

bout de papier

Vol. 32, No. 3

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

SEPTEMBER / SEPTEMBRE 2023

DIPLOMACY AS THE NEW UTOPIA

OUR PROFESSION
IN CONTEMPORARY
SCIENCE FICTION

Vladislav Mijic

MON AMI MOBUTU

Un extrait de *Not Mentioned
in Dispatches / Confidences
peu diplomatiques*

Jean-Guy Saint-Martin

HOCKEY SOCK DIPLOMACY

Striking Gold
in the Philippines

Ian McGrath

LGBT RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIPLOMACY THROUGH A DIPLOMATIC LENS

An excerpt from *Queer Diplomacy*

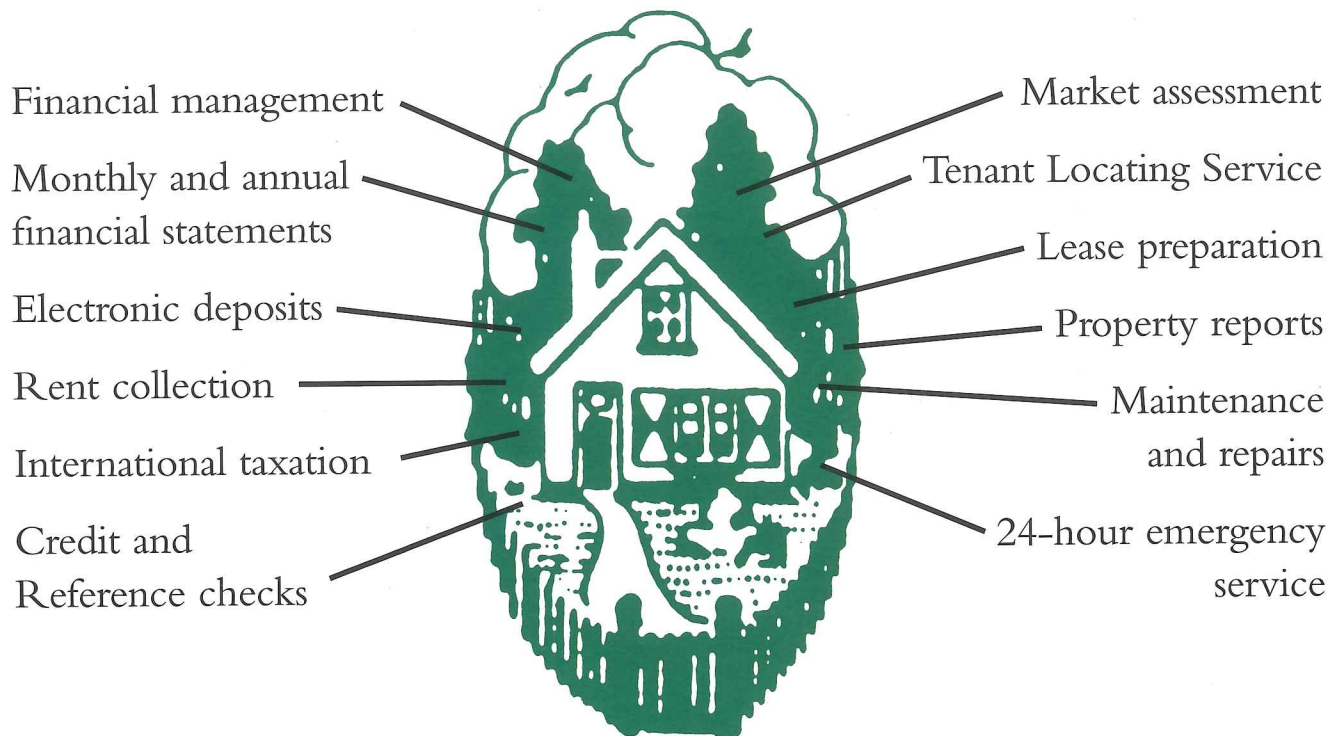
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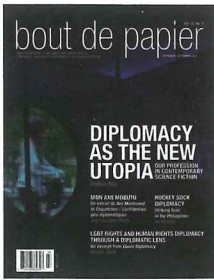


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What's next for bout de papier?

Lillian Thomsen

Editor-in-Chief // Rédactrice en chef



IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE to see the latest issue of **bout de papier** finally come out. It has been a bit of a struggle on multiple fronts, but I am hoping that the way forward will be both smoother and quicker. To begin with, Zal Karkaria has kindly agreed to become deputy editor-in-chief of **bout**. Unlike myself, Zal is a serving Foreign Service Officer with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. He is currently working with the Afghanistan Task Force. Zal has written for **bout** in the past and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. Also, thanks to support from the PAFSO office and therefore from all PAFSO members, we have been able to hire a student over the summer to help us with our single greatest challenge: getting relevant, high quality articles in a timely fashion. Adam Beauchemin, a recent Carleton University journalism graduate, was hired after an extensive competition which attracted over 100 candidates, including from as far away as London, England. He brings energy, enthusiasm and plenty of creative ideas to the table. Finally, but far from least, Eric Schallenberg, as managing editor of **bout**, continues to provide support and guidance as well as to produce captivating covers and layouts of the articles.

Dans les prochains numéros, nous vous présenterons des nouveautés et de nouvelles démarches d'approche au service extérieur et, plus particulièrement, au fait qu'il s'agit d'une vie et non pas simplement d'une carrière. Les extraits de livres – nous en avons déjà publié deux – se révèlent un franc succès populaire, et nous sommes en voie de nous doter d'une banque de nouveaux extraits, sans compter que nous examinons aussi d'autres suggestions que nous avons reçues, notamment des articles d'universitaires, d'étudiant.e.s et de chroniqueurs.euses.


The fall is likely to see concentrated and enhanced coverage of the Foreign Service. There will be the development and then implementation of "The Future of Diplomacy", the much anticipated report of the Standing Committee of the Senate on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. It will no doubt generate much commentary, both positive and critical. All this will be unfolding in the context of an incredibly complex international environment which shows every sign of becoming more challenging on all levels in the years to come.

Pour ce qui est du présent numéro, vous y trouverez toute une gamme d'articles. L'extrait de livre provient de *Queer Diplomacy*, rédigé par un agent du Service extérieur dans le cadre de ses exigences de thèse de DPH de l'Université Queen's. Il y a également un nouvel article par Ken Neufeld portant sur ses expériences en Afrique, cette fois son travail auprès d'un ONG avant de rejoindre les rangs de l'Agence canadienne de développement international. Il est rédigé sur un ton légèrement ironique que je commence à bien connaître. Nous avons un article sur la diplomatie dans la science-fiction dont plusieurs passages m'ont fait froncer les sourcils en signe de perplexité et même d'incrédulité. Enfin, nous avons une critique de la plus récente œuvre de Henry Kissinger. Malgré qu'il soit à présent centenaire, il semble qu'il plancherait sur son prochain livre dans lequel il examinerait et évaluerait, entre autres choses, les incidences possibles de l'intelligence artificielle sur la conduite de la politique étrangère.

Our Hungry Diplomat has given us a broad and appetite-provoking piece on pancakes in all their different incarnations. A. Aalto has produced yet another impossible – at least as far as I am concerned – puzzle, this one dealing with Leonard Cohen and Buddhism.

Finally we have two tribute pieces. One, written by Gary Smith, the author of *Ice War Diplomat* with the active support of a large cast, included a number of former Deputy Ministers of international trade, covers the life and times of Ken Sunquist, whose many roles in the department included serving as Chief Trade Commissioner. There are a number of quirky elements to the piece. The one which astounded me the most was that in his youth Ken was a promising figure skater. The other piece includes a tribute by Emil Martel to Jacques Bilodeau, a political officer who devoted the final years of his public service career to La Francophonie.

Ken et Jacques étaient deux éminents et très visibles membres du Service extérieur. Toutefois, ils étaient d'abord et avant tout la gentillesse et la bonté incarnées, soutenant les agents plus jeunes et moins expérimentés et toujours prêts à offrir un coup de main et un précieux conseil quand on le leur demandait.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this current issue and please be on the lookout for the next as we continue to incorporate many of the new features described above. 



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE // MOT DE LA PRÉSIDENTE

L'avenir du Service extérieur

Pam Isfeld

President, PAFSO // Présidente de l'APASE

BEAUCOUP D'EAU A COULÉ SOUS les ponts depuis la rédaction de mon dernier message pour **bout de papier**. Un élément positif : nous avons signé une solide convention collective avec l'employeur à la fin de juin. Cette convention, qui sera en vigueur jusqu'en juin 2026, apporte d'importantes augmentations économiques et constitue la meilleure entente possible dans le contexte actuel. Elle nous permettra aussi de mettre l'accent sur d'autres enjeux cruciaux.

We continue to live in a VUCA world characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, which means Foreign Service life is not getting any easier. This reality has been recognized by both the Standing Committee of the Senate on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Minister Joly and Global Affairs Canada, who are about to conclude lengthy studies on what must change to meet these challenges.

Both studies recognize that Canada's Foreign Service will continue to face unprecedented challenges in our operating environment's pace, level, and intensity. While still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we're facing increased climate volatility, rising inflation and interest rates, the impact of new AI systems, war, insecurity, and shifts in global power structures. The past offers little help in predicting the future.

Il y a un an, quelques grandes nécessités ressortaient déjà des discussions et des consultations du Comité sénatorial permanent des affaires étrangères et du commerce international (AEFA) concernant l'initiative de réforme d'Affaires Mondiales Canada. Le document de travail de la ministre Joly sur l'avenir de la diplomatie reconnaît l'importance de réformer la gestion des ressources humaines afin d'appuyer des effectifs exceptionnellement talentueux, diversifiés et compétents et de les compléter par de l'expertise externe; d'élaborer un nouveau modèle de gestion et d'évaluation des risques qui encourage l'innovation et habilite les fonctionnaires à prendre des risques calculés; de favoriser davantage la recherche, l'analyse stratégique et la perspective d'ensemble et de mettre moins l'accent sur l'approche transactionnelle et administrative; et d'établir une culture visant à décourager la complaisance et à récompenser explicitement l'innovation, l'expertise, l'action et la souplesse.


"The Future of Diplomacy" paper also makes a case for the importance of diplomacy in an era when global challenges cross borders and directly affect our security and prosperity. It

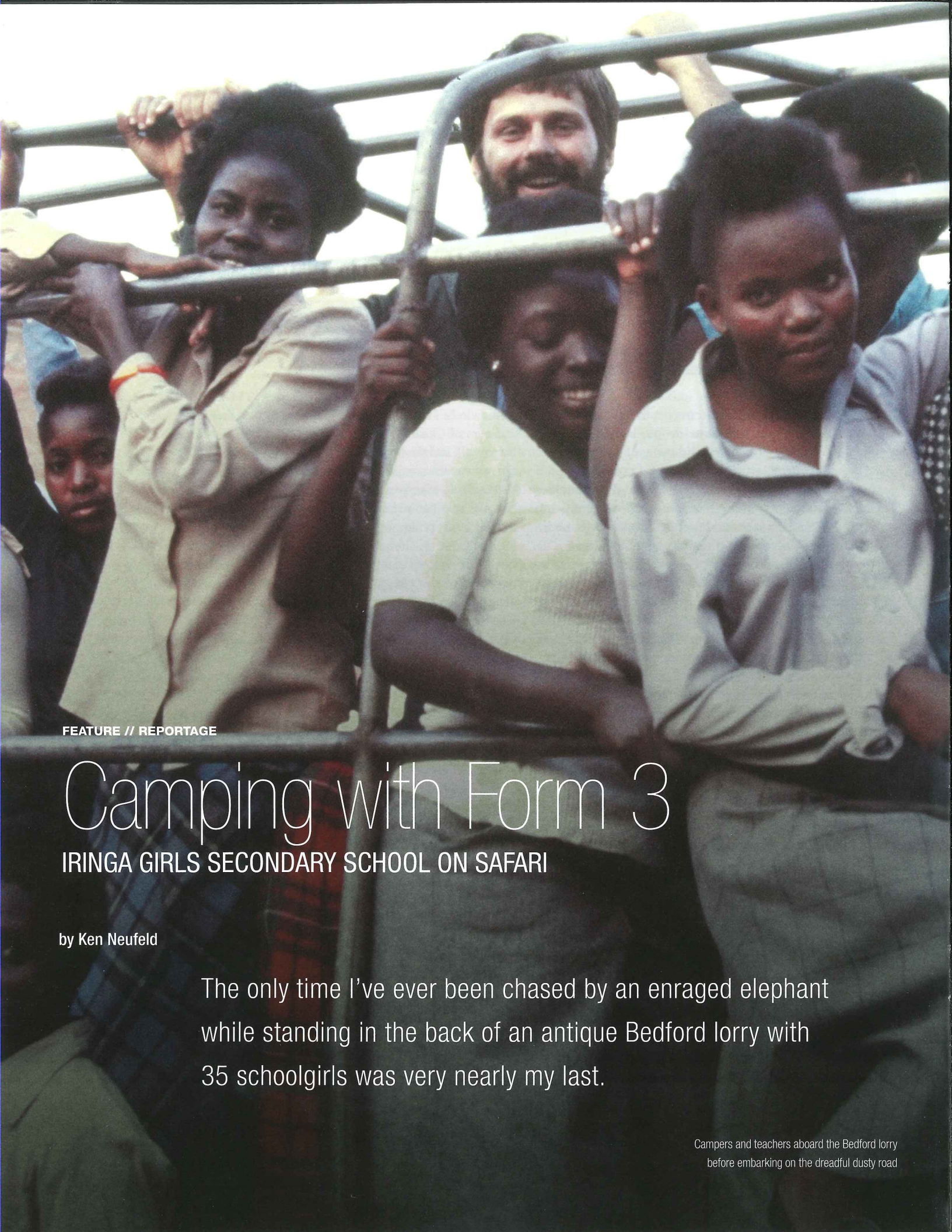
acknowledges the role played by the Foreign Service as the eyes and ears of Canada overseas, the negotiators of the rules that help us all, and the first people Canadians in trouble can turn to when away from home. I was heartened to see that it recognizes that building effective international relationships and networks is slow and painstaking work, essential to establishing the influence that protects our security and prosperity.

