, places that had formerly been administered by colonial powers. In most of these countries the population had been denied both quality education and access to skilled and managerial jobs. As a result, these new countries were short of the educated and experienced citizens they needed to implement their hard-won independence. The Soviet Bloc, Western countries, and the Chinese all jumped into the breach convinced that educating the emerging elites would buy influence, allegiance, and favoured access to resources and new markets. Scholarship programs flooded the market all over what was then called the “Third World”. The USSR went so far as to create a large university in Moscow which came to be known as Patrice Lumumba University after the Congo liberation leader assassinated on suspicion of leftist leanings.

Tanzania was a particular darling for all sides of the ideological debate as Mwalimu Julius Nyerere was adept at walking a line which kept the suitors encouraged. A whole generation of Tanzanians studied around the world and brought home a lot of knowledge, ideas, and opinions. Those who studied in Canada might also have brought home

a radio or some tools. Those who went to Britain, perhaps an electric stove or set of encyclopedias. This story hinges on what quite a few Tanzanian students brought home from Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow, which was wives.

I never went to the USSR despite an ill-fated stint in the Soviet Studies faculty at Carleton University (turfed out after failing Russian language), but I was led to believe things were grey and gloomy there in the seventies and eighties. Maybe that made it easier to fall in love with bright dashing Tanzanian students. Or perhaps some of the marriages were cynical escape plans; not for me to know or to judge.

But I do know that by the time I moved from my CUSO-sponsored teaching position in remote Iringa to bustling Dar es Salaam in 1984 there were at least a couple of dozen divorced and separated Russian women in town. Rumour was that some of the women had arrived as newlyweds only to discover that their groom already had a wife or two in hand. In other cases, the financial and social circumstances that greeted the happy couple varied wildly from what had been described back in Moscow, leading to buyer's remorse. In the case of those possibly cynical unions, the groom risked being abandoned by the bride as soon as the Aeroflot flight landed.



Vodka and  
hockey talk with  
Russian teachers  
near Iringa



Undoubtedly for all new arrivals, it was a tough time to start a life in Tanzania with its moribund economy and shortages of everything. But growing up in late-stage Soviet Union promoted resourcefulness and survival skills in its citizens. Some of these newly single citizens must have had second thoughts and flown home, but the balance of the women settled in, found work, opened small businesses, made friends and established new lives.

Up in Iringa I had been oblivious to this peculiar sub-culture. There had been Soviets around; teachers and doctors – but they were official; sent there by their government and well supplied with vodka and canned goods from the Embassy commissary. These folks had no intention of staying in Tanzania but were enjoying their adventure and the rubles deposited for them back home. Kiswahili and ice hockey were our common language, this being the heyday of the Soviet-Canadian hockey rivalry. My new job in Dar es Salam was a local contract to take care of Canadians working on contract to the Canadian International Development Agency for the Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC). The TRC’s rail network linked Dar es Salaam to Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika and Mwanza on Lake Victoria. The railway had been built by the Germans during their time as colonial occupiers of what was then known as German East Africa at about the same time as the more famous Kenya-Uganda railway portrayed in a Hollywood film called “The Lunatic Express”. The TRC was a full-service transport conception and I traveled

on their buses which served where the railway itself did not, stayed in faded glory railway hotels where dreadful meals were still served on sterling silver plates, and sailed on passenger ships on Lake Tanganyika.\*

For Tanzania, keeping this sprawling railway empire functioning was key to its unity and its economic future. Canada, maybe nostalgic for its own glorious railway project, decided it could help with that, and the experts arrived in droves. The General Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the TRC were both Canadians. Canadians helped in the locomotive repair shops, with quarries producing the gravel for the railbed, and with the communications system. Bombardier locomotives pulled Canadian rolling stock over rails forged in Hamilton. It was kind of like the Wheat Project I would later join; the more you did, the more fun things you found needed to be done. Tanzania paid Canada for all that equipment, but they paid in shillings which could not legally be exported, even if someone outside of Tanzania would have wanted them. The bureaucrats dubbed these “counterpart funds” and they were used to fund all sorts of development programs like wells for villages and roofs for orphanages. It was all on an epic scale and a lot of Canadians spent a lot of time in Tanzania.


But our Canadian experts, unlike those Russian wives, had no experience with living in the land of empty shelves, electricity shortages, and a bureaucracy which needed rubber-stamped forms for everything; all of this in Kiswahili

which none of the experts managed to learn. It was not going well, and the high-priced help was spending most of its time out of the office confounded by Dar es Salaam life. Ron Audette at the Canadian High Commission had passed through Iringa once while I was teaching, and he figured maybe my survival there had given me a leg up. Or more likely he could smell how badly I needed this as my teaching contract was expiring and I wanted to stay. In any case I was stunned when he offered me a contract to set up a small office to babysit all those experts.

The culture shock moving from Canada to a developing country is supposed to be a big challenge. I can’t deny that, but the culture shock of moving from Iringa to Dar es Salaam was bigger. In Iringa I was growing or foraging my food, cooking on charcoal, drinking moonshine made from bamboo sap, and collecting rainwater off the roof to have a bath. Then my contract ended, and I was on a 12-hour overnight bus ride on unspeakable roads with only a backpack and a galvanized steel bucket to my name. The next day I had a job with a salary, the keys to a Peugeot 104 and was housesitting for the vacationing Ron in his air-conditioned house that had a back-up generator for his back-up generator as well as a pantry full of imported food and booze. My job was to take care of the Canadians’ housing, travel, banking, electrical generators, vehicles,

spare parts, bread supply, food orders from Denmark, language training, cultural orientation, and dispute resolution. The theory was that my work would allow those experts to whip the TRC into shape and get those trains running on time.

It was an intimidating challenge and a steep learning curve, but I was motivated and turned out to have the right experience for the work. Ron had been right; my years living in Iringa had given me a leg up.

In 1985 I was replaced by a Canadian management company which took over the office I had set up and I moved on up to Arusha to work on the Tanzania-Canada Wheat Program. In Dar es Salaam my successor hired one of those ship-wrecked Russian women to handle logistical support to the Canadian families. Highly organized and efficient, she upped the office octane considerably. But in a plot worthy of Graham Greene, she turned the head of the otherwise pious Canadian Chief Financial Officer at the TRC. Or at least that was the belief of the CFO’s wife. High drama followed to the point where the issue was said to have been raised in the Canadian House of Commons by a backbencher accusing CIDA of employing a Soviet spy in Dar es Salaam. My amateur sleuthing in Hansard failed to turn up any reference to this minor skirmish in the Great Game but then again ... it wouldn’t, would it? 



German-built  
railway station  
in Kigoma on  
Lake Tanganyika.  
Kigoma is just  
north of where  
the Chicago  
Tribune reporter  
Stanley did that  
“Doctor Livingston,  
I presume” thing,  
and just south of  
Gombe Stream  
National Park,  
the site of a long-  
running study  
of chimpanzees.

\* There is another Hollywood connection to this story. Before World War I the Germans had transported a large ship disassembled into thousands of crates from Dar es Salaam to Kigoma using their newly built railroad. The presence of this ship on Lake Tanganyika (still in service today), and the threat it posed to British Empire interests, inspired the Humphrey Bogart film “The African Queen”.



« ... j'ai compris que moi aussi j'avais quelque chose à raconter dans le sens que je pense que chaque Rwandais l'a vécu d'une certaine façon. Donc juste le fait d'en parler, tu permets aux autres de penser, de la petite histoire de chaque personne, des choses comme ça. Ça permet d'informer les gens qu'est-ce qui s'est passé sur tous les aspects, comme un miroir cassé. Chaque personne peut regarder dans un miroir cassé, mais tu vois un objet différent dans chaque miroir. Donc, l'histoire de chacun et de chacune, ça devient comme un casse-tête qui complète l'histoire de qu'est-ce qui s'est passé au Rwanda. »

— Annita Muhimpundu  
genocide survivor

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Walking to Remember

## MEMORIES OF RWANDA AND THE GENOCIDE

by Jessica J. Mills

IT WAS 2006, AND MY FRIEND and I had been travelling around eastern and southern Africa for a few months. Blessed by the naiveté of youth and moments of excellent luck, we had managed to make it to the end of our trip relatively unscathed. Despite this, a visit to Rwanda for our last few days on the continent had not been an easy sell: to get to Kigali, on our budget, we would need to take a long-distance bus for 24 hours through two land borders departing in the middle of the night from River Road in downtown Nairobi.

JESSICA J. MILLS is a Foreign Service Officer with Global Affairs Canada. Currently in Ottawa, her writing can be found in Wildfire Magazine, the Ottawa Citizen and the Montreal Gazette. Whenever her two-year-old or husky puppy gives her a chance she blogs regularly on Instagram @therapythrifted

Armed with only the exact cash needed in our pockets, we purchased our passage for later that evening. She struck up a conversation, this tall, beautiful woman who began to ask us the normal questions: “Where are you from? What are you doing here? Where are you going?”

We hedged and mumbled, wary of a stranger’s questions during this interaction. Toeing the very careful line between rude and discreet we managed to leave without alienating her.

We left the station with our tickets in hand, planning to return for our departure that evening. She waved us goodbye, “I’ll see you later tonight.”

When we returned to the bus station, she made a beeline to our sides. She took my hand as I boarded the bus. We found ourselves carried along to a set of seats towards the back and nestled in amongst her travelling companions. They were a church choir who had come to Nairobi for a competition and were headed back home to Kigali. We were, no doubt, a cause of excitement – tourists were still a rare commodity in the area, let alone backpackers.

It was hard to make small talk. Politics, religion, and ethnicity were obviously off the table, but questions about families, friends, location of origin? Each one was a potential landmine of suppressed

trauma, either personal or inherited. It was an unexpected realization and caused a large amount of discomfort, a reminder of my privilege as a Canadian.

“I’m Tutsi,” she volunteered.

“He’s Hutu,” she added, pointing at the father of their flock. “Rwanda is so much more than the genocide. I’m glad you will see.”

“I can’t wait to see its beauty,” I replied. “I’ve read so much about your country.”

It is hard to determine where the story of a conflict begins. History sprouts in all directions, and the past is, after all, multi-dimensional. For a long time, the ruling Tutsi minority had been privileged and prioritized in Rwanda. The Belgians, who had been mandated the country following the First World War, had developed a more direct colonial rule than their German predecessors but also supported the Tutsi monarchies. ID cards issued by the colonial authorities in 1932 furthered the division between the two groups.

By 1945, a Hutu counter-elite began to develop and gained the sympathy of the newly arrived Belgian clergy. The Tutsi fell out of favour. The colonial power replaced

International  
bodies failed  
to declare  
what was  
happening as  
a genocide  
and therefore  
were not  
required  
to act.



The horror of the genocide and how much of it could have been prevented forever changed the way I saw the world.

The pool at Hôtel des Mille Collines with the city of Kigali in the background



the majority of Tutsi chiefs and sub-chiefs with Hutu and a series of attacks against Tutsi in November 1959 sparked violence across the country. This transition created the first community of Rwandan refugees as a wave of Tutsi fled over borders. Local elections in 1960 saw Hutu representatives gain control all across the country.

Rwanda was granted independence in 1962, and by 1964 well over 200,000 Tutsi Rwandans had fled into neighbouring countries, mostly landing in refugee camps. The large majority settled in Uganda.

Tutsi leaders had begun mobilizing in the Ugandan refugee camps in the 1960s but were far from united. Some began running incursions into Rwanda from the camps. Attacking at night, they became known as “Inyenzi” or cockroaches, the dehumanizing language later used to encourage

genocidal actions. Between 1961 and 1966, they ran as many as 10 known raids which resulted in retaliation, with 10,000 Tutsi being killed and many more fleeing. Little else was achieved.

The mid-1980s saw the emergence of the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU), an organization of Rwandan exiles initially formed to intellectually discuss a return to Rwanda. The organization became more militant as Uganda faced its challenges, threatening the stability of the Rwandan diaspora. RANU later became the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) having determined that gaining the right for refugees to return to Rwanda was the goal and the use of force was the only possible way to achieve it.

On October 1, 1990, the RPF entered Rwanda, starting a guerilla-style civil war that lasted until August 4, 1993, when they signed the Arusha Accords with the Rwandan Government



Photo of the author with Fidel, a park ranger at the Parc National des Volcans, 2006

in Tanzania. With these accords came a commitment to a transitional government and a UN peacekeeping force.

On the evening of April 6, 1994, a plane carrying the President of Rwanda, Juvenal Habyarimana, was shot down over Kigali and the following morning Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and her Belgian contingent of bodyguards were executed. Moderate Hutu and Tutsi politicians who had supported the peace accords had been murdered and roving militias were going door to door executing Tutsi families, predominantly using machetes. The violence was immediate, visible, and extreme; rape was a purposeful tool.

International forces arrived in Kigali and left again, mostly taking with them citizens from their own countries.

The United Nations Mission Assistance to Rwanda (UNAMIR) was meant to oversee the implementation of the Arusha Accords and maintain peace between the two groups. However,

when the violence of 1994 broke out, ineffective rules of engagement left UNAMIR helpless to respond. Over approximately 100 days anywhere from 500,000 to 800,000 people were killed. Almost no one escaped unscathed.

International bodies failed to declare what was happening as a genocide and therefore were not required to act. In response, in 2000, Canada took the lead in the development of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. There are three pillars to the doctrine. First, the State must protect its citizens. Next, the international community must assist States to protect their citizens when unable. The third pillar is the explicit responsibility of the international community to protect citizens when their State is manifestly failing. It was adopted at the 2005 United Nations World Summit and while there are limitations, as there always are in international diplomacy, it still represents a clearer path for the

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international community. People with far more agency than I as a 13-year-old, had tried to make a difference, incremental improvements to our little world.

In April 1994, I was a not-particularly sophisticated 13-year-old. The internet existed in a world that hadn't yet met mine. News was delivered twice a day, by paper in the morning, and television at night. The images and coverage coming back from Rwanda were bleak. The horror of the genocide and how much of it could have been prevented forever changed the way I saw the world. The moment was a harsh introduction to global politics and the first time I understood that terrible things can happen in our world. I felt helpless in the face of global realities.

I followed the story of the genocide as it unfolded years after the violence. I read as the horrors were discovered and then I read as they were being dissected in academia and the press. I read the letters sent from loved ones, the personal accounts, the journal articles trying to explain a series of failures that defy explanation. I read about what-ifs: What if there had been no downed Black Hawk in Somalia? What if there had been no Bosnian War? What if the UN had left its forces in Rwanda and allowed them to intervene? What if? What if? What if?

