

# bout de papier

Vol. 32, No. 1

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

## CONCOURS DE PHOTOS DE L'APASE 2021

**LE VENT  
DE L'EST**  
Anne Leahy

**THE GHOSTS OF  
AFGHANISTAN**  
Pam Isfeld

**THE GOLDEN  
YEARS OF EDUCATION  
MARKETING**  
David Lysne

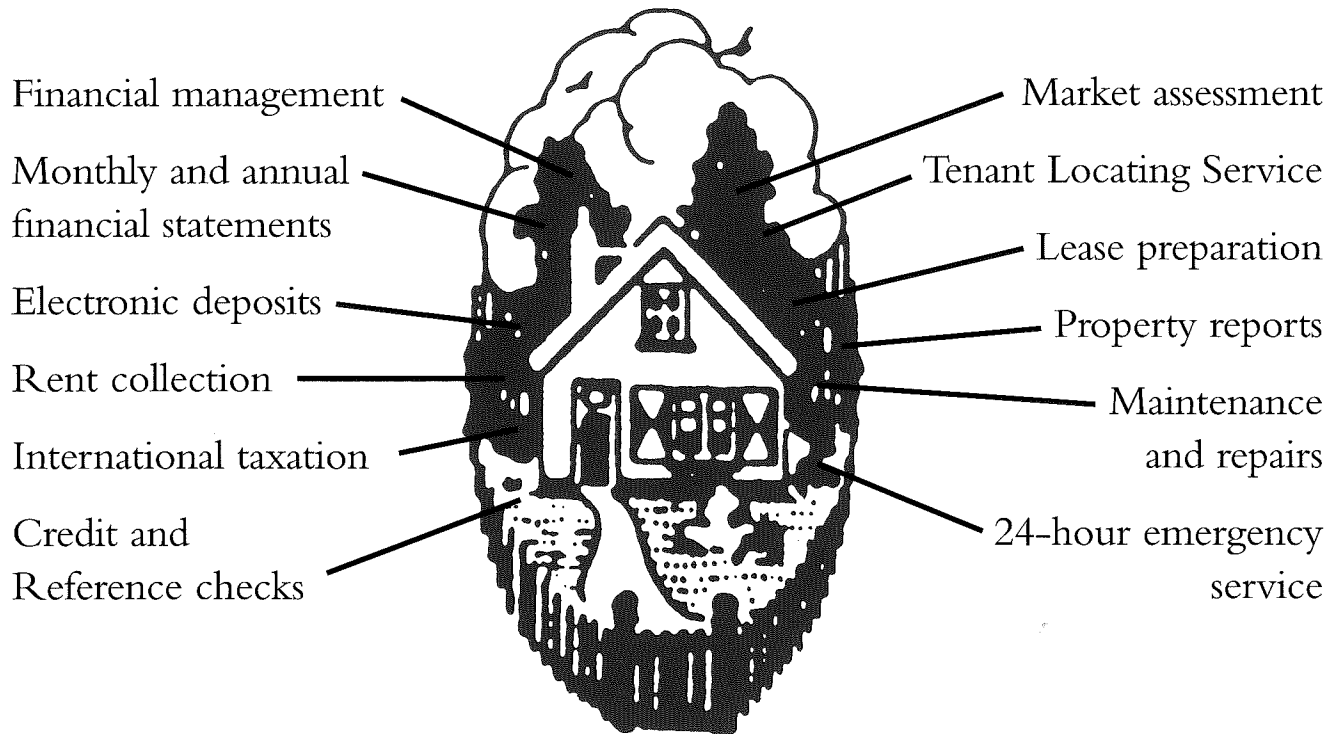


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# Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Lillian Thomsen

Editor-in-Chief // Rédactrice en chef



## DEAR READERS,

I don't know quite how it happened that I have come to be the Editor-in-Chief of **bout de papier** replacing my friend Dan Livermore. But I have and I am and now I have to get on with it, so to speak. This first issue has taken longer than I would like to get out but I think I have now hit a rhythm and have a better idea of what is and will be required to make **bout** a success, which by definition means read, enjoyed, and appreciated across the Foreign Service and beyond, as it was in its heyday.

To do this requires content, and ideally content which reflects the present as well as the past, that teases out issues of interest to the Foreign Service, that provides perhaps a different perspective on some key developments globally and in international relations. And some fun, of course, in the form of the impossible, at least as far as I'm concerned, puzzles by A. Aalto, and the aroma of good food thanks to *The Hungry Diplomat*. In the weeks to come, with the constant and most welcome support of Pam and the magazine's editorial board, which I hope to expand, I would like to plan out the next two issues for 2022 quickly. There is no shortage of subjects which can be covered, finding writers is proving more of a challenge. But for those of you who are interested please reach out to me at [lillianthomsenottawa@gmail.com](mailto:lillianthomsenottawa@gmail.com). Ideas for articles are most welcome as well, as are comments on those published in this issue. I would like to find a way to bring back the "letters to the editor" feature and therefore an ongoing dialogue with the readership of **bout**. So please don't hesitate to raise your hand.

Coming back to **bout**, I couldn't help but be reminded of my own career in the Foreign Service. When I left at the end of 2016, I sent a message to as many of my colleagues and friends as I could think of. It comprised a "stock-taking" of my life – and it is a life not a career – in the Foreign Service, drawing on the principles of "deliverology" which was much in vogue at the time.

Here are some extracts: "There were five postings, all of them memorable, but to three of which I retain a deep emotional attachment. Nine assignments at headquarters, seven of which I loved, two of which were less successful in my mind. Ironically the two less successful ones were the two I had lobbied most intensely to get. There were promotions, five in total over the years from FS-1D to EX-03, interspersed with some seven attempts – the slog to become an EX-01 was particularly long.

There were seven Heads of Mission, and I was lucky enough to get the chance to be one myself. There were 45 bosses overall (a list which includes bosses of bosses where they were a daily presence in my life). On the flip side, over the years I calculated that I have

had a degree of responsibility for some 320 colleagues, both Canada-based and locally engaged. There have been 14 Under-Secretaries of State/Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which works out to about one every two years and eight months during my time. I worked very closely with six of them and grew to appreciate the near impossible nature of their jobs. There were 20 Secretaries of State for External Affairs/Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which works out to an average tenure of some 22 months for each of them.

The Foreign Service is not so much a job or a career as it is a life. In my case Moscow brought me a chance encounter with a curly-haired journalist which led to a wedding split between London and Saint Petersburg 18 months later and the birth, a year and a week later in 1996, of our glorious daughter. The postings also brought the opportunity to see places you wouldn't have thought of seeing otherwise. Severomorsk in the Russian high Arctic, home of the Northern Fleet, and the Jewish Autonomous Region in Siberia, on the frontier with China, stick in my mind but there were many others on the more beaten track which were equally memorable. It also brought the opportunity to meet and, if one was lucky, have conversations with people you wouldn't have met otherwise. Often in the context of organizing summits (Yeltsin/Clinton, G8 and Commonwealth) of which I worked intensively on seven over the years.

The rhythm at headquarters was, of course, very different from that at post. There were way more meetings for one thing. Probably thousands. There were task forces, in my case the most memorable being 9/11 and the Asian tsunami. With the many crises came very long hours, particularly in the Media Relations Office and later in the Consular Branch. There was writing – a lot of it. Some of it tedious and pro forma. But the longer pieces were genuinely fun to work on and for some strange reason, I particularly liked writing speeches. There was the chance to get involved in "extra-curricular" activities. In my case the PAFSO Executive early in my career and the Women's Network later on.

It is hard to sum up a career made up of so many disparate elements. But there was a constant sense of being part, no matter one's role, of the making of history and, if things turned out well, of a better world. I think that is as true today as it was when I wrote it five years ago. Despite the enormous challenges of the past two years I hope you feel the same. Please get and stay in touch.

– Lillian 

# Interesting Times for Canada's Foreign Service

**Pam Isfeld**

President, PAFSO // Présidente de l'APASE



**THE LAST TIME I WROTE** to *bout de papier* readers, much of the world was in the middle of a third wave, but vaccine administration was ramping up, and even Bill Gates was predicting that the world would be back to normal by the end of 2022. Then along came the Delta variant, creating a fourth wave, a higher threshold for herd immunity, and more uncertainty. And, just when we thought we had gotten through the worst, Omicron emerged, bringing with it unprecedented case counts, stress on health care systems in Canada and around the world, and the need for vaccination boosters.

On 6 October 2021, partly in response to stagnating vaccination levels, Prime Minister Trudeau announced that all federal employees in the Core Public Administration were required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination by 29 October. Those who did not do so, or who declined to get vaccinated, were placed on leave without pay as early as 15 November. Soon after the Prime Minister's announcement, GAC announced its complementary policy, which also applies to Locally-Engaged Staff. The policy calls for Canada-Based Staff at missions abroad who do not meet the requirements to return to Canada and be placed on unpaid leave.

The Employer cannot force our members to get vaccinated, but our legal advice indicates that it is within its rights to make vaccination a condition of employment. While providing realistic advice and full representation to those who are denied legitimate accommodation or who are placed on leave without pay because of the Employer's decisions, PAFSO would be remiss if we gave members the impression that they could avoid serious consequences from ignoring the vaccination requirement.

Furthermore, Article 3 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement requires the Employer to "make all reasonable provisions for the occupational health and safety of employees." PAFSO welcomes all efforts made by the Employer to ensure a safe and secure workplace for employees during this global pandemic, so long as any measures respect employees' privacy and allow for legitimate accommodations. The consensus among mainstream national and international public health authorities on the science is clear: vaccinations, along with masks and physical distancing, are the most effective ways to decrease the risk of serious illness or death and to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. The vast majority of our membership prioritizes the need for safe and secure workplaces with all reasonable health and measures are in place.

The bottom line: if you can get vaccinated, including any recommended boosters, please do so as soon as possible. It's the right thing to do, not just to protect yourself from financial, career, and health


consequences, but also to safeguard our co-workers, loved ones and communities.

As the world struggles to get out of the COVID-19 tunnel, life goes on, and good things even happen once in a while. The Foreign Service community was overjoyed on 25 September when, after 1,019 days in unjust detention in China, our friend and colleague Michael Kovrig, along with fellow Canadian Michael Spavor, returned to Canada. The release of the "Two Michaels" marked the culmination of extensive public and private diplomacy efforts by many Canadians, including PAFSO and its members.

The fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban in August was another event that resonated with many of us. Canada's Foreign Service, along with our Armed Forces colleagues, was engaged in Afghanistan for two full decades, trying to combat terrorism and promote security, development and democratic governance. During our efforts, 165 Canadians, including former PAFSO member Glynn Berry, lost their lives, and many more were permanently changed by their experiences. In another piece in this issue, I write in more depth about what Afghanistan meant – and continues to mean – to some of us.

We were also very pleased to partner with AMBCANADA in the establishment of the Deborah Chatsis Indigenous Scholarship in International Affairs at Carleton University. This initiative will help make sure that Indigenous peoples are properly represented in Canada's Foreign Service.

Finally, on the PAFSO governance front, I am happy to report that in September, our members voted to make the Full-Time Presidency a permanent part of our structure. An overwhelming 84.66% of voters supported the Executive Committee's recommendation, which marked the culmination of a three-year pilot and consultation process. Each of the five associated proposed constitutional amendments also passed with similar levels of support. The first direct elections for the permanent position will take place before the end of April.

This is great news for the future of our Association, and for the Foreign Service community in general. Even without COVID-19, the complexities and risks facing those who serve Canada and Canadians abroad are high. Continuing to have a serving career Foreign Service Officer dedicated full-time to leading PAFSO will make an already effective association and bargaining agent stronger, more focused, and in an even better position to represent the concerns of the professional Foreign Service during the exciting and challenging times to come. 

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Le vent de l'est

by Anne Leahy

The fall of the Berlin Wall inspired freedom and hope in many African nations. Cameroon, Chad, and the Central African Republic all experienced changes which reflected the spirit of events occurring in central Europe.



**ANNE LEAHY's** postings over the decades show how all is related. Experience in the USSR/Russia came in handy in Cameroon and both areas were excellent preparation for her last assignment as Ambassador to the Holy See. Since retiring in 2013, Anne shares her knowledge at McGill University and at UQAM's Institut des études internationales de Montréal.

**THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL** of the Berlin Wall was predominantly a European celebration – understandably so since it and other events of 1989 symbolize the failure of Soviet communism in Europe and the rebuilding of the continent. The geopolitical implications have affected relations between states in every part of the world; indeed, they have helped to reshape the world order. It is perhaps less often remembered that tearing down the Wall also had an impact on political life in countries not readily associated with communism.

I experienced this first-hand in west-central Africa from the vantage point of Yaoundé, capital of Cameroon, where I found myself in the autumn of 1989, as ambassador for Canada. I also covered Chad and the Central African Republic.

It can be said that all the significant developments in central Europe over the past decade can be traced back to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Rid of Soviet domination, and later of occupation forces, central European states were free to pursue their goal, which was overwhelmingly to reaffirm their European identity.

Freedom and hope were the prevailing sentiments. They caught the wind all the way to Africa where in several countries local political elites were feeling the pressure to loosen up. In the three countries in which I was most closely involved, the reaction of ruling parties varied significantly from opportunistic to outright battering down of the hatches.

In Cameroon, government ministers and opposition activists alike told me that freeing central Europe from Soviet control compelled them to go forward on their paths, albeit with varying degrees of motivation. In the Central African Republic, I heard leaders thunder about the dangers inherent in “le vent de l’est,” which seemed to provide them with a convenient excuse to keep the screws on.

The “eastern wind” blew over central Africa for a few brief years. In Cameroon, where the political culture was the most developed and where the dangers of “tribalisme-confessionalisme” were most present, the leaders had no choice but to react to Indigenous demands for greater transparency and participatory democracy. In March 1992,

the first multi-party elections since independence in Cameroon some 30 years earlier grew partly from a seed carried on this wind.

Africa consists of over 50 very different countries; not all were receptive to what was occurring in central Europe. Not all were cohesive states able to react to international events – although this was not necessarily the case for individuals living in such states. However, I believe that very few ruling parties, let alone political activists, could remain indifferent to the shock waves set off by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

At the end of the 1980s and into the 1990s, Cameroon saw its Western partners open their arms to central Europe. It feared competition for the finite fund of aid dollars. At the same time, donor countries had become more rigorous in their demands on the recipient government – good governance had become a new watchword. All the various definitions included respect for human rights and participatory democracy. The pressure was on Cameroon to show that it bought into this.

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**Freedom and hope were the prevailing sentiments and caught the wind all the way to Africa.**

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L'École Nationale d'Administration Publique gathered at the Canadian residence in Yaoundé.





Ed Broadbent, the newly-minted director of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development visits the Canadian mission in Cameroon.

In Europe, the fall of the Wall led to a series of parliamentary and presidential elections in the former Soviet client states. The excitement generated by the birth or rebirth of parties and the re-emergence of free media fed the desires of politically active Cameroonians. Many had long been fighting their own fights. The fact that the same objectives were being realized in Europe – and with the encouragement of Western countries – was a tremendous boost for them.

The government recognized this and to a certain extent accommodated it. There was merit in allowing a certain measure of political freedom in the press. Very pragmatically, it concluded that donor requirements for participatory democracy could be dealt with expediently by holding “multi-party” elections. In countries with foggy recollections of party politics, which in any case did not always fit the country’s historical and social experience, it was expeditious on the part of the West to gauge a country’s commitment to “democracy” by its successful organization of such elections. Nevertheless, given the pattern in central Europe, it fit the bill.


In one of many discussions with presidential advisers about the particulars of holding multi-party elections, I was asked by a key decision-maker, with a smile in his eyes, how many parties we would require. He was cynically right; that was not the point. He was conceding, however, that the external environment, specifically the recovery of free political expression in central Europe, added urgency to keeping up with the times and with Western donor expectations. He probably realized that once you start down this road, expectations have already been raised and that is a step toward participatory democracy – at least, in the “inculturated” African version of this Western concept.

Cameroon’s neighbour, the Central African Republic, reacted altogether differently. Its leaders saw nothing good coming out of central Europe. On the contrary they railed against the nefarious consequences for their all-too-fragile state. What they really had in mind was the precariousness of their hold on the state. At a rare congress of the ruling

party in 1991, I heard one party representative after another warn against disorder as had been unleashed in central Europe; placards carried by hordes of uniformly brightly clad activists at the closing of the party congress read: “Non au vent de l’est.”

Yet, it is in the Central African Republic that a young activist reflected on the downfall of the Ceausescus in Romania and their summary execution. He took some pride in drawing attention to the relatively civilized manner in which the current regime in Bangui had dealt with Jean-Bedel Bokassa, the disgraced “emperor.” He had not been simply eliminated but sentenced in court. There was no intention here to draw any unwarranted comparisons with Europe or to gloss over any of Africa’s notorious difficulties. However, here was a call for a Westerner to take notice that in Africa, too, there was hope.