Il manque un élément crucial aux discussions : de la clarté quant aux ressources qui seront chargées d'appuyer la réforme nécessaire et de concrétiser ces idées inspirantes. Il en coûtera cher pour perfectionner l'expertise stratégique au point où le Canada puisse « définir le débat international » sur des enjeux clés comme le changement climatique, l'investissement dans de nouveaux outils et procédés, la mise de l'accent sur les personnes et, en particulier, l'accroissement de notre présence stratégique à l'étranger. Au moment même où AMC élabore son plan de mise en œuvre, les cadres supérieurs sabrent dans les budgets et mettent en garde les chefs de mission sur le point d'être affectés qu'il n'y aura pas d'argent neuf; comment donc, alors, s'attendent-ils à pouvoir concrétiser la vision de la ministre Joly? Comme membre de longue date du Service extérieur qui a vu plus d'une tentative de réforme échouer faute de fonds, je suis mi-sceptique et mi-optimiste.

Here at PAFSO, we're continuing to develop and adjust our own approach to ensure we fully represent the long-term interests of the Foreign Service community in the face of these challenges and opportunities. Earlier this year, Daniel Pollak, our Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations Officer, joined our team to develop an advocacy strategy that will raise awareness of the vital work we do, position PAFSO as the principal authority on the interests and conditions of current serving Foreign Service Officers, and ensure that our members know about the support and services available to them through our Association.

As Canada's only magazine by and for the Foreign Service, **bout de papier** is an important element of our strategy. I'm very pleased that Editor-in-Chief Lillian Thomsen, her Deputy Zal Karkaria, and staff members Eric Schallenberg and Adam Beauchemin have a vision for the magazine that will showcase the joys and challenges of Foreign Service life and provide you with information and ideas to help navigate our VUCA world.

More to follow; watch this space! 



FEATURE // REPORTAGE

Camping with Form 3

IRINGA GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL ON SAFARI

by Ken Neufeld

The only time I've ever been chased by an enraged elephant while standing in the back of an antique Bedford lorry with 35 schoolgirls was very nearly my last.

Campers and teachers aboard the Bedford lorry before embarking on the dreadful dusty road

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

THIS WAS NOT THE LAST TIME I would bounce around in the back of a lorry with schoolgirls, nor the last time I would be chased in a lorry by an enraged elephant, nor even the closest I came to dying with my students in the back of a lorry. But you cannot beat an enraged elephant, schoolgirl, and decrepit lorry story, so I am going with that.

It was hard times at Iringa Girls Secondary Boarding School when I arrived on a two-year teaching contract in 1982. Tanzania's economy was in near total collapse and life seemed to be impossibly difficult for everyone.

One morning shortly after my arrival our staff room emptied when my colleagues rushed to the outdoor market at the rumour of salt. There was salt, but it had been scraped up from a sea pond in the form of large chunks peppered with dirt and rocks. It had to be dissolved, strained, and re-evaporated in the sun before you could add a pinch to your bean stew. Another colleague travelling in the north on school break ran into a tourist shocked that the shop he had just visited had vinegar, but nothing else. My colleague demanded the location of the miracle shop and ran to buy a case of the vinegar which he brought back 800 kilometres on a bus to share with us in Iringa. Expatriates like me subscribed to the airmail Manchester Guardian Weekly newspaper as it not only provided a window on the world we had left behind, but the paper itself was of texture to use, when cut into squares, as toilet paper. I still wonder whether the journalists had any idea where their writing ended up.

Without a family to care for, these challenges were difficult but also exhilarating in a way. For my Tanzanian colleagues and neighbours, they were crushing. There was no chance they could make ends meet with their teaching jobs; not so much for lack of money but because the necessities of life were not available. The teachers ended up cultivating every available bit of land in and around the school as we all became farmers and scavengers.

In theory our staff housing had running water and electricity, but weeks would go by without either. Under our neighbours' tutelage, we young city slicker greenhorns became experts at catching rainwater from the roof drains, cooking on charcoal, butchering chickens, and washing clothes in a bucket. We prepared lesson plans by candlelight, rationed batteries for our shortwave radios, and learned to appreciate the bamboo sap home brew known as ulanzi. At school, tattered textbooks had to be shared among several students who used old copies of *The Daily News* to replace the torn covers. In the absence of staples or paper clips the girls would pierce the top left corner of their exam papers with a pencil and then use a thread extracted from the hem of their skirts to tie the papers together.

Post independence in 1961, President Julius Nyerere undertook ambitious projects to develop this huge and overwhelmingly rural country. The most ambitious and well known was the goal of universal primary education. He also increased the number of girls and boys in secondary school. That was where folks like me came



Iringa Girls
Secondary
Boarding School
class photo
from 1984

into the picture; initially there had not been enough educated Tanzanians to fill all those new classrooms. By the time I got there, this had changed as the system was graduating a lot of teachers and did not need outside help. But my Headmistress wanted someone trained in teaching English as a second language because the girls coming into the school had been taught in Kiswahili in primary school and were having trouble making the switch to the all-English language instruction in secondary school. Fortunately for me and my conscience there were not many teachers with this training in Tanzania.

Tanzania had similarly ambitious dreams for public health care, transport infrastructure, irrigation schemes, and electrification. Expensive ambitions for a country with a small tax base. By the end of the 1960's President Nyerere was convinced the state needed control of what little there was to ensure

that economic decisions and revenue benefited the majority. This logic led to nationalization of many of the bigger farms, much of the industrial sector, and even most of the larger retailers.

By the time I arrived in 1982 the full impact of these decisions had firmly taken root and not much was being grown on the large state farms, little was being made in the factories, and tourism had largely disappeared. These stumbles in management of the economy were compounded by ideological tussles with the World Bank and the western donor countries, the international oil price shock of the 1970s and a war with Idi Amin's Uganda. Without foreign currency almost nothing was being imported (except perhaps East German Sauerkraut cans, faulty Chinese flashlights, and other strange shoddy items linked to "friendship" agreements with eastern bloc countries). Strict controls on the little foreign currency available resulted in a black-market economy pegged to dollars and euros. In this downward spiral, and without a lot of ideas or options, the government doubled down on enforcement. But this led to a substantial increase in corruption as needy citizens negotiated with needy bureaucrats over the allocation of scarce resources.

Despite its financial difficulties and eroding ethics, the Tanzanian State was still, at its core, aspirational and its bureaucratic systems sputtered along. Which brings me back to that Bedford lorry full of schoolgirls and their heavily bearded English teacher, Mwalimu Ken. As it turned out



The author on
laundry day

the school budget had an unused allocation for educational field trips. My Tanzanian colleagues, too busy growing maize and chasing rumours of soap, wanted nothing to do with this budget, so there the money sat waiting for unsuspecting me.



Students parade and sing on Saturday morning while teachers inspect their cleaning job.

Always desperate for an inspiring conversation topic (my students and I knew almost nothing about each others' world, so my discussion topic ideas often fell flat), I proposed "Animals of Tanzania" and discovered that none of my students had visited their National Parks. To my safari-crazed mind, this was hard to fathom. Ruaha National Park, one of the best in Tanzania, was only 110 kilometres from Iringa Girls. I cannot recall what possessed me even to raise the idea with Headmistress Mgonja but she agreed and just like that, it was a funded plan. The idea made no sense at all: the only vehicle we had at our boarding school with over 300 students was an antique Volkswagen combi nearly always out of commission, there had not been petrol or diesel at the filling stations in months, there were no hotels at, in, or near Ruaha Park, and there was nowhere to eat.

But the Headmistress was a force of nature. She arm-twisted her counterpart at Tosamaganga Boys Secondary School to lend us their lorry. This was progress but it would only hold 30 girls and I was Form Master for 60 girls in Form 3. It was going to have to be two camping trips instead of one. She then shamed the Regional Commissioner into allocating two drums of diesel fuel from his strategic stock. Ruaha National Park had basic dormitory facilities which we were welcome to use but we would have to be self-sufficient for food; I would have to recruit Sister Dotta to my plan.

Iringa Girls Secondary School had been part of an extensive network of Italian Catholic Missions in the southern highlands prior to independence. At

the time I was too wide-eyed to wonder why villages like Tosamaganga looked straight out of Tuscany with massive brick churches, schools, and hospitals built around piazzas. It is a bit of a long story. When the Germans occupied what they called "German East Africa", they moved swiftly into the interior to the fertile Southern Highlands which had good agricultural land, resources, and a healthy climate. To their chagrin, they discovered that the Wahehe people of the Highlands under the leadership of Chief Mkwawa were vigorously opposed to their presence. It took years of military campaigns and brutal repression by the Germans to finally impose themselves in the area. Over time they used German Benedictine missionaries to establish schools and hospitals in the Southern Highlands (and Lutherans elsewhere in the country). With the First World War Germany lost their African colonies and the Benedictines left Tanzania. The League of Nations gave the British a mandate to administer the former German colony under the new name "Tanganyika". The British were not keen to invest much in their new territory and convinced the Italian Consolata Fathers to take over the abandoned missions around Iringa. Sister Dotta was a nun left over from that legacy living in a small convent with a few other Italian nuns who operated a health clinic. Sister Dotta was the head of our Home Economics Department. She had secret, perhaps divine, sources of sugar and flour for her students' baking exams. These exams would then find their way to the teachers' room at chai time.



Sister Dotta and colleagues watching the students parade before Saturday morning assembly.

Sister Dotta was all-in on the safari idea and took charge of the menu and the bedding and, to my relief, the discipline. (The girls lived in fear of her but not of me.) We had hours of rough, dusty, and hot road ahead of us with no refrigeration, no ice, and a lot of hungry girls. Sister Dotta dipped into the Convent's pantry and came up with giant bags of dried mashed potatoes. Breakfast would be maize meal porridge. Lunch would be too inconvenient so never mind.

The girls had basically two clothing options at the school. The orange skirt/white blouse uniform or the one set of dress-up go to mosque/church finery. Fancy clothes it would be.

We were driving slowly on a rough and winding track when an elephant in the distance flared its ears and homed in on us with determination. Lumbering is the mode you usually associate with elephants but that gait disguises speeds up to 40 kilometres an hour when motivated. Top speed in a Bedford down a hill would not have been much more than that, but on this rough track we would be lucky to hit 20.

Elephants will often mock charge out of a twisted sense of humour or just to set you straight.

But park ranger was of the view this was not a mock charge and urged the driver on. Even I could tell this was not a good situation. For one



Cooking over a campfire on the banks of the Ruaha river. Note the Baobab tree in the background which has nearly been worried through by elephants.


Off we went, against all odds. It must have taken at least four hours to do the 110 kilometres on the unspeakable dirt road, but we made it somehow, surely under some sort of protection pre-arranged by Sister Dotta with her boss. Mashed potato dinner was all you would have expected it to be, but the setting more than made up for it. And everything tastes better camping.

The next morning, we all piled back in the truck and went deeper into the Park with a Game Ranger. Ruaha Park in those days had almost no visitors as it was so remote. It was famous not only for its huge elephant population (49,000 according to a 1982 census) but also for aggressive ivory poaching.

Elephants are social animals and highly intelligent with a reputation for perhaps holding a grudge. Or at least that was the impression I was left with after this trip.

thing, the elephant's charge started from hundreds of metres away, so personal space was not the issue. Nor was parental concern as she was alone. Our fate became a question of geometry with Tembo taking the straight line as we were forced to follow a twisty track. I must have had a camera with me but not the nerve to attempt a shot as no visual record remains.

But the story ended happily with no girls falling out of the lorry, no tusks through Sister Dotta, the road straightening out, and the elephant finally abandoning the chase.

For a long time afterwards, I would wake up in a cold sweat imagining the headline "School Safari Tragedy Blamed on Late Canadian School Teacher". The girls though, bore me no grudge and when I left Iringa in 1984, they presented me with an embroidered safari-themed tablecloth completed under the tutelage of Sister Dotta. 