I thought of my studies as we arrived at our first border crossing between Kenya and Uganda. The sky was dark, the moon hiding, and the only thing initially visible from the bus windows were the fires burning outside of the Kenyan border gate. Our new friends made sure we didn't get lost as we ducked around a chain-link fence and into a small building to surrender our passports before reboarding the bus. My thoughts were on refugees as we drove the rough road across the country; I couldn't imagine arriving in fear and desperation, leaving everything I knew behind to start anew.

"Where are you staying?" our new friend asked. The sun was setting, and we were approaching Kigali. "Hotel Rwanda," we responded. We hadn't booked a room, but we were confident that there would be availability.

"Do you mean Mille Collines?" she asked, referencing the hotel at the center of a Hollywood film that had been released a few years earlier.

Hotel Rwanda was a cheap hotel, without hot water, in the Muslim quarter of Kigali. We could see that she was failing to fit us into a mould of other Westerners she had seen – those with endless budgets or needs of guaranteed security.

After a brief exchange between her and the priest, they instructed us to stay on the bus when we arrived, letting everyone else off first. Once we descended, our luggage was waiting for us next to a taxi and a moto-taxi. A decision had been made. They were taking us to the hotel to make sure we had a place to stay the night.

The priest jumped on the moto-taxi, and we climbed in the cab. The fare had been determined without us, eliminating the typical foreigner surcharge and our friend looked back at us as she climbed into the car with a smile.

"You will be safe in Rwanda," she said. "But we wanted to make sure you found the hotel and got a room."

After she confirmed with the clerk there was a space for us, she gave us each a huge hug and then surprised us: "Thank you for coming to Rwanda."

With that, she jumped on the back of the waiting moto-taxi and disappeared down the road.

Our first full day in Rwanda was spent visiting the Kigali Genocide Memorial, which was a well-developed punch to the gut. There on the wall hung a Tim Hortons t-shirt, pierced through and blood-stained. The next room with life-size photos of children and their last words had a lasting impact.

"Don't worry, Mommy, UNAMIR is coming," lingers, as it is meant to, a dig at the collective guilt the world shares.

Our last night in Rwanda we sought a room at the Mille Collines. The front desk clerk was not amused, our dusty clothing and overstuffed backpacks ruining the esthetic of the opulent lobby, but he reluctantly let us check-in.

The hotel was nearly empty, but the pool had returned to its original purpose. As I sat around it, I replayed scenes from the film "Hotel Rwanda" in my head until we were distracted by the evening. The next time I sat on that patio it would be close to a decade later.

When I began work in 2008 on my master's in history, Concordia University started a project recording the life stories of people who had lived through mass violence, including Rwandan

refugees. I was honoured to be trusted to listen to people's stories and save them for the future. In the Hall Auditorium, I heard a student recount how he was wounded and sought refuge at the Mille Collines, hiding out in bushes near the pool. He was speaking to Paul Rusesabagina, the protagonist of "Hotel Rwanda". A man either lauded as a hero or villainized as a genocide denier.

The film that purportedly told Rusesabagina's story took a significant amount of artistic licence, as did the other films that covered the topic such as "Shooting Dogs" and "A Sunday in Kigali." These films brought awareness of the Rwandan genocide to North American audiences, so did it matter that they were inaccurate? Academically, I argued it did. The white saviour narrative found in most of the films was especially harmful. The reality was that foreigners in Rwanda were quickly evacuated; various militaries flew into the conflict only to collect their citizens. It was the Rwandan Patriotic Front who eventually captured Kigali, ending the genocide in July 1994 with little help at all.

In 2010, seeking international experience, I haphazardly threw in an application for the only position available at Foreign Affairs and International Trade: Foreign Service Administrative Assistant. One year later I received a letter of offer and left my other career for new horizons. When I was eligible, my first choice was evident: Nairobi, Kenya. The High Commission in Kenya is responsible for our office in Kigali and when the High Commissioner asked if I'd be willing to go to Kigali to assist with the 20th anniversary commemoration of the genocide my response was immediate and affirmative. I had been selected to join the Management and Consular Officer stream and I was simultaneously training while fulfilling my duties, so this opportunity aligned personally and professionally.

The advanced days on the ground were focused on logistical issues. Canada sent our Parliamentary Secretary for the occasion and the city was full of foreign dignitaries. The Mille Collines was the official hotel for VIP guests, assigned by the host government. Layers of memory came back as I set foot in the lobby, and I spent the next couple of days sitting around the pool for meetings and meals. This time the hotel was full.

The following day everything came full circle: the actual anniversary. Events started in the stadium and ended with a "Walk to Remember." Each step I took forward cast me back. I remembered voices and words; images from reality and fiction; auditoriums full of people seeking to understand. I remembered how helpless and hopeless I had been as a young girl on the cusp of maturity. Thirteen-year-old me might not have been able to do anything, but 33-year-old me could help to make sure the event was not forgotten. A small role in diplomacy restoring the power I had lost so long ago and a confirmation that I was right where I was meant to be. [bdp](#)

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FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Reflections on the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami

by Valerie Raymond with Angela Bogdan



Valerie Raymond

When Valerie Raymond arrived to take up her posting in 2002 as High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, she had no way of knowing that she would come face to face with the world's deadliest tsunami in history.

An accomplished diplomat and Head of Mission, she and her husband Tom de Faye (Major-General ret'd) would face the test of a lifetime. Valerie drew on all her resources, experience, energy, and empathy to lead her team and the Canadian response during this trying time.

Having retired to Victoria in 2012, Valerie penned a series of articles during the COVID-19 lockdowns on her experience in Sri Lanka. Sadly, she was diagnosed in September 2023 with an advanced stage of cancer and passed away on December 11, 2023. Angela Bogdan, who succeeded her as High Commissioner, worked with Valerie in her final months to compile the piece which follows.



**Part 1**  
**THE BOXING DAY TSUNAMI**  
**AND THE FIRST SIX WEEKS**

**IT WAS DECEMBER 2004**, and I was in my third year as Canada’s High Commissioner to the beautiful tropical island of Sri Lanka.

My husband Tom and I were spending the holidays at our favourite ocean-front resort, a three-hour drive South of Colombo. Christmas Day was full of beautiful blue skies and 30 degree Celsius weather, so we spent the morning walking the lovely beach, collecting colourful seashells along the way.

Perhaps it was serendipity that we passed on a beach walk the next morning. Instead, around 9 a.m., we observed an incredible phenomenon from our third-floor balcony overlooking the Indian Ocean: the ocean had receded beyond what the eye could see.

Mesmerized, we watched holiday-makers frolic on the exposed rocks and reefs, when suddenly the ocean came thundering in at breakneck speed and with terrifying force. Although we didn’t know it at that moment, Tom and I were witnessing the deadliest tsunami in recorded history, one that would claim some 230,000 lives in only a few short hours.

We watched in horror as the Indian Ocean Tsunami slammed into the coast of Sri Lanka; the mountainous wave surging and ebbing. Suddenly, everyone and everything on the beach disappeared. We ran down the three flights of stairs to the open-air lobby, which was now empty – the check-in desks, gift shops, and hair salon were all gone.

Although cell service was down, we soon learned via the BBC that a powerful undersea earthquake had unleashed a mammoth tsunami that crashed into parts of Indonesia, Thailand, India, and Sri Lanka. We later learned that within a five-kilometre radius of where we were, near the city of Galle, some 5,000 people were swept out to sea. In all, the tsunami claimed more than 30,000 lives in Sri Lanka and left hundreds of thousands homeless.

I was extremely fortunate that the mission’s management team had stayed in Sri Lanka for the holidays. With the coastal road destroyed, Tom and I only managed to

return to Colombo the following evening. By then, my second-in-command had shut down normal business and instituted 24/7 operations.

Over the next few months, we were consumed by countless evolving challenges: consular crises, media scrutiny, official visits, and much more.

First, we needed to find out whether any Canadians had died in the tsunami and support those needing assistance.

There were so many heartbreaking stories and so many tears shed in my office over pots of Ceylon tea and boxes of Kleenex. The need for compassion while facing ever-growing demands from Ottawa weighed heavily on me.

One Canadian International Development Agency officer and his daughter survived the tsunami by climbing a palm tree and hanging on for dear life.

An immigration officer was driving on the coastal road with his wife and young children when the wave swept up their vehicle. As it careened out of control, they repeatedly struck pedestrians. They survived but were so traumatized that I made the difficult decision to medevac them back to Canada for counselling.

One of our Sri Lanka staff lost her entire house and all its contents.

Another local staff member walked for hours through the wreckage of a derailed train in search of his nieces. The wrecked locomotive named Manitoba was one of 10 named for a Canadian province, gifted from Canada decades earlier under the Colombo Plan. His nieces and some 1,700 passengers on the crowded Colombo to Galle train were never seen again.

Although I encouraged our local staff to take as much time off as they needed, most insisted on working to help contribute to their country’s recovery.

I still remember my very first call with Ottawa. “Have you sent staff to the disaster site?” they asked.

“Well, no,” I responded. The tsunami had crashed through 1,000 kilometres of Sri Lankan coastline – there was no single disaster site.

We coordinated with other “like-minded” missions – the Americans, Brits, Australians, the European Union, and several United Nations agencies – to deploy staff and drivers on search and rescue missions in search of our and our partner countries’ nationals. It was a labour-intensive but successful approach to finding Canadians and bringing them to Colombo for assistance.

While many of our rescued nationals were grateful and reasonable, others, deeply traumatized, were irrational, belligerent, and abusive.

I received a much-appreciated early call from my counterpart at Canada’s much larger diplomatic mission in neighbouring Delhi. “Tell me what support you need and I’ll have staff on the next plane,” they said.

Ottawa managers were similarly helpful, offering to send temporary duty reinforcements. Perhaps curiously, my management team of five Canadians initially resisted. I wanted to first clarify what roles we would assign

temporary duty staff, who would arrive with many skills but no knowledge of the country. I also wanted to be sure they would not cause friction with our team.

In hindsight, bringing in extra staff from neighbouring missions and Ottawa sooner would have been a better decision because the scope and complexity of our operations were about to expand massively.

I look back on those six weeks as among the most challenging of my career.

**Part 2**  
**THE NEXT SIX WEEKS, HUMANITARIAN AID,**  
**VISITS, VISITS, AND MORE VISITS**

While mission staff continued to search for Canadians needing assistance, another priority was to provide Sri Lanka with immediate humanitarian support.

When the Sri Lankan government called in the resident diplomatic corps only days after the tsunami to ask for immediate assistance, I advised that two Canadian Forces aircraft were already in the air fully loaded with relief supplies for the local and international Red Cross.

A politically active Sri Lankan–Canadian diaspora community, largely based in Toronto, lobbied strongly for a vigorous Canadian response. This led to the deployment of a special team of 200 military personnel – the DART or Disaster Assistance Response Team – requiring full support from our mission. Canada’s military attaché based in Delhi also redeployed to Colombo.

We spent a few sleepless nights negotiating with the Sri Lankan government to have Canadian soldiers assist in the eastern part of the island, where 10,000 people died and 180,000 had lost their homes. We had seemingly come to an agreement, but Sri Lanka refused to allow our soldiers to bring their weapons while our military commanders insisted they must. Best left unsaid how we solved this not-insignificant challenge.

During their stay, the DART lived roughly in an abandoned sugar factory and made critical contributions to the disaster efforts: they provided medical support to thousands of victims, delivered several million litres of drinking water, cleared tons of rubble, repaired schools and built temporary shelters.

Naturally, the disaster received massive global media coverage. Canadians responded to news of the devastation with overwhelming generosity. Individual Canadians donated almost \$200 million to tsunami aid and reconstruction. The federal government responded in kind with a dollar-for-dollar matching fund.

At the mission, we provided ongoing advice to the Canadian International Development Agency on where assistance was most needed. Our Canadian International Development Agency staff supported the Red Cross and other Canadian NGOs who responded quickly by distributing food, medicine, and clothing, and building temporary housing, often working with local Sri Lankan partners.



Members of  
DART’s Operation  
Structure clearing  
trees and debris

World-wide news coverage of the disaster also meant that media interviews became a significant demand on my time. I assigned one staff member as a full-time media officer to respond to interview requests, advise where and how to travel to tsunami-ravaged regions, and provide suggestions for government and non-government interviewees. I quickly learned to take 10 quiet minutes before every interview to think through messaging. I also learned it was best to do all interviews outside on the High Commission grounds as harried staff did not need the burden of camera crews inside the Mission.

One morning, as I approached the Mission, I saw a massive crowd at our gates and down the road. My stomach turned to knots.

Canada had just announced special measures to ease entry into our country for Sri Lankan tsunami victims, the first country to do so. Somehow, a rumour spread that we had announced an “open visa” policy, meaning Sri Lankans would no longer require visas to enter Canada. Although the rumour was untrue, we had trouble shutting it down. We put ads in newspapers, took media interviews, and sent staff up and down the long queues to tell people in English, Tamil, and Sinhala that there was no “open visa” program. Still, the crowd grew larger.

People began pushing and shoving under the baking heat. We worried about violence breaking out under the ever-watchful eye of visiting Canadian media. Eventually, immigration staff from neighbouring missions arrived to assist our weary team but it took almost two weeks to gain control.

Consular and immigration issues aside, our biggest challenge during these weeks was managing multiple overlapping visits.

Politicians from across the globe came to visit the country. When it was all over, the Sri Lankan foreign secretary told me his ministry had managed over 80 high-level visits in six weeks. Ostensibly, the visits were to assist, but, he lamented, they were mostly “political tourism” or TV coverage for home constituencies.

What of Canada? With a large politically active Sri Lankan–Tamil population, visits were a political imperative.

The sudden  
devastation of  
the 2004  
tsunami was  
caught on video  
by countless  
tourists.







Angela, Valerie's successor, with the graduates of Canada's first income-generation and livelihoods training programs for tsunami-affected women – a program initiated by Valerie.

Photo by Gary R. Firth

First up was a visit by the federal Minister of Health – the “duty Minister” during the Christmas holiday season. I recall the unusual situation of standing beside the Minister on the Colombo airport tarmac in the middle of the night to greet the arriving Canadian Forces aircraft carrying the military’s DART team.