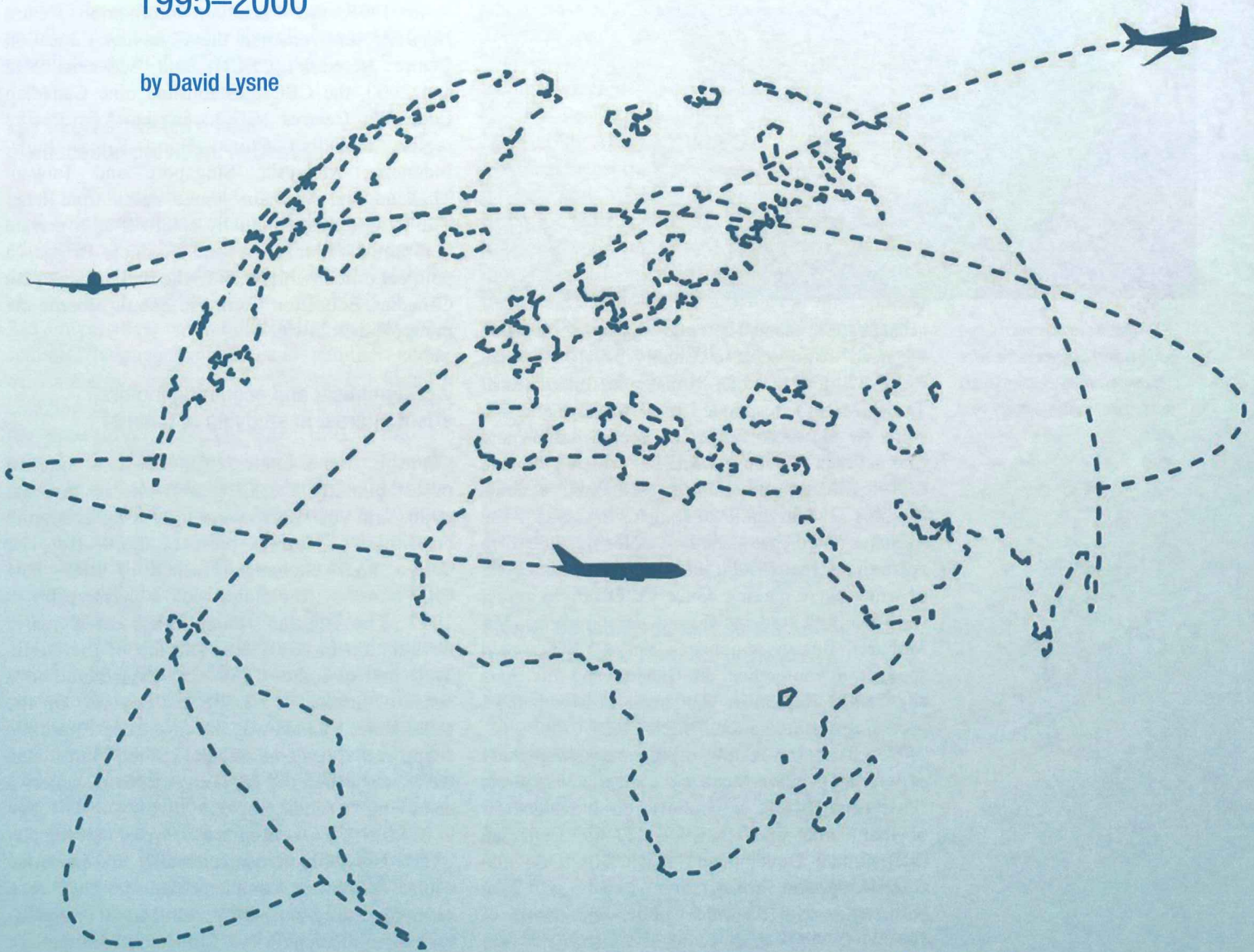
In Chad I saw yet another variation on the impact of events in central Europe. Unfortunately, Chad was practically oblivious to goings on outside its immediate region. Central power changed hands militarily, and the challenge to the capital was to keep its hold in the regions. Chad remains an interesting case in the study of the rivalry between France and the United States for influence in Africa that became more evident after the end of the Cold War.

Ten years on, much has been written about the transformation of Europe and the geopolitical reordering symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall. A lot remains to be said about the global reach of these events and how they inspired people, not complete strangers to European civilization but certainly living in another world. This is one illustration of the universality of human rights and aspirations. 

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# The Golden Years of Education Marketing 1995–2000

by David Lysne



**DAVID LYSNE** joined the Canadian Foreign Service in 1969 and served internationally in Berne, Switzerland; London, England; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Chicago, Illinois.

Can you imagine that on the same day in different locations, former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, former Minister of International Trade Sergio Marchi and former Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy each were scheduled to give addresses on the importance of international education to Canada on March 5, 1997?



Minister for International Trade Sergio Marchi (left) thanks the author for his contribution to the Team Canada visit to Latin America, January 1998.

**IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND HOW** and why this took place, we need to go back to January 31, 1994, when Roy McLaren, the then Minister for International Trade (MINT), responded to a formal marketing study by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) which stressed the significant political and economic benefits generated by international students in Canada. The Minister noted that Canada was losing ground to Australia, Great Britain and the United States, all of which were making concerted efforts to attract well-qualified students from Asian countries. Mr. McLaren further announced that DFAIT would sponsor a conference on Canada and the Asia and Pacific Region in Vancouver in March 1994 focussing on international education.

Based on the results of the marketing study as well as positive feedback from the Vancouver conference, MINT announced on November 1 of that same year, that DFAIT, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) in partnership with the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC), planned to establish a network of nine Canadian Information Centres over the next five years in the Asia Pacific region. The Information Centres were to be based on principles developed by the Canadian Embassy in Seoul.

CIDA was to assume responsibility for Information Centres in those jurisdictions where it had a major operational presence. DFAIT would be financially responsible for the non-CIDA Information Centres and while CIC did not contribute financially to the network, that Department was most supportive

of the establishment of the Information Centres and was equipped to determine which students met the criteria to study in Canada. The APFC, headed by Dr. Bill Saywell, who had served in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, was to have overall managerial responsibilities for the establishment and operation of the Centres.

In 1995, the Canadian Information Centre Network was renamed the Canadian Education Centre Network (CECN) and between 1995 and 2000, the CECN established nine Canadian Education Centres (CECs) in the Asia Pacific region, including China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan. Thailand and Vietnam joined some time later. The CECN was eventually spun off as a private non-profit organization and Rodney Briggs, a political officer with DFAIT who had managed the Canadian Education Centre in Seoul, became the first president in 1997.

### **World political and economic factors affect interest in studying in Canada**

There is some context for DFAIT's interest in establishing the CEC network in the late 1980s and 90s. There were unsettling economic conditions in various parts of the world. The Tokyo stock exchange crashed in 1989. The Thai currency, the Baht, took a massive hit in 1997. The Russian ruble underwent a major devaluation in late 1998. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 also contributed to a sense of unease in Europe and beyond. On the other hand, Canada was in fairly good economic shape at that time, as was the United States. One writer described the economy in North America as having "a renaissance".

While CEC programs were principally directed towards student clientele, the education centre activities complemented political and economic programs in a number of missions abroad. Canadian Prime Ministers, Ministers of International Trade, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Citizenship and Immigration all led successful missions to Asia Pacific posts. For example, Lucienne Robillard, then Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, launched the Canadian Education Centre in Hong Kong in 1998. Prime Minister Chrétien announced the opening of the CEC in Jakarta, which was officially carried out by Raymond Chan, the Secretary of State for the Asia and Pacific Region.

In 1991, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce office in Taiwan, later giving way to the present Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, opened an educational office which then became part of the Canadian Education Centre Network. Before the Taipei Canadian Education Centre office was opened, more Taiwanese students enrolled in the public Minnesota State University in Mankato than enrolled in all of Canada. That all changed with the establishment of the CEC in Taipei.

### **The CECN attracted a host of education providers in Canada**

From 1995 through to 2000, the CECN had enjoyed well-deserved support from Canada's international education community and, in some senses, was driven by it. According to the CECN website, all provinces had enlisted in the CECN with 245 universities, community colleges, secondary schools, language schools and summer camps across Canada eventually represented. I found it amazing to feel the support and enthusiasm for the Education Marketing File (EMF) from the offices of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, Minister of International Trade Sergio Marchi and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, as well as basically all levels of staff colleagues in the Lester B. Pearson Building. The success of the CECN offices in Asia became widely known in Canadian posts abroad, including Washington D.C.

Enquiries by telephone, telex and email began to arrive in my DFAIT office, asking how individual posts could capitalize on the growing interest for studying in Canada. I recall receiving a telephone call from Ambassador Jeremy Kinsman in Moscow to discuss his interest in the Education Marketing File and mentioning a young officer, who he felt was well-suited to manage education marketing in Moscow. Our embassies in Oslo and The Hague also expressed similar interest in establishing an education marketing presence in their missions as did Ambassador Stuart McDowall in Abu Dhabi. Our Consul General in Munich, Jon Scott, also expressed a strong interest in developing a Canadian education marketing capacity to serve Southern Germany.

### **Developments in Athens**

A most novel approach to promoting Canadian education abroad came from our mission in Athens. As the DFAIT publication *Panorama* wrote in

June 1997, the Education Resource Centre (ERC) in Athens featured a new model for promoting post-secondary Canadian education in Greece. In the words of then Ambassador Derek Fraser, CECs in Asia were used as a springboard for the Athens model, which epitomized the reality of a small mission's resources and capacity. To make ends meet for this operation, Ambassador Fraser assumed the chores of the mission gardener himself!

Bob Peck, then Counsellor at our Mission in Athens stated: "The success of the Athens model was based largely on the work of Kathy Angelopoulou, a Greek-Canadian and University of Toronto graduate with impressive credentials in the sector. Responsible for education marketing and academic relations at the Embassy from 1998 to 2008 as a member of the Locally-Engaged Staff, Kathy built an impressive network of partnerships in Canada and Greece which left an important legacy."

While her position was a victim of the massive budget cuts arising from the Great Recession of 2008, Kathy continues to promote Canadian academic options as Deputy Coordinator of the International Baccalaureate Programme at the prestigious Costeas-Geitonas School (CGS) in Athens.

### **Formal Canadian education marketing interest in Latin America emerges**

As indicated, CECN and post programs to facilitate education marketing were growing at a phenomenal pace throughout Asia, with expressions of interest also coming from Canadian missions in Europe and the Middle East. It was in Latin and South America, however, where Canadian interests coalesced. Rodney Briggs offered a visionary comment on behalf of the CECN, saying that "with the success of marketing Canadian education in Asia Pacific, it was clear that we should offer the same opportunity for students globally. Our major effort at the time was to open up the Latin American market."

### **Not so fast, however: a marketing study was needed for Latin America!**

Bearing in mind how critical the marketing study was for Asian markets in the early 1990s, the Latin American Trade Division and a small Political and Economic DFAIT team designed a marketing

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Canada was losing ground to Australia, Great Britain and the United States, all of which were making concerted efforts to attract well-qualified students from Asian countries.

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**The timing  
seemed right for  
a Team Canada  
visit to Latin  
America, India,  
and other Asian  
countries.**

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study for Latin America. Fred Spoke, the trade representative on the team in Ottawa, knew exactly where those questionnaires should be sent in Latin America, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia. In addition to addressing the post-secondary education catchment area, Fred wisely flagged the private school potential for Canada. Twenty-four years later, I well remember how thoughtful and positive the responses were to those surveys.

**Canadian attendance at Latin American  
fairs and conferences**

Concurrent with the marketing study, Canadian academics and representatives of various Canadian education institutions attended a growing number of education fairs in South America. Brazil declared 1996 to be "The Year of Education". In 1997, a major conference took place in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In a new and welcome development, Canadian Embassy staff in Brasilia personally provided assistance to Canadian education representatives at the Rio conference with helpful information about legal

A University of Ottawa string quartet provides the music at the inaugural meeting of the Oversight Committee, held in the Lester B. Pearson Building.



and other requirements for Brazilian student applicants.

With such positive results from the Latin American marketing study, the positive experiences of Canadian academic participants at education fairs in Brazil and encouraging signs of interest from our Embassy in Mexico, the timing seemed right for a Team Canada visit to Latin America, similar to the earlier well-received visits to China and India as well as other Asian countries.

**The 1998 Team Canada heads  
to South and Latin America:  
a Canadian event which brought  
huge results**

According to David Kilgour, then Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), who was on the Latin America Visit Team, it was the largest Team Canada visit ever designed to promote Canadian goods and services (including educational services) as well as to foster the establishment of long-term institutional links. Participants included 10 premiers as well as territorial representatives, nearly 500 business representatives, 64 women entrepreneurs, 34 young entrepreneurs and four Indigenous business leaders. The press corps was also well-represented, including Robert Fife from *The Globe and Mail*.

In terms of the education dimension of the Team Canada visit, Sergio Marchi, Minister for International Trade, oversaw the opening of four Canadian Education Centres (CECs) in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico. The first CEC in Mexico City was scheduled to be opened by Prime Minister Chrétien but was unfortunately delayed. A most memorable reception took place nonetheless, with the principals enthusiastic about doing business in Mexico and beyond in South America. As companion pieces, four Cultural Memoranda of Understanding were prepared for signature, and designed to be complementary to the business deals negotiated. While there was no public mention of their signing, at least one premier, Ralph Klein of Alberta, while in Santiago, Chile, publicly praised them as a "good idea".

In the middle of a glittering wind-up Team Canada reception in Buenos Aires, I received a telephone call from Meera Louis of the Wall Street Journal wanting to learn more about Canada's plans to establish "25 education information centres" in Canadian diplomatic and consular offices by the year 2000. She had heard that Canada had a "new spin on

education marketing”, compared to what was happening in her country. She mentioned that US foreign student numbers had been flat in recent years, likely due, she said, to high tuition fees and rising crime rates. She had been well briefed by the DFAIT Public Affairs Office in Ottawa.

With respect to a look back to Team Canada’s visit to Latin America, I think Minister Marchi said it well, “It was a pleasure to have educational institutions as part of Team Canada. Promoting our education excellence internationally [was] important for attracting foreign students, as [was] our education’s affordability by contrast to other nations. Moreover, our way of life was and is safe and welcoming to newcomers.”

In terms of the Education Marketing File, a phenomenal amount of development had transpired between 1995–2000, leading some to refer to that period as the “Golden Years of Education Marketing in Canada”. While federal/provincial issues arose at times, efforts to work with each other were largely successful.

### Administrative changes in the works

With the establishment of nine Education Centres in Asia, four recently opened centres in Mexico and Latin America as well as individual initiatives at the post level such as Athens and Abu Dhabi, Minister Marchi rightly recognized the need to make critical administrative changes.

One such change was the establishment of a 21 member Education Marketing Advisory Board (EMAB) to deal with specific and broad policy issues. The Advisory Board brought together leading representatives from the Association of Universities and Community Colleges (AUCC), the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), individual universities, colleges, and provincial representatives.

Sheldon Levy, then President of Sheridan College, assumed the Chair of the Board position. The first meeting of the Oversight Committee, which was an elegant occasion, was held in the Lester B. Pearson Building enhanced with music provided by a University of Ottawa string quartet.

In terms of organization structure, Minister Marchi also established a formal Education Marketing Unit (ACET) in DFAIT, which included Darren Smith, a recent Queen’s University graduate who had just completed a work placement at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, and Dr. Gilles Séguin, who had received his doctorate from Penn State University.

### Harbingers of developments to take place

While administrative changes were taking place at a rapid pace, DFAIT had also been technologically active in developing an initial education marketing CD-ROM


in cooperation with Rodney Briggs and his Canadian Education Centre Network colleagues. More than 4,500 copies of the CD-ROM, “Study in Canada,” were distributed to all our missions worldwide.

Minister Marchi, at a much heralded Education Industry Summit in Toronto in October 1998, launched the second edition of the CD-ROM, which was multilingual and available in French, English, Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese! This CD-ROM signalled that a new day had arrived for Canadian education marketing internationally.

Developments in the first years of the 21st century with respect to the Education Marketing File (EMF) were much more complicated than in the years leading up to the year 2000.

The introduction and growing popularity of the CD-ROM as well as the establishment of the DFAIT website in multiple languages, were, in a sense, counter to the role of the CECN offices internationally. Many observers, however, believe that the “coup de grâce” for the CECN, as with other government funded entities, came as a result of the Great Recession of 2008. The massive cutbacks in federal government funding eventually resulted in the closure of the entire CECN network on June 30, 2009.

Attempts by various Canadian education entities to keep the CECN alive were simply unsuccessful, the reasons for which require explanation, but go beyond the purview of this narrative.

The story of the relationship between DFAIT/GAC and the Canadian educational community, however, did not end with the closing of the CECN. In a sense, the relationship between DFAIT/GAC and the Canadian Education Community gained traction, leading up to the point where the international trade side of Global Affairs Canada had assumed responsibility for the entire Education Marketing File. The unfolding of that development is a story in and of itself and whoever writes it will complete an important element in the Canadian Education Marketing saga! 

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FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Survivor's Guilt

INSIGHTS AND OUTLOOKS  
FROM THE AFGHAN DIASPORA

by Jeremy Desjardins



**JEREMY DESJARDINS** is a second-year master's student at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, with a research focus on international trade and economic policy. He is currently working for Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. As a photography enthusiast, Jeremy believes in the power of images to humanize complex issues and bring people closer together.

On August 15, the Taliban seized control of Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, and assumed control of the country after a blistering takeover. For many Canadians, the events in Afghanistan are distant and ephemeral. However, for members of the Afghan diaspora that call Canada home, the events of the past few months are far more tangible. According to the 2016 census, 83,995 people with Afghan roots live in Canada. They experienced the events in Afghanistan not only through the news, but through frantic phone calls with loved ones still on the ground, through a scramble for refugee and immigration applications to get them out from under the thumb of the Taliban, through memories passed down from their families that resemble current events all too closely. Needless to say, members of the Afghan diaspora in Canada have been nothing short of restless.

## Shared memories

Maseh Hadaf was born in Kabul in 1996, around the time of the Taliban's first rule over the country. He arrived in Canada in 2000, growing up in the Greater Toronto Area. Having cultivated an interest in public health and technology, Maseh founded a start-up with a member of the Iraq diaspora. When the chaos in Afghanistan began to unfold this time around, he put his plans on hold to assist with the evacuation efforts, providing IT assistance and advocating for the Canadian Campaign for Afghan Peace, all while helping relatives prepare refugee status applications.

Maseh was quite young when he left Afghanistan, too young to have lasting memories of life under the Taliban. Yet, as he vividly recalls the memories passed down from his family, it became evident that they are deeply ingrained in him. Stories from the women in his family have made a particular impression. "As a woman, you are brutalized, you can't go outside without a male companion, you have to cover head to toe, you can't be seen in public alone, and even if you do all of these things, you can still be beaten arbitrarily," he says while recounting some of his family's experiences under the Taliban.

Omra Masstan, a law and international affairs graduate student at the University of Ottawa, recalls several similar stories passed down from her mother. "Seeing women being whipped on the streets for whatever reason, like for wearing the wrong-coloured shoes, wearing nail polish, the little things the Taliban could nitpick on, they would just stop women and beat them on the street. This is the kind of stuff you would see on the regular." Born in 1996 and arriving in Canada in 2005, Omra sympathizes with the reality of being a young woman living under an oppressive regime. "It's heartbreaking. I put myself in the shoes of someone still back home, I don't even know if I would still be alive, let alone be pursuing the life that I have today. Seeing pictures of these old Taliban fighters with 12-year-old girls, God forbid that could have been my little sister, or my little cousin."