FEATURE // REPORTAGE

Mon ami Mobutu

UN EXTRAIT DE *NOT MENTIONED
IN DISPATCHES / CONFIDENCES PEU
DIPLOMATIQUES*

par Jean-Guy Saint-Martin

Au Zaïre, aujourd'hui la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) tout événement de la vie diplomatique peut prendre des allures originales et inédites. En voici quelques exemples.

Avant de prendre sa retraite en 2003, **JEAN-GUY SAINT-MARTIN** a occupé différents postes de cadre supérieur dans la Fonction publique du Canada. Il a alterné des responsabilités de vice-président (direction des Politiques puis direction du Partenariat) de l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI), des mandats d'ambassadeur du Canada en Afrique notamment au Zaïre, en Côte d'Ivoire et au Maroc et de sous-ministre adjoint au ministère du Développement économique Canada (DEC).

Où sont passées mes lettres de créances?

La présentation, pour la première fois, des lettres de créances, est un moment émouvant et solennel. Le nouvel ambassadeur espère que tout soit parfait.

J'ai vécu des moments de nervosités avant la présentation de mes lettres au Zaïre car je ne les avait pas encore reçues.

Les lettres de créance d'un nouvel ambassadeur arrivent par courrier diplomatique. Dans mon cas, point de lettres.

Je m'en œuvre au Chef du protocole qui me dit de ne pas m'inquiéter car le Président n'ouvre pas les enveloppes. Il les prend et les lui remet. On convient de remettre au Président une grande enveloppe contenant quelques feuilles blanches.

À la réception de mes précieux documents, je n'aurais qu'à les lui porter et il les placerait aux archives officielles. Comme le dit le dicton, lorsque l'on veut, on peut.

Une estafette, dépêchée d'Ottawa, arrive avec les précieux documents moins d'une heure avant la cérémonie. Quel soulagement.

Je présenterai, au fil des ans, mes lettres dans huit autres pays mais ce show de boucane a une saveur originale au Zaïre.

La rencontre avec le Président se termine en levant le verre de vin de palme aux ancêtres, à nos pays respectifs et surtout à notre amitié. Le toast aux ancêtres exige que nous verrions par terre une partie du précieux liquide. Puis Mobutu invite alors ses hôtes à l'accompagner pour dire bonjour aux léopards qui vivent dans une grande cage à l'extérieur de son bureau. C'est l'animal fétiche et emblématique de Mobutu qui porte toujours une toque en peau de léopard.

Réforme de la Fonction publique

Au début de 1983, la Banque Mondiale conclut une étude sur la réforme de la Fonction publique. Elle y formule plusieurs recommandations dont certaines ne sont pas de nature à plaire aux autorités zaïroises. La plus délicate recommande le congédiement du tiers des employés de l'État. En contrepartie, la BM allongerait les sommes requises pour augmenter de 20 % le traitement des fonctionnaires restants et financer les primes de séparation.

Puisque c'est à mon tour de présider le Club des amis du Zaïre, j'ai l'honneur d'organiser la rencontre de présentation de la conclusion clef. J'invite donc à déjeuner, une semaine plus tard, les ministres des Finances, de la Fonction publique et le Chef de cabinet du Président ainsi que le représentant de la Banque Mondiale et les ambassadeurs membres du Club. Inutile de dire que je suis dans mes petits souliers. Je crains que les ministres zaïrois quittent la table dès l'annonce de la mauvaise nouvelle. Je m'efforce de créer une atmosphère décontractée jusqu'au dessert. Alors, je me lance à l'eau que je crois bouillante et demande au représentant de la Banque Mondiale de présenter cette recommandation délicate.

Le ministre des Finances prend la parole et s'adresse au ministre de la Fonction publique en disant: « Si on congédie tous les morts et quelques fonctionnaires qui ne viennent plus au bureau depuis au moins un an, je crois que ça fera bien le tiers des fonctionnaires. Qu'en penses-tu? »

Au moins le tiers répondit le ministre et un éclat de rire joyeux secoue le groupe zaïrois. Tous les convives occidentaux se joignent à la rigolade. La réforme de la Fonction publique est amorcée. Mais, il y a souvent loin de la coupe aux lèvres.

Le prologue de l'histoire est le suivant : en 2011, alors retraité de la Fonction publique, je reçois du Gouvernement belge le mandat d'étudier leur projet de réforme de la fonction publique zaïroise qu'il finance depuis cinq ans. Tel n'est pas mon étonnement de découvrir dans la documentation qui m'est remise par le Secrétaire général du ministère de la Fonction publique, l'étude de la BM datée de 1983. Elle est la dernière étude globale et la plus récente sur le sujet. J'ai l'impression de remonter le temps en faisant un saut périlleux arrière de 25 ans. Le Zaïre ne change pas.

Une visite d'adieu mémorable

Quelques semaines avant mon départ, je demande, à travers le service du Protocole, audience au Président pour lui dire au revoir. Je prends soin d'indiquer la date de mon départ définitif.

Silence radio de la part de la présidence. Je commence à m'inquiéter. En effet, Mobutu donne, quelques fois, audience à l'ambassadeur partant quelques semaines après son départ. Ce qui force ce dernier à revenir au pays. J'informe donc, informellement, le Chef du Protocole que je ne reviendrai pas au Zaïre si la rencontre m'est accordée après mon départ.

Les jours passent, les jours passent et toujours pas de signal. Trois jours avant mon départ, je lis dans le journal que le Président part pour quatre jours dans le Nord-Est du pays. J'en conclus que je ne serai pas reçu.

Le soir même, un appel téléphonique de la présidence me prie de me trouver à l'aéroport de Ndolo, petit aéroport au centre-ville, à 6 h 00 le lendemain. Un bimoteur nolisé me conduirait là où se trouve le Président.

Je me présente au lieu-dit. Je n'ai aucune idée de l'endroit exacte où il se trouve au Nord-Est. L'avion survole une grande partie du pays et se pose à Isiro vers 10 h 30 où m'attend une Jeep avec une importante escorte militaire. On voyage un peu moins d'une heure sur des chemins de brousse pour arriver à un petit campement provisoire sur les rives d'une rivière.

Le Président Mobutu m'y attend. Je porte un costume noir avec chemise blanche et cravate. Je suis un anachronisme dans ce décor. Mobutu porte de grandes bottes de pêcheur,

un chandail gris et un chapeau de paille. Il m'invite à revêtir un équipement de pêche et à le rejoindre avec mes agrès dans la rivière.

Il y a une telle abondance de tilapias que tout débutant peut se prendre pour un grand pêcheur. Vers 12 h 30, nous quittons la rivière pour rejoindre une petite tente où une table est dressée. Le Président se transforme en cuisinier pour faire griller quelques poissons sur le BBQ au charbon de bois. Le Chef cuisinier fera griller les autres.

Le déjeuner est agréable, Mobutu est très décontracté et accepte de discuter franchement tous les sujets.

Nous discutons de politique étrangère : Rwanda, Afrique du Sud, Israël, etc.; de politique intérieure et notamment de l'importance pour le Zaïre d'honorer ses engagements envers le Club des amis du Zaïre et de prendre des mesures pour réduire significativement la corruption, etc. Nos points de vue sont assez proches sur la majorité des sujets sauf sur la réduction de la corruption. Mobutu considère, qu'en Afrique, les chefs doivent eux-mêmes partager la richesse entre les différents groupes. Il ne dit pas que pour ce faire, il doit faire main basse sur la richesse du pays. Les Africains, dit-il, ne se sentent pas à l'aise avec le système de sécurité sociale occidentale qu'ils considèrent trop rigide et trop bureaucratique.

C'est une justification facile mais qui ne tient pas la route.

Le déjeuner terminé Mobutu m'invite à prendre un café et un digestif.

Il est maintenant plus de trois heures. Comme j'avais mis cinq heures pour rejoindre le Président, il m'est impossible de retourner à Kinshasa pour participer au dîner de l'ambassadeur suisse.

Tant pis, me dis-je. Je ne peux rien faire. Aucun téléphone pour signaler mon absence.

Vers 15 h 30, j'entends un bruit inquiétant et puissant, je réalise qu'il s'agit d'un immense hélicoptère militaire construit pour transporter une trentaine de soldats avec leurs équipements. Il se pose à une centaine de mètres du campement.

Le Président m'invite à monter à bord et on se dit au revoir.

Je suis seul avec l'équipage. Je me rends compte que l'hélico vole probablement vers Goma. Il s'y posera effectivement.

Il me faudra, me dis-je, passer la nuit à Goma et rejoindre la Capitale le lendemain sur le vol d'Air Zaïre.

Le DC-10 d'Air Zaïre qui fait la liaison trois fois semaine entre Kinshasa, Goma et Nairobi vient de se poser. Le pilote de l'hélico me dit d'attendre la venue d'une voiture qui doit me conduire à la passerelle du DC-10.

Je n'ai pas du tout envie de faire le circuit. J'aurais préféré coucher à Goma et de prendre l'avion le lendemain. Je fais cette remarque à l'hôtesse qui m'attend au pied de la passerelle. On suit les ordres du Président, me dit-elle.


Je monte à bord, on retire la passerelle et la porte se ferme. Je découvre alors que je suis le seul passager avec un des fils du Président.

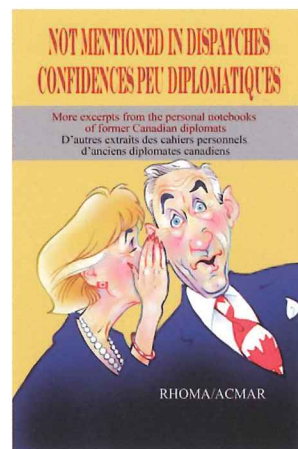
Ce dernier me dit que son père, voulant s'assurer que j'arrive à l'heure au dîner offert en mon honneur, avait

ordonné à la compagnie nationale de faire patienter ses passagers à Goma, le temps de venir me déposer à Kinshasa et de revenir poursuivre son itinéraire régulier.

Le Président voulait me démontrer son amitié et sa reconnaissance pour l'aide du Canada envers son pays.

Ce genre de remerciement est difficile à comprendre et à accepter pour un Occidental préoccupé par l'efficacité et la rigueur de la gestion publique.

Air Zaïre, surnommée Air peut-être, fera faillite quelques années plus tard. 

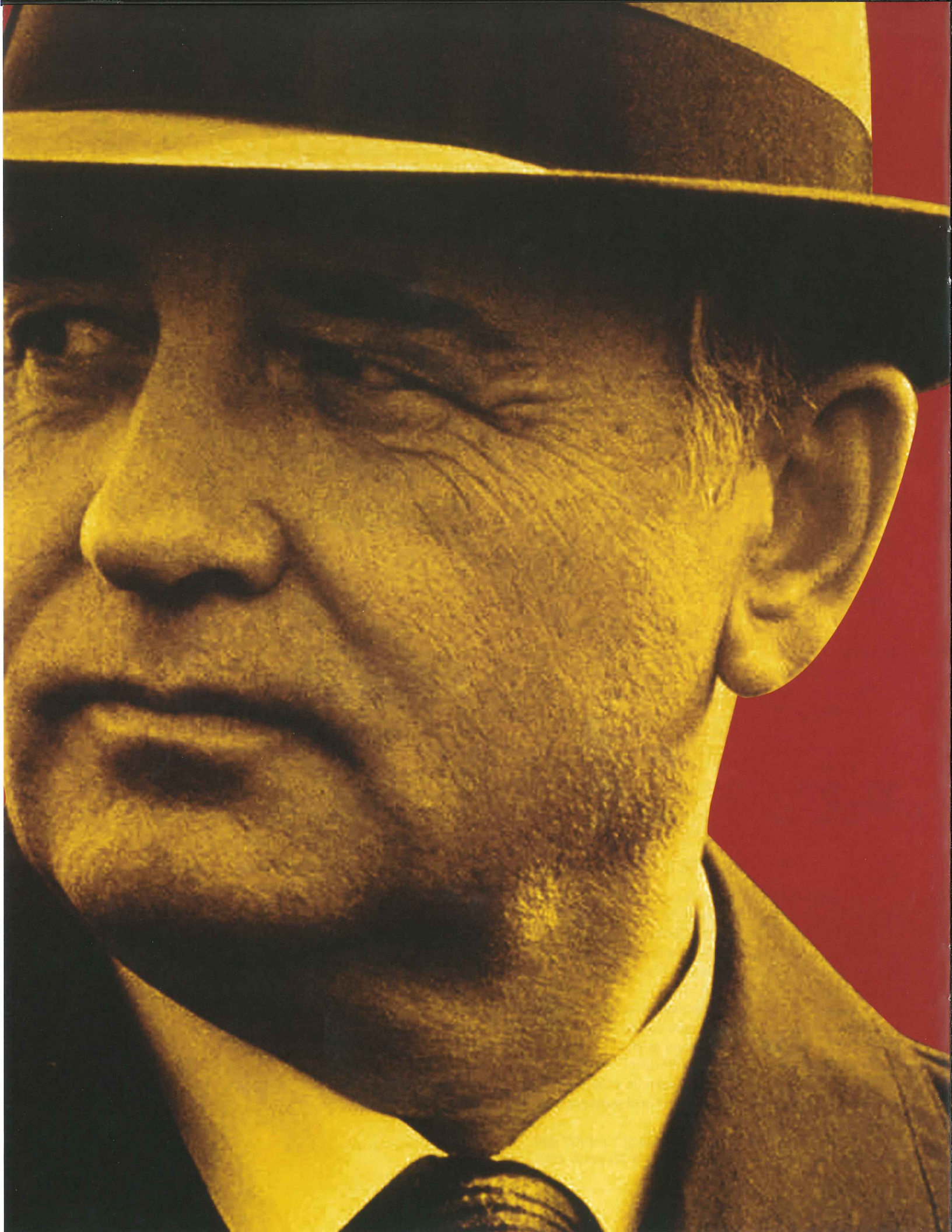


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FEATURE // REPORTAGE

Moscow 1993

AN ENCOUNTER WITH FORMER PRESIDENT GORBACHEV

by Lillian Thomsen

February in Moscow was generally, along with November, the dreariest month of the year. Dark and gloomy, the days were still short, and the black ice underfoot on Moscow's ungroomed sidewalks increasingly treacherous. But inside the Canadian Embassy in Moscow, the beginning of February saw a flurry of activity. The Minister, Barbara MacDougall, was coming on a visit, which was to be the precursor for a visit by the Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, later in the spring. Canada–Russia relations were in a very positive space. For reasons no one could really understand Boris Yeltsin and Brian Mulroney had hit it off on a personal level. Both were gregarious and retail politicians by nature, but the resemblance pretty much ended there. But no matter. The Minister was coming and, in a reflection of the good relations between the two countries, had been offered the opportunity to deliver a lecture to be followed by a reception at the highly prestigious State Institute of International Relations, known by its Russian acronym GUMO.