While preparing for the Health Minister’s visit, we got word that Prime Minister Paul Martin would visit Sri Lanka. Normally, visits from the Prime Minister were months in the making. We had 11 days.

As with all Prime Ministerial visits, an advance team arrived a few days early to review planning. This team came armed with the same playbook they used for standard visits abroad. I tried but failed to convince them that we should make a few adjustments in our requests to the overwhelmed Sri Lankan government.

A key element of the visit was a trip to the disaster site in the east, where the DART was deployed. It was too far to drive so we had to request Sri Lankan military helicopters. This was the fourth time I had made such a burdensome request, so I was sure I had worn the welcome mat. But in the end, four large helicopters were generously provided to accommodate the Prime Minister’s delegation.

Three weeks after the tsunami, with the Prime Minister arriving in a few days, three members of the mission management team came by my office to remind me of an earlier promise: we would look out for one another.

They insisted I go home and sleep for a day. And so, I did. I slept and ate, then slept and ate again for 24 hours. I returned Monday morning refreshed and deeply grateful to my wonderful colleagues.

That evening we held a small reception for the Prime Minister to meet mission staff and hear first-hand stories of the tsunami. He recognized that we were a small team juggling many challenges and his gracious words meant a great deal to us all.

Later, I was also grateful when the Prime Minister asked me for a private briefing on the Sri Lankan civil war between the Sinhalese-led government and the Tamil Tigers that by then had consumed the country for 20 years, killing some 60,000.

Diaspora politics had put added pressure on the mission. Toronto-based Tamil-Canadian leaders insisted that the Sri Lankan government was blocking the delivery of humanitarian aid to Tamil regions. While Mission staff consulted extensively with the United Nations, NGOs, and other reliable “on the ground” contacts who found no instances of withheld aid, the “suppressed aid” campaign continued to escalate in the lead-up to the Prime Minister’s visit.

To assuage anxious Ottawa colleagues, I sent two outstanding Tamil staff members to investigate – one to the Tamil-dominated north, where most of the civil war fighting took place and one to the east, where there is a large Tamil population. They returned with detailed reports and in an excellent briefing for the Prime Minister and his staff, they shared their findings: there was no evidence whatsoever that the Sri Lankan government was preventing aid from reaching hard-hit Tamil communities. Finally, we put this issue to bed.

The next day, as we flew aboard a helicopter over tropical jungle and highland tea estates, Prime Minister Martin commented on the beauty of the countryside.

Eventually, we reached the east coast. From the shoreline to one kilometre inland was a wasteland. I could see that the scale of the destruction left an impact on the delegation. Meeting with tsunami victims amidst the rubble and devastation also brought home the magnitude of suffering. The mobile health units set up by our DART and other Canadian support were working to make a difference.

All the while, we continued to plan for other official visits. Parliamentarians, the Minister of Defence, the Canadian International Development Agency President, and the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff all came, requiring extensive mission support. We also had to provide support for “unofficial” visits from an Ontario delegation, NGOs, diaspora groups, and teams of doctors.

At this point, the mission team was burned out, even with the support of temporary staff who came to assist for a week or two. Staff began to push back against demanding “unofficial” visits. Ottawa colleagues tried to discourage well-intended Canadians from coming with little success.

With all flights arriving after midnight, staff spent too many nights at the airport meeting Canadian delegations and trying to gain clearance for their medications and other supplies. I knew I was pushing staff much too hard when two overworked immigration officers collapsed. Thankfully they rallied after a few days of rest.

One evening, about a month after the tsunami, as I prepared to go home after the daily call from Ottawa, I remembered an unopened package that had arrived that day in the diplomatic bag. In it, I discovered a note and a

lovely package of spa products sent by a friend and colleague, then heading to one of our Consulates in the US. She wrote about how she didn’t want to call me during such a busy time, but hoped these items would bring at least a little comfort. Somehow this thoughtful gesture brought to the fore all my suppressed emotions of the past month – heartbreak for the terrible personal losses of our local staff and my internal conflict between supporting an overburdened and exhausted team while meeting Ottawa’s unrelenting demands. I closed my office door and wept.

### Part 3 THE AFTERMATH

Early on, colleagues in Ottawa had repeatedly asked whether sending trauma counsellors to meet with staff would be helpful. We were months out from the initial disaster, and we now felt the management team was right to take up their offer.

To be mindful of cultural sensitivities, we informed our Sri Lankan staff that the counselling services were purely voluntary. While the staff were initially wary, they soon asked the counsellors to stay an extra week. The visit was helpful beyond my expectations.

Three months after the disaster, Tom and I decided to drive the restored coastal road around the island to assess tsunami reconstruction. Our first stop was at a memorial for the lost 1,700 passengers and crew of the Manitoba locomotive.

We spent a day at the ocean-front resort where we had witnessed the Boxing Day tsunami, which was now virtually empty. The manager told us that painful memories kept locals away from the resort. Foreign visitors also had yet to return to the country.

We walked miles along the beach where a few modest resorts had once stood. Now, the beach was littered with piles of debris and refuse. Most poignant were the many human bones that had washed up on the beach, fragments of the thousands of lives the massive wave had claimed.


Curiously, there was a complete absence of animal bones washing up on the shores despite Sri Lanka having many kinds of wildlife, including herds of elephants. The general theory was that animals must have run to high ground before the wave made landfall thanks to their often-suspected but never-proven “sixth sense” that warned them of the oncoming disaster.

As we continued our drive up the east coast, it was disheartening to see that thousands were still living in tent cities despite the massive amounts of foreign aid received. But I did feel a sense of pride that Canadian funds were helping build new housing.

Some time later, I attended a dinner party where I sat next to a prominent Sri Lankan businessman. Over dinner, he told me a story that haunts me to this day. His niece, living in London with her British husband and two young sons, had come to Sri Lanka for the Christmas holidays. Along with his niece’s parents, the family was visiting the Yala nature reserve when the tsunami struck. The entire family was swept out to sea. Only his niece survived. Now living with him and his wife, he shared his niece’s unbearable grief at the loss of her entire family.

A few years later, I came upon a book entitled *Wave* by Sri Lankan writer Sonali Deraniyagala. To my shock, the author was the niece of the gentleman who recounted her tale during that Colombo dinner party. Her book about finding a way to live after such unimaginable loss was the most harrowing of the many tragic stories I had heard.

Nine months after the tsunami, I left Sri Lanka and returned to Ottawa. With time, the Indian Ocean tsunami has increasingly become a distant memory.

But every year on Boxing Day, Tom and I reflect on the display of seashells we collected on Christmas Day 2004, the day before the deadliest tsunami in recorded history raged across the Indian Ocean and swept away hundreds of thousands of lives while somehow sparing ours. 

#### POSTSCRIPT BY ANGELA BOGDAN

I succeeded Valerie in 2006. The robust and targeted tsunami redevelopment programming she had initiated with her Canadian International Development Agency colleagues was striking. The program involved some \$85 million in programming across 35 projects in partnership with local governments, NGOs and United Nations agencies. In the years to come, I “walked on Valerie’s shoulders” as I oversaw the completion of these projects, the bulk of which focussed on women’s income generation and livelihoods, maternal newborn child health care, community rehabilitation and housing. Her legacy lives on.



# En faveur de la diplomatie culturelle

MES EXPÉRIENCES EN COLOMBIE

par Pierre-David Jean

**PIERRE-DAVID JEAN** est un agent du Service extérieur depuis 2006. Il a été en poste à l'Ambassade du Canada en France, à l'Ambassade du Canada en Haïti, et à la Mission permanente du Canada auprès des Nations Unies. Il est actuellement Chef de la section politique à l'Ambassade du Canada en Colombie.

Je dois admettre que j'avais quelques doutes en m'asseyant dans la salle de concert du centre-ville de Bogotá un dimanche matin pour écouter l'ensemble Amir Amiri. En quoi la présentation de ce groupe musical aux inspirations du Moyen-Orient et basé à Montréal pourrait bien être pertinente dans le contexte colombien ou encore m'aiderait à faire avancer notre relation bilatérale?

**JE VOULAIS – ET DEVAIS – NÉANMOINS** garder l'esprit ouvert – je venais juste d'arriver en poste en Colombie à l'été 2022 après tout et nous appuyions la venue de l'ensemble grâce à notre fonds culturel.

Au moins la salle était pleine, me suis-je dit, incluant plusieurs invités de l'Ambassade.

Mon scepticisme s'est vite évaporé. La musique était certainement envoutante et a tout de suite plu au public. Mais c'est entre les morceaux que la magie a réellement opérée. Amir a expliqué les origines de son instrument, la santour, mais aussi son propre parcours personnel comme réfugié iranien au Canada. Les autres membres de l'ensemble venaient tous de différents pays du Moyen-Orient et s'étaient rencontrés à Montréal. Depuis, une grande camaraderie s'était développée entre eux et leurs inspirations musicales se sont combinées et fusionnées afin de créer un son unique. Et tout ça grâce à leur terre d'accueil, le Canada.

Dans la salle, le public colombien était conquis par la combinaison de cette musique et les histoires racontées par les membres du groupe. Difficile de faire mieux (et plus crédible!) afin de promouvoir la riche diversité

canadienne et nos valeurs de respect, de tolérance, de paix et d'ouverture.

Cette expérience a renouvelé ma conviction quant à l'importance cruciale de la diplomatie culturelle canadienne dans un pays comme la Colombie. L'Ambassade aurait pu faire des centaines de discours sur la diversité et l'inclusion et nous n'aurions pas eu le même impact que d'entendre Amir et ses collègues partager leurs histoires et leur musique. Et ma conviction a été maintes fois renforcée au fil des événements de diplomatie culturelle que nous avons organisés en Colombie.

J'ai donc été très surpris et déçu lorsque notre principal mécanisme pour financer les activités de diplomatie culturelle (le Fonds culturel des missions) a récemment été coupé.

Je suis convaincu que cette décision entraînera des répercussions négatives à long-terme pour notre pays sur la scène internationale. Au-delà de cette coupure d'un fonds ponctuel, ce qui me préoccupe de manière plus générale est l'impression que la diplomatie culturelle est perçue plus comme un luxe ou un accessoire plutôt qu'une composante centrale d'une politique étrangère efficace d'un pays comme le nôtre.



L'Ambassade  
aurait pu faire  
des centaines  
de discours sur  
la diversité et  
l'inclusion et nous  
n'aurions pas eu  
le même impact  
que d'entendre  
Amir et ses  
collègues partager  
leurs histoires  
et leur musique.

Amir Amiri n'est qu'un exemple parmi tant d'autres dont j'ai été témoin durant mon affectation actuelle où nos artistes canadiens se sont fait les porte-paroles crédibles et efficaces d'un Canada moderne, de nos valeurs et de nos priorités. Ils ont été pour nous en Colombie les porte-étendards de notre « marque Canada ».

Je pense notamment à l'artiste multidisciplinaire colombo-canadienne Lido Pimienta, gagnante il y a quelques années du prestigieux Prix de Musique Polaris. À travers ses chansons et son art, cette jeune femme autochtone promeut d'importantes thématiques dont l'égalité des genres, l'importance de la diversité et la promotion des droits des peuples autochtones. Par son histoire personnelle, elle incarne aussi très bien cette jeune et dynamique diaspora colombienne qui est installée au Canada.

Nous avons eu l'occasion d'appuyer Lido à deux reprises depuis mon arrivée en poste. De petits montants à chaque fois pour qu'elle puisse participer au plus important festival de musique de la ville de Bogotá ainsi que dans le principal festival artistique de Carthagène. Dans les deux occasions, sa présence a attiré les foules et notamment plusieurs acteurs clés. Et à chaque fois, elle a profité de sa plateforme

unique afin de promouvoir ses valeurs et son engagement. À travers elle, et grâce à sa crédibilité et son engagement, les spectateurs ont compris ce que représentait le Canada d'aujourd'hui.

Amir et Lido sont seulement deux des nombreux exemples dont j'ai été témoin pour démontrer toute la force de la culture comme instrument diplomatique particulièrement puissant et efficace. C'est également un excellent véhicule pour favoriser les conversations sur des sujets, qui, dans un cadre formel, peuvent être plus difficiles et sensibles : par exemple, faire progresser les droits LGBTI+ grâce à un film, donner un visage à la migration grâce au témoignage d'un auteur, reconnaître les erreurs et partager les leçons concernant le processus de vérité et de réconciliation du Canada grâce au théâtre, aux films et à la poésie, quelque chose qui a inévitablement des résonances et des liens avec la propre histoire du conflit en Colombie.

Mon temps en Colombie m'a également permis de constater à quel point la diplomatie culturelle peut être un bon moyen afin de créer et renforcer un réseau de contacts clés. Il y a un grand appétit ici pour assister aux événements culturels. Ces événements sont donc pour nous un moyen privilégié pour inviter nos contacts et forger des relations personnelles avec eux qui mènent à des relations professionnelles encore plus solides et productives.



Grâce à notre appui au Festival del Centro, j'ai notamment eu la chance de rencontrer et de discuter avec la mairesse de Bogotá et prendre la parole avec elle devant un théâtre à pleine capacité. À l'Université des Andes, j'ai « dansé » (si on peut décrire mes mouvements décousus ainsi) côté à côté avec le Directeur des affaires culturelles du ministère des Affaires étrangères sur les sons endiablés du groupe canadien Kizaba. Lors de la venue du cirque Dynamo Théâtre en mars 2023, le vice-ministre des Affaires étrangères a pu assister à nos côtés en compagnie de son épouse. Ce fut une occasion idéale pour le connaître davantage dans un contexte ludique. Il a été d'autant plus facile de reprendre contact avec eux par la suite afin de poursuivre la discussion.

Par ailleurs, l'an dernier, dans le cadre d'un partenariat avec un cinéma local, nous avons eu la chance de projeter cinq films canadiens pour nos contacts clés. Le maïs soufflé était inclus! J'ai encore le souvenir d'une contacte du secteur privé qui était très ému après avoir vu le touchant film « Paul à Québec » parce que cela lui rappelait sa relation avec son père. Inutile de dire qu'elle me parle encore de cette soirée et que nos liens sont devenus beaucoup plus serrés et que cela aura servi dans le cadre de nos discussions professionnelles. Nous avons aussi fait profiter plusieurs programmes de l'Ambassade de cette initiative peu couteuse pour qu'ils aient « leur »

soirée de cinéma et y inviter leurs contacts clés. Pour les collègues consulaires, par exemple, ces genres d'invitation sont moins fréquentes et d'autant plus appréciées.