While many youths in the Afghan diaspora share these memories passed down from their families, some have lived them first-hand. Roya Shams, a student at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), recalls some of these: "I remember when my parents would home school us from inside, underground, and they would hide our pens and papers. We were not allowed to say to any of our neighbours or even relatives that my parents are educated." Having seen the value and importance of education as a young woman, Roya is disheartened to see a regressive regime return to power after 20 years of relative freedom. "The women are subjected to violence, child marriages, they will not be allowed to pursue their dreams, education, sports. They won't have the same basic human rights. Here I can walk outside without fear, but there they would expect that a woman has a man accompanying her. For me it means they don't even consider us as a functional part of society." Roya came to Canada in 2012 with assistance from the Canadian government after her father, an advocate for women's education, was assassinated a year earlier at the hands of the Taliban.

## Betrayal

When the United States announced a date for a complete troop withdrawal, many Afghans were confident in their own government and armed forces to put up some degree of resistance to a Taliban resurgence. Upon seeing the districts falling to the Taliban one after another, doubts began to set in. "I thought, maybe the government has had enough, and now we will see some counterattack. Maybe within the next three to six months, all those districts that had fallen would be recaptured," Reshad Nazerzai tells me. "But as the days went by, you want to see the trend to change, for things to turn around, but unfortunately to the shock of many, we were all devastated to see that actually there was no plan."

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Reshad came to Canada in 2007 after studying in the United States. An alumni of the political science and public administration programs at the University of Ottawa, he traces his interest in politics to his roots, quoting his father: “if you’ve got money and you don’t invest it, one day you’ll run out and you will be left with nothing. If you have knowledge and you don’t pass it on, it will be gone and you will be left with nothing. If you don’t participate in politics or you don’t take interest in politics, then you will lose your country one day.”

When asked about the lack of response to the Taliban’s advances from the Afghan government and the hasty, messy American withdrawal, Reshad becomes visibly stirred. “I think it’s nothing less than betrayal. I feel like Afghans have been betrayed. I don’t care about the government, the politicians, but the Afghan people have been betrayed. Of course, most Afghans have lived under the rule of the Taliban, and it will be no different for them now.”

The feeling of betrayal extends to the evacuations, which have largely been seen as unnecessarily haphazard and chaotic despite the resources available. The lack of new pathways offered by Canada in lieu of refugee status, which requires that the border of another country be crossed to apply, to escape the Taliban regime has resulted in much frustration, as Maseh indicates.

### Representation

One of the factors commonly attributed by members of the diaspora to the lack of an official Afghan response is its staggering level of corruption, in which officials demonstrate exorbitant self-interest at the expense of the people. Seeing the enormous amounts of money poured into Afghanistan over the

years yield very little in the way of results, Reshad points the finger squarely at them: “I don’t know how that money ended up with them but based on what we have found out, the money that was spent in Afghanistan went into the pockets of very few, and the people, the public, felt abandoned. They did not see their representation in the government.”

Afghanistan has a rich cultural heritage, with ethnic and cultural diversity at its heart. “There is a mosaic of identity, a wealth of diversity,” says Maseh. “Not just identities but languages as well.” Under the Taliban, reports of targeted violence against ethnic minorities have surfaced. The Taliban has historically shown little regard for diversity, prescribing rigid guidelines for society, particularly as it pertains to its strict and puritanical interpretation of Islam. “Although the huge majority of Afghanistan is Muslim, this is not the Islam that anyone has ever asked for or practices daily,” says Omra. “It’s not the values that represent Afghanistan at all. We’re a culture of such rich history, and poetry, and music and arts, bursting with culture, and this is not a part of it at all.” Sharia law is proclaimed by the Taliban as their key guiding principle in establishing the societal code of conduct but, Reshad points out, many varying interpretations exist in the Muslim world, aggravating the uncertainty around its application.

### Survivor’s guilt

As the members of the diaspora tell their stories and speak of their homeland from Canada, feelings of guilt emerge. “The first thing that comes to mind is survivor’s guilt,” says Maseh. “A lot of people in the diaspora feel this. They feel a guilt for being here and safe. You might come across some gruesome images on social media, and as you scroll, you’ll see your friend baking sourdough or

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I think it’s nothing less than betrayal. I feel like Afghans have been betrayed. I don’t care about the government, the politicians, but the Afghan people have been betrayed

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Reshad Nazerzai



Omra Masstan

something. There's a real contrast, and that contrast is extremely painful as a member of the diaspora, because you feel this guilt and shame, and you feel like there's nothing you can do about it."

Omra, harbouring these feelings herself, reveals that this is a nearly universal feeling among younger Afghans in Canada: "I speak with other Afghans my age who've left and you really do feel survivor's guilt. You almost feel bad having a good life here. The only difference between you and the person back home is that your family was lucky enough to get out at some point."

Roya, who has seen the horrors of the Taliban first-hand, continues to suffer through this guilt: "I lived this war, I breathe this crisis through my siblings, through my little nieces and nephews. I fear for their lives, but also their futures." However, she proclaims, she does not feel that Afghans bear this weight alone. "There are so many other Afghans who call Canada home, and Canadians are their families, their friends. I made aunts, uncles, even parents here, and they live it through me. They feel the same pain."

### What the future holds

The compassion that Roya finds in Canadians is not something that the diaspora takes for granted. It stems, Omra believes, from the universal traits that Afghans and Canadians share: "At the core, Afghan people and Canadian people share the same values. The average Afghan just wants peace, access to education, access to a good livelihood, so at the core there isn't much that differs between an average Canadian and an average Afghan person."

Maseh echoes this sentiment and hopes that Canadians will continue to show support and put pressure on their elected officials to make Afghanistan a priority in Canada's international

affairs agenda. The Canadian Campaign for Afghan Peace, with which Maseh is actively engaged, is centred on an open letter that outlines four demands that Canada should take to support Afghans and Afghanistan. The group wants Canada to expand the Afghan resettlement program, provide immediate humanitarian assistance and aid for Afghanistan, engage in diplomacy on the issue of human rights in Afghanistan and push for the rights of girls, women, ethnic and religious minorities to be respected.

Expectations for a reversal of fortune in Afghanistan among the diaspora remain reserved. Reshad, who recently welcomed a daughter into the world, reflects on the future that awaits the next generations in his home country. "I look at my relatives, my old neighbours, and what I see when I look at their children and the kind of future that's waiting for them, it's not a good one, that's for sure." Yet a ray of light still manages to shine through for Reshad. "You know, when my daughter was born, I was going to name her something else, but given the situation, I changed her name to Hila, which means hope in my native language." The Taliban's totalitarian history, however, does little to alleviate concerns, despite their claims of moderation. "They are trying to show the world that they are doing something right," says Roya. "Let me ask them something: if they are doing it right, will they allow a girl like me to walk freely and get an education to be equal to them? It will never happen." bdp

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There are so many other Afghans who call Canada home, and Canadians are their families, their friends. I made aunts, uncles, even parents here, and they live it through me. They feel the same pain.

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Roya Shams



Maseh Hadaf



**PAM ISFELD** is a career Foreign Service Officer and the President of the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers. In addition to her assignments in Kabul and Kandahar, she has also served in Moscow, Nairobi, Sarajevo and Warsaw. You can find more of her personal views on Afghanistan and other subjects on Twitter @dip\_passport.

**FEATURE // REPORTAGE**

# The Ghosts of Afghanistan

by Pam Isfeld

**SOUTHERN AFGHANS CALL IT** “The American War”. In July, it ended not with a bang but with a whimper, when the Taliban took Kandahar and the district of Panjwayi, where Canadian troops had fought so hard in 2006 and afterward. On August 15, the insurgents arrived in Kabul and entered the Presidential Palace unchallenged, a full two weeks before the planned US withdrawal.

By the time Canada closed our Embassy and evacuated our diplomats, along with Locally-Engaged Staff and their families, Afghanistan had long been out of fashion in Ottawa. Many of us who served there, especially in the early days, learned not to talk too much about it unless we wanted to see colleagues’ eyes glaze over, or worse, have our experience discounted by those who knew better after the fact.

The chaotic final weeks of the war in Afghanistan prompted old friends – Foreign Service Officers, current and former soldiers, interpreters, humanitarian workers and journalists – to reconnect. Some wanted help getting Afghan contacts out of danger, and others wanted to talk to someone to help make sense of what had happened and what it meant. Many were haunted by questions about how “we” had “lost” Afghanistan, and others wondered whether we should ever have hoped to “have” it in the first place.

Many of us were surprised to find how much we still cared, and it’s telling that when I put out a call for friends and contacts to help me with this article, many came forward but did not want to speak for attribution. Still, they were eager to talk about why they went to Afghanistan, whether they had succeeded in their goals, and whether they would do it again.

In August 2003, I found myself with Canadian and German soldiers at a former Soviet airbase in Uzbekistan. The night air was surprisingly cold, and we were too excited to sleep anyway, so we huddled around the firepit. I had just come from Sarajevo, Bosnia i Hercegovina, where I worked for High Representative Paddy Ashdown, and most of the Canadians had also spent time as peacekeepers in Bosnia.

For a student of Russian and Soviet politics, joining a NATO mission to support a fledgling democratic government in Afghanistan was almost as daunting as it was exhilarating. But, as we boarded the military flight to my new assignment as Political Advisor to the NATO-led International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, I felt confident in the experience of my military colleagues. Afghanistan would be a challenge, but, as one Canadian officer said, “We thought we were ready for it. Even our most junior captain had three missions under his belt. We were some of the most experienced peacekeepers in the world.”

The pilot invited me to sit in one of the few spots behind the cockpit, giving me a full view of the beautiful terrain below. As the plane navigated between the jagged mountain peaks, I saw a shepherd and his hardy mountain sheep gazing down from above. He smiled and waved at us with what I thought was amusement but, in retrospect, might also have been pity.

When my eyes met that enigmatic gaze, Afghanistan ceased to be an abstraction for me. The mission became intensely personal, as it would to the many Canadians who served over the 20 years of

Jean-Yves Dionne  
et Lucie Tremblay

## Diplomates en péril?

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**peu**  
diplomatiques

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15-05 Bonn	B12 A l'heure
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14-04 Abidjan	A10 A l'heure
15-02 Budapest	B08 Retardé
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our engagement there. It was that sense of commitment that made many of us, including me, volunteer to return multiple times, even after the US shifted the bulk of its resources and attention to Iraq in 2004.

I returned in 2006 as the Political Advisor to the Commander of Operation Enduring Freedom/NATO's Regional Command South in Kandahar. At that time, the prevailing wisdom held that it was just a matter of time before we "crushed the insurgency" with a combination of force and political persuasion so democracy could flourish. Canada's strategy prioritized engagement with the local population through the Provincial Reconstruction Team. My work within the military chain of command involved advising the Commander on the effects of the political environment on military operations and vice versa, including how to support the provincial governors in extending central government authority. A typical day could involve anything from giving input on targets to negotiating with village elders on compensation for civilian casualties in an airstrike to organizing a regional conference. Our mission was called Task Force AEGIS, for the shield carried by Athena and Zeus in Greek mythology.

None of it was as easy as we or our allies had hoped. In Kandahar alone, we faced a complicated web of tribal politics, opium interests, centuries-old conflicts within the local population, regional interference and animosity – some of it justified – towards the central authorities in Kabul. Within a couple of years, Canada had well over 3,000 soldiers and 100 civilians at Kandahar Airfield (KAF) and the Provincial Reconstruction Team struggling to secure the south. The war was urgent and intense and the most exciting story out there, dominating the 24-hour news stations and the front pages of national newspapers.

For a decade, Canada's foreign policy revolved around the mission and what it meant to our global alliances and relationships. Although we spent less time and effort understanding Afghanistan itself, our commitment to the cause cost over \$3.6 billion and 165 Canadian lives. One of those lost was career diplomat and former PAFSO member Glyn Berry.

The toll on the Afghan side was even more devastating. Within five years, the Taliban killed four of my six governors and injured a fifth in a brutal IED attack. Even

after Canada ended the combat mission in 2014, our Embassy in Kabul remained one of the largest in our diplomatic network, and Afghanistan was our largest bilateral aid recipient, but that did little to stem the suffering of the Afghan people. According to the Costs of War Project, Afghanistan and the border areas of Pakistan lost more than 200,000 people between 2001 and 2021, including nearly 90,000 military and police and 71,000 civilians.

Like me, most of those I talked to were not sorry they went, although the reasons for doing so varied depending on the mission's timeline. For example, James Johnson, an FS02 with Global Affairs Canada, saw his 2010–11 deployment to Kandahar as an advisor to the Governor as "an opportunity to participate on the front lines of diplomacy within a whole-of-government, multinational environment" and "promote Canada and Canadian values." He returned to Kabul in 2016–18 to do similar work with the Ministry of Interior, NATO and the International Police Coordination Board. Gwen Temmel grew to care deeply about Afghanistan and its people as a new FS in the geographic division. She saw her first posting to Kabul in 2019–21 as "a way of continuing that important work and building relationships."

According to James, "success is hard to measure because it was always a cat-and-mouse game ... Afghan officials used key phrases, like "women's rights," to secure funding without seriously addressing the systemic challenges in their community. The goal was the cash. It was a feeding frenzy better suited to Shark Week ... When I walked the Palace grounds on the weekend and realized many of the provincial leaders were staying at their expensive properties in Dubai – not bad for relatively low paid functionaries – it was clear long-term success was unlikely, and the house of cards would fall once the international community left." In one of the defining moments of his time in Afghanistan, he describes preventing the theft of an expensive generator from the Governor's Palace only to be banned from the premises, with little recourse.

I recall similar feelings of cognitive dissonance in Kandahar at an early briefing for one of our higher allied headquarters on a new series of patrols in a remote area of a neighbouring province. No foreign troops had entered that valley



A desolate road meanders through the Parmir mountains an hour outside Bagram Airfield.

We did some good things ... We built roads, schools and hospitals and improved infrastructure. We gave people hope when they had none. In the end, the US did defeat al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and got Osama bin Laden and Mullah Mansour. Everyone did as much as they could at the tactical level, at the human level.”

Although many of us wonder if our governments have absorbed the strategic lessons of Afghanistan, we know the mission changed us personally and

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Although many of us wonder if our governments have absorbed the strategic lessons of Afghanistan, we know the mission changed us personally and shaped our approach to our work forever.

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since the departure of the Soviets. Upon hearing that the units had encountered what seemed like hostile fire for reasons unknown, the principal angrily berated the briefer. “I don’t want to hear f---ing unknown,” he sneered. “If it’s drugs, you tell me it’s drugs. If it’s Taliban, you tell me it’s Taliban.” The message was clear: ambiguity and uncertainty were not welcome, even in this murkiest of operating environments.

At the next session, the briefer attributed the entire day’s worth of incidents to the “insurgency.” From then on, any problems in that area would be solved by military might alone, with no prospect for persuasion or the softer methods of an engagement strategy like Canada’s. Within weeks, American A-10s, designed for ripping the bellies out of Soviet tanks, had bombed dozens of mud-walled family compounds, killing civilians along with the alleged enemy. By the time I left Kandahar eight months later, that area was an unambiguous hotbed of Taliban activity. My colleagues and I feared that this represented a pattern across the theatre. After all, if you have a big enough hammer, you might be able to pound anything into a nail.

Most of us also have hopeful memories of our time there. One of mine involved a mob of curious little girls during a visit to Zabul with the Governor who couldn’t believe a woman could participate as an equal with political or military leaders. A decade later, Gwen hosted an embassy event for female students where a panel of professional women and men spoke about their work in Dari and English. They included two women from the Canadian Military Police detachment in Kabul and the Locally-Engaged Staff of the Embassy. Gwen hopes “the current state of affairs won’t take away all their memories or the way they felt while participating in the programs we supported.”

As one military intelligence officer who served in 2006 and again in 2009 said: “it’s easy to be cynical and sad.

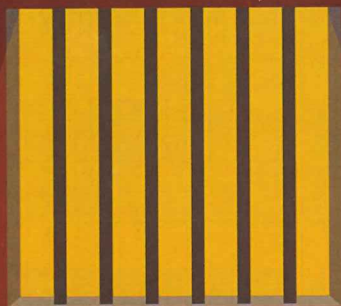
shaped our approach to our work forever. After all, if those kinds of experiences don’t affect you, nothing will. And, in the words of a senior US diplomat who spent considerable time in the south, “institutions don’t learn lessons, but the people in them do. And we use them every single day.”

In August, I spent a couple of hours on the phone with another friend, who had worked as a security contractor in Kandahar before leaving to train as an emergency-room nurse. Without Afghanistan, she said, “I would never have been ready for the stress and trauma of the pandemic. The war gave me the mental equivalent of calluses on my hands, earned through hard work, and that’s made everything else seem easier by comparison.”

Gwen reports that her time in Kabul made her think about “how we represent the values we promote within our service at home and abroad.” She notes that “many of us dedicate our hearts and souls to serving in extreme circumstances. We get bruised by the stress, the crises, the bureaucratic boundaries and the discrepancies between the public awareness and realities of our work.”

In the end, she concludes that “it’s not easy, but it’s worth it, so long as we continue to take care of ourselves, our families, and one another.” bdp

Innocent Canadian Captives  
and High Stakes Espionage  
in the US-China Cyber War



# THE TWO MICHAELS



MIKE BLANCHFIELD AND FEN OSLER HAMPSON

**FEN OSLER HAMPSON** is Chancellor's Professor at Carleton University and President of the World Refugee & Migration Council. He was a Distinguished Fellow and Director of Global Security Research at The Centre for International Governance Innovation. He is Co-Director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance.

**MIKE BLANCHFIELD** is the international affairs writer for The Canadian Press based in Ottawa. His reporting has taken him across the world, including the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He was the winner of the 2013 R. James Travers Foreign Corresponding Fellowship. Mike is currently president of The Canadian Press branch of The Canadian Media Guild.

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Rock Takes a Turn

Excerpted from *The Two Michaels* by Michael Blanchfield and Fen Osler Hampson

**ALLAN ROCK IS MANY THINGS:** a former Canadian justice minister, a former Canadian health minister, a university president, a law professor, and a former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations mission in New York City. Rock's United Nations job meant that he was something else that in 2018 became extremely significant: he was Michael Kovrig's former boss.

When Rock took over the UN mission from career diplomat Paul Heinbecker, he immediately noticed a low-level communications officer, Michael Kovrig. Rock found Kovrig to be extremely well-informed, "an interesting guy with a master's degree from Columbia University in international affairs, possessed of a very active intellect, curious, and ambitious." He quickly came to the conclusion that Kovrig was underemployed and began to use him for a variety of more challenging tasks at the mission. At one point, at the request of Canada's ministry of foreign affairs, Rock went on a speaking tour of Canada to talk about Canada and the United Nations. He took Kovrig with him on this ten-day cross-country jaunt and developed a greater appreciation for his wry sense of humor and conversational skills.