Responsibility for the event was split between the Embassy, where I was in overall charge of the visit, and the Canada desk in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Issuing the invitations for the Minister's speech followed by a reception was to be split between the two with the Embassy taking care of the diplomatic corps and the small but growing community of resident Canadian business people. The Canada desk would invite senior Russian officials engaged in relations with Canada, key academics, and the heads of the various foundations sprouting up in Moscow. A mistake was made. Mikhail Gorbachev, head of his own foundation, was invited. Accusations were lobbied that this had been an error on "the Canadian side". The accusations were rebuffed, but it was clear that Gorbachev could not be uninvited. And his office quickly accepted on his behalf. In his state of near purgatory he did not receive all that many invitations it would seem, and he also had good memories of Canada, it being one of the first foreign countries he had visited as a member of the Politburo with responsibility for agriculture.

On the day of the Minister's speech and reception, February 5, Gorbachev's office called. He would regrettably not be able to attend the speech but would be present for the reception. What time was the reception expected to start? I provided my best estimate.

That evening at GUMO guests were welcomed and invited to take their seats in the auditorium where the Minister would speak at a podium with a large painting of Vladimir Lenin directly behind her. No money had been spent on interior decoration since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Just as she started to speak I received an urgent message. Mr. Gorbachev would be arriving early. For reasons that were a bit hard to understand, he was still allowed to use the special express lanes going to and from the Kremlin on the main thoroughfares and reserved for senior members of the government. So he had made excellent time. He would not go into the auditorium and interrupt the Minister's speech, but perhaps he could wait somewhere quietly and then join the reception? Quick decisions were made. I would look after Mr. Gorbachev and we would wait in the Institute's library, which was located in the basement. Barely a minute went by and there was a whoosh of the door letting in a blast of cold air. Accompanied only by his long-time aide and translator, Pavel Pavlichenko, Gorbachev came quickly up the stairs, exuding energy and vivacity. I introduced myself and motioned him into the library. There two doughty women, of the kind known in Soviet times as *dezhurnaya*, were waiting to greet him. Once introductions had been completed Gorbachev remarked, "You know, I have actually

never been here before. As a student I applied for admission to the Institute, but I was turned down. But Raisa and I used to walk by it regularly, as we lived nearby and I would pass it on my way to the gym. The gym had exercise machines, particularly a rowing machine, which I enjoyed using." One of the Russian women moved her arms as if she were steering a row boat, and asked, "How did it work?" "I'll show you," he replied. In seconds he was on the floor demonstrating, bent knees moving back and forth in co-ordination with his arms. He kept it up for nearly a minute and then bounced to his feet.

Turning to one of the two Russian women, he asked if they worked in the library. On her affirmative reply he asked what kind of books and other items were available. Puffing herself up visibly she responded proudly,

"We have every issue of Pravda since No. 1." "You know", said Gorbachev, "I read Pravda every day for years and years and years until I left government. But there was so much I didn't read." He then described the book club he and his family had set up at their dacha and the classics of literature and some non-fiction they were reading in Russian translation and then discussing. As quickly as he had discussed his reading habits, he turned to me and asked, leaning in closely, what were the principal themes of the Minister's speech? This was a question to which I knew the answer as I had worked on multiple drafts. Somewhere in the middle of my second sentence I realized with whom I was speaking and tripped up over my words. I apologized and went back to the beginning of the sentence I had made a hash of. Gorbachev leaned forward and looked at me intently, "At least you speak more than one language", he said. At that moment a round of applause started above us, and the Minister's speech had clearly ended. "I guess it's time to go", he said thanking us as he turned to leave the library. I escorted him up the stairs to where the reception was to be held and brought him to the Minister's side. Once introductions had been made I was no longer needed. I turned to take up my charge of greeting other guests, including the officers from the Canada Desk of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all the while wondering about missed opportunities and the fickle hand of fate. 

Mr. Gorbachev would be arriving early. For reasons that were a bit hard to understand, he was still allowed to use the special express lanes going to and from the Kremlin on the main thoroughfares and reserved for senior members of the government. So he had made excellent time.

FEATURE // REPORTAGE

LGBT Rights and Human Rights Diplomacy through a Diplomatic Lens

AN EXCERPT FROM *QUEER DIPLOMACY*

by Douglas Janoff

In his new book *Queer Diplomacy: Homophobia, International Relations and LGBT Human Rights*, Douglas Janoff explores how LGBT rights are promoted through diplomacy. For this book, Janoff interviewed 29 diplomats, human rights advocates and experts, and representatives from the UN and other intergovernmental organizations. This article is excerpted from chapters 1 and 7 of *Queer Diplomacy*.

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IT IS TEMPTING TO SEE the global struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights as a relatively new phenomenon. However, these recent gains are the fruit of many years of struggle.

On September 30, 1984, a few hundred activists gathered on Christopher Street in New York City for the International March on the UN for Lesbian and Gay Freedom. The demonstration is long forgotten; according to Google, only one website in cyberspace acknowledges that it even occurred!

However, I know it happened because I was there: a skinny, mustachioed 26-year-old wearing tight jeans, a green hoodie and Kodiak construction boots, waving the Maple Leaf flag.

The crowd – mainly white, North American, left-wing activists – gathered in front of UN Headquarters in New York and listened to fiery speeches on the need for international solidarity.

Fast-forward to 2015, when I returned to UN Headquarters to conduct my doctoral research. I had taken academic leave from my work as a Canadian Foreign Service Officer and was in the middle of a series of interviews with diplomats, UN officials and human rights advocates – now called “representatives of LGBT civil society organizations” (CSOs). This time I had less hair, more girth, and was wearing a business suit.

Thirty-one years before, I had been a gay activist demonstrating outside the UN; now I was an LGBT diplomat on the inside. I made my way through the busy foyer, with its low couches, soft lights and cappuccino bar. People emerged from the adjoining meeting rooms, dragging laptops and talking into their cellphones.

In the 1980s, the activists’ colourful garb had made us easy to identify. In 2015, however, it was difficult to distinguish the CSO representatives from the diplomats: everyone was now wearing fancy shoes and tailored suits.

SINCE 67 COUNTRIES STILL CRIMINALIZE same-sex conduct, debates around LGBT rights have generated considerable political friction within the framework of international human rights institutions and organizations.

However, there is a danger of falling into a narrative that features heroic “White Western saviors” squaring off against “homophobic” religious bigots in the

Global South. Although the objective of this book is to analyze how LGBT rights are promoted internationally through diplomacy, one of my main challenges is not succumbing to an overly-simplified Western/Non-Western binary.

This abridged section considers diplomatic efforts to both promote and obstruct LGBT rights. I asked the 29 interviewees to reflect on how the human rights of LGBT people intersect with the diplomats’ world of multilateralism and diplomacy.

The interview subjects conveyed how LGBT rights are framed, constructed and debated in the multilateral context. Most revealingly, they discuss how they work to influence diplomatic engagement in these forums.

Diplomatic positioning of the “like-minded”

All the CSO and UN representatives I interviewed had their own theories about what messages diplomats are trying to convey through their support for LGBT rights.

One advocate cynically referred to LGBT rights as “... an issue that all countries agree to manipulate politically.” The advocate felt that LGBT rights have become a “hobby-horse” – a way for the West to demonstrate “moral superiority.”

For another advocate, this uniquely Western approach breeds mistrust and stokes fears in the Global South that LGBT rights is “a convenient way to divert attention from issues such as Guantanamo and mass surveillance.”

One UN representative observed that the West’s insistence on LGBT rights can come across as too much of a good thing:

“Some countries like to burnish their human rights credentials by championing these liberties in the international arena. It’s great that rich states have high-level political support and funding for LGBT rights. On the other hand, they are impatient. They want results. Many would like to see this go faster. Politicians will see this argument as an easy political win, portraying a political leader as a monster.”

Western states who promote LGBT rights internationally walk a fine line; if they are too insistent they risk creating a backlash.

The first-ever resolution on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) to be adopted at the UN was passed at the Human Rights Council on June 17, 2011, with 23 in favor, 19 against, three abstentions and two absent. One advocate recalled how conservative member states targeted the US during the debate over the resolution.

Since 67 countries still criminalize same-sex conduct, debates around LGBT rights have generated considerable political friction within the framework of international human rights institutions.

Member states that opposed the US attempted to make the US appear hypocritical for promoting LGBT rights abroad while denying them at home. As a result, the US became the focus of almost the entire debate – rather than spending time discussing human rights violations against LGBT people around the world.

... there were 20 hours of debate. And eleven and a half hours of that debate were taken up with calls by member states for the US to repeal its military ban on homosexuality. Meanwhile, there were 25 NGOs lined up to talk about violations in other countries. You have to be able to point your finger at other countries.

To counteract this tendency, it appears that other Western member states take a more low-key approach. For example, one diplomat reflected:

We have to be careful; it requires a lot of tact and strategy... at the UN, we never talk about same-sex unions. We commend countries that legalize same-sex unions. But we don't put that in our recommendations. Our goal is to get down the number of countries with anti-gay laws. Strident statements don't help.

Another Western diplomat likes to arrange informal bilateral meetings before delivering a negative public recommendation on LGBT rights, describing these informal meetings as “another layer of the [Universal Periodic Review].”

Certain member states try to avoid the debate completely.

One Global South diplomat was torn, wanting to take a more aggressive stance in support of LGBT rights at the UN, but needing the support of African and Asian countries on a completely separate, but extremely divisive, domestic issue:

The reality is that sometimes you have to choose your issues. We were trying to get support for our resolution on [issue x]. The states that were against the SOGI resolution were actually supportive of the ... resolution [on issue x]. As a result, we had to be moderate in our negotiation with the homophobic countries.

Not surprisingly, this polarizing atmosphere encourages Western countries to gravitate toward their like-minded counterparts: one mechanism that cements these relationships is the UN Core

Group, an informal circle of pro-LGBT member states in New York that meets once a month.

A UN representative remained skeptical about whether countries from different regions will actually engage in granting LGBT rights or just give them lip service:

For many countries, with few resources and scant capacity, it will take a long time for governments to mainstream LGBT rights. Will they ever become a global priority? Unfortunately, nowadays everything is considered a priority. Nobody will actually say, “This is interesting, but it's not a priority. Let's talk again in ten years”.

Generally, though, a consensus seems to be emerging that the West's insertion of LGBT rights in multilateral processes will continue.

As one CSO representative put it, “I believe that the non-Western diplomats are starting to realize that the issue is not going away. This is slowly sinking in because of the cyclicity of the human rights processes.”

One UN representative is convinced that, “the trend is not favorable towards the homophobic countries.”

Homophobia and diplomacy

To what extent does homophobia permeate the diplomatic environment?

In diplomacy, the personal and the political are often intermingled.

Although I did not set out to interview LGBT UN representatives, diplomats and advocates, I discovered that approximately two-thirds of my interview subjects identified as gay, lesbian, non-binary or queer.

In the course of the discussions on LGBT rights, examples of homophobia experienced by some of the interview subjects emerged.

For example, a Western gay male diplomat said he took it very personally when an African male ambassador told him privately that “the battle for LGBT rights was a ‘line in the sand’ that was threatening the traditional family.”

He was also bothered by comments made by his Middle Eastern male counterparts, who knew he was gay and would taunt him by reminding him how beautiful the women are in his country.