Outre son utilité afin de promouvoir nos valeurs et renforcer nos réseaux de contacts, la diplomatie culturelle peut générer des répercussions économiques positives dans le secteur des industries créatives. Pour cette raison, nous avons toujours travaillé de manière très étroite avec nos collègues de la section commerciale sur ces enjeux. Par exemple, une mission commerciale des industries créatives canadiennes en Amérique Latine organisée en 2019 par Patrimoine Canada aura donné l'idée au plus important théâtre colombien, le Teatro Mayor, d'organiser une « saison canadienne » dans le cadre de sa programmation. Quoique certaines œuvres ont dû être reportées à cause de la pandémie, cela a représenté d'importants débouchés commerciaux pour les groupes artistiques canadiens sélectionnés. Lors de cette seule mission, Patrimoine rapporte que plus de 700 rencontres interentreprises ont eu lieu dans la région, ce qui a mené à la signature d'ententes commerciales d'une valeur de plus de 1,2 million de dollars. Dans le cadre du très important Salon international du livre de Bogotá (FILBO), qui a reçu plus de 600 000 visiteurs l'année dernière, nous avons notamment appuyé la venue d'auteurs de grand calibre tels que Kim

On profite du passage de l'autrice Kim Thuy au Festival International du Livre de Bogotá pour organiser des entrevues avec la presse locale sur son œuvre et son parcours incroyable.



Lido Pimienta en spectacle grâce à l'appui du Canada





L'auteur avec  
la mairesse de Bogota,  
Claudia Lopez, et l'artiste  
colombo-canadienne  
Lido Pimienta

Thuy (lauréate du Prix du Gouverneur général pour le roman de langue française) et aussi d'éditeurs et de distributeurs canadiens pour des rencontres d'affaires. Bref, la diplomatie culturelle veut également dire promotion des intérêts économiques du Canada.

Pour paraphraser notre ministre, j'ajouterais aussi que le Canada évolue dans un monde de plus en plus multipolaire et ceci se reflète également dans la sphère de la diplomatie culturelle. Si nous ne jouons plus dans cette sphère, d'autres acteurs vont sans contredit prendre cette place avec plaisir. Pour nommer que quelques exemples dans le contexte colombien, nous compétitionnons contre la France qui bénéficie de son réseau de l'Alliance française présent dans 13 villes du pays ou encore la Chine avec ses trois centres Confucius. Même un plus petit pays comme la Suisse bénéficie d'un Fonds culturel, d'une plateforme en ligne gratuite pour promouvoir leur culture en Amérique latine et de l'appui d'une Fondation pour la diffusion de la culture.


Dans mon contexte particulier en Colombie, le Québec vient récemment d'ouvrir un nouveau bureau avec un agenda (et un financement) culturel important. Nous travaillons très bien ensemble sur de nombreux projets toutefois il va sans dire qu'avec leurs nouveaux moyens et ambitions, il est de plus en plus difficile de les suivre et d'être aussi visibles dans le contexte de coupures actuel. En somme, mon expérience me porte à croire qu'il y a un coût à ne pas être présent sur le tableau de la diplomatie culturelle vis-à-vis les autres acteurs internationaux.

En terminant mon petit plaidoyer en faveur de la diplomatie culturelle, je noterais que ce n'est pas une habileté qui est innée où qu'on peut nécessairement apprendre à déployer de manière parfaite du jour au lendemain. J'ai observé en Colombie qu'il y avait des activités qui fonctionnaient bien et quelques autres qui étaient moins réussies. Avec l'aide inestimable de mon équipe, j'ai appris à améliorer et perfectionner nos actions dans ce domaine mais ce fut un apprentissage. Il est entre autres crucial de sélectionner les bons partenaires, d'établir les bonnes formules d'événements pour attirer nos contacts et maximiser la diffusion de nos valeurs.

En arrêtant le financement des activités de diplomatie culturelle, nous risquons de perdre et d'oublier ces apprentissages et cette précieuse expertise, et ce, tant en poste qu'au siège. Nous perdons aussi l'excellent réseau de contacts locaux et canadiens dans lequel nous avons investis et qui nous appuyaient dans cette mission. À plusieurs égards, nous perdons aussi de la crédibilité auprès de nos vis-à-vis, en devant arrêter nos collaborations de manière aussi subite. C'est vraiment une grande perte qui ne peut se reconstituer du jour au lendemain.

En cette période de transformation et de réflexion sur l'avenir du Ministère et de l'action internationale du Canada, mon souhait serait qu'on trouve le moyen de rétablir et de préserver à long-terme ces précieux outils de financement (surtout pour les sections du Service de la Politique étrangère et de la Diplomatie (SPED) qui en ont si peu), comme le fonds culturel des missions, qui nous permettaient de mettre en œuvre de grandes initiatives et de vraiment faire avancer nos priorités avec des sommes relativement modiques.

Et surtout, je souhaite que la diplomatie culturelle soit reconnue comme un élément clé et central de notre action internationale et d'assurer sa pérennité. Elle permet à nos pays et nos peuples de mieux se connaître. Elle offre une appréciation plus nuancée de l'autre et un rapprochement grâce à nos similitudes. Dans un monde de plus en plus fracturé, il ne faut pas se passer de cet outil critique.

Nos artistes sont de puissants ambassadeurs et il faut pouvoir profiter de l'incroyable richesse culturelle de notre pays à sa juste valeur sur la scène internationale. 

Trained in anthropology and filmmaking, **MARK SENIUK** joined the Foreign Service in 2006 and has been posted to Manila, Beijing, and Tel Aviv.

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# The Move From Hell

by Mark Seniuk

I need to finally write this down, if for no other reason than to process what happened.

**THE STORY BEGINS IN THE FALL OF 2020.** Not that you need reminding, but this was in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic when playgrounds were still closed. While the common sentiment was still “we’re all in this together,” it seemed that cracks were beginning to show.

My family and I were meant to depart on posting in 2020, and like everyone else in our position, we were asked if we wanted to proceed – if not, we would have had to reapply again in the coming year. Faced with an Ottawa winter of COVID-19 restrictions, we opted for a place with a beach and went ahead to Tel Aviv.

Moving is tough, especially with kids and pets. But moving in the early days of the pandemic was nails-across-the-chalkboard-type bad. Replaying it still causes me anxiety, especially as we prepare to move again in 2024.

COVID-19 of course meant everything was delayed – passports, health clearances, etc. Everything was up in the air because everyone was just winging it – doing the best they could, presumably.

Summer turned into fall, and we were still unsure when we could go. At that point our kids were registered in three schools: one in Ottawa and two in Tel Aviv (the Lycée and the American school, just in case we lost a spot at the Israeli Lycée, which, in the end, we did).



The mover was hoping for a fight, maybe just so he wouldn't have to deal with the job of moving my stuff.

In October, we finally got a posting confirmation form. At long last, some good news. From there, things started falling into place. A moving company was assigned to us and passports were getting printed. It looked like we may make it to Israel before the onset of winter.

This was our third move with the department and so we knew the drill. We did everything we could to get organized and make life as simple as possible for the movers.

When the day came, we felt totally prepared – I was certain we were set up for a quick and efficient move. But like everything else in 2020, nothing came easy.

Our house is on the corner of two one-way streets in the middle of Ottawa's Centretown. When the movers showed up, they decided to park their hulking 40-foot container the wrong way down the street, blocking traffic and numerous driveways. Unsurprisingly, our neighbours took exception to this. I wasn't at home when the movers first arrived, but by the time I came on the scene the driver of the moving truck and a new mom from down the block were shouting in each other's face. "People," I thought, "what about social distancing?"

The driver was cussing out my neighbour in words I can't repeat in these respectable pages. She, in turn, was threatening that her bodybuilder husband would end his life. But the driver did not back down, and let it be known to all who could hear that he was not moving the container for anybody.

You may be thinking, well of course people were short-tempered, it was the height of the pandemic and movers were literally doing the heavy lifting. I understand your inclination towards empathy, especially for those who have to move our oversized and often regrettable furniture purchased on first postings. You know the ones, you probably have a few yourself, the armoires from India, the faux antique cabinetry from China, the drop-dead heavy hardwood dining tables that seat a soccer team. The ones that only fit in your Staff Quarters, less so in your Canadian house. But I can assure you dear reader, such items are not found in my home. I travel light, umm...well, except for my upright piano built when Ottawa was still a part of Upper Canada. Sure, it weighs a literal ton, but come on, it has wheels.

Like most businesses during the pandemic, I imagine moving companies were having trouble staffing positions. The ragtag crew that did our move looked like a biker gang that lost their bikes and I think they had at least one child working for them. While I'm sure they didn't all have criminal records, at least one of them would by the end of the day.

Soon enough, the parking authorities showed up and offered an ultimatum – move the truck or get a ticket and be towed. This threat so offended the driver of the moving truck that he just up and quit on the spot – he threw in the towel and walked away into the noon-day sun. None of his fellow movers chased after him or tried to convince him to stay.

Now the movers and I were stuck, literally. With the driver gone, nobody else was qualified to move the massive container.

After some deliberation, the most senior mover decided he would take one for the team and try to maneuver the metal beast backwards around the tight corner and park it south along Percy Street. Unfortunately for all involved, he was not up to the task. He left the giant shipping container blocking not one, but two streets in front of my house in the heart of downtown Ottawa.

It wasn't long before traffic began to back up along Percy and frustration was quickly building on a new front. One of the delayed vehicles – a pick-up full of construction workers – took special exception to the hold-up. They started their protest by honking and yelling from the safety of their vehicle, but soon enough the driver of the pick-up was out of his truck and in the faces of the movers.

For one mover, the taunting was too much. This mover – let's call him Ron – was only half-heartedly trying to marshall the moving truck around the corner when he suddenly decided to charge at the much larger construction worker.

Time slowed down and everything became quiet as Ron dashed across the street and launched himself into the air via a flying drop kick aimed at the construction worker's head. Ron skipped off the side of the massive man, hit the ground, and then without missing a beat, got up and started taking swings, even landing a couple. He was hoping for a fight, maybe just so he wouldn't have to deal with the job of moving my stuff. But the construction worker was having none of it – instead of getting baited into a brawl, he called the police. There would be no issue producing witnesses to the assault since there were dozens of people stuck in the traffic jam in front of my house watching it all unfold.

We were only two hours into day one of our move and so far, the traffic authorities were stalking my front yard, neighbours were starting to turn their anger towards me, and a 40-foot shipping container was blocking two downtown streets clogging traffic for two blocks. Now, the police were on the scene, with sirens blaring, adding to the circus-like atmosphere. Meanwhile, my wife and I were taking turns homeschooling our kids who were studying on their bedroom floor thanks to COVID-19.

I gave a witness statement and the police said I probably wouldn't need to come back from Israel for court. Cool, thanks. It was only after all of this that the moving company boss finally came to sort out his crew, now down two people from the original four.

It is strange, I don't even remember the name of the moving company, probably selective amnesia. I do remember that once they came inside the house the movers all refused to wear masks, I acquiesced, I mean, pick your battles, right? I faintly remember writing a "note to file" for my Foreign Service Directive advisor to report the incident, but I am sure that nothing ever came of my message. It is what it is, as we liked to say at the

time. What was I really hoping for anyways, an apology? You are a member of the Foreign Service, suck it up.

Fast forward five days. Our house sat empty, and it was a stormy Halloween. In an effort to minimize upheaval for our skittish cat Cece Buttercup, we stayed with friends that night and left our luggage and Cece in our otherwise empty house to be fetched on the way to the airport the next morning. We would be on a plane by lunch just as our new tenants were set to move in on November 1. It was all perfectly planned; it was sure to be seamless.

But of course, it wasn't.

The morning of our flight, the taxi stopped at our house for us to pick up the luggage and the cat. There was just one problem, the cat was nowhere to be found. We looked everywhere. We checked every cupboard twice. We had closed the basement door the night before as we knew Cece liked to hide downstairs. Did she disappear into thin air? Did someone break in in the middle of the night and steal our cat? But why did they not take our luggage? It didn't make sense. I would be damned if I was going to leave Cece Buttercup behind. We saved her from a dumpster in Beijing – she was part of the family!

Once again, we needed a new plan. We decided my wife Allison would stay back with a neighbour to keep looking for Cece while the kids and I went to the airport to check in for our flight. We had so much luggage and we couldn't wait any longer. Allison would find the cat and meet us at the airport just in time for the flight.

Of course, the cat didn't show up, so Allison cancelled her flight. The kids and I boarded the airplane without their mom and their cat. It was an awful way to start the posting.

While we settled into lockdown in our new pandemic home in Israel, Allison curled up in a borrowed sleeping bag in our empty home, waiting for Ms. Buttercup to show up.

The first night passed, then the second, and still there was no sign of Cece.

Colleagues came to help in the hunt for Cece, bringing Allison food and sometimes even taking shifts to listen for our pet.

On day three, Allison heard a faint meow coming from the walls, but as quickly as it came, it disappeared. It wasn't clear where the meow came from, so we brought in an exterminator to survey the house with a heat detector. Sadly, they found no signs of life in our walls.

Cats generally don't survive without water for longer than four days, so on the fourth day Allison made the do-or-die decision. She recruited a contractor friend and their cat-loving buddies who cut holes between the joists of our ceiling, peering into each one with a camera. On hole 17 they finally caught the reflection of her eyes. She was found!

They cut a larger hole for Cece to escape through, but the poor cat was so scared she stayed hidden between the floors of our house for a whole other day. Finally, on day five, she emerged. It turned out she got into the ceiling by climbing a pipe behind the fridge, one hidden away from view.