When Rock left New York, the two men stayed in touch. Kovrig used Rock as a referee for a position with the International Crisis Group to which he had applied. Rock was happy to provide a very positive reference and was delighted when Kovrig landed the job.

With both a personal and professional interest in Kovrig's welfare, Rock was anxious to do what he could to either have him released from Chinese prison or to have his living arrangements improved and, fortunately, he soon had an opportunity. In early November 2019, Rock led a delegation of former Canadian government officials, politicians, and academics to Chengdu, China for a below-the-radar meeting with Chinese officials. Ostensibly, the gathering was to discuss the future of Sino-Canadian relations, part of a polite, well-oiled "track two" dialogue that had been set in place prior to those bilateral relations breaking down in 2018. Rock felt strongly that he also had a chance to improve the fortunes of the Two Michaels.

The meeting had been organized by Gordon Houlden, head of the China Institute at the University of Alberta (CIUA). A soft-spoken, bespectacled former diplomat who speaks Mandarin, Houlden had spent much of his professional career working on China, including his efforts two decades earlier in organizing the first human rights dialogue between Ottawa and Beijing under the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien. He had held postings in both Hong Kong and Beijing, and also served as executive director (an ambassadorial-equivalent position) of the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei. Prior to joining the University of Alberta in 2008,

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Rock was anxious to do what he could to either have him released from Chinese prison or to have his living arrangements improved.

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“What’s the best way to deal with this? My own view is that little is achieved by shouting publicly, loudly, at the Chinese on these issues.”

– Rob Wright

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Houlden was Director General of the East Asian Bureau, which was responsible for Canada’s relations with China and neighbouring countries, in what was then called the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, since renamed Global Affairs Canada.

As head of China Institute, Houlden has continued to promote Sino-Canadian relations. As he remarked on his retirement as director of the centre in 2021, “My goal, in line with the original mandate of the China Institute, has been to use the China Institute to increase Canadian understanding of China, and to build a think tank which would enhance better understanding of China, and what China will mean for Canada in this 21st century.”

The rest of the delegation was a who’s who of the Canadian foreign policy and political establishments, and one that straddled party lines. Apart from Rock, who had recently stepped down as president of the University of Ottawa, his job after serving as ambassador to the UN, it included the affable John Baird, who had held a variety of senior ministerial posts in Stephen Harper’s Conservative government, including foreign minister; Ted Menzies, a former Conservative MP from Alberta who was Harper’s junior finance minister; Phil Calvert, a former diplomat who had also served in China and also for four years as Canada’s ambassador concurrently to Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos; Rob Wright, a former Canadian ambassador to China; Len Edwards, who had held three deputy ministerial posts (foreign affairs, international trade and agriculture) in the Canadian government and had also been Canada’s ambassador to South Korea and Japan; and Yves Tiberghien, a career academic and the former head of the Institute of Asian Research at the University of British Columbia. The members of the group unanimously saw merit in having an “informal dialogue” with the Chinese to advance the Canadian position on Meng and to address the situation of the Two Michaels. As Wright testified a few weeks later at the House of Commons special committee on Canada-China relations: “To the extent that we can influence the government of China on their form of detention, we [should] do so. What’s the best way to deal with this? My own view is that little is achieved by shouting publicly, loudly, at the Chinese on these issues.” Based on his own experience in China, Wright said, “headlines on the front pages of newspapers about Chinese actions and about

the fact that Canadians were detained in Chinese prisons didn’t help resolve the issue. What helped was deliberate, ongoing, diplomatic contact with Chinese officials, working with them to ensure that Canadian citizens were treated fairly, that we had access to them, and that they were given a fair hearing under Chinese law to the extent possible.”

The Chinese government chose to host the meeting at the luxurious Six Senses resort near the city of Chengdu, coincidentally the birthplace of Meng Wanzhou, in Sichuan province. The resort advertises itself as a place where you can reconnect with your six senses because “in this world of disconnection, reconnection doesn’t happen on its own. You have to define how you want to connect.” It was an ironic piece of sloganeering, given the context of the meeting that was about to unfold. The hotel’s vast complex of villas, courtyards, gardens, and main facilities sits at the base of Qing Cheng Mountain and the nearby Dujiangyan irrigation system, which was built in the third-century BC and still controls the waters of the Minjiang River. The region is also famous for being the home of the ancient Chinese philosopher Zhang Ling, founder of Taoism, and for its hot and spicy food. If the Chinese government was sending some sort of signal with their choice of venues, it was lost on the Canadians, who were unaware of Meng’s association with Chengdu.

The members of the Canadian delegation took separate flights to Chengdu via Beijing. They met at a Chengdu hotel and had breakfast together in a private area off the hotel’s main dining room before boarding a bus for the two-hour ride to the Six Senses resort. They discussed for the first time what they regarded as their central purpose and the principal message they would convey to the Chinese. There was anything but unanimity about the way forward. Some members of the group felt that Canada had to cut Meng loose, otherwise there was no way to get the Two Michaels back. Others said wait a minute, you can’t give in to a bully, and you can’t set a precedent that would endanger the lives of Canadians around the world and give would-be hostage-takers the wrong message. The discussion continued on the bus ride.

After arriving at the resort around noon and checking into their comfortable accommodations, some members of the group spent the next several hours meandering along the mountain trails near the resort. Small temples were visible to them on the surrounding slopes and hills, which were shrouded in a cloudy mist.

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If the Chinese government was sending some sort of signal with their choice of venues, it was lost on the Canadians.

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At dinner, the group agreed to meet again, early in the morning. Over breakfast, it was agreed that Rock would serve as group leader and deliver the opening statement, which had been drafted and reviewed over breakfast. But as they were walking from the breakfast room to the meeting room, Rock turned to the group and said, “you know guys, I don’t think I can sit there and read this because it’s too formulaic. I will use this as a basis for speaking but won’t recite chapter and verse.” The group agreed. It was cool and wet outside as the Canadians made their way through the labyrinthian hotel complex to the meeting room.

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Now it was  
Rock’s turn.  
Given how  
the meeting  
was unfolding,  
it was clear  
Rock was the  
right choice to  
take the lead.

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The Chinese delegation was led by Wang Chao, president of the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPFIA), and included a number of former military and diplomatic officials, notably Zhang Junsai, who had been China’s ambassador to Canada and had just retired from the prestigious job of director general of the administration of Diaoyutai State Guesthouse from 2014 to 2019, and Jiang Shan, who had been minister counsellor (economic) at the Chinese embassy in Ottawa from 2007 to 2013. The talkative Jiang was well-liked, and viewed as having done a superb job promoting economic ties between the two countries.

After their introductions, Wang got down to business. His main subject was Meng and the Two Michaels. He brought a chill to the room by blasting Canada for being a lackey of the United States. He said that Meng’s business interests were legitimate and that she’d done nothing wrong. Canada, he said, was unlawfully detaining Meng, the court process was unmeritorious, and she should be sent home immediately. How could Canada do such a thing to such a nice woman? he asked.

Wang stressed that there was no connection between Meng and the Two Michaels. As far as the Chinese were concerned, the Two Michaels had been engaged in espionage activities, which was why they were arrested. It was a refrain that other members of the Chinese delegation would repeat.

Edwards said it wasn’t easy listening to this half-hour lecture from the Chinese, given how the Canadian delegation felt. “We got the full force of the Chinese position,” he said. “The whole environment before Allan came in had turned extremely cold.”

Now it was Rock’s turn. Given how the meeting was unfolding, it was clear Rock was the right

choice to take the lead. Anyone who had seen him in action knew that there would be nothing casual or off-the-cuff about his delivery. A skilled lawyer, Rock is a careful master of his brief and attentive to detail. He leaned in over the boardroom table and, though jetlagged, carefully set out for the stern-faced Chinese officials the Canadian government’s position. He explained that Canada’s actions were dictated by its obligations under international law. Canada was complying with a request from a treaty partner to extradite someone who had been charged under US law and that had triggered the judicial process, which was now underway. He pointed out that Meng was free on bail, living in comfortable accommodations, and enjoying access to highly sophisticated and experienced legal counsel. He said that she was appearing in an open courtroom, where she had the opportunity to make every representation available to her in Canadian law in full public view. Rock explained that an impartial independent judge would evaluate the merits of the case and that only if the statutory test was met would she be committed for extradition. After that, it was up to Canada’s minister of justice to determine in the ministerial phase of the process whether to surrender her for extradition. All of this, Rock underscored, was being done in accordance with the law.

Rock then pivoted to the situation of the Two Michaels. He reproached the Chinese for the inhumane conditions in which the Canadian detainees were being held, which stood in stark contrast to those of Meng. They were prisoners, he said, with no opportunity for bail or freedom pending the disposition of whatever complaint the Chinese had against them. He then politely but firmly reprimanded the Chinese for denying the Two Michaels proper legal counsel and for not informing them about the particulars of the Chinese government’s complaint and justification for holding them. Their detention was indeterminate, he underlined, and they had no idea if or when they would be allowed to leave or under what circumstances. Rock implored his Chinese hosts to bring to bear whatever influence they could, as distinguished current or former members of the Chinese government, to improve the living conditions of Canada’s detainees which, he emphasized, were unacceptable and “unworthy of the great people of this nation.” As for Canada, he concluded, it would pursue what the Canadian government believed were its legal

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“We got the full force of the Chinese position. The whole environment before Allan came in had turned extremely cold.”  
– Len Edwards

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The Chinese claimed that the Two Michaels were being held in the same conditions as all other prisoners, which Rock said amounted to “the same old bullshit.”

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obligations under the rule of law because Canada, he underlined, is a nation that abides the rule of law.

After Rock finished speaking, Baird passed him a handwritten note. While in politics, Baird presented as a partisan pit bull, but behind the scenes he worked hard to build consensus across party lines on sensitive international issues. This was hardly his first non-partisan international foray: he had taken NDP and Liberal critics with him to Iraq in 2014 and featured them prominently in talks with the Iraqis. He wanted to do the same when he visited Ukraine after the Russian invasion in 2014, but Prime Minister Harper shot down the idea, not wanting the opposition to share the spotlight. Baird also travelled to Ethiopia in 2010 to lobby for an imprisoned constituent, so he was no stranger to fighting for political

prisoners in tense international meetings. “Hell has frozen over. I agree with you entirely,” said the note. The gesture drew a quiet chuckle from Rock, a perfect illustration of the aphorism that “politics stops at the water’s edge.”

The Chinese were implacable in response to Rock’s presentation. They claimed that the Two Michaels were being held in the same conditions as all other prisoners, which Rock said amounted to “the same old bullshit.” But they had also done their legal homework on Canada’s extradition law. Rock had argued that when it came to the proceedings in the British Columbia Supreme Court, the government’s hands were tied, that Canada had a process and was following it in good faith under the rule of law. The Chinese hit back with section 23(3) of Canada’s Extradition Act, which gives the minister of justice the authority “at any time [to] withdraw the authority to proceed and, if the minister does so, the court shall discharge the person and set aside any order made respecting their judicial interim release or detention.” As Rock recalled, the Chinese in effect said, “the minister of justice can, at any time, pull the plug on this damn thing, so don’t try to tell us that you’re stuck pursuing this, unquestioningly, to the bitter end. We’re reading from your own legislation.”

The Canadians were ready for the Chinese to exploit that inherent loophole in the government’s argument. Rock parroted the line from the Department of Justice, that the section of the legislation the Chinese had cited was not necessarily intended for this kind of case. It would be an extremely rare circumstance in which the minister would prematurely halt any such proceeding.

As Rock confessed privately sometime later, it was “a non-satisfactory response” and “somewhat ironic.” In later months, he and former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour would adopt that argument themselves in an effort to free the Two Michaels. They put it to the federal government in no uncertain terms that although it could cite the rule of law to justify its unquestioning and unswerving decision to allow the continuation of the Meng proceeding, the rule of law also includes Section 23. “I spent twenty years arguing cases in court. And I certainly know that sometimes you argue cases you don’t believe in,” Rock says. “Sometimes you argue a case and put the best face you can on it, knowing that it’s got weaknesses, feeling your heart sink when the other side identifies those weaknesses, trying your best to respond. But knowing that they’ve got a very good point.” That was how he felt about Section 23.

The rest of the morning was spent alternating from one side to the other, allowing everyone an opportunity to offer views. Baird reinforced many of Rock’s arguments. Ted Menzies, whose principal preoccupation was trade relations, spoke forcefully, drawing on his experience in Asia and in government, talking about the considerations facing the government of Canada and how to manage them.

The two sides broke for lunch, and when they returned expanded the conversation to the broader aspects of the Sino-Canadian relationship, including economic relations, people-to-people ties, health, and human rights. Both sides expressed a desire to return to a position where there was a constructive relationship between the countries because both had much to gain. Edwards said the tone became noticeably warmer. He started noticing some positive signals during informal conversations with the Chinese delegation away from the formal talks. While the formal Chinese position was that Meng’s case was in no way connected with their prosecution of the Two Michaels, Edwards was beginning to get the impression that China saw a much closer connection between the cases. “We had not heard that before. And when we picked it up in the corridor and dinner discussions, despite what was being said, in a formal meeting, about no connection and so forth, the Chinese were ready to talk to us on the basis of a connection. They were ready to talk about the situation of the Michaels if we were prepared to drop our proceedings.”

Rock said the Chinese recognized the strength and potential political clout of the Canadian

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“I spent twenty years arguing cases in court. And I certainly know that sometimes you argue cases you don’t believe in.”  
— Allan Rock

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delegation. It had seasoned ex-diplomats who knew China, three former cabinet ministers from the country's two main political parties. "We had people very knowledgeable about China. And so, I think they regarded us as a potential source of hope that there might be some influence brought to bear on the government of Canada to bring this episode to an end."

The next day, the Chinese delegation played tour guide for their Canadian visitors. They visited panda bears at a local zoo and took a tour of a water conservation project. Edwards interpreted the hospitality and the new "friendliness" of the Chinese delegation as "part of the signaling that things could be put right" between the two countries.

Something very concrete was also "put right" that day: the Chinese lifted their ban on Canadian pork. Edwards couldn't say for sure whether it had anything to do with how the previous day's talks had gone. Was it a sign from the Chinese that progress was possible or was it simply a coincidence? Either way, it buoyed the spirits of the Canadian delegation as they departed Chengdu and made their way back to Beijing for the final leg of their journey. "We were anxious to take credit for the lifting of the pork embargo. But then we realized that, at that time, we were on the verge of the Chinese New Year," Edwards recalls. That meant family get-togethers and festive dining. "Pork is so central to the Chinese diet," Edwards said. "There was a shortage of domestic pork because of the disease that afflicted their herds."

When the group returned to Beijing, it met with Lu Kang, the North American chief for

the Chinese ministry of foreign affairs. The Canadians continued to communicate the message that the tit-for-tat reaction to detention of Meng Wanzhou was a miscalculation. As Houlden later remarked, they "did not see movement in the Chinese formal position," but he hoped that his hosts came away from the meetings with "a better understanding of the Canadian position."

When the group reassembled after meeting Lu at the Canadian embassy in Beijing, it came to the consensus that it was time to bring the Canadian legal proceedings to an end, not least because the Meng case had become so politicized with President Trump treating her as a bargaining chip in trade negotiations. Some members of the group felt that the Chinese were quietly signalling that they, too, would like to put the case behind them. The Canadians worked on a script that would be shared in a call with ambassador Dominic Barton, who was in Canada for consultations with his government and had no opportunity to meet directly in Beijing. Rock was tasked to make the call with Barton, which took place in the padded "secure" room in the bowels of the embassy, out of earshot of any hidden Chinese listening devices.

The Chinese recognized the strength and potential political clout of the Canadian delegation. It had seasoned ex-diplomats who knew China, three former cabinet ministers from the country's two main political parties.

## Praise for *The Two Michaels*

“ *The Two Michaels* is a timely and highly-readable book – a gripping human drama that also tells a bigger story about the fast-changing world of international diplomacy, superpower rivalry, and the struggle to secure the Internet.

– **Madeleine Albright**  
former US Secretary of State

“ *The Two Michaels* reads like a gripping spy novel, but it's a true story. This is a chilling and convincing analysis of how two innocent Canadians became pawns of a bullying state that refuses to follow the rules essential for smaller countries like Canada.

– **John English, OC, FRSC**  
biographer of Pierre Elliott Trudeau  
and Lester B. Pearson, and former  
Liberal Member of Parliament

NEWS // NOUVELLES

## THE AMBCANADA–PAFSO DEBORAH CHATSIS INDIGENOUS SCHOLARSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AMBCANADA (THE CANADIAN AMBASSADORS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION) AND PAFSO are extremely proud of the Deborah Chatsis Indigenous Scholarship in International Affairs at Carleton University. Originally an initiative of AMBCANADA in 2020 PAFSO gave its support and full endorsement of the scholarship late last year. Thanks to the generosity of the members of both associations the funding for the scholarship has reached a level at which we expect it will be self-sustaining in the years to come at a value of \$2,000 annually.

We were even more delighted on December 29, 2021, when the Governor General announced that Deborah was being named a member of the Order of Canada “for her leadership as the first woman of a First Nation to serve as Ambassador of Canada, and for her advocacy of human rights around the globe.” A career foreign service officer and executive Deborah was born in Chilliwack, British Columbia and grew up in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, as a member of the Ahtahkakoop First Nation.

A graduate of the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering followed by a Bachelor of Laws, Deborah subsequently earned a Master of Laws degree from the University of Ottawa with a specialization in international law. To top this off she earned a master’s degree in Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University which she attended as a Fulbright Scholar.

Highlights of her career in the Foreign Service included serving as Ambassador of Canada to Vietnam, Director of South Asia Relations at the Department, and as Ambassador of Canada to Guatemala and High Commissioner to Belize. Deborah also served as a senior advisor to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and worked at the Privy Council on Indigenous issues.

The first recipient of the Scholarship is Sage Shelton, who is a student in the M.A. programme at the Norman Peterson School of International Affairs. Before enrolling at Carleton Sage com-




Order of  
Canada recipient,  
Deborah Chatsis

pleted her BA at the University of Winnipeg in 2020, with a focus on English literature and human rights. In her MA program she is focussing her studies in the health, displacement and humanitarian policy stream with a particular concentration on research on refugee policy and forced displacement. Sage is a member of the School’s equity, diversity and inclusion committee and is actively involved in promoting equity, diversity and inclusion for Indigenous and other marginalized communities.