For many countries, with few resources and scant capacity, it will take a long time for governments to mainstream LGBT rights. Will they ever become a global priority?

A gay or lesbian diplomat will be careful before exposing his or her sexual orientation. There is a conservatism common in the profession.

He noted bitterly that a Middle Eastern diplomat “once told me that homosexuality does not exist” in his country. He said that another Middle Eastern diplomat shunned him by organizing a dinner party at his home and inviting every diplomatic counterpart on their committee – from dozens of countries – except for him.

Generally, as one UN representative explained, people refrain from making explicitly homophobic remarks in public spaces. However, “diplomats have been known to make homophobic comments about lifestyle, illness, abnormality and debauchery. Still, this language tends to be in individual tweets or during the informal discussions on draft texts of resolutions.”

Other references to homophobia emerged.

For example, a young Asian man wearing a tiara was heckled by diplomats while speaking at a CSO forum at the UN. One diplomat felt that “the personality of the ambassadors and officials can play a significant role in opposing LGBT rights.”

This seemed to be confirmed by one UN representative:

One [Global South] Ambassador was so disgusted he could not bring himself to talk about homosexuality. He refused to push the issue and the momentum had come completely to a halt. Then suddenly he was replaced by a lesbian Ambassador, and the difference was like night and day. (Interview U11, 2015)

One person discussed homophobia in the workplace: the Global South diplomat’s president was choosing a foreign minister, but the most obvious, qualified candidate was passed over because “... he was gay, and the President was somewhat homophobic.”

The diplomat reflected:

I think it’s much harder for gays to get ahead... The gay diplomats have to work twice as hard. [At our mission], we had to recruit a team. We wanted to recruit as many professional members of our Foreign Service as possible. We selected two that were gay. At first the Ambassador rejected them. He finally decided to take one, but he said that the other was “too gay.”

Some advocates consider the education of diplomats on LGBT rights is central to their role:

- They sometimes “manage to get meetings with missions whose countries are generally hostile to LGBT rights. We were happy to have activists get in to see the ambassadors of [two African countries that criminalize homosexuality].”
- When a group of gender non-conforming activists visited an Asian mission, a diplomat asked them, “What do you do about procreation? How do you have children?” It wasn’t done in a super-insulting way. He wasn’t trying to harass us.

The examples are a good reminder of the value of educating diplomats: there is sometimes an assumption that people know more than they actually do.

The rise of the gay/lesbian diplomat

The appearance and mannerisms of some LGBT diplomats are often under scrutiny; they may have to regulate themselves considerably in the work environment.

A UN representative who has worked with many diplomats reflected:

A gay or lesbian diplomat will be careful before exposing his or her sexual orientation. There is a conservatism common in the profession; you can’t be too forward and need to build trust. The nature of diplomatic work contains a level of constraint that does not enter into other work environments. This could limit your career and your ability to operate within the system.

Some diplomats are more open to disclosing their sexual orientation than others.

A Latin American diplomat told me: “I don’t know how many of my colleagues knew that I was gay, though. There are delegates from other member states who are even more openly gay, but also some that are in the closet. I know an Ambassador from Africa who’s gay.”

One advocate has known gay diplomats from Africa who took a more assertive role on LGBT rights at their missions, only to be reprimanded by their capitals.

Still, a Western diplomat felt that the assertive role that LGBT people are now taking on LGBT

rights “at the UN, the World Bank and the WHO ... is a factor that has been overlooked and underestimated.”

One Global South diplomat reflected on the reasons for being so engaged on supporting LGBT rights at the UN:

I wonder if being gay made a difference... personally, I was very linked to the issue. At the very beginning, I said that [my country] was ready to support this, even though I had no instructions from my capital. Being gay helped me because I understand the issue. When I'm talking about discrimination and human rights violations, I have first-hand experience of the situation.

There seems to be something about the injustice inherent in the area of LGBT rights that inspires and motivates many people in this field. One straight diplomat who works on LGBT rights reflected:

I have always worked in the area of human rights. This file has been a natural progression for me: this is a societal advance of human rights and social justice. I am not personally impacted by these issues. I cannot represent LGBT's because I am not part of their communities, but I consult all the time. My close friends are gay ... Working in this area is extremely rewarding.


On the other hand, while not all straight diplomats are conservative, not all gay diplomats are necessarily progressive. One Western diplomat told me:

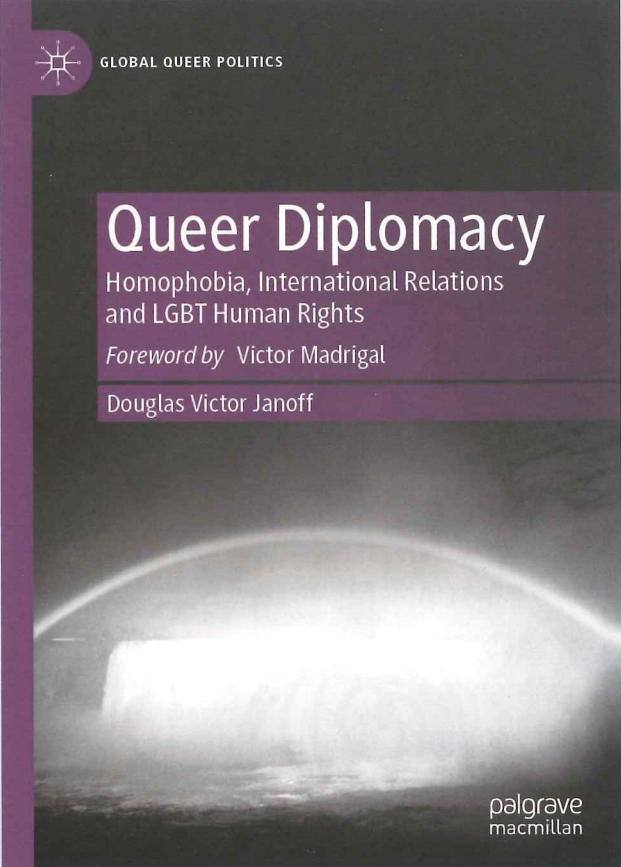
I try to use my own personal situation as a way to pass on the message. I try to assure them that you can be gay without looking like a drag queen. You can look like everyone else. These are seeds that we are planting.

I found this unapologetic comment to be ungenerous and not a little provocative – especially since, during other parts of the interview, the diplomat's country was portrayed as a haven for liberal values while diplomats from Asia, Africa and the Middle East were disparaged as being homophobic.

This was the most blatant example of homonationalism to emerge from my interviews; however, there is no way of knowing how prevalent this attitude is without conducting more research on a larger scale.

The example also calls into question the “us and them” dichotomy: not all homophobia is found in non-Western countries.

Sometimes it is found even among those from Western countries who openly identify as LGBT. 



Queer Diplomacy can be found in print and digital formats on Amazon, Indigo, and Springer Books. It is also available in libraries across the world. Janoff recommends contacting library-biblio.sic1@international.gc.ca to access the book through the Global Affairs Canada library or searching worldcat.org to see if his book is available at another library near you.



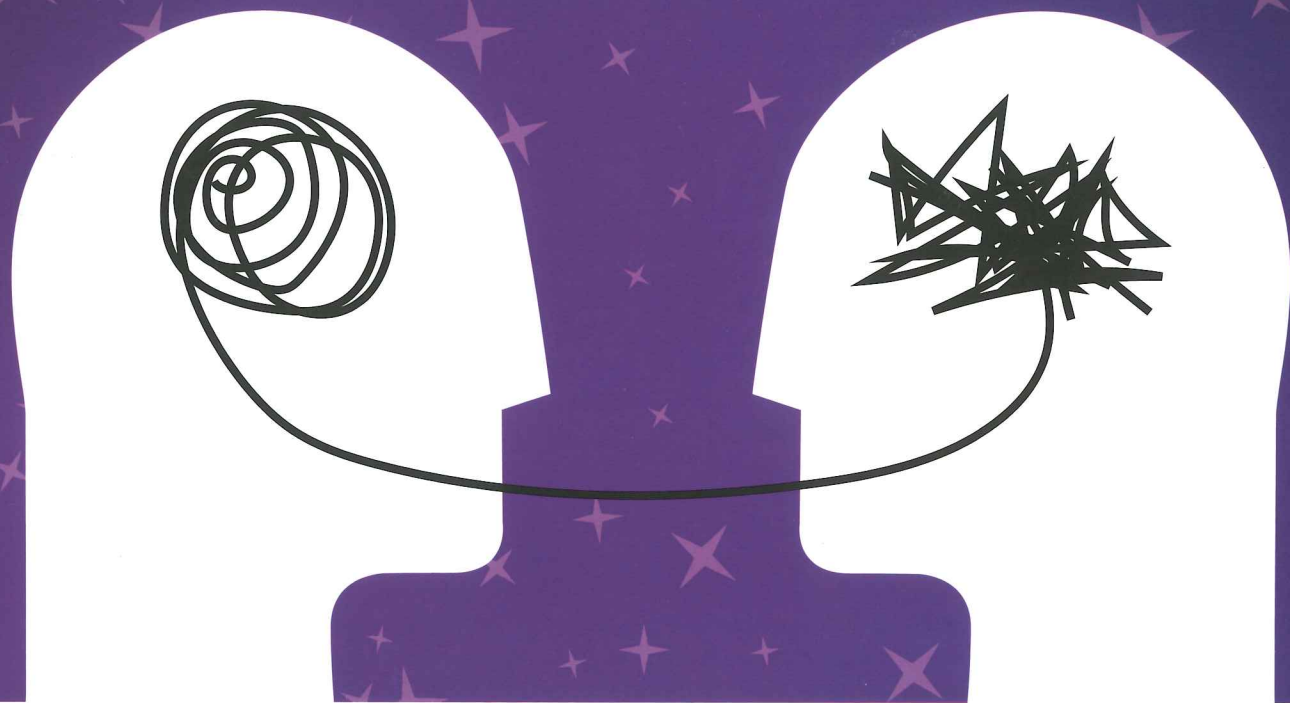
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Diplomacy as the New Utopia

OUR PROFESSION IN CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE FICTION

by Vladislav Mijic



Let's start with a simple premise, widely accepted to the point of making the claim almost banal: **we live in a time of crises.**

THE WHOLE PERCEIVED GLOBAL CONSENSUS created in the aftermath of World War II, and we may give it any of its different possible names – Pax Americana, Bretton Woods, the rules-based international order, whatever – isn't in a happy place, and that's merely the political manifestation of the larger issue. Global metacrisis are numerous and frightening, and they range from climate change and pressing environmental concerns, to nuclear weapons (testimony to our considerable potential to blow ourselves up and out of existence), to rogue artificial intelligence, and probably well beyond.

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Doomerism figures prominently in the debates for all kinds of good reasons. Future thinkers¹ believe that at least one of the big problems human civilization is facing lies in the contradiction between the human capacity to create complex, accelerated, and mutually reinforcing systems and our lack of proper evolutionary tools to follow the pace of that complexity, with the underlying multipolar traps potentially leading to cascading issues.

With this glum global backdrop in mind, if we were to bring all this closer to our métier, it's not a wonder that this is also not an easy time to do diplomacy. In fact, it would be tempting to establish a correlation between the current diplomatic environment and the fractured larger world in which people, entities, and nations appear to constantly talk past, rather than listen to, each other. If we believe that societies are getting increasingly polarized, that hardly provides fertile ground for successful diplomatic advocacy.

In addition to all the various crises and metacrisis, there seems also to exist a crisis of meaning and interpretation – two categories that also lie at the very foundation of diplomacy. Both traditional and digital media repeatedly indicate the same sense of divisions, opposites, and mutually exclusive doctrinary standpoints. How does one inhabit that space of competing truth claims and evolve to do our work properly, to make connections, and to bring people and ideas closer together?

The desperate search for sources of collective imagination often leads to science fiction. In his influential essay *Progress versus Utopia; Or, Can We Imagine the Future?*, Fredric Jameson writes that "... the apparent realism, or representationality, of SF has concealed another, far more complex temporal structure: not to give us 'images' of the future ... but rather to defamiliarize and restructure our experience of our own present, and to do so in specific ways distinct from all other forms of defamiliarization."

It is interesting that, in this quest to restructure our present, contemporary science fiction often turns, explicitly or implicitly, to the issues of diplomacy, coming to epitomize the ultimate appeal to bridge gaps rather than create and perpetuate them. Arguably, all these efforts in science fiction to build different worlds, where political subjects talk instead of fight, where we have access and agency in

places we previously didn't know or understand, and where boundaries are overcome, have in many cases recently shifted from technological and other utopias toward various tales of diplomacy.

This isn't entirely new. In all fairness, "diplomatic sci-fi" has been around for quite a while. The desire to know the previously unknown or seemingly unfathomable, and to approach the Other as a partner rather than the enemy, is perhaps nowhere more visible in classical sci-fi than in the *Star Trek* universe. Unlike *Star Wars*, where the world is defined and redefined through power struggle (between the Empire and rebels), *Star Trek* is a prime example of intergalactic diplomacy based on the idea that alliance building through healthy consensus rather than by force is possible. The main props in the two universes are clear giveaways. While the lightsaber in *Star Wars* is a weapon, *Star Trek's* tricorder is primarily a communication device.