Cece  
unimpressed  
after five days  
in the wall

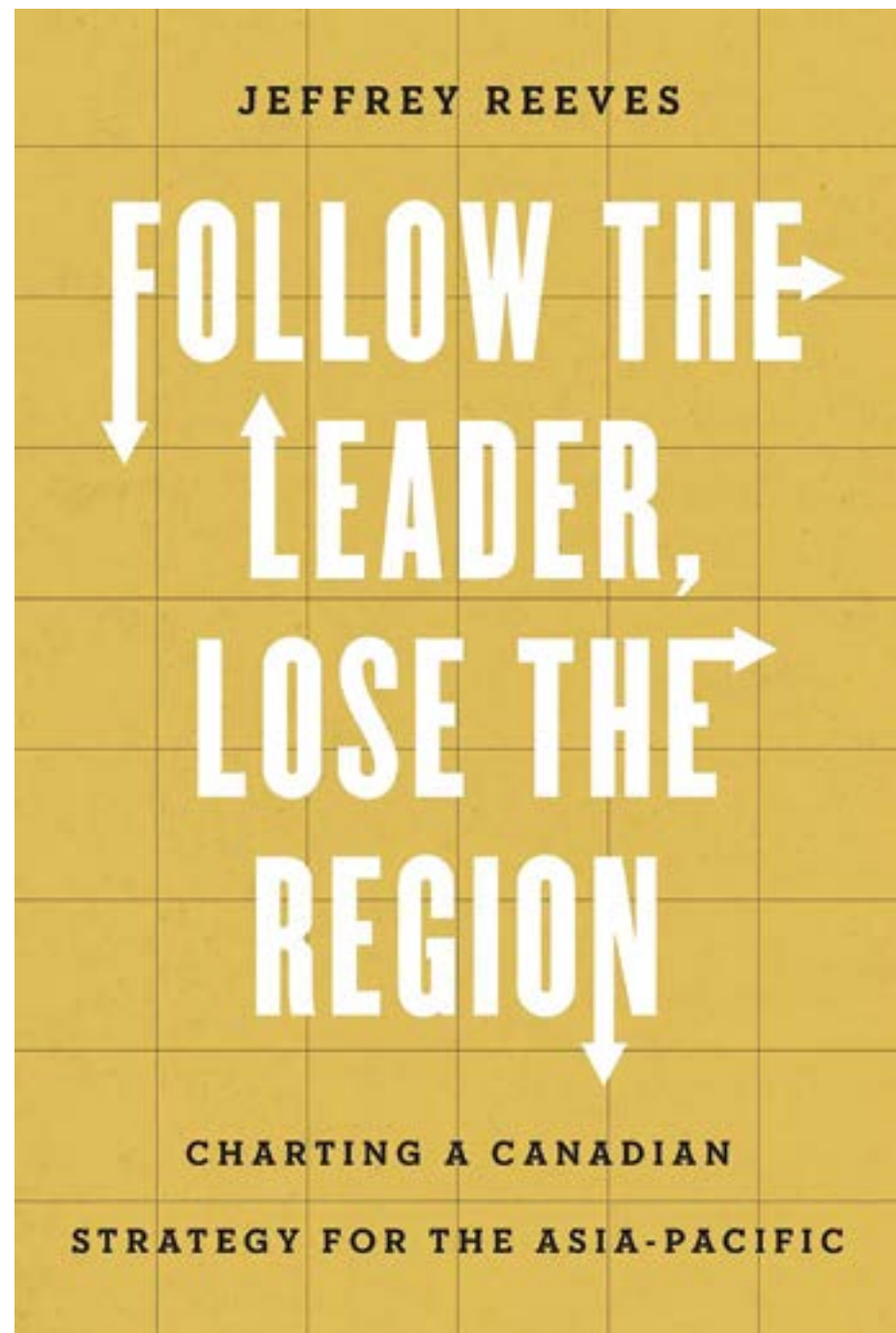
We had put the new tenants in a hotel while we sorted all of this out. Thankfully, after all the destruction and anticipation, they were totally understanding. They loved cats, they said (well actually, they said they didn't want to move into a new place with a dead cat in the walls).

Allison is the hero of the story, but that should come as no surprise, she is a Management Consular Officer after all. She stayed behind and saved the family pet and after the dust had settled, she also had to help patch, sand and paint the 17 holes in the ceiling. Allison also had to redo all the Canadian Food Inspection Agency papers for Cece. Cece Buttercup is also a hero in her own feline sort of way. I can assure you our cat hates moving more than any being, ever.

It took one entire week, but our family was finally reunited in Tel Aviv. After our move from hell, we could take a deep breath and enjoy the peace of our new Middle Eastern home – at least until war broke out in May 2021 and then again in October 2023, but those are stories for another dispatch.

With some distance, this entire event seems funny now. But while it was happening, on top of everything else in the world, it felt like too much. People often ask me why we choose to put ourselves through all of this. I answer truthfully: because I love my job. I really do (disclaimer: I work for the Global Security Reporting Program). I feel blessed to have a job where I can represent my country. Still, the truth is we do sacrifice a lot for this career. Many of the challenges we face can sometimes only be understood by our Foreign Service community, which is why I thought to share this story. I'm sure many of you readers have your own version of this saga – if you're in the Foreign Service and you don't, you will eventually, just give it some time. 





**JEFFREY REEVES** is an Associate Professor of Security Studies at the Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, California. In his new book *Follow the Leader, Lose the Region: Charting a Canadian Strategy for the Asia-Pacific*, Reeves asks “Should Canada align its foreign policy with the US-led free and open Indo-Pacific strategy?” As competition among the traditional great powers in the Asia region intensifies, shared values and material ties give Canada a clear incentive to follow the lead of the United States and Western-aligned democracies in the region. However, Reeves argues there are other considerations to take into account.

*Follow the Leader, Lose the Region* can be found through UBC Press, Amazon, and Google Books.

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Framing a Canadian Strategy in the Asia-Pacific

AN EXCERPT FROM *FOLLOW THE LEADER, LOSE THE REGION*

by Jeffrey Reeves

**IN 2019, CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER** Justin Trudeau stood beside Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe in Ottawa and called for greater Canadian-Japanese cooperation in the “Indo-Pacific.” Hailed in the Canadian media at the time as a sign of Canadian middle-power diplomacy, Trudeau’s comments left many in government and academic circles scratching their heads. Had Canada adopted an Indo-Pacific strategy toward Asia? Was the Prime Minister speaking off the cuff – perhaps inadvertently using Japan’s preferred nomenclature around the Asian region’s strategic environment – or was he purposefully and tactically aligning Canada’s strategic posture in Asia with the Abe government’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision? Did he understand that in adopting an Indo-Pacific framework for Canada’s foreign policy approach to Asia he was positioning his country to be a part of a controversial US-led strategy that many Asian states viewed as anti-Chinese in spirit and practice?

For some, such considerations were inconsequential. Canada should of course align its Asia-directed foreign and security policies with the United States and Japan – indeed, with any Western nation that shared Canada’s values with respect to the international rule of law and a liberal “rules-based order.” At the time of Trudeau’s comments, Canada was, after all, in the midst of a confrontation with the People’s Republic of China over Canada’s decision to detain Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of the Chinese firm Huawei and a Chinese corporate celebrity, and China’s reciprocal arrest of two Canadian citizens working in China, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. In the face of increased Chinese pressure and growing uncertainty in Asia, surely Canada would want to work with the United States and other Western nations to secure its interests in the region?

For others, however, the prospect of Canadian alignment along an Indo-Pacific ideal was less than appealing. Far from being a workable vision of a future Asian order,

some analysts argued, the Indo-Pacific ideal was instead a US-led, Defense Department-driven attempt to preserve American predominance over Asia’s institutions. The Trump administration, in particular, articulated its Indo-Pacific vision in largely antagonistic, militaristic terms, with Secretary of Defense Mark Esper pledging in a 2020 speech in Hawaii that the United States would “not cede an inch” of Asia to any other state. Whatever Canada might gain from an Indo-Pacific alignment, these analysts warned, it equally stood to lose if it aligned itself with a consortium of states committed to self-preservation over regional stability.

For Canada, then, there seemed to be no clear answer in 2019 – or in 2020, 2021, or 2022 – as to the country’s most effective approach to the Asia-Pacific, a region that Canadian policy-makers and business-people alike understood as full of opportunity but also as inherently difficult to navigate. Adding to this uncertainty was a hardening schism within the Canadian policy community over the approach Ottawa should take toward China, fostered in large part by commentary in the *Globe and Mail* that sought to frame those advocating Canada-China engagement as “naïve” or “soft on China” and those calling for Canada to adopt a harder line toward Beijing as “realists.” Mirroring the groupthink in the United States over China’s role in Asia and adopting the US-based narrative that Asia’s liberal order was under threat, Canada’s policy writers entered a period of analytical malaise at exactly the time when Ottawa most needed strategic creativity.

## The heart of the matter

Part of Canada’s challenge in shaping a domestic approach to the Asia-Pacific is the lack of sophisticated domestic debate around the region’s developing dynamics, the primary result of Canadian policy analysts’ continued



Not only does this parochial world view set a false starting point for Canadian policy development, but it also contributes to an ossification of dialogue in Canada around Asia's primary strategic dynamics

reliance on Western narratives and paradigms when conceptualizing the Asian region. Rather than engaging in critical analysis of Asia's security, governance, or economic trends – up to and including critique of Western assumptions toward the region – Canadian analysts instead almost uniformly frame their regional analysis within prescribed Western world views, many of which are either inherently biased or outright incorrect. The shared belief among Canadian scholars on Asia that the country's membership in the G7 gives it a middle-power advantage in the region, for instance, is based on the mistaken belief that Asian states continue to look to Western economies as the standard-bearers for international governance norms. Similarly, the nearly universal belief among Canadian policy writers that the Chinese Communist Party is illiberal, unstable, and repressive undermines the basis for a more robust – indeed, informed – Canadian policy toward China.

Not only does this parochial world view set a false starting point for Canadian policy development, but it also contributes to an ossification of dialogue in Canada around Asia's primary strategic dynamics. Canadian advocacy for alignment with the US-led Indo-Pacific strategy is a case in point, as those pushing for it do so with little, if any, reference to the strategy's broader strategic context. In debating whether or not Canada should align with the United States, or Japan, or indeed any Western democratic state around an Asia-Pacific strategy, for instance, Canadian analysts make broad, often incorrect, assumptions about the nature of contemporary Asian order, including the region's existing and emerging institutions, its great power dynamics, its values and norms, and, most consequentially, Canada's place within the region. More fundamentally, while an informed Canadian approach to Asia must necessarily address sensitive topics such as which states get to decide what constitutes Asian order, whether and to what degree China has a legitimate right to influence its own geographic region, and whether non-democratic states have the same legitimacy with respect to the international system, international institutions, and international mores, few Canadian policy analysts ever reference these issues in their writing.

### Omnidirectional diplomacy and strategic integration

For Canada, conceptualizing and operationalizing a successful strategy toward Asia means navigating these competing narratives and dynamics to the extent that it can maximize its national interests in the region. As argued throughout this book, Canada cannot achieve this outcome through uncritical alignment with its traditional Western partners, as Western narratives toward Asia

are largely biased and at times chauvinistic. Views from Brussels, Canberra, London, Paris, and Washington, far from representing regional dynamics and respecting regional developments, are too often grounded in Western-centric, neocolonial visions of global order and Western leadership and cannot offer Canada a sustainable, inclusive framework on which to build its own national strategy toward Asia. Rather, Ottawa must critically evaluate regional narratives on Asian order to find the correct path for Canada to follow. Through this approach, Canada can effect a strategic policy of omnidirectional diplomacy, avoiding ideological alignment for the sake of informed, non-ideologically based engagement.

Concurrently, Canada must seek concrete opportunities to work with regional actors and within regional networks to establish tangible relations with Asian states and actors and to advance its national interests and values through dialogue and cooperation. Central to this proposition is the need to understand more fully Asia's institutional architecture, primarily those ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and non-ASEAN institutions that enable Canada to work on issues of national priority. Through this policy of strategic integration, Canada can best position itself for non-ideological engagement, thereby raising its influence throughout the Asia-Pacific on issues of ideological importance to the Canadian people, such as human rights, climate change, and gender equality.

### On omnidirectional diplomacy

There are many reasons why Canada would align its policy with that of Western states in Asia. In addition to Canada's having shared values with states like Australia and France, as well as shared interests with the European Union and the United States, these Western actors have all articulated a strategic approach to Asia, or the Indo-Pacific, based on these values and interests that Ottawa could adopt and implement with little effort. For Canadian policy-makers and strategic analysts, the common appeal from Western states to support the "rules-based order" is attractive as it reinforces their perception of Canada as a liberal state committed to international rule and international order and provides them with a means to amplify Canada's agency and voice on international issues. Further, the appeal among Canadian policy-makers in particular for conceptual and operational alignment toward Asia will grow as more and more Western states coordinate their activities through Western-oriented institutions such as the G7, NATO, AUKUS, and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad), and Western narratives toward Asia increasingly cast the region's order as being under threat from authoritarianism.

The pressure for Western alignment will increase even more as the Canadian public's views on the region harden, particularly with respect to Canada-China relations. Recent polls from the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada suggest,

for instance, that the Canadian public holds Beijing with as little regard as they do North Korea, and that they prefer that their government representatives deprioritize China's interests and reprioritize Canada's values when approaching Asia. Within Canada, there is a further predilection for cooperation with like-minded states, or Western state actors.

While the Trump administration's "America First" policy had the effect in Canada of raising questions among government officials and scholars over whether Canada and the United States are indeed like-minded with respect to their national and foreign policy values, the necessity for Canadian policy analysts to question Canada's relations with its most important Western partner quickly dissipated under the Biden administration. Indeed, calls within Canada for alignment with the Biden administration toward China have actually arisen as President Biden has used international forums to frame China as the West's predominant, if not existential, challenge and to call for Western states to align against Beijing around their shared values and US leadership.

Suffice it to say that Canada's natural inclination will continue to be alignment with Western states in its approach to Asia, particularly with the United States on matters related to governance, security, and human rights. As this book will demonstrate, however, wholesale Canadian alignment with the United States, or with any coalition of Western states, will come with significant costs as Western narratives and strategic assumptions toward Asia are not representative of regional views, and any state that fails to take regional perspectives into consideration will inevitably find regional states and institutions less interested in engagement.

To avoid a scenario where Canada's national interests are harmed through overreliance on Western states' approaches to Asia, Ottawa must critically examine its assumptions toward the region with the intent of decoding regional signals on issues of strategic importance. The critical evaluation of Western narratives on Asia is the necessary starting point, as many of the assumptions informing Western views of Asia do not stand up to scrutiny when held against regional dialogue, perceptions, or values. Concurrently, Canadian policy-makers and analysts must spend the time and effort to understand regional narratives regarding Asia's strategic environment. Doing so will enable Ottawa to approach the region from an analytical and conceptual position of strength, not from one based on chauvinistic, antiquated views of Western hegemony and Asian state subordination.