Colleagues and friends who would like to add their contribution to the Scholarship may do so by reaching out to [futurefunder.carleton.ca/giving-fund/ambcanada-pafso-deborah-chatsis-indigenous-scholarship-in-international-affairs](https://futurefunder.carleton.ca/giving-fund/ambcanada-pafso-deborah-chatsis-indigenous-scholarship-in-international-affairs).



Sage Shelton is the first recipient of the AMBCANADA–PAFSO Deborah Chatsis Indigenous Scholarship in International Affairs.



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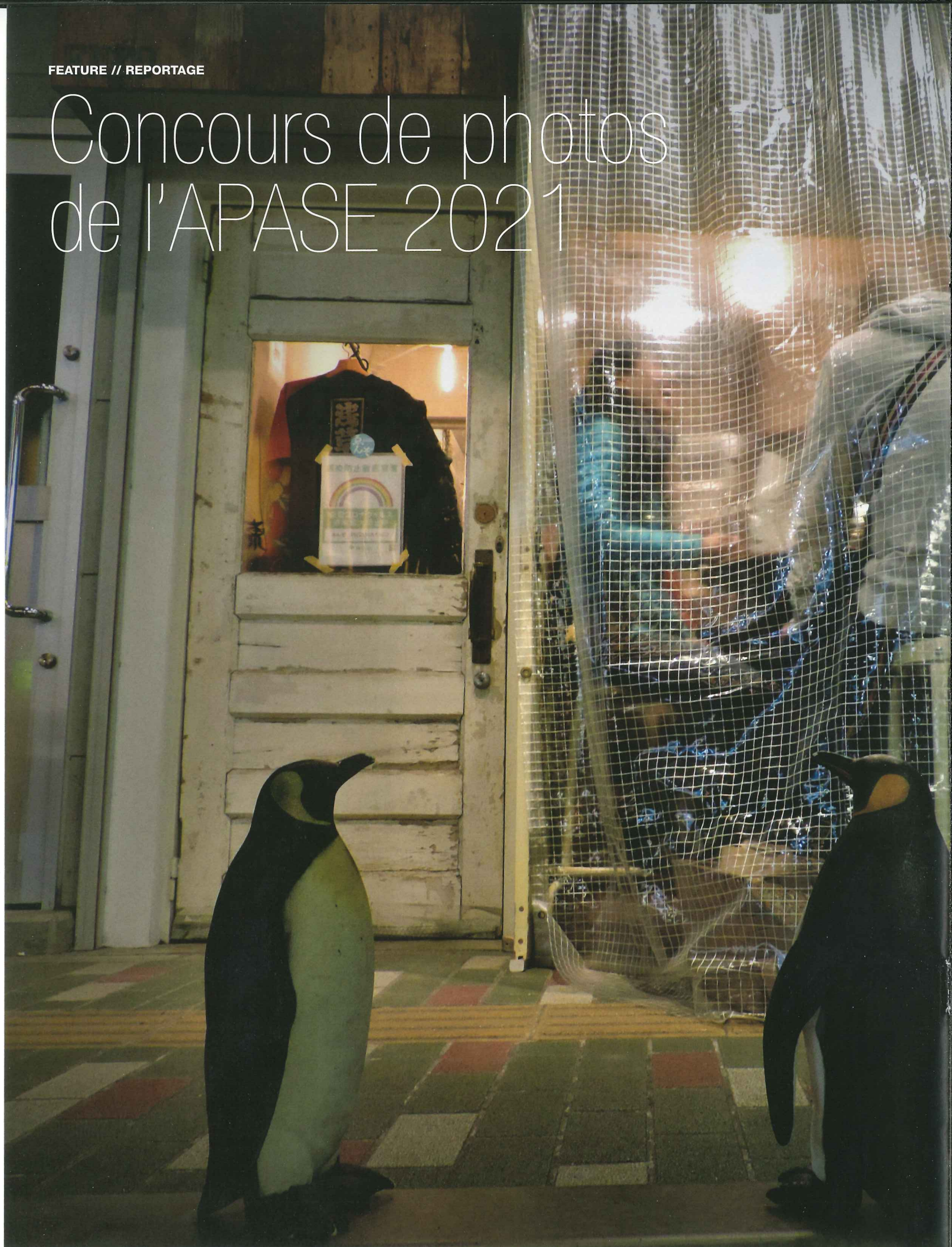
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FEATURE // REPORTAGE

# Concours de photos de l'APASE 2021





**PREMIER PRIX**

Au restaurant, Tokyo, Japon  
par Tsung-Wei Lin

**LE THÈME DU CONCOURS CETTE ANNÉE**, La prochaine normalité, visait à donner aux membres de l'APASE une occasion de démontrer leurs compétences photographiques en captant ce qu'ils voyaient émerger comme notre vie post-pandémique. Nos juges étaient intéressés à voir à travers leurs yeux – et leurs objectifs – comment change l'expérience quotidienne dans laquelle ils travaillent et vivent alors que le monde commence sa lente récupération après plus d'un an de crise.

Le jury de cette année a octroyé le premier prix à l'œuvre de Tsung-Wei Lin, « Au restaurant, Tokyo, Japon ».

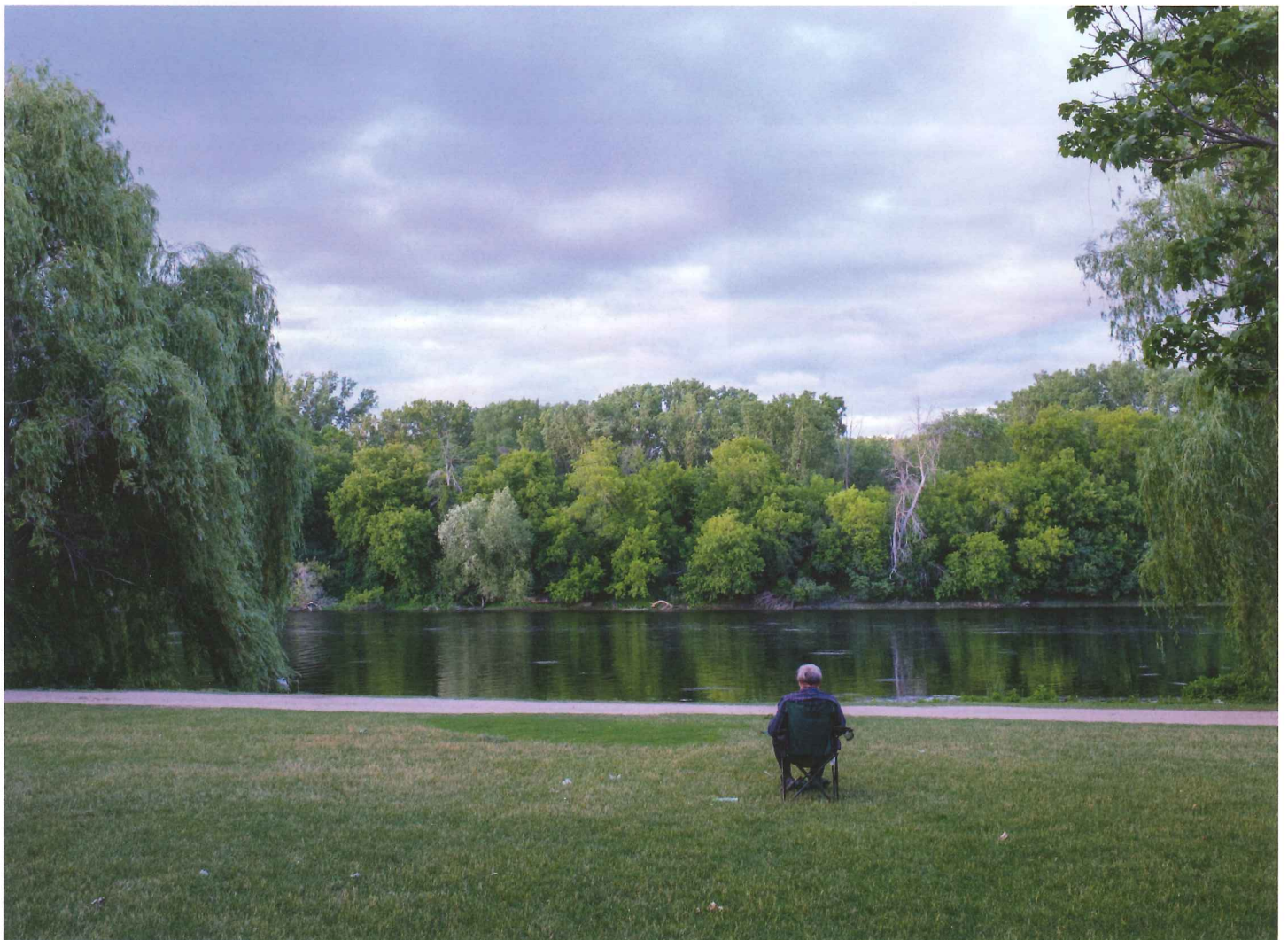
« Lors d'une promenade nocturne dans une rue calme de Tokyo, j'ai trouvé deux pingouins debout sur le trottoir. En m'approchant, j'ai découvert qu'ils étaient le signe d'un petit restaurant. Le restaurant avait créé une petite table à l'extérieur recouverte en plastique. Ceci se voit au Japon pour protéger les clients de la pluie ou du vent. Depuis la pandémie, ces tables couvertes de plastique servent également pour les clients qui préfèrent ne pas s'asseoir à l'intérieur du restaurant », explique Tsung-Wei. « Du point de vue des pingouins, la scène semblait très douillette et même rassurante en cette période incertaine. De nombreuses petites entreprises n'ont pas pu survivre les turbulences causées par la pandémie, il était donc bon de voir que ce petit restaurant lui a pu s'adapter et survivre. J'espère sincèrement que nous atteindrons tous la prochaine normalité très bientôt. »



**DEUXIÈME PRIX**

Frisson d'un lever de soleil de montagne,  
Dulce Nombre de Maria, El Salvador, par James Clark

Le deuxième prix a été décerné à James Clark pour sa photo intitulée « Frisson d'un lever de soleil de montagne, Dulce Nombre de Maria, El Salvador ». Et « Le lecteur, Ottawa, Canada », par Nicolas St-Pierre, a remporté le troisième prix.



**TROISIÈME PRIX**  
Le lecteur, Ottawa, Canada,  
par Nicolas St-Pierre

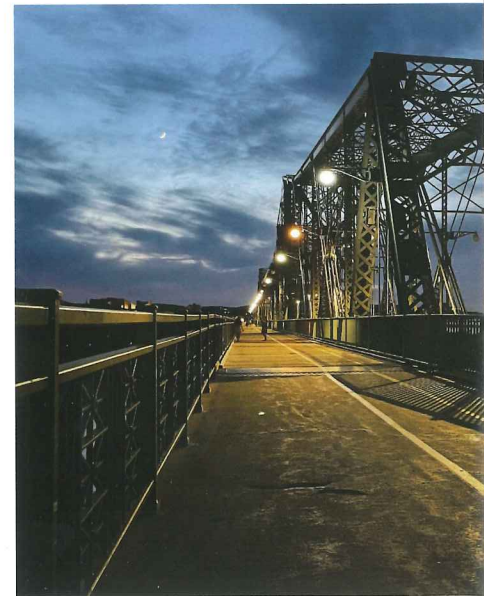
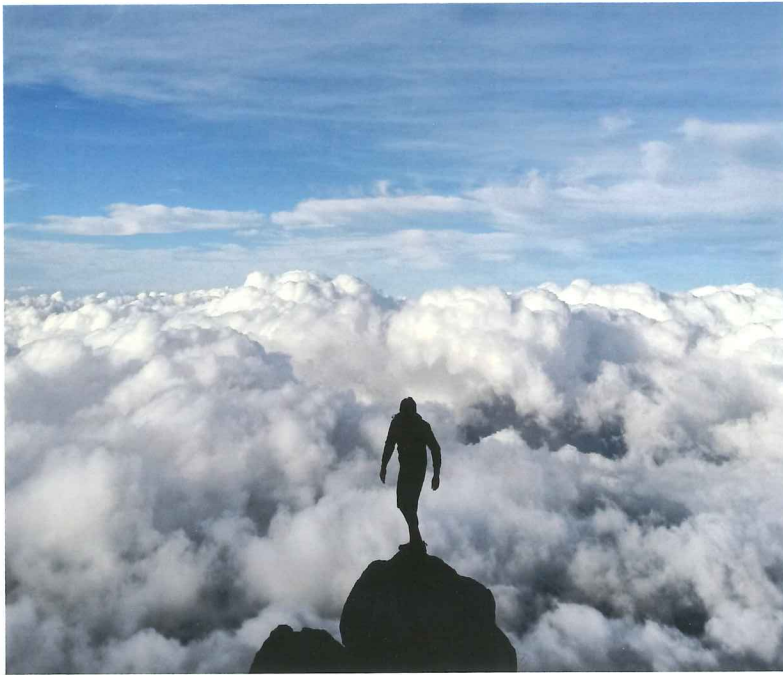
Des mentions honorables ont été décernées à Antoine Nouvet, Aslin Unlusoy, Joshua Hodgson, Lara Engel, Bob Paquin, Corina Pinto et Erin Koenig.

Cette année encore, les photos soumises serviront à illustrer le calendrier de bureau 2022 pour les membres de l'APASE.

Félicitations à tous les lauréats et aux récipiendaires des mentions honorables!

**MENTION HONORABLE**

Au dessus des nuages, le soleil brille, Mont Agung, Indonésie, par Antoine Nouvet



**MENTION HONORABLE**

Promenades nocturnes tranquilles, Ottawa, Canada, par Aslin Unlusoy



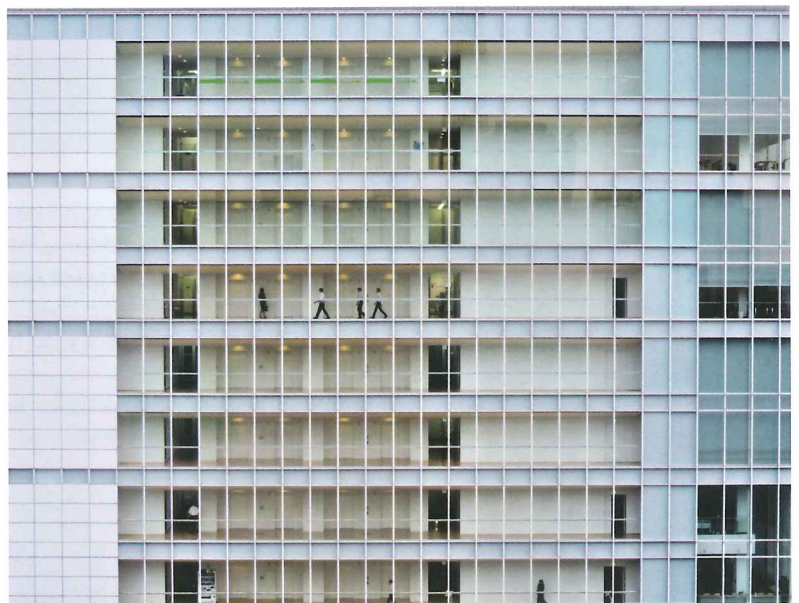
**MENTION HONORABLE**

Regard vers l'avenir, Tokyo, Japon, par Tsung-Wei Lin



**MENTION HONORABLE**

À bientôt, entre Bogota et San Andrés, Colombie, par Lara Engel

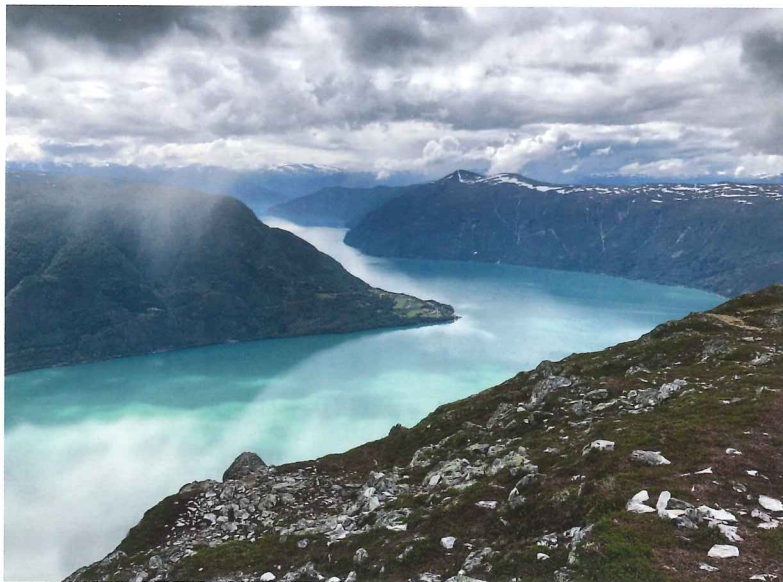


**MENTION HONORABLE**

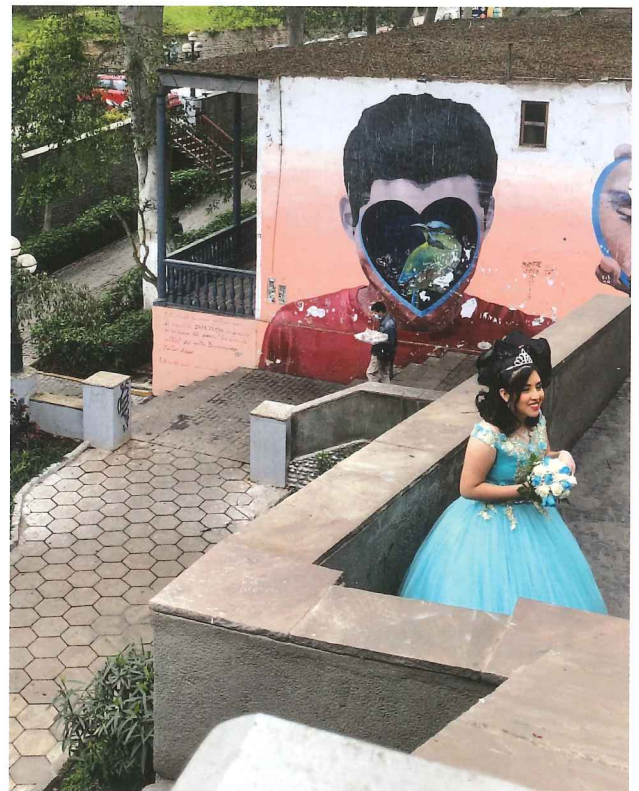
La boîte de travail, Tokyo, Japon, par Joshua Hodgson



**MENTION HONORABLE**  
Labyrinthe d'ascenseur,  
Tokyo, Japon, par Joshua Hodgson



**MENTION HONORABLE**  
Il faut que tombe un peu de pluie, Lustrafjord, Norvège, par Bob Paquin



**MENTION HONORABLE**  
Quinceañera, Lima, Pérou,  
par Erin Koenig



**MENTION HONORABLE**  
Toujours distancié,  
Ottawa, Canada, par Corina Pinto

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# The Hungry Diplomat

by Lisa Bitto

**TACOS.** “You cannot make everyone happy. You are not a taco.” That’s one of my favourite memes. I was walking my dog recently, thinking about food (as one does) and it occurred to me: tacos are one of the world’s most perfect foods.