This idea is arguably circumscribed in the reality of enlightened leadership, the same kind of founding myth that made the United States into the global superpower it has been over recent decades. As the tide turns and its status is no longer that obvious, the more recent *Star Trek* spinoffs, such as *Discovery* or *Picard*, are far less certain of themselves and their explorer (or missionary) type heroes than, for example, the canonical *Next Generation*.

Contemporary reworking of the diplomatic theme in sci-fi is much more subtle. In the movie *Arrival*, based on Ted Chiang's *Story of Your Life*, the main character is a linguist, and, when the strange, non-human aliens appear on Earth, her mission is to crack their communication by non-linear code. Working as an interpreter, she not only gets to understand what they are trying to communicate but also brings meaning to her own life. As if to stress the obvious kinship of interpreters and diplomats, this sounds like the very definition of diplomacy – understanding what others are telling us, and interpreting that to inform our own thinking.

If we believe that societies are getting increasingly polarized, that hardly provides fertile ground for successful diplomatic advocacy.

1. See, for example, Daniel Schmachtenberger's talk of the third attractor: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XCXvzQdcug>



Future projections: German Bundestag, Berlin.

Photo credit: Mira Zdjelar

That essential diplomatic act of cultural interpretation is even more of an uphill task in China Miéville's 2011 novel *Embassytown*, where the link to diplomacy is clearly established starting with the title. The emissary to a vastly different alien civilization not only succeeds in comprehending the seemingly impenetrable alien language but also uses it to irrevocably change the aliens and their society. In some ways, there is even more to diplomacy here, going beyond mere interpreting toward influencing.

It's not surprising that in the current climate, marked by the absence of dialogue and understanding, the imagination of science fiction creators turns toward diplomacy.

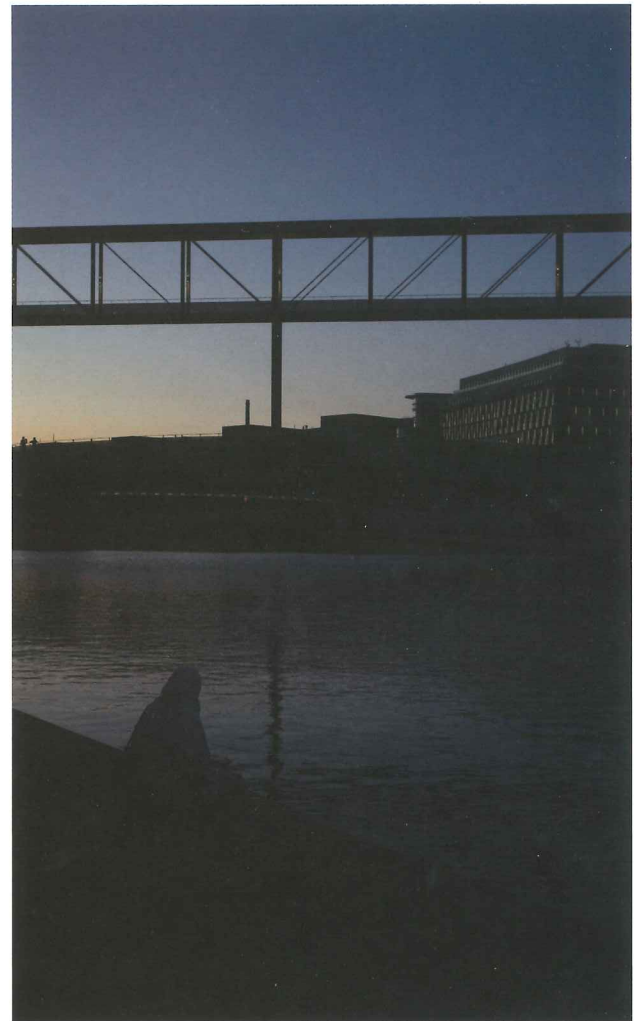
Perhaps the richest homage to the allure of our profession in this suite of recent works is Arkady Martine's duology of novels about the intergalactic empire of Teixcalaan, consisting of *A Memory Called Empire* (2019) and *A Desolation Called Peace* (2021). Her main character in both novels is a diplomat, Mahit Dzmare, from a small space entity (Lsel Station), who grows up studying, and being seduced by, the empire to which she'll be sent. When caught in the whirlwind of imperial intrigue, her diplomatic skills are put to the test as much as her loyalty.

The novels argue that although we may embrace the Other and be fascinated with the culture of our rivals, it doesn't necessarily mean that we have to lose sight of who we are. This fascination doesn't have to represent the antithesis of loyalty because true diplomatic loyalty is about serving those who send us while synthesizing the host culture with the sending culture to the extent possible. Familiarity with the Teixcalaanli empire helps Ambassador Mahit to work in the best interest of her own station, but the byproduct of her actions is that the empire also becomes a better place. Cultural affinity for

Teixcalaan doesn't hamper her from being an agent for her world; it arguably does the opposite by giving her the advantage of knowing, akin to the act of performative agnosticism where one internalizes the conversation partner's position to better understand it.

This is merely a small sample of a recent cluster of works that reaffirm constructive and collaborative diplomacy as a way forward, and as a counterbalance to the forces that divide us. It's perhaps not surprising in the current climate, marked by the absence of dialogue and understanding, both within societies and between them, that the imagination of science fiction creators turns toward diplomacy. This can be read as an expression of desire to bridge gaps between people and nations that appear to be widening constantly.


In terms of what may happen next, Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) ventures beyond diplomacy to questions of global governance. The



Abandoned by modernity? Sunset on the river Spree, Berlin.

Photo credit: Mira Zdjelar

Ministry itself is created after a catastrophic, climate change related event, which kills over 20 million people. As dystopian as the premise may sound, the rest of the novel is significantly less depressing than the opening chapter. Using the mechanisms of global governance to their full potential, people manage to find some solutions that put humanity back on a difficult but promising path. Of course, the implicit, large and important question for all of humanity is whether improving our current predicament can be accomplished without a major catastrophe as a preamble.

Whatever the case may be, the fact that our profession figures so prominently in contemporary artistic imagination as a way to potentially make things better should not only be a source of inspiration, but also a reminder of our own great responsibility as diplomats. 



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FEATURE // REPORTAGE

Hockey Sock Diplomacy

STRIKING GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES

by Ian McGrath

WHEN I RECALL THE CONVERSATION that led to me coaching the Philippine Men's National Hockey Team, I can only smirk. I had been playing shinny with players from the National Hockey Team for a few months, got to know them pretty well, and was welcomed to their invitational golf tournament. We were sitting in the clubhouse after our round of golf, enjoying our San Miguel Lights, when the topic of the team roster came up. Feeling confident, I looked at the team captain, Steven "Swiss" Füglistler, and said "I could definitely crack this lineup. Who do I have to fight?" When the laughter died down, he calmly explained that they didn't need another player, they needed a coach.

As much as I've grown to love Swiss, I remember hating that answer. I was a player, not a coach. My hockey career was a long one and I had had some minor success playing junior hockey and at Carleton University. While I had a decent slapshot and a physical game, I did not have Philippine citizenship. The more I thought about it though, the more the idea of coaching began to appeal to me. I had to face it, I wasn't getting any younger and the opportunity to build a hockey program in South East Asia was a challenge I couldn't resist.



IAN McGRATH is a Foreign Service Officer with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada currently on his third posting. When not at the rink in Manila, you will most likely find him at home with his wife and four children.

Whenever I mention that I'm a hockey coach on the Philippine National Team, everyone has the same two reactions: "The Philippines has a hockey team?" and "Isn't that cute!" Not a traditional hockey nation, Manila features one hockey rink in a country of 110 million people located at a shopping mall on Manila Bay. When I started playing here, the hockey community was very welcoming but fractured. A lifetime of hockey politics had splintered a small community into even smaller parts. In the absence of a "governing body", pre-pandemic hockey in Manila had been marred with scandals and in-fighting generated by over-involved parents, expats, and organizers. In hockey terms, the locker room was divided and with no possibility of trades. Even a bronze medal at the South East Asia games in 2019 in Manila could not fully repair the growing rift as, shortly after this win, the pandemic put a stop to hockey in the Philippines altogether.

When I arrived in 2021, hockey was just restarting but it was struggling, as participation was low. Many of the expats who had played in the league had left during the pandemic and the turnover in the head coach position created a lot of uncertainty within the hockey community. There was no league, there was no ice time, and the outlook for restarting the league was bleak. After a great outpouring of support at the grassroots level from the hockey community, the Philippine Ice Hockey Federation hired Juhani Ijas as the Head Coach. In South East Asia terms, this was a major signing as Ijas had won gold with Thailand in 2019 at the South East Asia games as Head Coach. Given all the turmoil within the hockey community and the fact that the National Team had spent the last three years in lockdown, the announcement of Juhani's arrival was met with muted optimism.

Having spent my life in the hockey world, I knew immediately what a coach with Juhani's pedigree could do for hockey in the Philippines. For anyone still doubting his impact, they needed to look no further than what was happening on the ice. The league became organized, the game was being marketed to the curious locals, and players were getting better with his coaching. More importantly, he was a "no nonsense" coach who did not care about the internal conflict and whose sole focus was on building the best possible team to go to the World Championships in Mongolia.

After chatting with Juhani one day, it became clear that winning a gold medal would be the best thing for hockey in the Philippines. Nothing would let bygones be bygones like a victory on the world stage, so this is exactly what we set out to do. When I look back now, I think I had accepted to be his Assistant Coach before he even offered me the job. When he did offer me the job, I accepted before thinking about what it would mean for my wife and four kids. Caught up in all the excitement and the possibilities, I momentarily forgot my responsibilities.

Fortunately, my wife is a former professional hockey player herself and well understood that the opportunity to win gold at the World Championships



Celebrating our victory in front of the Philippines' flag and fans after the final game against Kuwait.

is truly “once in a lifetime”. As any great hockey player will tell you, it is hard work and the support of friends and family that make success possible. While I was coaching hockey four nights a week for the past three months, she managed a household of four kids under eight years old. Had she not been so supportive and understanding, my story would end right here. As it turns out though, her backing of this adventure made all that came next possible.

It is probably not a surprise to learn that the Philippines has never competed at a World Hockey Championship. Faced with the Division 4 World Championships in Mongolia three months away, Juhani and I set about to finalize the team roster. Having already played with many of the players vying for a roster spot, I had a good sense of the talent we were working with and felt cautiously optimistic about our chances of winning. We knew from past games that the Philippines could probably beat Indonesia and Kuwait, but that the real gold winning game of the round-robin tournament would be against Mongolia. With the competition set in our sights, the weeks leading up to the tournament were a grind as both players and coaches set out to prepare themselves to beat Mongolia on home ice.

As the Assistant Coach, my assignments were to work with the defencemen and special teams. In a sort of good cop/bad cop divide, Juhani and I also decided that the Assistant Coach who had played with the team for years could be the person players turn to when they have an issue they are too shy to bring to the Head Coach. I like to think that this approach created a positive atmosphere in the locker room and made a more receptive audience

for coaching the team on defence, power plays and penalty kills. While we worked with the team four nights a week to refine their game, the team really began to mesh, and the excitement leading into the World Championships was palpable.

Prior to hosting the World Championships, Mongolia had never had an indoor rink. For the occasion, the President of Mongolia commissioned the construction of the Steppe Arena. Designed by a Canadian architect, the arena was a truly a state-of-the-art facility that seated 3,500 fans and featured a giant video screen and scoreboard. When we first stepped into the arena, our jaws dropped at the quality of the dressing rooms and saunas. By contrast, our team had been dressing in a room at a shopping mall that had doubled as a storage facility. The ice surface itself in Mongolia was professional grade and maintained by two state-of-the-art Zambonis. The players actually took some time to get used to the speed of the ice surface. Again, for contrast, Filipino hockey players are used to playing on ice that is melting quickly and skating through thick fog for most of the third period.

Based on the quality of the rink and the police escort our bus received to and from our hotel, it was clear that we had arrived on the big stage. As coaches, we can only get the players ready and have to let them play when the time comes. Would our guys be ready for the bright lights and roar of the crowd? We had been playing in near total silence and for a handful of curious mall shoppers up to this point. We ran through a few practices before our first game against Indonesia. Our message to the players at this point was that the pressure was all on Mongolia and we needed to play “loose”, have fun, and no fighting. Mongolia had a new million-dollar rink, the President of Mongolia would be in attendance, and the game with the Philippines was marketed on national TV for the Saturday night time slot. For Mongolia, losing on home ice would not be an option, and it was clear that the pressure was all on them.

After practice, we returned to the dinner buffet at the Holiday Inn and checked out some local TV. Much to our surprise, we found that our team practice had been recorded and that a panel of pundits were dissecting our goalie’s weak spots. Growing up, I had heard of this sort of thing happening in international hockey events but had never imagined that I would be featured. In a way, it was both alarming and satisfying. If they were going to record our practices, then it was clear that they viewed us as a major threat. Let the head games begin!