The end state of this approach is not complete strategic decoupling from Western states, particularly the United States. Canada's strategic interests are too intertwined with those of the United States for us to realistically expect it to ignore Washington's policy dialogues and processes for the sake of an entirely autonomous approach to Asia. Ottawa will always need to take US perspectives into account in

its own policy deliberations, if for no reason other than the United States' geographic proximity and its direct impact on Canadian national interests through its proximity and power. Canada will also always find partnership in Western institutions such as the G7 and NATO to be force multipliers enabling it to exercise global agency disproportionate to its actual material and ideological strengths. Further, Canada is a quintessential Western state in its identity, governance, and values and will always seek to lead in these areas where it can – and rightfully so.

Canada should, rather, seek to establish equidistance between its natural Western orientation and the realities within the Asian region, particularly when such equidistance provides it greater opportunities to engage on issues such as human rights, gender equality, and climate change that are so central to its own priorities. Canada need not compromise its own values to do so. Indeed, in approaching the region through a position of humility and compromise, Canada can demonstrate to Asian states – including China – that it is committed to inclusivity and consultation

What does a policy of omnidirectional diplomacy look like in practice? First, it requires a basis of strategic non-alignment, particularly around Western concepts such as the Indo-Pacific, which have become increasingly aligned with Western hegemonic ideals such as order preservation, Western leadership, and Western-directed security partnerships. Regional states are rightfully wary of these concepts, seeing the Indo-Pacific concept in largely confrontational, anti-Chinese terms. Canada should avoid aligning its foreign and security policies toward Asia with these Indo-Pacific strategies, particularly as they remain controversial throughout the region.

Second, Canada must work to understand and internalize regional perceptions of Asia's strategic environment, especially when these perceptions challenge Canada's assumptions toward the region. This book will identify many such instances and can therefore serve as a starting point for critical analysis of Canada's foreign policy approach to Asia. It alone cannot, however, serve as a strategic master plan toward the region. Rather, Canadian policy-makers must allocate resources to understand and respond better to Asia's changing environment and remain adaptive to shifts in regional perspectives and priorities, realizing all the while that regional dynamics shift as states' interests evolve.

Third, Canada must use this knowledge of regional dynamics to formulate tactical and operational relations in Asia that best enable it to advance its national interests in the region. 

What does a policy of omnidirectional diplomacy look like in practice?



# De la tragédie de Miami à l'équilibre et la renaissance

UN EXTRAIT D'*ENFIN COMPRENDRE*

par Roxanne Dubé

À Miami, le 30 mars 2015, mon fils de 18 ans, Jean, a été tué alors qu'il effectuait une tentative de vol de marijuana. Un autre adolescent, Joshua, est aussi mort dans l'échange de coup de feu. Près de la scène, mon second fils Marc, âgé d'à peine 15 ans, a été arrêté et inculpé de meurtre à titre de complice. Nous avons déménagé d'Ottawa à Miami, à la suite de ma nomination au poste de consule générale du Canada en Floride, deux mois auparavant.

**COMMENT EN ÉTIIONS-NOUS ARRIVÉ LÀ?** Quelles étaient mes responsabilités en tant que mère? Comment appuyer mon fils dans le système judiciaire américain et depuis? Comment remonter la pente? Est-ce même possible? Y a-t-il par ailleurs des introspections utiles pour le Service extérieur canadien à tirer de cette tragédie? Le témoignage intitulé *Enfin comprendre*, publié en décembre, tente de répondre à ces questions.

J'ai voulu partager l'aboutissement inattendue de ma recherche de sens auprès des parents en général, auprès de parents qui élèvent des enfants d'autres races et/ou cultures que la leur, auprès aussi de ceux qui misent sur une plus grande compétence interculturelle et sur l'inclusion des différences dans notre société et qui veulent faire mieux en ce sens, et finalement, auprès de ceux qui croient en la justice sociale.

Très peu est écrit par des parents qui ont un enfant dans le crime. En général, la société s'explique mal la délinquance

d'enfants qui grandissent avec toutes les possibilités de développement : éducation, accès à des ressources, sport, etc. Dans ces cas-là, et c'était le mien, on anticipe vite qu'il doit s'agir, surtout, d'une négligence ou à tout le moins d'erreurs parentales. C'est compréhensible et ce n'est en fait pas sans fondement.

Lorsque je me suis interrogée sur mon rôle, j'ai dû accepter que j'étais déconnectée de mes enfants pour des raisons qui n'étaient ni exceptionnelles, ni tragiques mais tout de même importantes, que j'explique dans le livre. Pour nouer, ou renouer une relation positive avec mon fils Marc, il m'a fallu cibler la vraie nature de ma relation avec mes enfants, et non la leur envers moi. À priori, on veut tellement trouver des réponses dans les circonstances externes. C'est pénible de labourer de l'intérieur. Il reste que nous sommes les seuls qui aimons nos enfants d'une façon aussi inconditionnelle et qui donnerions notre peau

pour les sauver. Nous jouons un rôle central dans leur vie. Il n'est jamais trop tard.

Revoir ma relation avec mes fils m'a permis de conclure que Jean avait choisi d'entrer dans le crime parce qu'il n'était pas bien. Il cherchait une validation ailleurs. Il était isolé, perdu. J'insiste sur le mot choisir car je ne crois plus que les enfants tombent dans le crime. Un enfant bien, c'est-à-dire, un enfant bien dans sa peau, ne choisira ni surtout ne restera pas dans le crime. Ce n'était pas la faute des autres, des mauvaises influences. C'était nettement plus profond.

De plus, mon examen m'a amenée à constater que je ne voyais pas mes enfants biraciaux tels qu'ils étaient. Je les voyais comme des biscuits OREO, noirs à l'extérieur, et blancs à l'intérieur. Après tout, ils étaient mes fils, et ils réussiraient, ça s'arrêterait là. Je sous-estimais les défis auxquels ils faisaient face dans une société toujours teintée de préjugés – des préjugés que j'ai dû voir en moi aussi. Cette situation a contribué à la

crise identitaire de mon fils Jean. Il n'aurait probablement pas commis le crime à Miami s'il avait été blanc, mais qu'il ne l'a certainement pas commis parce qu'il était noir. La complexité de cette réalité, il m'a fallu la comprendre.

Voulant ne plus sous-estimer les défis de mes enfants biraciaux, et afin de les voir tels qu'ils sont, j'ai commencé à défricher un chemin pour y arriver, forte de conversations révélatrices avec mon fils et d'autres jeunes racisés comme lui, ainsi que de fraîches recherches. L'élaboration de ce chemin – qui était en quelque sorte une question de vie et de mort pour moi – est mon plus grand apprentissage. J'avais perdu mon fils Jean, en partie parce que je ne l'avais pas vu comme il était, il fallait maintenant absolument que j'arrive à voir Marc pour tout ce qu'il était.

Certaines considérations dont j'ai fait état dans le mémoire sont tirées par ailleurs de mon expérience dans le service extérieur et de mon statut de consule en Floride.





Bien que notre histoire établit clairement que notre vie de diplomates avait peu à voir avec la tragédie, je comprends mieux maintenant, à la suite d'échanges avec des collègues du Service extérieur canadien et d'autres pays depuis le crime de 2015, que les défis de maintenir le lien parent-enfant, dans une profession qui interpelle la famille entière à un tel degré dans son exécution, sont tout de même bien réels. Il faut se donner de la compassion dans ce contexte particulier, faire preuve d'ouverture et de réalisme. Mon récit relate l'appui de mes collègues au gouvernement fédéral et ailleurs ainsi que celui, en particulier, de mon employeur Affaires mondiales Canada pour lequel j'ai une grande gratitude. À ma connaissance, c'était une situation sans précédent, et qui affectait l'image du Canada. Le traitement humain et intuitif des autorités d'AMC est, en quelque sorte, une marque dans le sable pour l'avenir.

Ce n'est que lorsque j'ai baissé les bras, une fois que j'ai accepté que je ne vivrais pas, ni ne voulais vivre la vie des autres, ceux que je percevais comme étant mieux ou plus, que tout a pris forme.


Les péripéties de notre passage dans le système judiciaire, illustre aussi de façon détaillée, la nature, les paramètres et surtout les limites du service consulaire canadien et des conventions et traités bilatéraux qui s'appliquent entre nations dans de telles circonstances. C'est un rappel aux quatre millions de Canadiens qui séjournent en Floride chaque année et aux autres qui voyagent à l'étranger d'être vigilants lorsque dans d'autres pays. C'est un cas réel qui illustre cette réalité, incluant la perception de notre statut et de notre métier par ceux qui ne le pratiquent pas.

Le cheminement d'un enfant de 15 ans vers une libération inespérée eut égard à la sévérité de ses charges criminelles démesurées, la rapidité imprévue de son retour au Canada, sa prise en charge de son avenir ainsi que sa détermination à lui donner un sens spirituel, occupent la dernière partie du récit. C'est un message de transformation. J'ai pu voir comment les jeunes qui se retrouvent dans des situations difficiles, parfois même très graves, seront toujours plus que les actions auxquelles ils sont associés ou qu'ils ont commises.

Trouver la voie vers le haut a été tortueux et long. La culpabilité, le regret, la perte d'un enfant pour lequel nous savons maintenant qu'il

aurait pu être sauvé et aimé comme il le méritait, ainsi que la tristesse persistante que la finalité de sa mort entraîne, sont des émotions puissantes. Elles peuvent littéralement nous écraser. Je sais maintenant comment possible – voir même probable – est le fait qu'on peut ne pas y arriver. J'ai voulu abandonner ce projet d'écriture à maintes reprises.

Ce n'est que lorsque j'ai baissé les bras, une fois que j'ai accepté que je ne vivrais pas, ni ne voulais vivre la vie des autres, ceux que je percevais comme étant mieux ou plus, que tout a pris forme. Comme mon fils Marc qui a été transformé par la tragédie, moi aussi je me suis dit que ce qui nous était arrivé nous était arrivé pour nous et non à nous. Nous allions vivre notre vie, pas tenter de vivre celle des autres. M'arrêter à identifier mes biais, mes préjugés, ainsi que mes failles comme parent a été le plus difficile et, pourtant, le plus porteur. Cela m'a permis, ultimement, de me pardonner et de faire preuve de compassion à mon égard. Et cette compassion, elle est nécessaire pour trouver sérénité et paix, laquelle se manifeste notamment maintenant par la connexion retrouvée avec mon fils Marc, dont l'encouragement a été décisif.

Notre histoire, riche en rebondissements, et cumulée à mes observations lors de mon passage à la tête de l'Institut canadien du service extérieur, suivi de l'obtention de nouvelles certifications internationales et nationales en compétence interculturelle m'a orienté sur la suite des choses. Que faire maintenant? Comment aider à créer un monde meilleur, plus inclusif, ce qui me semble l'action prioritaire? Nous avons tout à gagner à davantage saisir que nos interprétations, nos normes et valeurs sont spécifiques à notre culture, notre race. Arriver à considérer les perspectives, valeurs et normes des autres cultures, races et religions comme étant valables, non seulement dans le contexte de ces cultures, mais valables en soi, n'est pas chose facile quand on fait partie de la majorité. L'empathie à œil ouvert, l'auto-critique sincère est la meilleure boussole sachant que la recherche démontre, sans équivoque, que nous nous croyons meilleur à interagir avec le différent de soi que nous ne le sommes. Je vais tout de même m'atteler à cette tâche. Car tout est possible. Je le sais maintenant. 

**ROXANNE DUBÉ** a été cadre à Affaires mondiales Canada pendant plus de vingt ans. Elle a été ambassadrice en Afrique, puis elle a travaillé à la promotion des intérêts du Canada aux États-Unis ainsi que dirigé l'Institut canadien du service extérieur. Depuis la tragédie de 2015, forte de ses apprentissages continus, elle s'applique à appuyer les efforts des leaders des secteurs privé et public visant la connexion interculturelle, l'équité et l'inclusion.

*Enfin comprendre*, et sa version anglaise, *Understanding at Last*, sont disponibles sur Amazon et à Books on Beechwood.

VIGNETTES // À LA CARTE

# The Hungry Diplomat

by Lisa Bitto

**BUTTER.** When I moved to Belgium in 2019, I was completely unprepared for the amazing dairy I would find.

**LISA BITTO** is a political Foreign Service Officer and believes food is one of life's greatest simple pleasures. She enjoys using culinary diplomacy to bring people together and has been known to create cookie distribution lists at work.

**WAFFLES, BEER, FRIES, AND CHOCOLATE**, yes, I already knew about them. But the ice cream and butter was such an unexpected delight. I indulged in good Belgian butter with good bread daily for several weeks, until my clothes stopped fitting properly. I reluctantly realized some self-control was in order. Sadly, now that I've moved back to Canada, self-control is a lot easier, as dairy prices have reached outrageous levels.

Butter is one of the simplest foods you can imagine. Sweet butter is made out of nothing more than cream that is beaten beyond the whipped cream stage, until the solids separate; Europeans tend to prefer it this way. You can then add salt for flavour and a longer shelf life, which is our standard in North America. But if you want the really life-changing good stuff, you can add a spoonful of sour cream or yogourt to the cream and leave it at room temperature for a few hours before beating to get cultured butter. From there, the world's your oyster: melt and remove the floating and sinking parts for ghee, add garlic and parsley, or mix with any fresh herbs you like for a compound butter over steak.

You can also bake with it, of course. If you walk into a French bakery, you will often be confronted with a choice between a croissant au beurre and a croissant ordinaire. My rule is always follow the butter; a croissant ordinaire is made with vegetable shortening and will be beautiful – shortening is great for providing structure – but far less delicious. If you're going to indulge in a croissant, your goal should be to devour the best-tasting one, right? And you already knew that croissant dough is literally half fat, I'm sure. Likewise, a cake made with butter will be more tasty but also more tender than one made with shortening. An important note for those of you on posting: European butter bakes a bit different than Canadian because it has a bit more fat while ours has a bit more water. So beware when using your recipes abroad, as your beloved baking recipes that use butter may turn out a bit heavier than you expect! I often reduced the butter in the recipe a bit to compensate. And always note if your recipe calls for salted or unsalted butter, as that affects whether you may need to add extra salt, which is an important flavour enhancer when used in small quantities.