**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.

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My concept of tacos used to be ground beef and seasoning from a packet. Good, but not great. That’s called a “gringo taco”. And that’s fair, because that’s not how those from the birthplace of tacos – Mexico – eat them. Tacos were invented before the arrival of Europeans, though there is also the theory that Mexican silver miners invented them much later, naming them after the small explosive charges of gunpowder wrapped in paper used for mining. As Mexicans emigrated to the US, they introduced tacos to an adoring American public. For the popularization of the crispy corn taco shell, you can thank ... Taco Bell. Really. Taco Bell didn’t come up with it, but it did bring the taco to the masses.

I was lucky enough to travel to Mexico City a few years ago, so I got to see how it’s really done.

More accurately, one of the ways it’s done, as tacos are amazingly – and delightfully – regional. Check out Netflix’s *Taco Chronicles* for a fantastic overview, if you are interested. My favourite taco discovery in Mexico was the *al Pastor*, which I had never heard of before. Spiced pork, roasted and sliced thin from the rotating spit and a slice of grilled pineapple, with onions, cilantro and a selection of salsas. As good as it is, Mexico cannot claim sole credit for the *al Pastor*: it was created by Lebanese immigrants to Mexico! The glorious shawarma intersecting with the Mexican taco. Magic.

One thing that struck me in Mexico City is that the taco features only a few flavours, combined well, rather than the “all-dressed” style we tend to employ in North America. No lettuce. No tomato or sour cream. Meat, cheese, onion, cilantro and salsa. The taco is not overflowing or soggy, just a perfect handheld parcel. So that’s what I often replicate at home. But the great thing about tacos is that you can make them whatever you want them to be – make them however it makes you happy!

# Tacos

## THE TORTILLAS

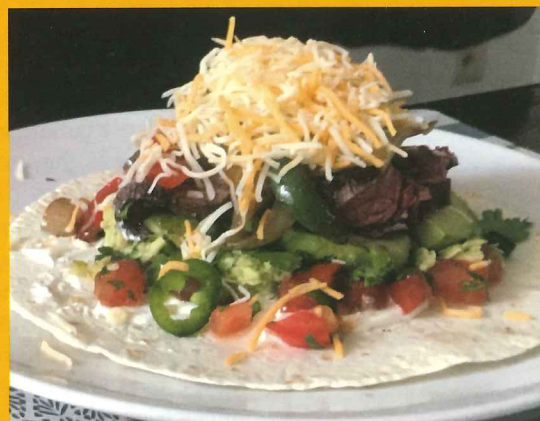
Your first choice is whether you prefer flour or corn tortillas. Buy them or make them. Both are easy to make; it's a matter of preference. Corn tortillas require masa harina (gluten free!), which is limed corn flour available in some grocery stores, health food stores and places like Bulk Barn. Flour tortillas can be made with all purpose white flour.

**CORN** My favourite. To make corn tortillas, pour some masa harina into a bowl, add a pinch of salt and then enough room-temperature water to make a soft dough. No need to measure and no worries about working the dough too much – since there is no gluten in the corn flour, the dough won't get tough. It takes a bit of practice to figure out the right amount of water to add, but I've found that developing that feel works better than measuring according to a recipe, since the weather and your kitchen can affect how much liquid is needed. Knead the dough on the counter for a couple of minutes. Form the dough into a ball and invert the bowl on top to keep the moisture in. Let rest 15 minutes on the countertop, divide into golf ball-sized pieces (or smaller, if you want to do it the way it's done in Mexico), then let rest under the bowl again for about 10 minutes. This gives the masa time to absorb the moisture better and results in a better tortilla. If you don't have time, just mix and roll 'em out!

**FLOUR** There are so many great uses for flour tortillas – tacos, fajitas, enchiladas and quesadillas, just for a start. I've seen some bloggers say they use them for quick pizzas, which seems like a great idea for emergency snacks (my hunger qualifies as an emergency), even if just with sauce and cheese. I often make extras and freeze them in pairs in a freezer bag, with parchment paper placed between the pairs to keep them from sticking. I do find that they get freezer burned quite quickly, so try to keep the air out and use them within a month or two.

To make flour tortillas, use about ¼ cup of flour per tortilla, add a bit of salt (let's say about ¼ tsp for every six tortillas), a small glug of oil or lard (I've used canola and olive oil successfully. Use what you like), and then enough boiling water to form a smooth, non-sticky dough. Stir as well as possible, then let cool until comfortable to touch. Knead for about a minute, just to ensure the flour is uniform and silky. Then invert the bowl over the dough and let rest for 15–30 minutes. Cut into golf ball sized pieces and invert the bowl again for about 10 minutes.

From here, you treat either type of tortilla the same. Heat a cast iron frying pan (you are going to dry fry, so don't add anything to the pan) over medium heat. Squash and roll out each ball to about 1/8"-1/4" thickness, keeping the others covered. I like to use a bench scraper to smoothly transfer each to the frying pan. Check to see if it has developed some nice brown spots after about a minute. If so, give it a flip and repeat. I usually like to re-flip one more time, giving it about 30 seconds. When you finish, sandwich it into foil and a dish towel. This is probably the most important step – they will steam and soften to become foldable. Otherwise, you'll be stuck with stiff tortillas that will crack when you fill them. Still delicious, but not the experience you're looking for.




## THE MEAT (OR OTHER FILLING)

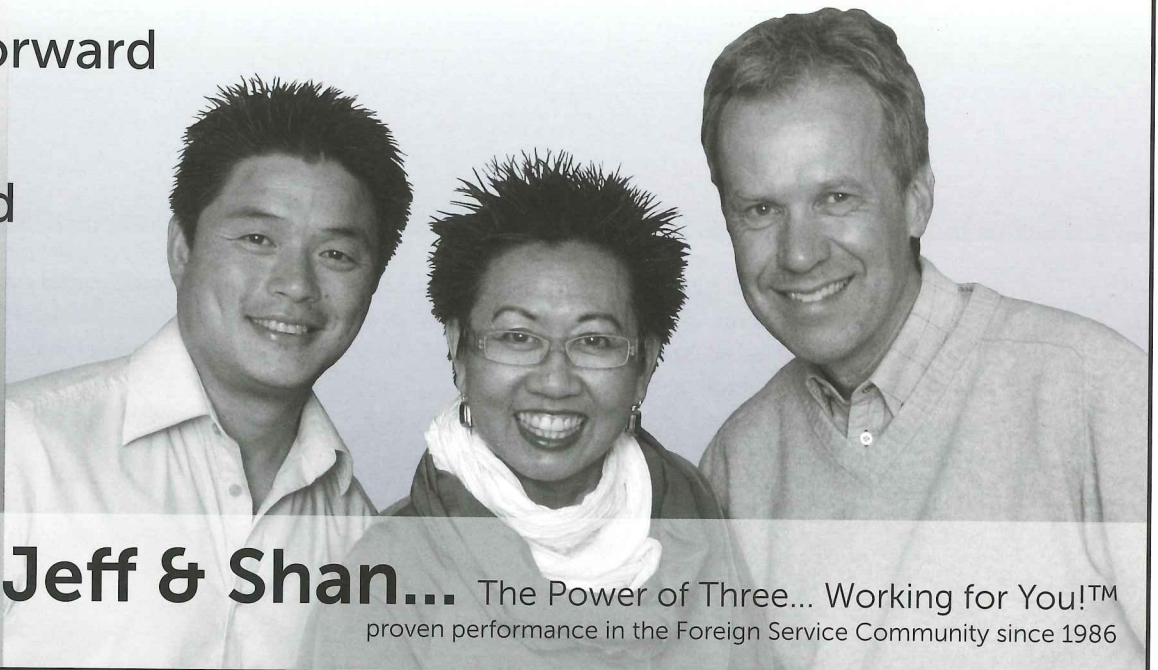
In my mind, this is the soul of the taco; it determines the biggest aspect of your taco's flavour profile. And you can use whatever you like! Pulled pork or chicken make for a succulent taco. Shredded beef works really well here too. But you can also use sliced meat, either purpose roasted or leftovers, which provide your hands with a less messy experience. Use tofu or a meat substitute if that's what you prefer. I usually try to use a southwestern flavour profile, which includes chili powder, cumin and Mexican oregano. And don't forget the salt – this is your main vehicle for enhancing the flavour. If you're having people over, maybe do two different fillings for variety. Seriously, aren't you craving tacos right now?

## THE TOPPINGS

Again, use whatever you love. I must have pico de gallo and cheese (usually aged cheddar, but feta or a more authentic fresh crumbly white cheese are also lovely). Chopped cilantro and diced onion are favourite additions from Mexico City. But you could also use refried beans, sour cream, cabbage (dressed in vinaigrette or not; pulled pork with dressed cabbage is awesome), chopped tomatoes or any kind of shredded greens. Arugula would be fantastic. If you usually fully load your taco, try adding just one sauce and one or two additional ingredients. The whole experience changes because you focus on only a few elements.

That's it. Easy. Enjoy just one or as many as you like. Throw the leftovers in the fridge and enjoy again tomorrow (or re-purpose them to make something else, like enchiladas). Yes. Tacos. Go make them. 

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IN MEMORIAM // EN MÉMOIRE DE  
**MARK EDWARD BAILEY**  
1951–2021

by Ghislaine, Nawel, Soraya and Raja Bailey

**WHEN MARK ARRIVED IN OTTAWA** in 1973 as a 22-year-old new recruit on the steps of the Lester B. Pearson building, he could not have known that this was the start of a calling to public service.

In one of his earliest assignments at the UN General Assembly in New York, from 1974–75, Mark began addressing some of the world's thorniest issues, including the Arab-Israeli dispute, apartheid in South Africa and other conflicts around the world.

His first posting was slated to be to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, but this was changed to Rabat, Morocco, where Mark served as Third Secretary and Vice Consul. A fortuitous change, as it was in Morocco that Mark not only cut his teeth on difficult consular cases, but most importantly, met the love of his life, Raja. The two returned to Canada, and after a few years, and the birth of two daughters, Mark and his family moved to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. His exposure there to political reporting and some representational duties led to a cross posting to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 1982,

where they welcomed a third daughter.

While in Jeddah, Mark became the first (and possibly the only) Canadian diplomat to complete the Islamic Hajj as a religious participant, on which he subsequently prepared a briefing. This report, written in 1982, stands today as the only report of its kind.

In addition to Saudi Arabia, the Embassy was also accredited to the two Yemens, and memories of his travels through both countries remained some of the fondest of his career. He spoke of climbing to the top of the minaret of the Tarim central mosque, "taking in the land of frankincense."

His time in Saudi Arabia and Yemen planted the seeds for Mark's love for the Middle East, a region he would return to with enthusiasm and dedication later in his career. Before then, he began honing his expertise in trade and economic policy: in International Economic Relations in 1984, then as Director of the International Finance Division in 1986, participating in Canada's delegation to the



Mark meeting with a Moroccan government official in Rabat, circa 1998

Paris Club, working on the reorganization of the debts of countries in economic difficulty. Mark felt that this role gave him a bird's eye view of a country's governance, not just its economic policies, and it shaped his thinking on what policies would most effectively pull these countries out of the economic quicksand in which they found themselves. Mark's presentation to the Paris Club on a new way to approach this (namely, reducing debt rather than rescheduling it), was subsequently endorsed at the Toronto G7 Summit, and became known at the "Toronto Terms."

His work on international finance grew into expertise on economic policy, international development and trade in his posting as Economic Counselor in Geneva, Switzerland (UNCTAD, UN ECE, GATT and Uruguay Round) in 1989, and then through a cross-posting to Washington, D.C. in 1992, where he worked on G7/8, Investment Affairs, Transportation, Science & Technology and Macroeconomics.

While those assignments were meaningful ones to Mark, it was his return to Middle East issues that captured his passion for the remainder of his career. In 1996 Mark returned to work on the Maghreb and Arabian Peninsula, a role which saw him return to Yemen, as well as travel to Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Algeria.

In 1998 Mark was chosen for his first post as an Ambassador – a return to Morocco. Mark's work concentrated on the embassy's development aid program, travelling throughout the country to visit aid projects, and recommending continued support from Canada. A popular destination at the time for trade missions, Mark hosted several Canadian Ministers, and later, received Governor General Romeo Leblanc for a state visit.

A brief stint as Director of the Assignments Division led to his assignment in 2003 as Director General, Middle East and North Africa. During this time, Mark threw himself into a profound study of the region, its culture, history, religion and people, wading into the deep waters of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Iran's nuclear weapons program, and other geo-political challenges. Mark acted as the senior DFAIT official accompanying the Canadian Delegation to the Madrid Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq in 2003, at which \$13 billion was pledged. His travels extended to Libya, Syria, Lebanon and Iran during this time – ensuring that by the end of this period, Mark had visited all the countries in the Bureau's purview except Bahrain and Mauritania.

In 2006, Mark and Raja, accompanied now only by their dog Beacon, as their three daughters were all in university, arrived in Damascus after accepting Mark's nomination as Ambassador. While this period brought them many happy moments, and a real love for the country, it also led to deep frustration and regret. In 2006, a young Canadian woman, Nicole Vienneau, disappeared after leaving her hotel in Hama. Despite significant, prolonged efforts to search for her, she was never located. This case stayed with Mark long after his departure from Syria.

Mark subsequently accepted a cross-posting to Turkey, with responsibility for Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, a country and region he and Raja both loved dearly. Towards the end of this posting, as he and Raja prepared for a potential cross-posting, Mark was asked to lead the efforts to liberate the two Canadian hostages who had been captured in Mali. A challenging assignment, with lives at stake, and months of worry and silence for his family, the mission ended successfully, to the enormous relief and elation of all involved.

Mark resumed his position as Director General of the Middle East Bureau in 2012, before accepting his final nomination as Ambassador to Austria, Slovakia and Permanent Representative to the international organizations in Vienna. Whilst assuming many responsibilities, the most critical would be to pursue Canadian objectives relating to Iran's nuclear programme. This posting proved a highlight of his life as a diplomat, and a culmination of his previous experiences: securing support for the long-negotiated CETA agreement, participation in the complex nuclear arms negotiations with Iran, and representing Canada with pride and enthusiasm. Mark retired on September 30, 2017, ending a brilliant career of just over 44 years.

Mark's retirement did not see him leave diplomatic life. He remained engaged on many policy questions, providing his expertise and insight in a number of forums, mentoring young diplomats, and even contemplated assuming a teaching position. In June 2020, he helped organize and signed a public letter, along with 57 former Canadian diplomats and politicians, calling for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to show stronger resistance to a proposed Israeli annexation of the occupied West Bank. Mark passed away on August 22, 2021.

The world is poorer without Mark's measured, informed and humanist diplomacy. He held the rare gift of holding onto both pragmatism and principle, of leveraging a deep expertise to permit high level understanding. Of embracing his responsibilities as a representative of his country.

Mark was remembered at a Memorial event hosted by his wife and three daughters at his home in Ottawa on October 2, 2021. Certificates of his many assignments hung in a long row, and photos reflecting his decades of service lined the walls of the tent. Moving speeches from dear and long-time friends and colleagues, including Louis Guay, Carmen Sylvain, Brian Northgrave and Philippe Cousineau, brought tears, laughter and memories. Masud Husain supported the family closely both before and after Mark's passing. And finally, Denis Comeau, a dear friend of the family, helped ensure the ceremony ran smoothly.

His wife and children offer sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry of Global Affairs Canada for the incredible, challenging and inspiring life Mark, and by extension his family, lived. We hope his legacy inspires future diplomats.



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IN MEMORIAM // EN MÉMOIRE DE  
**JOHN HILLIKER:**  
**AN APPRECIATION**  
1935–2021

by Mary Halloran



John with then Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Don Campbell (left), and Greg Donaghy (right) of the Historical Research Section, Lester B. Pearson Building in 1999. (Photo provided by Christopher Cook)

**JOHN HILLIKER, WHO LED** the Historical Section at Global Affairs Canada from 1986 to 2003, passed away peacefully at his home in Ottawa on September 14, 2021 at the age of 86. Anyone who has studied the history of Canada's international relations, and the role of the department in shaping it, is well acquainted with his work. John, through his own writings and in the departmental projects he oversaw, was pivotal in making that story known.

Born and raised in Kamloops, BC, John credited his early teachers with instilling in him an abiding interest in history and international relations that would define his later career. He entered, and won, a national competition for a scholarship to Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, from which he graduated with a BA in 1958. That same year, he began the first of his two stints at the Department of External Affairs (now Global Affairs Canada) when he joined the foreign service. He interrupted

his early training in Ottawa in 1959 to obtain a Master's degree in British history at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, returning to the department in 1960. A year later his yearning for foreign travel was finally satisfied when he was posted as consul to the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Of his first years in the department, John later wrote: "Indonesia was fascinating and work in the foreign service was interesting." But his academic studies had persuaded him of the importance of scholarship, and he had "a hankering to give it a try." He left External Affairs in 1964 to begin a PhD in history at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Doctorate in hand, he joined the faculty of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario in 1968. But the department beckoned once more. He seized the chance to pursue scholarship under a different guise and joined the Historical Division as an

editor in its series Documents on Canadian External Relations (DCER). The diplomat-turned-historian returned to External Affairs in 1975.

In the years that followed, John became a leading authority on the history of Canada's foreign relations, and the principal chronicler of the department's evolution. He edited three volumes of DCER, before becoming general editor of the series. In 1986, he was appointed head of a re-constituted Historical Section. The unit for which he assumed responsibility would be smaller than its predecessor, but under his leadership it would be more productive. John devised a publication schedule for the DCER series to ensure that volumes appeared in a timely manner and saw to it that deadlines were met. He was also the architect of the department's official history project, a narrative that traced the department's story from its origins in 1909 and demonstrated its critical role in the conduct of the country's international relations. John was sole author of the first volume of Canada's Department of External Affairs, and senior author of two subsequent volumes that followed the history down to 1984.