Fast-forwarding through the March 23, 2023 Indonesia game, which we won 14-0, we were

getting ready for the big game on March 25, 2023 against Mongolia. I should point out an interesting cultural difference between Filipino and Canadian players. Usually before a big game, Canadians like to put on loud music and build up some energy before hitting the ice. While Filipinos love music (and sing better than anyone I've ever hung out with), they stop all music in order to say a team prayer before taking the ice. This brief moment of introspection and gratitude is something I had never seen before with a hockey team but really did help to center them and momentarily remove any distraction.

For our goalies (who happen to be cousins), this quiet moment probably meant much more since the matriarch of their family (and the first Miss Philippines ever) had passed away the day before. With the added inspiration of playing for her, the stakes could not have been higher but our goalies remained mentally strong. Their goalie coach, J-P Lassila, had helped them with a few of the finer points on technique that set our goalies apart from others at the tournament. Despite the loss of their family's matriarch, our goalies looked cool and confident as the bright lights and loud music welcomed them to the ice.

I still don't know the words of the Filipino national anthem but the moment I heard it played before this game, I felt an incredible honour to be standing beneath the flag with my team. While fighting back nerves, I had come to appreciate that my team had come together around a single goal, worked tirelessly to prepare for it, and was on the verge of achieving its objective. Win or lose, this was a truly special moment. The pride I felt at this moment was amplified by the enormous pride I felt as a Canadian diplomat. For better or worse, the world associates Canada with its love of hockey, and here I was sharing this passion with the Philippines. I was not the only Canadian badly wanting hockey gold for the Philippines as the support I received from my colleagues at the Embassy was overwhelming. Reading their messages of support on my phone while I took my position behind the bench (and should have been setting the lineup) only made me want to win the game even more. By all accounts, the stress of the situation was written on my face while I tried to play it cool.

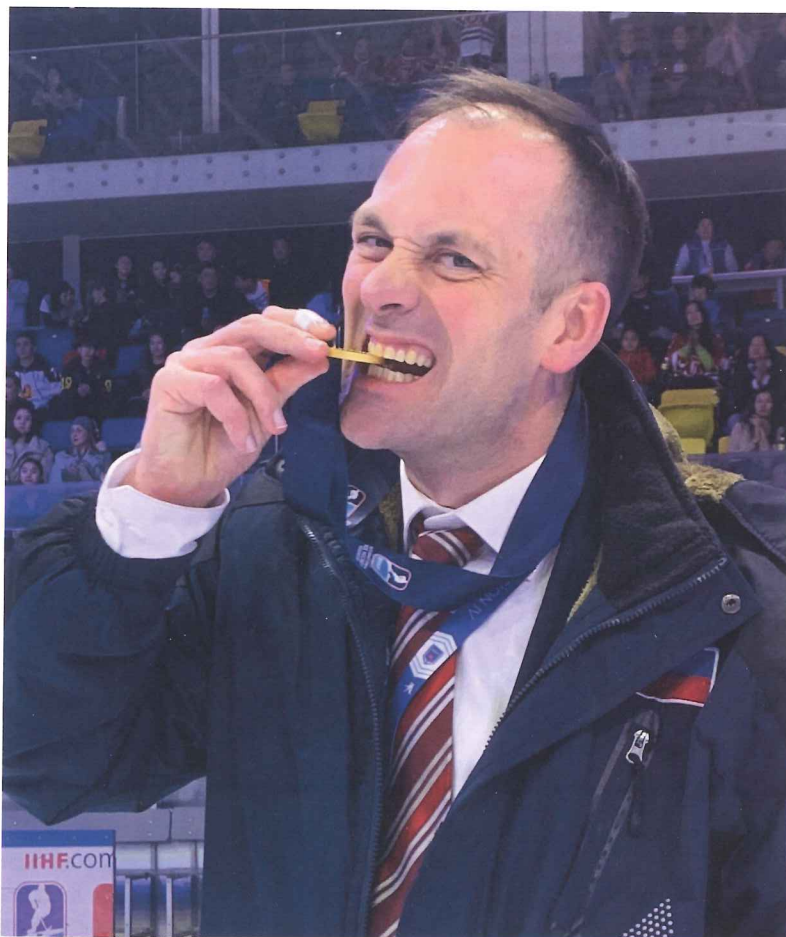
All too often, a big game hyped up like this one tends to disappoint, as it can never match our expectations. Without any doubt, the Mongolia game against the Philippines will forever be a classic. If you haven't seen it, you can watch it on YouTube. It features an amazing back and forth, endless parades of minor penalties and high drama ending in OT.

As we were headed into OT, a strange thing happened. The crowd was deafening and shouting what I can only imagine are obscenities at the Filipinos. At this point, I had lost my voice from trying to shout encouragement over the roar of the crowd. Just when I had an inkling of doubt, I looked at my goalie and defenceman and saw them smiling. All I could think was, "Who smiles in a game like this?" Two minutes later, it was clear that only champions could smile at a moment like that because they have assured themselves of victory. We won the game 7-6.

Banged up and bruised, we defeated Kuwait 14-0 on March 26 and commenced the ritual celebrations. The contents of these celebrations will remain up to the reader's imagination and will inevitably fall short of the reality. We returned to a hero's welcome with photos and interviews at the airport. Clips of the game were all over the news in the Philippines, messages of congratulations from celebrities, and even a meeting with President Bong Bong Marcos himself. It felt surreal to see myself on the news and in messages, especially since I'm usually pretty closed off to social media. Unfortunately, I caught COVID and missed the opportunity to meet the President but such is life. Most importantly, I learned that my kids watched me coach on TV and cheered every time they saw me. Even now, when my toddler sees hockey on the screen she points and says "Dada!" This is exactly what I want my kids to think of when they see hockey on TV.

After all was said and done, the Philippines had won its first ever world championship and has been promoted to Division 3B. For now, it's the off-season and we will restart the work of winning again in a few months. It's not clear what the roster will look like next year but hockey is gaining traction here. I was amazed to learn that kids are writing in their yearbooks that they would like to play on the Philippine National Hockey Team. It seems that the "spark" needed to grow the game here has been found and it will be up to us, as coaches, to keep the fire lit. [bop](#)

The author at centre ice in Mongolia, testing his gold medal.



IN MEMORIAM // EN MÉMOIRE DE

JACQUES BILODEAU

1943-2022

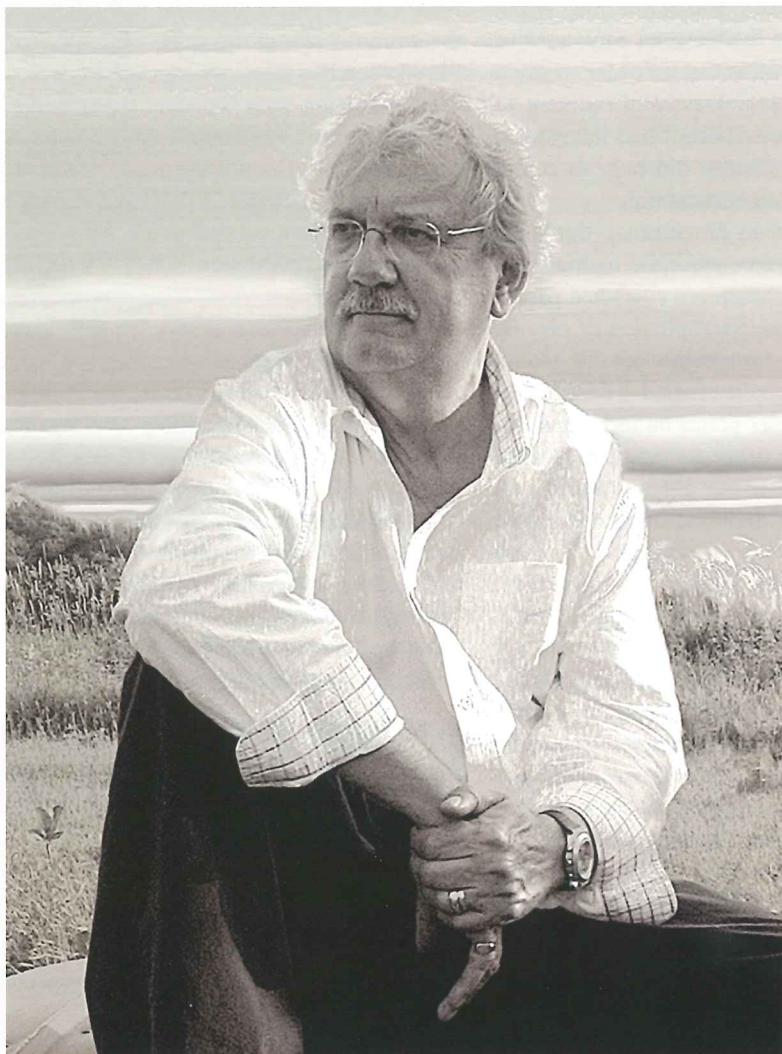


Photo : Huguette Marquis

JACQUES, DÉCÉDÉ D'UN CANCER À L'ÂGE DE 78 ANS le 11 mars 2022, était un diplomate canadien très respecté et extrêmement sympathique. Il a laissé dans le deuil sa compagne, Jacqueline Lessard, quatre enfants et douze petits-enfants. Entré au Service extérieur au cours de l'année du centenaire du Canada, Jacques a été ambassadeur au Sénégal, puis en Belgique et haut-commissaire adjoint à Londres. Il a également été sherpa de la Francophonie à deux reprises et conseiller spécial de Michaëlle Jean pendant son mandat de secrétaire général de l'Organisation de la Francophonie. Une cinquantaine d'années au total, dont 40 au service des affaires étrangères et 10 à la Francophonie. Il a mené une carrière axée en grande partie sur les relations bilatérales, puis une seconde sur les 88 États membres de la

Francophonie, qui se consacre depuis 1970 à la promotion de la langue française et à la coopération politique, éducative, économique et culturelle entre ses membres. Jacques était d'une patience et d'une gentillesse incroyables à l'égard des membres les plus jeunes du Service extérieur, tant ceux qui travaillaient avec et pour lui que ceux qu'il connaissait plus accessoirement par l'intermédiaire du service. Et tout cela sans aucun ego visible. Nous reproduisons ci-dessous l'homélie que son ami et collègue, Émile Martel, lauréat en 1995 du Prix du Gouverneur général pour la poésie de langue française, a prononcée lors de ses funérailles. Elle évoque l'amitié dans le Service extérieur malgré la distance et le temps, ainsi que les qualités humaines extraordinaires de Jacques.

HOMÉLIE POUR JACQUES BILODEAU

EMILE MARTEL, O.C., 28 MAI 2022

*Yo quiero ser llorando el hortelano
de la tierra que ocupas y estiercolas,
compañero del alma, tan temprano.*

...

En larmes, je veux être le jardinier
de la terre où tu gis et tu pourris,
compagnon de mon âme, si tôt.

C'EST MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ QUI COMMENTAIT ainsi la mort qu'il venait d'apprendre, d'un très grand ami à lui, en janvier 1936.

Vous comprendrez que ce soit le premier cri qui m'ait échappé quand Jacqueline m'a averti de la mort de Jacques.

Puis elle m'a demandé de vous parler ici de l'ami et du diplomate.

Je me suis demandé comment raconter un ami, comment rendre justice à des anecdotes et des conversations, des silences et des complicités, des fou-rires et des grandes bouffes partagées, des promenades place du Tertre à Paris ou vers le lac ici à Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, au cours des 55 dernières années dont l'une des caractéristiques est que nous n'avons à peu près jamais vécu dans le même pays en même temps. C'est tout dernièrement, et encore seulement pendant les mois d'été, que nous avons vécu dans le même village.

La distance entre les diplomates est une délicatesse de la profession car on sait toujours où sont tous nos amis et collègues et il y a sur la carte du monde, quand on rentre à la maison, une petite lumière dans des villes lointaines qui clignote et nous reconforte.

Quant à Jacques et Jacqueline et à leurs enfants, malgré nos dépaysements forcés notre amitié n'a jamais fait défaut, elle s'est déroulée dans la confiance, dans une espèce de promesse de se revoir bientôt, une certaine manière de terminer aujourd'hui la phrase commencée il y a des années.

Est-ce trop dire que d'affirmer que c'est une amitié qui clignote, qui reconforte, qui rassure, qui rassérène encore?

Et parler du diplomate. Jacques était un homme debout, à l'écoute, patient, souriant. Il observait, il réfléchissait. On parle d'une intelligence vive qui accompagne une personnalité chaleureuse et bienveillante. À La Havane ou à Accra ou à Athènes, à Dakar ou à Rome, à Bruxelles ou à Paris, à Londres ou à Ottawa il distinguait les enjeux, il y inscrivait les intérêts du Canada et il rendait compte de ses conclusions.

Est-ce que je ferai le décompte de ses diplomaties, est-ce que je dessinerai sur la mappemonde les points de ses ambassades et les chantiers de tous ces sommets qu'il a organisés et encadrés, en même temps que l'humanité des causes qu'il a défendues?