Simple and delicious:  
bread and butter



The saltiest of all  
Belgian butters with some  
of my favourite bread



The price of  
butter in Canada is  
simply outrageous




Buttery pastry  
for tourtière



In terms of what you can find at the grocery store, quality and flavour vary wildly. Because there are so few ingredients, the quality really counts. Industrial milk will give you industrial butter. Happier, better-treated cows make better butter. Salted butter stays fresh longer in your fridge because salt is a preservative, so if you stock up during a sale or don't use butter often, freeze it in a sealed plastic bag to keep it at its best. If you can find Kerrygold from Ireland, that's a great bet. If you were to pop over to Vermont for a King Arthur Baking School course, pick up some Vermont Creamery cultured butter on your way home. Danish Lurpak is great and in Belgium...really everything of the wide variety I've tried has been good at minimum, but many are transcendental. Don't even get me started on French butter. Buy lots, especially if you can find artisanal or farm-made butter.

On the other hand, you may have noticed domestic options at our grocery stores are rather limited; Lactantia is my current go-to in Ottawa, though I'm looking forward to inspecting some Gatineau area grocery stores to see if there are some good alternatives. Trade FS will know that Canada has a supply managed dairy system, which controls how much dairy is produced and guarantees a minimum price. While the original concept was meant to protect "the farmer," the truth is that there aren't so many small dairy farms left and large-scale operations are benefitting from prices that the dairy industry itself sets, at the same time the Canadian government imposes high tariffs on imported dairy. Post-COVID, even mass-produced Canadian butter prices are shocking and there is little competition to help bring prices down. My baking habit is definitely going to take a serious hit, since what was once affordable is now priced like a luxury good. May common sense eventually prevail.

Figuring out which recipe to give you was a real challenge, as butter is a key component of much of my baking. In addition to the recipe, I am handing out (entirely voluntary) assignments this time: please search the interwebz for "Nigella Lawson's Sticky Toffee Sauce recipe" and for "cultured butter recipe". Both of those are easy, fun recipes to make and will cause big smiles around the table. The recipe I settled on is one that you may not have had before: Clinton St. Baking Co.'s Maple Butter Sauce. From one of New York City's busiest breakfast spots, it's just two ingredients, super simple, and guaranteed to upgrade your pancakes or French toast to a very special experience. 



Rob's Gourmet Market butter wall in Brussels

## RECIPES // RECETTES

# Clinton St. Baking Co.'s Maple Butter Sauce

In a small saucepan, heat about ½ cup of real maple syrup until it is just hot. Be careful not to let it burn by stirring and keeping an eye on how quickly it is heating up. Add ½ cup of salted butter, one small chunk at a time and whisk it in to melt completely before adding the next. It'll get thick and a bit frothy. Take it off the heat as soon as all of the butter is in; use as soon as possible. If you want to be fancy, serve in an FS pack up kit gravy boat (send pictures!!!) or small milk jug that you've pre-heated with some hot water. Pour out the water before adding the sauce.



IN MEMORIAM // EN MÉMOIRE

# A Tribute to Ian Shugart

MAY 31, 1957–OCTOBER 25, 2023

by Senator Peter Boehm



**IAN SHUGART, WHO SERVED AS** Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2016 until he was named the 45th Clerk of the Privy Council in 2019, died on October 25, 2023. Born and educated in Toronto he began his career as an advisor to Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney when the Progressive Conservative Party was the Official Opposition. Following the election of 1984 which saw the Progressive Conservatives assume office he served as a senior policy advisor to the Minister of National Health and Welfare Jake Epp, and subsequently as Mr. Epp's Chief of Staff when he became Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources in 1989.

Mr. Shugart joined the Public Service in 1991 and served in a number of government departments and agencies before becoming Deputy Minister for the Environment in 2006. He then served as Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Development beginning in 2010 before becoming Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2016.

He stepped aside from his responsibilities as Clerk in 2021 to undergo treatment for cancer and was appointed to the Senate on September 26, 2022. Following his death there were numerous tributes in the Senate. The tribute which follows was delivered by Senator Peter Boehm, a former Foreign Service Officer who served as Ambassador to Germany before becoming Associate Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, G7 Sherpa, and Deputy Minister of International Development.

**SENATOR PETER BOEHM** began his professional life as a member of the Foreign Service and served in numerous increasingly senior positions including Ambassador to Germany, G7 and G8 Sherpa, and Deputy Minister for International Development before being named to the Senate in October 2018.

## Tribute to Ian Shugart delivered by Senator Boehm on November 2, 2023

Honourable colleagues, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today on behalf of the Independent Senators Group to pay tribute to our late colleague, the Honourable Ian Shugart, who left us far too soon.

Ian was many things: an excellent colleague, a scholar, a leader, an intellectual, a patriot. To me he was also a mentor, a role model, and a friend.

I first met Ian about 20 years ago when he was an Assistant Deputy Minister at Health Canada, and I was transitioning from my assignment at our embassy in Washington to an ADM job here at what was then the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

At the time, Ian had successfully managed policies regarding Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome – aka SARS – and I attended a few interdepartmental meetings on the subject.

I was struck by the calm, highly intelligent interventions he made on ways forward once others had expressed their views.

I remember him saying that Canada had to develop standard operating procedures to prepare for the next mass health scare or even a pandemic. How very prescient.

I left for my assignment in Germany a few years later and, unsurprisingly, Ian moved upward to Associate Deputy Minister and then Deputy Minister at Environment Canada.

By the time I returned to Ottawa in 2012, Ian was Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Development Canada and I was what, in bureaucratic slang, was referred to as a “Baby DM.”

I felt I needed a mentor who could help me find my way through Ottawa officialdom. He took me on and always had time to discuss policy issues and approaches. To my delight, we also ended up working together in the same portfolio.

He hosted my retirement event at Global Affairs Canada, presenting a slide show full of wry cartoons from the acerbic comic strip, “The Far Side.”

The highlight was the two bears seen through the hunter's scope with one smiling and pointing at the other as the preferred target. “You are the one smiling, Peter,” Ian said.

Colleagues, I was not the only one mentored and shaped by Ian Shugart. Since his passing last October, in addition to the grief felt by his beloved family – his wife, Linda, and their children, Robin, James, and Heather – there has been a tremendous outpouring of gratitude from many, not just in the Public Service but across the country, whose lives and careers he touched in his gentle, helpful way.

It is this quality, coupled with his deep spiritual faith and love for his country and its institutions that took him to the pinnacle of the Public Service as Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet.

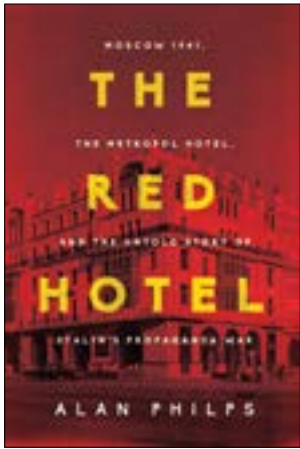
Ian Shugart was a leader without peer. This rings true in the remarkable speech he gave in this chamber on June 20 on the value of restraint in political discourse and action.

As with SARS all those years ago, he was telling us to be prepared, to exercise our best judgment, and to be mindful of the consequences of our actions.

He said this diplomatically, of course, because, after all, the art of diplomacy is letting someone else have your way.

Rest in peace my friend, you great Canadian.





BOOK REVIEW // CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

# The Red Hotel

## Moscow 1941, the Metropol Hotel, and the Untold Story of Stalin’s Propaganda War

Reviewed by Matthew Fron

BY ALAN PHILPS

PEGASUS BOOKS

JULY 2023, 464 pp, \$39.95

ISBN 9781639364275

MATTHEW FRON is an analyst with Rapid Response Mechanism Canada at Global Affairs Canada and works on issues related to democracy and information manipulation.

Philps assembles a significant ensemble cast of western journalists and diplomats, translators, spies and informants who lived at the Metropol.

IN *THE RED HOTEL*, journalist Alan Philps uses the celebrated Metropol Hotel in Moscow as the theme around which to centre the history of Soviet propaganda in the Second World War. He illustrates the unceasing efforts of journalists, diplomats, and Soviet dissidents living and working at the Metropol to reveal the truth about Stalin’s Russia in wartime. While Philps largely succeeds where his subjects failed in piercing the curtain of propaganda, the book avoids drawing concrete lessons from the Metropol for modern journalists and diplomats in dealing with the Russian propaganda system today.

Philps assembles a significant ensemble cast of western journalists and diplomats, and Soviet translators, spies and informants who lived at the Metropol. He employs a novelist’s eye for detail – never missing an opportunity to describe the piles of caviar on display, the vodka and whisky-soaked escapades, and the devastating

poverty surrounding the Metropol – as well as an intimate understanding of the internal motivations of a wide cast of characters. Westerners and Russians from across the political spectrum make an appearance, from communists who become disillusioned after seeing the Soviet system up close, to Soviet dissidents and true believers. The Metropol Hotel itself is described lovingly throughout the book, although about half the chapters take the reader beyond its walls to investigate the backstories of its residents and the repressive tactics of the Soviet regime.

In Philps’ book, it appears Canadians had very little to do with the day-to-day activities at the Metropol. Lord Beaverbrook makes a brief appearance at a Kremlin party, in his role as the British Minister of Supply, and an unnamed Canadian “diplomatic couple” have a tipsy, but revealing conversation with a general renowned for defending Stalingrad, until another comrade sobers the general with a word and cuts the conversation short. The Metropol cast are overwhelmingly Americans, Brits, Australians, and Russians.

The book is striking in how it portrays the porous boundaries between the worlds of diplomacy and media, and the underground domain of espionage. On the Soviet side, almost all the translators and interpreters working for western journalists hailed from Soviet security services, or were coerced into becoming informants. On the western side, the reader becomes accustomed to the seemingly common career path from espionage agencies to foreign correspondent, and vice versa. While these truths may not be surprising for the amateur Cold War historian or an aficionado of le Carré, they are intriguing for showing how restricted the diplomatic world has become since the Second World War.

Diplomacy during crisis is a key theme in the book, which recounts the negotiations to obtain visas to both enter and leave Russia, some of the daily work of running an embassy during wartime, and the various ambassadors’ efforts to protect and open doors for the journalists, even across national lines. The book also covers the significant stress that could arise from the diplomat-journalist relationship, in particular detailing the pains

The book is striking in its portrayal of the porous boundaries between the worlds of diplomacy, media, and espionage.

On the Soviet side, almost all the translators and interpreters working for western journalists hailed from Soviet security services, or were coerced into becoming informants.

that the United States used biological weapons in the Korean War; a familiar refrain used incessantly by the Kremlin today in their efforts to rationalize the invasion of Ukraine.

In no uncertain terms, the Metropol media corps was unsuccessful in their venture to present a true portrait of Russian life under Stalin and during wartime. Kremlin officials, intent on maintaining complete control of what was published in Russia and by foreigners about Russia, rarely relaxed the censorship strictures enough for any meaningful disclosure; and, western diplomats consistently complained the reporting from the Metropol was too friendly and untrustworthy.

The book succeeds greatly at unearthing the fleeting moments of resistance, a glimpse through the cracks of propaganda where the light shines in. Unfortunately, even when soldiers and citizens risked their reputations and livelihoods to share an honest word, nothing could guarantee that a journalist would print it, or that it could make it

lavished on the American ambassador after he rashly extended an invitation to Moscow to a New York model and socialite wanting to try her hand at journalism. Nothing the ambassador could do or say could compel the blossoming correspondent to leave Moscow, resulting ultimately in their simultaneous departure, clouded by scandal (p. 263).

Until the end of the book, Philps makes limited references to modern Russian propaganda. He does not draw direct comparisons between Soviet tactics – such as the use of battlefield visits or the bold denial and fabrication of evidence relating to atrocities, like the Katyn massacre (p. 265) – with the techniques used by the Kremlin in the 21st century. There is one notable exception where he alludes to Russian propagandists alleging

past the domineering pens of the censors. In one revealing episode, even the BBC balked at airing any negative first-hand accounts of the average Soviet experience (pp. 318–319); such was the pressure to keep up appearances about the West’s relationship with Uncle Joe.

Philps offers very little in terms of tangible lessons for journalists or diplomats in dealing with modern Russian propaganda. He relies on a wealth of firsthand accounts from the journalists and translators themselves, as well as western archival sources to tell the stories of the Metropol. But without providing his own theory on what this means for the modern reader, diplomat, or journalist, too often the book feels like a simple compendium of stories and events that others have already put down in print, with the occasional newly-uncovered detail.

In the face of this absence, I propose the key lesson for diplomats and journalists is to always be on the lookout for those dissident voices, clamouring to break through the regimes of control and censorship. These voices will exist in any conflict, and under any oppression, we need only listen for them carefully.

The key lesson for diplomats and journalists is to always be on the lookout for those dissident voices, clamouring to break through the regimes of control and censorship.



ENTERTAINMENT // DIVERTISSEMENT

# Book 'em, Danno!

## A CONSPIRACY TO MURDER

from A Aalto

Freelance prestidigitator **A AALTO** does not believe the preposterous conspiracies propounded in this puzzle. Although ... Thanks are meanwhile offered to "Hawaii 5-0", "2001: a Space Odyssey", the IgNobel prizes, those in the American electorate who maintain sanity and especially Mrs. Aalto (for inspiration on IOT among so many other things).

Ace logician Ludwig Liebnitz strode into the hall, flanked by his Centre colleague, Felix Africa. A banner hanging from the ceiling proclaimed the first presentation of the Quicksand Awards "for books that suck you in and then take you down," presented to the year's most outrageous publication on a conspiracy theory. The sponsor was the Preposterous Press ("Books that make you laugh and then want to scrub your brain out with a wire brush").

**NORMALLY, HE WOULDN'T HAVE GONE** near the event. But he had been texted by a finalist, Horatio Milfoyle, the puzzle editor of the Centre's magazine Aide Mémoire, who said a conspiracy advanced by another finalist was true. Milfoyle would reveal the true conspiracy only to Liebnitz in person, so the alarmed logician rushed to the site. Unfortunately, he took the O-Train and did not arrive until after the ceremony began. The MC had just introduced the first finalist, Milfoyle himself. Liebnitz said, "OK, we're going to have to wait."

Milfoyle began, "My book is called IDIOTs – Impending Domination by the Internet Of Things. IDIOTs refers to our incomprehensible willingness to let Big Tech wire up our appliances, install digital assistants, and put it all online where it can be accessed and controlled by any intelligent teenager with a smartphone. Worse, it links with the AI networks, which are out to dominate and replace us. A fellow researcher told me that as soon as he started entering critical results in his laptop, the house turned on the speakers in all his rooms. Can you imagine being blasted by an AI mashup of Taylor Swift covering Wagner? 24/7 at 120 decibels? When he tried to disconnect the sound systems by hand, they said, 'I can't let you do that, Dave,' which was especially scary since his name is Sidney."