In addition to his scholarly publications, which included numerous articles and conference papers, John also oversaw the Historical Section's informal access program. At a time when a large portion of External Affairs' historical files still resided in the department, awaiting transfer to a permanent home at the National Archives, the Historical Section made them available to academics for consultation, under controlled conditions. The effect was to facilitate the research of doctoral students and more senior historians who otherwise would have been denied entry into the departmental records. The historiography of the period is the richer for it.

To carry out the section's research and publication program, John recruited a small group of younger scholars. He offered them opportunities for advancement, the chance to work on interesting, substantive historical projects, and a congenial atmosphere in which to do it. He also trained them. There is a knack to carrying out the historian's work within the context of government bureaucracy. John quickly learned how to fulfill his obligations to his departmental masters without compromising the standards of historical scholarship and was pleased to show the ropes to his colleagues. Greg Donaghy, who so ably succeeded him as head of the Historical Section in 2003 and who, sadly, predeceased him in July 2020, always acknowledged John as his mentor and guide.

In an era of repeated budgetary cuts and competing demands for dwindling resources, much of John's time was inevitably spent on safeguarding the funding and, on more than one occasion, the existence of the Historical Section. He was a tireless and persuasive defender of the historians' function and grew adept at illustrating the relevance of their work to the department's mandate. That aspect of the job, as John ruefully admitted, was thankless and at times demoralizing. Still, he persevered; the section survived; and somehow, he managed to retain his good humour.



John's good humour, his innate civility, and his clear-eyed intelligence were in fact a hallmark of his tenure in the department. The long succession of directors and other senior managers to whom he reported, no less than his own staff, sought his counsel, knowing they could rely on his unmatched knowledge of the department's history and his shrewd assessment of its current operations for guidance. They also knew that his honest advice would be offered with wit and tact. The historian, it seems, knew well how to ply the skills of a true diplomat.

In retirement, John continued to collaborate with his former colleagues on publications and other projects related to the department's history. He also enjoyed travelling, reading, attending concerts and films, and his yearly visits to his beloved family cottage in Sorrento, BC. All the while, he carefully nurtured his friendships, some of which dated from his childhood. As Parkinson's disease curtailed his independence in his final years, a small circle of his Ottawa-based friends stepped in to assist. Such was the loyalty and affection John inspired, they considered it their privilege to do so.

John's friends and former colleagues miss the pleasure of his company. Together with all those who value the history of Canada's external relations and the department's unique heritage, they will forever treasure his legacy.

John (right) as a young Foreign Service Officer, sometime between 1958 and 1964.

*(Photo provided by Christopher Cook)*

Jean-Yves Dionne et Lucie Tremblay  
Essai

## Diplomates en péril ?

suivi de  
Chroniques peu diplomatiques

Diplomates	
01-01	Yves Dionne
02-01	Lucie Tremblay
03-01	Yves Dionne
04-01	Lucie Tremblay
05-01	Yves Dionne
06-01	Lucie Tremblay
07-01	Yves Dionne
08-01	Lucie Tremblay
09-01	Yves Dionne
10-01	Lucie Tremblay



### BOOK REVIEW // CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

# Diplomates en péril ?

## Suivi de : Chroniques peu diplomatiques

critique de livre par François Larochelle

PAR JEAN-YVES DIONNE ET  
LUCIE TREMBLAY

ÉDITIONS DE L'APOTHÉOSE  
ISBN 978-89775-466-2

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**FRANÇOIS LAROCHELLE** est un ancien diplomate canadien, analyste en politique internationale, ainsi qu'un Fellow de l'Institut d'études internationales de l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

« **LE CANADA EST DE RETOUR** » annonçait fièrement premier ministre Justin Trudeau alors qu'il venait d'être élu une première fois en 2015. Depuis, il est clair que ce n'était qu'un slogan. Notre échec en 2020 pour obtenir un siège au Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies en est la plus récente illustration. Seule notre participation aux G-7 et G-20 nous permet de rester faiblement sur l'écran radar mondial.

Le substantiel et éloquent essai écrit par Jean-Yves Dionne et Lucie Tremblay *Diplomates en péril ?* arrive au bon moment car il décortique les raisons qui minent l'influence de la diplomatie canadienne et explique pourquoi le Canada ne joue plus le rôle qu'il avait auparavant.

Beaucoup de livres ont été publiés sur les tenants et aboutissants de la diplomatie. Certains portent sur la théorie de la pratique diplomatique et visent un public universitaire, d'autres sont des mémoires de diplomates sur leurs années de service et intéressent les praticiens, les historiens et des lecteurs qui suivent les questions internationales.

Ce qui est particulier et original dans celui des Dionne-Tremblay c'est qu'il couvre ces deux aspects dans une perspective canadienne, se basant sur leur expérience d'anciens diplomates.

Dans la première partie, les auteurs dressent un portrait fort complet du système diplomatique canadien. Il décrit son histoire, traite de ses particularités dans un contexte fédéral, donne des détails sur le recrutement et le profil des agents du service extérieur. Il élabore sur leur formation, missions et tâches, leurs outils de travail. Ils soulignent leur professionnalisme, dans le contexte d'une évolution rapide de ce métier.

Fort de son expertise en relations industrielles, M. Dionne souligne le rôle moteur de la syndicalisation des agents du service extérieur. De ses luttes et acquis pour ses membres.

Le propos des auteurs établit un diagnostic : la diplomatie canadienne a du plomb dans l'aile et c'est en grande partie suite au lent détricotage de son service extérieur. De ses valeurs et de sa composition. Il décrit en particulier comment les méthodes actuelles de son recrutement remettent en question sa pertinence et son avenir.

Découlant des coupures budgétaires à répétition, les gouvernements successifs à Ottawa ont graduellement dévalué les conditions de vie à l'étranger des agents du service extérieur tant personnelles que professionnelles.

À Ottawa, on constate un effritement de l'influence des fonctionnaires expérimentés ou spécialistes des Affaires étrangères, au dépend des cabinets de lobbyistes et des attachés politiques. Les gouvernements récents ont multiplié les nominations politiques à la tête d'ambassades importantes au lieu de diplomates de carrière.

Tous ces paradigmes contribuent à diminuer l'influence d'Affaires mondiales Canada (AMC) au sein de l'appareil gouvernemental fédéral et à saper le moral d'un groupe de serviteurs de l'État qui faisait jadis l'envie de leurs collègues étrangers. Les auteurs portent donc, avec raison, un regard fort critique sur la gestion des diplomates au sein d'AMC. Ils posent les questions qui choquent. Leur analyse est incisive et bien documentée.

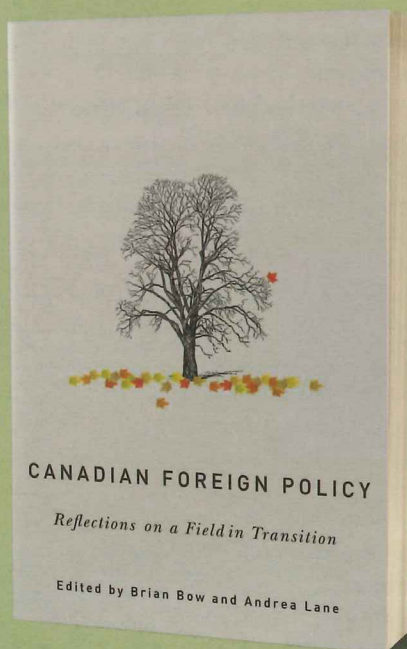
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# CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

## Reflections on a Field in Transition



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Mais heureusement ils ne s'arrêtent pas là. Ils font des propositions concrètes pour renouveler la politique étrangère canadienne. Elle passe, selon eux, par un net coup de barre pour reconnaître la place essentielle que les diplomates y jouent pour l'élaborer et la mettre en place pour l'intérêt de tous les Canadiens. Et que cette contribution soit reconnue à sa juste valeur dans l'appareil gouvernemental. Notamment par une reconnaissance de son rôle dans une approche multilatérale pour faire face aux défis contemporains : que ce soit les changements climatiques ou la lutte contre le terrorisme par exemple. Sans oublier ceux qui œuvrent au développement et au commerce.

La seconde partie du livre, *Chroniques peu diplomatiques*, décrit des tranches de vie de la famille Dionne-Tremblay dans diverses affectations, sur plusieurs continents. Anecdotes bien sûr mais aussi une description de la vie d'une famille dans le service étranger souvent dans des situations difficiles et stressantes. Elle nous familiarise avec le travail du diplomate commercial sur le terrain, que ce soit de promouvoir des produits et services canadiens mais surtout d'ouvrir de nouveaux marchés pour nos exportateurs ou d'attirer de nouveaux investissements étrangers.

Pour le lecteur qui s'intéresse à la profession de diplomate, le contenu de la deuxième partie du livre dresse un portrait de ses activités professionnelles qui n'est pas la caricature que l'on en fait parfois d'un coureur de cocktails, passant son temps au bord de la piscine un verre de champagne à la main et des petits fours dans l'autre. Il met en perspective ce que

c'est de vivre de longues années loin de ses proches au Canada et de travailler dans un environnement totalement différent de celui que l'on connaît chez nous.

Au-delà de la réflexion sur la régression de la diplomatie canadienne le livre incite à d'autres questionnements existentiels : À quoi sert un diplomate à l'étranger en 2021 alors que la récente pandémie a encouragé l'utilisation d'outils virtuels comme les visioconférences pour faire des négociations internationales ? Quelle en est sa valeur ajoutée ? A-t-il encore un rôle à jouer dans un monde où le multilatéralisme semble en perte de vitesse ?

*Diplomates en péril ?* brosse un tableau exhaustif de la réalité de notre diplomatie actuelle. Il est un appel au renforcement de la politique étrangère canadienne à travers notamment une mise à niveau de son principal instrument pour la mettre en application, son service étranger.

Sa lecture stimulera ceux qui s'intéressent au rôle du Canada sur la scène internationale et à ses praticiens. Mais il devrait aussi résonner auprès de nos dirigeants qui y trouveront une inspiration pour relever le niveau de notre diplomatie. Elle le mérite. Pour qu'enfin le Canada soit vraiment de retour !



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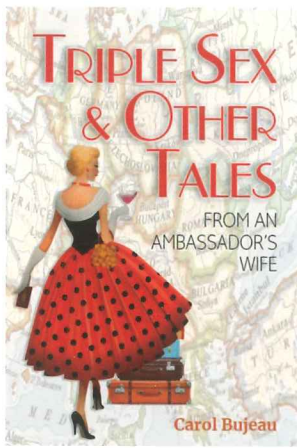
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BOOK REVIEW // CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

## Triple Sex & Other Tales from an Ambassador's Wife

reviewed by Sabine Nölke

BY CAROL BUJEAU

BURNSTOWN PUBLISHING  
HOUSE, 2021, \$25

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ISBN 978-1-77257-295-7 (eBOOK)

**SABINE NÖLKE** is a (mostly) retired former PAFSO Executive Member, with postings to London, Vienna (OSCE) and the Netherlands, where she served as Ambassador to the Kingdom and Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. She has also completed several shorter tours as Chargée d'affaires to Accra and Dublin. She'll have the red, please.

**HAVE YOU EVER OPENED A NEW BOOK** and felt like you were sitting down with a dear friend over a glass or three of wine, nibbling on some divine snacks, shucking off your shoes, and shooting the breeze for the rest of the afternoon? No? Well, have I got the book for you.

Carol Bujeau, the author of *Triple Sex & Other Tales from an Ambassador's Wife*, is married to John Holmes, a scion of the Legal Bureau and four-time Ambassador. A professional in her own right, Carol accompanied John around the planet for over three decades – from Barbados to Ghana and New York, and thence to Jordan, Indonesia, Turkey and finally, Manila.

And man, did they make the best of that life!

Trapped in the not-quite metropolis of Hemmingford, Quebec, Carol had an epiphany at the Montreal airport, when she “knew deep in my soul that my life would revolve around travel and living in foreign lands.” Sure enough, on their wedding night, John whispered to Carol that, “I’ll never be rich, but I promise to show you the world.”

You can practically hear them whooping with joy when John gets accepted into the Foreign Service (it can’t have been the salary, surely ...).

Soon enough, they find themselves and newly arrived baby Jordan in Barbados, learning, respectively, how to be a diplomat and a diplomat’s spouse. After surviving, wide-eyed and underdressed, her first and utterly cringeworthy diplomatic social gathering, Carol soon generates the occasional hapless embarrassment of her own. Undaunted, she navigates her new world and first-time motherhood while John sets about establishing himself as a diplomat to be reckoned with.

Watching Carol chart her own course as “wife of” is a joy, whether it’s fleecing rich innocents at bridge games; finding fulfilling work of her own when and where she can; becoming a cordon bleu chef; or creating a scholarship for young Jordanian women to study in Canada from nothing but chutzpah. Along the way, we watch her make friends everywhere she goes – from the thousands-of-dollars-an-hour interior decorator she charms

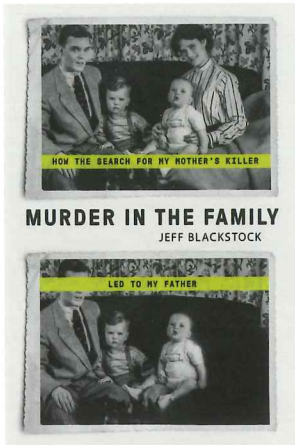
into rearranging the furniture in her and John’s New York apartment (for free), to eccentric Prime Ministers and the hard-working staff at the various Official Residences she and John inhabit.

The book is an explosion of hilarious anecdotes, touching memories, electric snippets and gorgeous vignettes. Oh, and did I mention the recipes? There are recipes! But what really bounces off the page is Carol’s unrestrained joie de vivre, the enthusiasm with which she immerses herself in every culture she encounters. “Cultural differences? Bring ’em on!” she hoots as the Korean ambassador’s wife subjects her to a loofah scrub, and proceeds to embrace every (well, almost every) human she meets along the way.

Most importantly, though, *Triple Sex* will allow you a deep and intimate look into the life of a globe-trotting family. Carol and John are clearly soulmates; the love between them and their children radiates from every chapter. But the trials and tribulations of raising a pair of third-culture kids into amazing adults are very real, as are the little and big ignominies of having to set up households in different parts of the planet – something that those of us who have embraced foreign service life can recognize and appreciate.

So, pick up a copy of Carol Bujeau’s *Triple Sex & Other Tales* and you’ll find yourself transported to a terrace somewhere, a glass with some unknown alcoholic substance and exotic fruit in hand. Pick out the umbrella, relax and enjoy!

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BOOK REVIEW // CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

# Murder in the Family

## How the Search for my Mother's Killer Led to my Father

reviewed by Siobhan Ward

BY JEFF BLACKSTOCK

PENGUIN CANADA, 2019,  
360 pp, \$24.95

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**SIOBHAN WARD** is a graduate of both Algonquin College and Carleton University. She currently works as the Youth Programs Specialist for Scouts Canada in Ottawa and is an avid reader across all genres, but especially true crime with a Canadian twist.

**"I THINK THAT MY FATHER** murdered my mother." The first line of Jeff Blackstock's true crime memoir, *Murder in the Family: How the Search for My Mother's Killer Led to My Father*, reads like something out of a thriller novel. In a mere 360 pages, Blackstock lays out the case against his father and forces readers to consider what really happened to Carol Blackstock in 1959.

Blackstock's book is a combination of a personal memoir and a true crime exposé with his family at the forefront. A retired Foreign Service Officer, Blackstock spent his career in the family trade – that of the Canadian Foreign Service. His father, a career diplomat with postings to Argentina, Switzerland and beyond, started his career as a young man in the 1950s. The senior Blackstock, George, started his first posting in Argentina with his young family in tow. George Blackstock, his wife Carol and children Jeff, Doug and Julia moved to the South American country in early 1958. By October 1959, Carol Blackstock was dead of a mysterious illness.

The book draws largely on primary sources – letters sent between his mother and her parents, documents from her illness and death and his grandfather's research into what really happened to Carol Blackstock. The letters in particular add an incredibly personal and human touch to the book, qualities not often found in true crime books.

In *Murder in the Family*, Jeff Blackstock begins by recounting his family's journey from his father's beginnings as a "natural athlete" attending Upper Canada College, to his parents' rushed marriage in 1950 when 17-year-old George married 15-year-old Carol to avoid their child being born out of wedlock. From this rocky start came Jeff, as well as the subsequent birth of two more Blackstock children, Doug in 1953 and Julia in 1956.

By 1957, George had written and passed the Canadian Foreign Service Exam and soon received his first posting to Buenos Aires, Argentina. The family's transition to their new home wasn't a smooth one, but everyone eventually managed to find their feet in their new environment. That is, until May 1, 1959 when the now 24-year-old Carol came down with a mysterious illness. Was her "hectic" existence – that of a Foreign Service wife – hosting parties, making house calls and supporting George's career wearing her down, or was there more to her sudden symptoms? By May 6, Carol had been hospitalized with a

cough, wheezing, orthopnea (shortness of breath) and vomiting. After three days of treatment at La Pequeña Compañía de María (the Little Company of Mary), Carol was well enough to be released home. Once home, she remained asymptomatic for six weeks. Or at least, that's what official reports said. Carol's own account, found in letters home to her parents, outlines more symptoms that began at the end of May, including swelling, numbness and wheezing.

By mid-June, Carol's vomiting had returned, leading to another hospitalization. Once again, she stayed at La Pequeña Compañía de María – which Blackstock mentions is particularly strange, considering the close proximity of the British Hospital, which the family was familiar with. After a mid-July discharge, Carol once again became ill and was eventually transferred to the Montreal Neurological Institute, where she died a few days later.

Now the plot thickens – not only were the young Blackstock children not

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Not only were the young Blackstock children not told of their mother's death for almost two months, but no cause of death was ever shared with them.

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Who was responsible for his mother's poisoning? Who knew what really happened in Buenos Aires? How far would his father go to cover the truth?

told of their mother's death for almost two months, but no cause of death was ever shared with them. A young, healthy 24-year-old dead with no apparent cause?

Like any good story, this is simply the tip of the iceberg – Blackstock not only focuses on the circumstances leading up to his mother's death, but the period after. After their father's quick remarriage, physical and emotional abuse in the Blackstock household, and family rifts that grew wider by the year, Jeff Blackstock finds himself a successful lawyer and Foreign Service Officer with the death of his mother still hanging over his head.