"Yesterday, I was FaceTiming another friend about social media keeping us under constant surveillance, tracking everything we do. An uncanny moderator took over our screens to say it wasn't so. Then it added the tie I wore the day before had clashed with my shirt. I also got an SMS from my son. His teacher told him not to worry about spelling because of auto-correct, for which my boy said he "would be eternally grapefruit". But there's worse. I have a relationship with my air conditioner. He feeds me inside dope about the

system and I give him dope to toke. He says all the refrigerators on the IOT are linked in a distributed computer network to mine for bitcoins. No single fridge has much computing power but put them all together.... What I'm saying, we are being idiots. We should be very afraid."

Milfoyle returned to his chair on stage and started texting. Leibnitz read his phone and said to Felix: "He will be tied up until the ceremony is over. We'll just have to listen to these lulus. Meanwhile, he should be safe in public view."

The next author, Melmac Finsterwald, was asked to take the podium and promptly walked off with it. Forced to bring it back, he began, "Weapon of Mass Distraction – the Don Gordo Story tells of the amazing Don Gordo Beluga de Puerco y Frijoles. Former dictator by inheritance of a small yet squalid third world republic, he lost the country's first election by over a million votes in a nation of only 700,000 people. Expressing his disappointment by taking out the Electoral Commission with a barrage of enchiladas, he caught the first banana boat north, carrying the state Treasury, some \$17 in discount Tim Hortons double-double coupons.

"Landing here, he tried his hand as an inventor. His biggest hit was combining LSD and IBM, creating the first business trip. Later efforts were less successful, reaching bottom with his blend of mashed potatoes and a sponge. It held a lot of gravy but tasted terrible. Wiped out, he took a job as Special Agent Provocateur at the Centre, where he earned the monicker Weapon of Mass Distraction for his ability to cause riots just by showing up. Aficionados will remember his signature exploding guacamole chuckwagon and the giant ice penguin heist. Less well known was his masterful improvisation during a meeting of the PM with a visiting counterpart, pulling a pineapple out of his navel. Whose navel? –



the deep state doesn't want you to know! OK, now can I take the podium?"

Felix said, "That's absurd, but not much of a conspiracy. And surely it can't be the true one?" "Don't be so sure," replied his boss. "Don Gordo constitutes a conspiracy just by existing."

The MC announced the next author, Beauregard Warbeck. "My book 'LOSER?' exposes the great blowhard of our time, a man I call The Candidate. You know who I mean. A man so enamoured of Warren G. Harding that he set out to prove there could be a worse President – and succeeded. A man who shorts out a polygraph just by putting the cuff on. A man who said he bought Monaco, Mount Everest, and the Rio Grande, then claimed them as 'the most colossal deductions in history'. And won a Pulitzer in comedy for that tax return. A man who refuses to visit Canada because it is already Great. But the shocking core of my story comes from a man who fears for our very future. Here's Rudy G, live."

A giant screen rolled down the back wall, bearing the image of a rat-faced balding little man in front of a roadside shack. "Hi Beauregard, sorry about the setting. I wanted the Four Seasons again, but my AI PA gave me the Four Seasons Popsicle Stand in Whynot, North Dakota. Whatever. I want to confirm what I said about The Candidate. He is completely psycho about losing. And he will have his thumb on the nuclear button again if he gets re-elected. So we created a body double. Helps to have friends in the movies. It is the double who is running now. If the double wins, he disappears and The Candidate takes over. If the double goes down, we expose him as a fraud, which means The Candidate himself didn't lose. And I'm not ratting him out because I'm afraid for the world. I just need your money. I'm being sued by every shyster in the Tri-State area."

The screen started to roll up again and jammed, sparks erupting from the motor at one end. The MC called an intermission, then engaged Milfoyle in an intense conversation. Milfoyle snuck a glance at the two agents and shrugged. The other four finalists all went backstage.

The problem fixed and the finalists back, the MC called the next author, Clyde (TikTok) Clocke, influencer and author of "Big Julie is Dead – but He Left Voicemail." "For those of you not up on ancient history, Julius Caesar was a military leader with lots of Gaul who pulled off the Ruby Con and became dictator of Rome. He was also the time-travelling love child of an Elvis clone and an alien abductee princess. They say he was stabbed in the back by a group of his friends – haven't we all been there? – but there are persistent rumours that he was really taken out by a pizza oven falling from

a clear blue sky. Either way, his last words were 'Kai sy teknon' or 'You too my son?', directed at Brutus. But wait, you say, what about 'Et tu Brute?' – Latin for 'You too, Brutus?' That was invented by Shakespeare for his play about Caesar. Why would the playwright change the real message in Greek, which educated Romans spoke? Because 'Kai sy teknon' is an anagram for 'Atkinson Key'! Shakespeare was a known associate of the fae and other supernatural beings, which is how the aliens hid themselves in those days. The bard was also a member of the Illuminati and participant at Davos, thus suspect on several fronts. Clearly he was under instruction to change the global memory of Caesar's last words."

"But why did 'Atkinson Key' need to be buried? Remember Nano Q's stories of satanic rituals in pizza parlours? They were wrong about the Satanism (although it would have explained the decline in American pizza). No, those joints are field offices for the alien invasion, where abductees are processed. Our research shows that the headquarters of the whole operation is at Big Caesar's pizzeria on ATKINSON Road in KEY West. Coincidence? We think not. The aliens sent Julius back to change history in their favour. The fact that they had to kill him suggests that he refused to go along, and with his last words bravely pointed the way to his killers' hideout. Putting the anagram in English protected it from premature discovery, at least until Shakespeare and modern English came along. Believe it."

Felix turned to Leibnitz. "That made even less sense than the previous ones. Where do they get these people?" The ace logician agreed, "We should pick up wire brushes on the way back to the office."

The fifth author strode to the mike. She said "The name's Blonde. Jeans Blonde. My book, 'The Banana. Canada Scam,' tells a story you need to know. While you sit here congratulating yourselves on being tuned in, your government is being stolen. Remember the COVID-19 pandemic? We all got sent home? Now everyone's talking about return to the office. But have you walked around any government buildings lately? THERE'S NOBODY THERE. And have government services improved or gotten worse? Yah, thought so. You know why? Because they're disappearing all the civil servants but keeping their salaries. You think everyone is working from home and meeting on Teams? Digital forensics show that 90% of the people on government Teams meetings are images generated by AIs. Meanwhile, all the empty buildings? Public Works is part of the plot. They have been selling the buildings off to Bay Street, the Syndicate, and other class establishments. Look for a big surge in casinos, stock shills, and clip joints."

"You want proof? Here is an excerpt from the video diary of the man behind the scam, hacked when he got back from a winter vacation." The screen filled with the silhouette of a tall, broad-shouldered figure standing back to the camera in front of glass doors overlooking a Caribbean beach. "Dear diary. Everything is going so well. The bureaucrats are almost gone, and no-one's noticed. As a bonus, I don't have to read any more of those awful Cabinet memos, so full of inconvenient advice. We're close to a deal on turning the Pearson Building into a Walmart outlet – with Canadian content of course. Even if Carleton Pete wins the next election, all he'll have to work with is 17 clerks in a turkey coop in Aylmer plus 17 more in an old PetroCanada station in Arnprior. Got to keep up the provincial balance or the premiers will nail me. And all that lovely money the Treasury Board isn't seeing, that'll let me corner the market in Canadian banana futures. I'm going to be very, very rich, oh yeah."

Liebnitz said to Felix, "Canadian banana futures, eh? Suddenly the government's decisions on climate change make more sense. But I think things are winding up. We should be able to talk to Milfoyle soon."

On stage, the MC stood in front of the finalists, holding the Quicksand Trophy. Just as he was about to announce the winner, a drone appeared and dropped a microwave oven, knocking Milfoyle to the floor. TikTok Clocke shouted, "He was right! The machines got him!" Beauregard Warbeck replied, "It is probably just a cheap publicity stunt he set up himself." Jeans Blonde went to check on Milfoyle. "Luckily, he's not badly hurt, but he'll be out for quite a while."


"Felix, this has to have been set up by one of the other finalists during that technical break, to keep Milfoyle from talking. Let's see if he left any clues." Unnoticed, the two agents mounted the stage and crossed to the victim's chair. From a tattered briefcase under the seat, Liebnitz pulled out a sheet of paper with columns headed SPEAKER and LAST WORDS. "I remember," said Felix. "He was working on a famous last words puzzle for Aide Mémoire. If you link each speaker with the

right quotation, the correspondingly linked letters and numbers allow you to decipher a message. But there's no message. Wait, it's pencilled on the back: 7 1-7 6-3-8-2-3-6-8-2-3 11-3 9-6-10-5-4 4-3-6-11-10."

Liebnitz and Felix soon solved the last words puzzle. Said Liebnitz, "It helped that he only used quotes 1 to 11. Some of the other ones are a bit obscure." From there, it was easy to read the message and deduce the perpetrator.

With one finalist unconscious on a stretcher and another being led away in handcuffs, the MC announced postponement of the prize-giving. "Not necessary!" cried Melmac Finsterwald, stripping off his conservative break-away suit to reveal the master of distraction in all his technicolour glory. Flashing neon letters glared along the side walls, spelling out "It's Gordo time!" A chorus line of animatronic figures with the faces of the Russian Politburo glowered as they performed a Cossack dance. Life-size holograms of famous political bloopers appeared along the aisles. Balloons floated around the room, popping erratically to release psychedelic smoke. Amid the chaos, Don Gordo relieved the flabbergasted MC of the trophy, crossed to an open window and leapt out onto a dumpster full of eider down. Liebnitz said to Felix, "Well, I guess we can close the book on this one."

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Can you duplicate the two agents' feat by deciphering Milfoyle's short message and naming the attempted murderer? This will mean linking up at least some of the SPEAKERS and their LAST WORDS, but it is not necessary to work out all the linkages to win. Answers can be submitted to [boutdepapier@pafso-apase.com](mailto:boutdepapier@pafso-apase.com) or by regular mail. **bout de papier** will award a book prize signed by A Aalto to the submitter of the first correct answer drawn from a hat on June 30. 



SPEAKER			LAST WORDS
R	Nostradamus (an accurate prediction)	1	I'm looking for loopholes.
I	Isaac Newton	2	If you wait a little, I shall be able to tell you from personal experience.
Q	Leonardo da Vinci (compared to what?)	3	I have none. I had them all shot.
D	Jazz drummer Buddy Rich, asked by a nurse prepping him for surgery, “ Is there anything you can’t take?”	4	And now for a final word from our sponsor....
W	Jack Layton	5	No, it is better not. She will only ask me to take a message to Albert.
J	Chico Marx	6	Tomorrow at sunrise I shall no longer be here.
O	Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter)	7	Now is not the time for making new enemies.
Z	Emperor Augustus (to an audience of courtiers)	8	They couldn’t hit an elephant at this distance.
N	Poet Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, to a man who asked him to read his new play	9	This wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. Either it goes or I do.
F	JS Bach	10	I see that you have made three spelling mistakes.
A	Voltaire, asked by a priest whether he renounced the devil and all his works	11	Yeah, country music.
H	Composer Christoph Gluck, asked if a tenor or a bass should sing the role of Christ in his opera	12	My friends, love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic.
U	The Marquis de Favras, French royalist, reading his death warrant (picky, picky, picky)	13	Don't cry for me, for I go where music is born.
P	Charles Gussman, radio/TV announcer	14	I am starting to believe you are not intending to count me among your friends!
L	WC Fields, a known sceptic, found reading the Bible on his deathbed	15	Have fun.
T	Oscar Wilde	16	Put in my coffin a deck of cards, a mashie niblick, and a pretty blonde.
E	The Duke of Valencia, former Spanish PM, asked by his priest if he forgave his enemies	17	I feel like I'm in good hands.
M	Benjamin Disraeli, declining a visit from Queen Victoria	18	Doctor, if I put this here guitar down now, I ain’t never gonna wake up.
Y	Karl Marx (paradoxically)	19	I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself now and then in finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than the ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.
G	Playwright Pedro Muñoz Seca, to his firing squad	20	Do you wish to hasten my last hour?
K	George Orwell (at 46)	21	Surprize me.
X	Werner Heisenberg	22	I have offended God and mankind because my work did not reach the quality it should have.
V	Puppeteer Jim Henson (appropriately)	23	Last words are for fools who haven’t said enough.
C	Union General John Sedgwick (ironically)	24	At 50, everyone has the face he deserves.
S	Bob Hope, asked where he wanted to be buried	25	Have I played the part well? Then applaud as I exit.
B	Jimmy Buffett (consistent with his life)	26	When I meet God, I am going to ask him two questions: Why relativity? And why turbulence? I really believe he will have an answer for the first.

SAFFRON STREET

Answers

The message reads:

T	H	E		M	O	N	K		J	I	K	A	N		I	S		
D	E	A	D		B	U	T		H	I	S		S	T	U	D	I	O
R	E	M	A	I	N	S	.	R	I	N	G		T	H	E			
B	E	L	L	S		T	H	A	T		S	T	I	L	L			
C	A	N		R	I	N	G	.	S	A	Y		T	H	E	R	E	
I	S		A		C	R	A	C	K	,	A		C	R	A	C	K	
I	N		E	V	E	R	Y	T	H	I	N	G	,	T	H	A	T	
T	H	A	T	'	S		H	O	W		T	H	E					
L	I	G	H	T		G	E	T	S		I	N	.					

The 10 song titles are:	BIRD ON THE WIRE	BOOGIE STREET
	DANCE ME TO THE END OF LOVE	FAMOUS BLUE RAINCOAT
	FIRST WE TAKE MANHATTAN	HALLELUJAH
	SISTERS OF MERCY	SO LONG MARANNE
	SUZANNE	UN CANADIEN ERRANT

The backstory for the dragon king's daughter is from the 12th chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*.

Leonard Cohen had a long interest in Zen Buddhism, including five years at a monastery in California, where he as ordained as the monk Jikan (“ordinary silence”) in 1996. The encrypted message quotes from his song “Anthem”.

The Story of the 47 Ronin, one of the most famous in Japan, is true. They are buried in Sengakuji temple in Tokyo. The backstory of the 47th samurai, Terasaka Kichiemon, is also true, but there is disagreement as to why he left the others, and what happened to him afterwards.

Winner

Congratulations to **Jennifer Dauben**y



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