As Blackstock grew older, he began to uncover more about the circumstances surrounding his mother's death with the help of his maternal grandfather, who devoted much of his time to finding out what happened to his daughter. Eventually, Blackstock learned the true cause of his mother's death: arsenic poisoning. Blackstock's investigation of his mother's death and his quest for the truth make for an incredibly interesting story – who was responsible for his mother's poisoning? Who knew what really happened in Buenos Aires? How far would his father go to cover the truth?

Blackstock's careful research and gift for storytelling make for an intimate and detailed look at Carol Blackstock's death. He tells a story that is engaging and accessible to anyone, even those without an understanding of Canada's Foreign Service. The book is a quick read, although not an easy one.

In the age of the armchair investigator, the true crime podcast and a huge resurgence in interest in famous true crime stories of the 20th century, Blackstock creates a narrative which is hard to find anywhere else. Unlike podcast hosts who rely on Google, Reddit threads and scanned newspaper articles, Blackstock's research is original and far more in-depth than anything Reddit's amateur detectives can uncover. Even for those who aren't true crime fans, Blackstock's personal connection to the story makes the book feel like a heartbreaking memoir at times, rather than a true crime story. It is a very worthwhile read.

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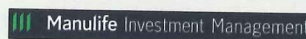
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# Who Mugged Tippi Hedren?

## AN ANNOTATED AVIAN ENIGMA

by A Aalto

Stifling a yawn, I chased another bennie with a shot of espresso. The men across my desk were not exactly the dynamic duo. D. Essex Mackinaw was the world's driest lawyer. As a charitable sideline, he helped the recycling campaign by desiccating left-over coffee back to instant crystals.<sup>1</sup> His client, who he had introduced as Max Ordinal, blended so well into the beige armchair that he almost disappeared.

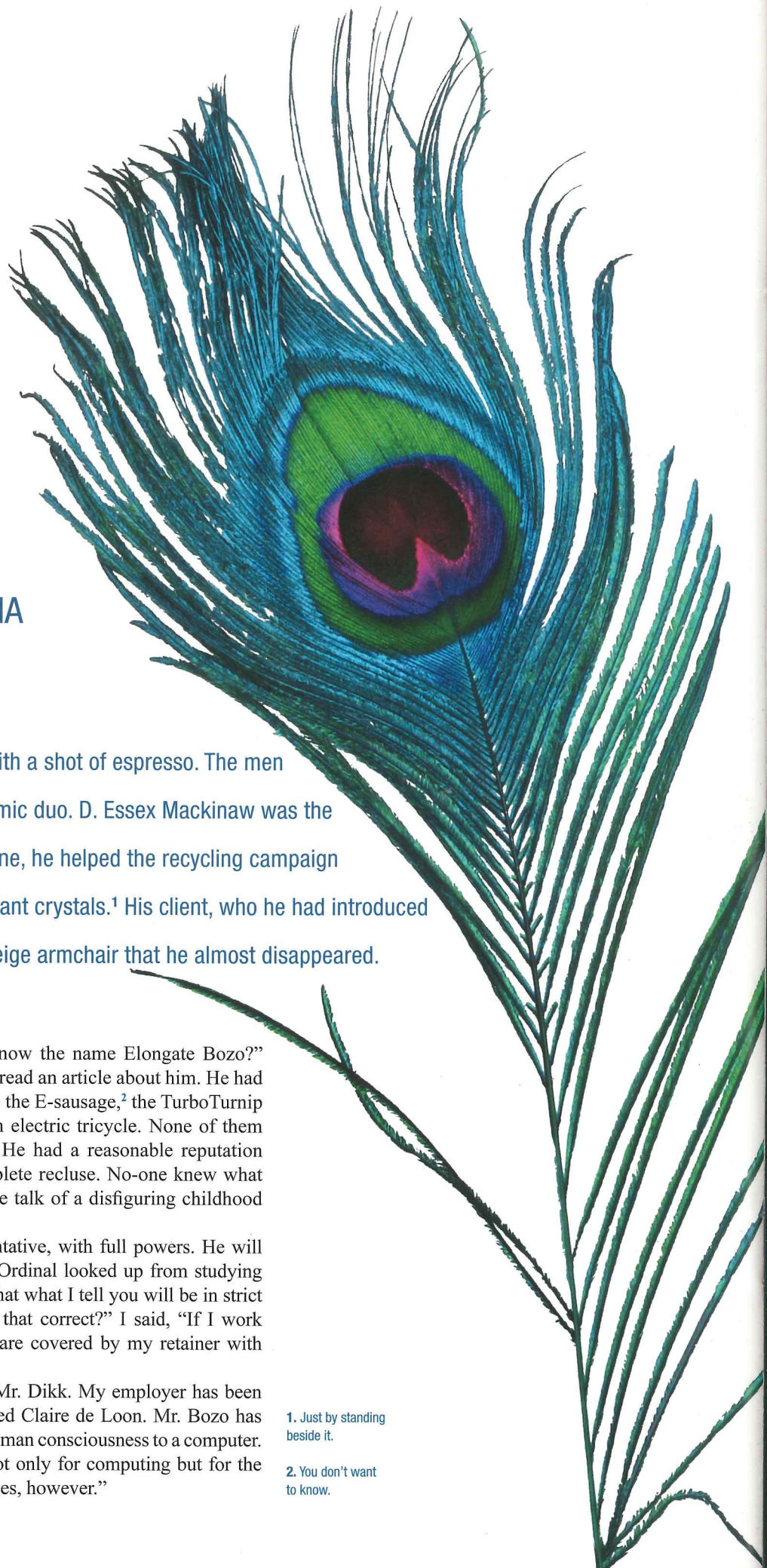
**MACKINAW RASPED, "MR. DIKK, I believe you may know the name Elongate Bozo?"** I nodded. "Right, the tech billionaire." I had just read an article about him. He had made himself rich with cutting-edge gadgets like the E-sausage,<sup>2</sup> the TurboTurnip Extreme game console and the Ultimate Lemon electric tricycle. None of them blew up, at least before the warranty expired. He had a reasonable reputation as a boss and philanthropist, but he was a complete recluse. No-one knew what he looked like. In public, he wore a mask. Some talk of a disfiguring childhood ailment. The media was fascinated.

"Quite so. Mr. Ordinal is here as his representative, with full powers. He will explain why we wish to engage your services." Ordinal looked up from studying his fingernails. "I am assured by Mr. Mackinaw that what I tell you will be in strict confidence, whether or not you take the job. Is that correct?" I said, "If I work for you, full discretion, and these preliminaries are covered by my retainer with Mr. Mackinaw."

Ordinal nodded. "It's a missing person case, Mr. Dikk. My employer has been working with an independent bio-geneticist named Claire de Loon. Mr. Bozo has long been interested in the concept of uploading human consciousness to a computer. He considers this to be the wave of the future not only for computing but for the human race. He has run into a number of challenges, however."

1. Just by standing beside it.

2. You don't want to know.



3. So was the thunderduck, but I'm still trying.

4. Well, not only was Claire's father a Loon, her mother was a Cuckoo.

5. Thereby leaving everything else up in the air as well.

6. It's expected to recover, after a long convalescence.

7. It was a short broadcast, so we had to hurry.

8. A local pinball magnate captured this all on his cellphone and later made a fortune recreating it electronically.

"This led him to Dr. de Loon. She gained fame as a costumed thief with an avian theme. Her gang was made up of genetically-modified birds with the size, strength and intelligence to follow her meticulous plans. You may remember the crime spree she masterminded." I replied, "The 600-pound canary was particularly unforgettable."<sup>3</sup>

Ordinal said, "Then she stopped, saying she had enough money to complete her research on reversing biodiversity loss among birds. Given what she saw as the lack of serious effort along conventional lines, she came up with an alternative. She would give birds increased intelligence and let them figure out their own way forward. But individually their brains were not big enough, so she thought of networking. Find birds who fly in large flocks and inject them with tiny microchips, linked by short-range wireless communicators into neural networks capable of complex computation. The chips would be built and maintained within the birds by nano-assemblers, which would also replicate and be passed down through eggs to later generations, ensuring that the new creation would grow and spread."

"That's crazy!" said Effie.<sup>4</sup> I coughed. "I'm sure *New Scientist* will be fascinated, Mr. Ordinal, but what has this to do with your missing person?"

"Oh, right, sorry. Well. Mr. Bozo realized that her work was just what he needed for his upload project. So he got in touch with her, which wasn't easy, as she is a wanted criminal. But they came to an agreement to combine his knowledge on computational networks with hers on avian genetics. Long story short, by earlier this month the first flock of enhanced birds was already in the air and everything was ready for the first human trial. Then, two days ago, Dr. de Loon disappeared."<sup>5</sup> All our communications links with her have gone dead and she has not been seen anywhere. But she did leave a note." He handed me a slip of paper.

**You will find me in the eye of the peacock.  
What have I watched?**

1 4-22-16-3 25-22-23-21-4-3-6 23-4-3  
17-18-22-21-7-17-1-5-6-24 2-9 7-2-24-2-16-2 //  
4-1-11-4 1-12 23-4-3 23-25-1-18-1-23  
24-7-10: 22 6-22-5-7 19-2-1-5-3.

He went on. "Here's where things stood when she vanished. There are two sets of the uploading device, one in our offices and one in her lab, so she could calibrate the connection with the birds. She alone was responsible for choosing and inoculating the first flock. We don't know what species of birds she is using or where the flock is located. We can't carry out the test without her, since only she has the codewords to launch it. So we really hope you can find her."

We took the case. Given the complexities, Mackinaw got us some specialist help from the Centre – rotund deconstructionist Don Gordo Beluga, the flamboyant Manitoba Jones and Bugbyte, our leather-clad systems geek. We met around my conference table.

I opened, "Claire de Loon is missing and all we have is this incomprehensible clue. The number sequence looks like a substitution cipher, but the message is too short for a frequency analysis. Where do we go from here?" We looked at each other. Effie waved a newspaper and beamed. "Well, it says here in the society pages, there's a big do on Friday at the Natural History Museum, a fundraiser for the biodiversity foundation. The big draw is the Akbar Khan diamond. It came from the Peacock Throne of the Mughal emperors and is sometimes called the Peacock's Eye." Max Ordinal spoke up from his chair against the wall. "That's right. Dr. de Loon told Mr. Bozo she was the donor. Anonymous of course." "Great catch, Effie," I said. "So, gang, how do we get our hands on this sparkler?"

Friday night in the museum, Ordinal and I stood on a balcony overlooking the Great Hall. All was glitter and champagne. Half the floor was overlaid with an ice rink, towered over by a 20-metre carved ice statue of a peacock. At its base was a heavy crystal case containing the Akbar Khan, a narrow walkway across the ice connecting the case with the ballroom floor, so that people could stroll over and look. The case was in full sight of the whole room and an armed guard stood at each end of the walkway. Waiters in penguin costumes criss-crossed the rink on skates delivering drinks and canapés to guests along its edges. Three of the skaters were our centre ringers. A band named Exfoliated Kibble did unspeakable and possibly illegal things to Broadway numbers.

The band finished off "Some Enchanted Evening"<sup>6</sup> and swung into the slow opening of Ravel's "Bolero". To one side, Bugbyte pressed a button on a small remote controller. I explained to Ordinal, "She's activating a pre-programmed shut-off of all the room's security cameras. Originally we planned to overwrite live coverage with a loop from earlier footage. When we saw that the security people have a window over the floor as well as the monitors, we switched to a taped broadcast of 'The Wit and Wisdom of Donald Trump' to distract them."<sup>7</sup>

As Bolero built up, the waiters put down their trays, lined up across the ice and linked up to a long stretch of rope. They twisted and jived as the line began to whirl faster around its centre. The guests began clapping in time. The music accelerated and the line shifted to a "crack the whip" formation, with Don Gordo at the free end and Jones next to him, both yelling their heads off.

Standing at one edge of the rink, Bugbyte watched the line. As the tip of the whip passed an inconspicuous mark, she pressed a second button on the remote. Small explosions severed the rope either side of Jones. The two ringers hurtled off. Don Gordo ricocheted off an Aztec sundial (accidentally re-setting the fifth sun apocalypse), the mayor, a giant tureen of anchovy chowder (exchanging phone numbers with the chef), a cabinet of unusual musical instruments (getting his leg stuck in a mechanical cello) and looping around the Black Hole of Calcutta (not the historical prison, an actual black hole from India) before slamming his full 150 kilos into the ice penguin and knocking it over.<sup>8</sup>

Jones pulled a flashy stop in front of the mayor's wife (exchanging phone numbers with her), then skated, whistling nonchalantly, towards a second mark in the ice near the crystal case, which the toppling penguin promptly smashed. Crushed ice and broken glass fountained all over. Jones stuck out his hand casually and a glittering object fell into it. Trousering it, he raced elegantly toward the exit, only to trip over an anchovy-covered cello bow and skid under the bar, where he found the band taking cover with three real penguins and a Japanese tour group.<sup>9</sup> The other two ringers extracted him and they left the Museum.

I joined them inside a large white van parked nearby, its side displaying the logo of Stay-Puft Marshmallows. I asked Jones if he had the diamond. "No sweat," he said. "With all the stuff on the floor, they probably don't even know it's missing." He passed it to Bugbyte, who sat in front of a complex piece of electronics. She inserted the gem into the base of the device and turned to a computer screen displaying pale lines in crystalline formation. "I'm assuming she's laser-written a message at the molecular level at the core. If so, I can read it." She adjusted two dials, humming.<sup>10</sup> "Oh yes, Dr. D. you sweetheart, there you are – and sent to printer."

What came off the printer was 11 lines of boxes, each with a clue underneath. I examined it and said, "This is straightforward. Each clue gives you the name to put in the line above, a name that includes the name of a bird. The shaded boxes with the numbers give you the links between numbers and letters in the cipher – for example if an A falls in the box with the number 1, then A replaces 1 in the cipher." We soon had the clues filled in and the message deciphered. "Which tells us something, but not a lot. Manitoba, you go back into the hall and put the diamond where someone will find it."<sup>11</sup> I'll go and report to Mr. Ordinal."

At the Bozo building, D. Essex Mackinaw was waiting in the lobby. We went up to the penthouse. Max Ordinal ushered us into the chairman's office, a room of dark wood and deep carpets, with a floor-to-ceiling window along one wall. Ordinal went and leaned on the edge of the large desk. He said, "Have you solved Claire's message?" I replied, "I think so, Mr. Bozo." He smiled. "How did you figure it out?"

I said, "It wasn't that hard. No-one knows what you look like. Everyone says you are pathologically shy, but you also need to be able to run a hands-on business. So you created an alter ego, someone who is not a genius, not even very interesting, but who is good with people and can carry your authority. Max Ordinal in fact. Although that's a bit of a slip. Ordinal numbers are for ordering – second, seventh, thirtieth – and the maximum ordinal would be "first", or number one. Then a minute ago, you called Dr. de Loon "Claire". Meek Mr. Ordinal wouldn't do that, but Mr. Bozo would."


Bozo mimed applause. He had straightened up. His eye was brighter and his mouth firmer. "My compliments. I guess I got the man I paid for. Now what does the message say?" I told him. He closed his eyes and said "Thank you, Mr. Dikk. You can have no idea how much this means to me." I replied, "Probably not, since I don't think you've told me the whole story."

"Quite right. But I no longer need to keep secrets. First, I have no lingering childhood ailment – that myth just helps keep people out of my hair – but ironically I am dying of an incurable progressive disease. So the uploading is for myself as well as humanity. The second thing is that Claire and I fell in love and she agreed to join me in the upload. But she always needs a last-minute twist. So she uploaded herself and challenged me to follow if I could. The answer you just gave me provides the bird species and the location of the enhanced flock, which make up the code sequence for the uploader."

Mackinaw broke in. "For one last time, Elongate, I appeal to you not to do this. This woman is unbalanced, a known criminal. You have no real proof that she has uploaded to the new flock. She has taken a lot of your money. Maybe she has faked the research, banked the cash and is waiting for you to zap yourself out of the picture. Please don't take the chance."

Bozo looked at him and said, "Essex, have you never been in love?" The lawyer paled, looked down and said in a low voice, "Once. Just once."

Bozo walked over and put his hand on the lawyer's shoulder. Then he stepped to the wall, opened a panel hidden in the woodwork and took out a headset. Seating himself at his desk, he plugged the headset's cord into a slim black box and swivelled the chair to face the night. Pulling down the microphone, he spoke four words. His head fell on his chest. And the moon shone down.

Can you duplicate Dikk's feat by deciphering Claire de Loon's last message and providing the four-word upload code? **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 May 31, 2022. Not necessary to win, can you also fill in the 13 clues? The Akbar Khan diamond is a real thing and may or may not have been the Peacock's Eye. Thanks to Barry Hughart for the Key Rabbit and to Dan Aykroyd for the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Van. 

**A AALTO** joined the department when Prime Minister Trudeau led a minority Liberal government informally supported by the NDP.

9. Lost since the previous week, they found the bar's sake congenial.

10. It sounded like "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" but Bugbyte can't sing, so it could have been the 1812 Overture.

11. He put it in a glass of icewater and delivered it to the curator. The curator broke a tooth on it. Manitoba slipped on a petit-four leaving.



## WHO KILLED TURK MCGURK

### Answers

The killer was MORAN, the man who left the room. The deduction is by elimination: all of the other suspects have a tight reason why they could not have fired the crossbow (highlighted below).

SEATED	N	S	E	W	other
NAME	Renarde	Meniscus	Zywycki	Moran (false name)	Schwermotif
OCCUPATION	Lawyer	Club owner	Broadcaster	Salesman (actually a doctor)	Musician
TRAIT	Red-haired woman	Bald man	Tattooed woman	Glasses	Fat man
FALSE INVITATION	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
LINE OF FIRE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (but outside the window)	Yes
ALIBI	Parkinson's	Effie (but stoned)	Blind	Out of room (but ...)	Playing on stage

Moran slipped out of the club, circled round the building into the back alley and killed McGurk with a shot from outside the open window, then dropped the crossbow in a way that made it look like it had been thrown out that window. It turned out that he had bribed a bartender to kill the lights. By the way, he was not a salesman but Shamus' doctor (note Oscar's reference to med school). He was leaving the alley when he bumped into Shamus but tried to throw him off by pretending to be drunk. Colonel Sebastian Moran was a top henchman of Moriarty's in the Sherlock Holmes canon. In the story "The Adventure of the Empty House" he tries to assassinate Holmes through the window of his room at 221b Baker Street.

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