Est-ce que j'allais donner ici le spectacle de mes larmes, les preuves de ma colère contre la maladie, et aller chercher Jacques et le revenir et qu'il nous fasse un sourire et une moue, un geste de la main, comme un adieu ou comme une retrouvaille?

Est-ce que j'allais vous mentir et vous dire qu'il est mort pour le vrai? Ou est-ce que j'allais le revivre et le ramener, l'empêcher de se taire pour qu'il fasse écho dans ce lieu de tous les échos?

Est-ce que je vous amènerai à l'entendre encore puisque d'après moi il est à portée de voix?

Fermons les yeux et voyons-le descendre l'allée de cette église. Je l'entends qui se moque gentiment de ma grandiloquence; il dit qu'il n'est pas si mort que ça, que j'exagère.

IN MEMORIAM // EN MÉMOIRE DE
KEN SUNQUIST
AUGUST 30, 1948–JUNE 8, 2022

by Gary J. Smith with Rick Kohler



GARY J. SMITH and **RICK KOHLER** are former career diplomats and ambassadors. Rick was a distinguished Trade Commissioner in his own right and Chief of Protocol of Canada; while Gary's senior assignments included Director General for Asia. Gary and his late wife, Laurielle, became very close friends of Ken and Carolyn in retirement and Gary presided over the funeral service for Ken.

KENNETH JOHN SUNQUIST WAS BORN to be a highly successful, top level, Canadian Trade Commissioner and diplomat—intelligent, congenial, reliable, effective, an intuitive inspirational leader who cared about people, and a nomad. He was never one to see life as a glass half full or half empty; rather, as a full glass of positivism, optimism, and opportunity.

Ken liked to say he was born in Winnipeg “at the end of mosquito season” — the fact this was the end of August said as much about the man’s abundant sense of humour as it did about the resilience of that city. His father, Ed, was a trouble shooter for the pipelines. When Ed was assigned a new task, which was often the case, he did not just set off on his own but packed up the entire family with him. Ken, his mum Diana, his slightly younger sister Susan, and brother Tim, accordingly, found themselves bouncing around Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Northern Ontario, as well as sharing a stint in Galveston, Texas.

Like most Prairie boys Ken was drawn to the ice; but the constant family movement precluded sticking with a hockey or curling team for anything like a full season. So, he, Susan, and Tim adapted and took up the transportable sport of figure skating where they could be self-reliant. They all excelled; with Ken rising through the various stages until he found himself competing at junior levels against burgeoning stars like Toller Cranston and Ron Shaver. The demands of university study took him away from further competition but his devotion to the sport led him to become a respected gold level judge — a function he performed for decades afterwards.

At the then Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan, Ken enrolled in administrative (business) studies. For a period, he was engaged with the Royal Canadian Navy Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP). Unusual perhaps, as Regina is a long way from any ocean, but the lakes of the Qu’Appelle Valley, which Ken loved, are close

and the northern part of the province is dotted with water. It also has been pointed out that the limitless horizons of Saskatchewan equate to what naval officers face on the high seas.

Ken soon found himself bitten not by a mosquito but by the political bug and the desire to work with and do something for others. He was elected President of the Student Council and guided it through a period of turbulence during vociferous protests against the Vietnam War and incessant demands for free university education. The love bug also struck in the charming, effervescent form of the politically aware Carolyn Darke; an education faculty student who had grown up with deep family roots in Regina. Ken was fond of squiring Carolyn to the student council offices after hours and coaxing the resident juke box into playing his favourite song by Neil Diamond – “Sweet Caroline” – as they danced across the office floor. They were engaged at graduation in June 1970; his first paycheck went toward the purchase of a ring. They were married on February 5, 1971, on one of those frigid Prairie days with the temperature touching minus 29. Carolyn was Ken’s “Sweet Caroline” then and throughout their 51 years of marriage.

Ken’s first full-time job was as assistant clerk to the Executive Council of the Government of Saskatchewan and then executive assistant to Ross Thatcher, the province’s premier. Thatcher was in his second term and was known to be combative and combustible – he apparently fired and rehired Ken in the same conversation, on multiple occasions. Ken took it in stride and enjoyed working on policy formation and the political give and take. But what caught his fancy was the interaction with citizens, reaching out, listening, and learning. Thatcher was defeated in the June 1971 election.

Ken regrouped and like many talented people from Saskatchewan, was attracted to the concept of service to the country and employment with the Public Service of Canada. He initially worked with Revenue Canada in Regina but the broader fields of Ottawa and service abroad beckoned. After successfully passing the Foreign Service exams in autumn 1972, he and Carolyn moved to the nation’s capital in June 1973 where he became a proud and devoted member of Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service (TCS). It fit him like a glove; he was on his way.

Ken cut his first diplomatic teeth, with direct exposure to other cultures in foreign lands, the following year in Jamaica, as a commercial officer under the skilled tutelage of fellow Saskatchewanian, Bob Burchill. A highlight of the Kingston assignment was the birth of son Stephen in 1975. Then it was on to Belgrade, Yugoslavia in early 1977 where he was faced with the clash of commerce with ethnic and ideological politics. There also was a disruptive merry-go-round of housing and the unexpected turnover of Canadian personnel, but throughout Ken kept his focus and shoulder to the wheel and came to appreciate the vital importance of locally engaged staff to the welfare and success of a mission abroad. As always, the challenges of

life in the Foreign Service extend beyond the employee to the family. Canadian Government policy dictated that births were not to occur in communist countries and so in 1978, Carolyn set off for Regina to await the arrival of their second child. She made it as far as Toronto before son Sean unexpectedly decided to arrive on the scene. Then a third consecutive assignment abroad, this time in 1980 to San Francisco where the world of high tech, communications, and media awaited him. Once again, he was fortunate to have the wise guidance of another Trade Commissioner from Saskatchewan, Bill Clarke, and the opportunity to work with the talented, future Deputy Minister, Marie Lucie Morin. With added drive and determination out of the office, Ken acquired an M.A. in Public Administration from Golden Gate University.

The family of four returned to Ottawa in 1983, after nine years abroad. The cauldron of headquarters awaited: Deputy Director of USA economic relations followed by a year as Executive Assistant to Sylvia Ostry, the brilliant, colourful, and demanding Deputy Minister of International Trade and coordinator of International Economic Relations



for the Government of Canada. Ken not only survived that experience but added enormously to his knowledge bank – as he would say later, he “learned about the strength of intellectual reasoning in what we do, the ability to provide Ministers with options and that integrity with colleagues, staff, and ministers, while difficult at times, is the only way to achieve lasting results”. Onward to Director of the Trade Development Policy Secretariat, followed by director of export information and then two years as Director General of Trade Communications and Public Affairs.

The incessant demands of headquarters and his determination to get the job done on time and well, kept the self-described workaholic in the office beyond regular hours when others had long gone home. Ken found a way, nevertheless, to share special hours and weekends with his young sons, both indoors and outside, by becoming a leader first with Beavers, followed by Cubs.

Then it was off with Carolyn and the two boys to Seoul in 1990 as Minister Counsellor (Economic and Commercial) in an increasingly important and hyper-active embassy. The mission was led at first by Ambassador Brian Schumacher who Ken would say taught him the skills of higher-level business networking and how to make Canada a player in Korea. Subsequently, Len Edwards, another future Deputy Minister, would take the Embassy reins. Ken described Edwards to be a “great leader with his focus on achieving results”. The South Korean economy was booming and there were business and governmental visits aplenty to organize, vital contacts to be made, social events to plan, sage advice to be given, and complicated and lucrative deals to help negotiate. Korean industrial names came to world attention: Samsung Electronics, Hyundai Heavy Industries and Hyundai Motors, POSCO Steel, Kia Motors, LG Electronics, among others. Ken found himself increasingly near the centre of the action; always as a consummate team player, paying as much attention to the concerns and needs of those below him as well as to those above.

The demanding pace in South Korea prepared Ken extremely well for the even more challenging assignment of Beijing; which was experiencing its own massive economic expansion and opening to the world. Every Canadian exporter dreamed of selling just one item to each of the then 1.2 billion citizens of the People’s Republic of China and each company representative came pounding on the Embassy door for assistance. Ken (with Carolyn and only Sean this round) got off to a frenetic start upon his arrival at the end of summer in 1994. Plans were developing in Ottawa for the first ever Trade Team Canada trip abroad in November with China (Beijing and Shanghai) as the destination, along with Hong Kong. The idea was to go big or go home in the face of international competition. The mega delegation, which was led by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, included nine of 10 provincial premiers and their staffs, International Trade Minister Roy MacLaren, and approximately 400 businesspersons associated with the Canada–China Business Council. There were many egos and unlimited demands to deal with and much of the pressure fell on Ken as the Embassy number two,

responsible for economics and commerce. As he always did, Ken remained calm, cool, and collected. When asked for advice by the delegation leaders, he kept it short and on target to everyone’s appreciation. The resultant press release from the Prime Minister’s Office spoke of over eight billion dollars in signed contracts and commercial opportunities. Less than a year later, Ken took on the added duties of Chargé d’affaires for a considerable time during the illness and untimely passing of Ambassador John Paynter.

In the summer of 1997, Ken, Carolyn, and Sean returned to Ottawa. It was not a prolonged stay. Within the year the opportunity arose to be named Ambassador to Indonesia. Carolyn was delayed for several months with her ailing parents, but Ken (this time with no accompanying children) jumped into the fray in dealing with a new Indonesian government and a destabilized economy after the collapse of the 32-year authoritarian regime led by General Suharto. Canada had a large economic footprint in the country, particularly in the mining, oil and gas, and forest industry sectors, which needed attentive nurturing, as did our major development assistance program. The largest Muslim country in the world, led by three different presidents during Ken’s term, also required skilled political attention. The tumultuous and violent end of the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste, which was a matter of considerable international and Canadian focus, occurred during his assignment and took up much of his time.

After three action filled years in Jakarta, it was finally the moment to return once again to Ottawa and headquarters; to stay at home if one did not count the hundreds of thousands of kilometres of air travel across Canada and the globe with his new official duties. Starting in 2001, he was Director General of the Trade Commissioner Service, Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of World Markets and International Business, ADM of Global Operations and ADM for Asia and Africa. From 2003 until 2010, he concurrently was Chief Trade Commissioner – a job he loved and where he was known to be a staunch and determined defender of the Trade Commissioner Service in assorted bureaucratic battles. It was a blistering pace but if it was not demanding enough, he became “champion” for mid-level management, for mentoring and for Indigenous Affairs in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). Additionally, he held special responsibilities as alternate governor to the Asian Development Bank, to the African Development Bank, and senior official to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and to the grouping of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). For his multiple endeavours Ken received the Minister of Foreign Affairs Award of Excellence for Policy and the Public Service Awards for Excellence in Management and again for Policy.

Throughout it all, Ken never lost sight of the importance of his family to his own well-being. Few would have turned down an ambassadorial assignment to a major embassy, as Ken did, to keep the totality of life in some form of equilibrium.

On his retirement day, June 18, 2010, the Crush Lobby in the Pearson building was packed with well-wishers. As a measure of the man, the Deputy Minister of International Trade announced the creation of the “Kenneth J. Sunquist Award” to be awarded annually to a junior Trade Commissioner “who exemplifies the same qualities and attributes which Ken has shown over his 37-year career including:

- leadership, charisma, passion
- commitment to duty beyond normal expectations
- spirit of cooperation and teamwork
- client focus.”

There also were multiple oral and written compliments, of a personal nature, directed his way. Many referred to his: “amazing interpersonal skills”; “love of people”, “affable nature and ever ready smile”, “human touch”, “humanity and compassionate nature”, “generosity of spirit”, “uncommon ability to balance the brain and the heart” and even “possessing a magic potion that gives you the ability to care for everyone, give wonderful guidance, mentor and just be a fun, all-round good guy”. Another wrote that during a mentoring session for middle ranking officers held over a sandwich luncheon, Ken made every person feel important and asked about their hometown, history, and career aspirations. We all left the session, the young officer said, feeling “respected, recognized, valued, and inspired”. A contemporary described Ken as a classic “servant leader”.

But it was not just his innate ability to have a good relationship with everyone and to draw the best from others to meet goals and objectives. He was seen as “wise” with “uncommon, good sense”, and as having a mind “as sharp as a tack”. He was judged by his peers and team to have renewed the fabled Trade Commissioner Service and made it ready for the 21st century by seeking new directions and opportunities; by giving its members “the tools to do our job, to serve our clients and to collaborate effectively with our partners”. Most importantly, trade commissioners spoke about a “sense of pride and accomplishment” under his leadership.

While retirement is the end of the work line for many, it was just the beginning of a new measure of public service for Ken; particularity in the world of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He sought new avenues and became a passionate member of numerous boards: 10 years with CARE Canada (five as Chair), CARE International, CARE Indonesia, the Forum for International Trade Training (FITT), the Trade Facilitation Office (TFO), the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC), and the University of Alberta, Canada-China Institute. Ken was no strap hanger, along for the ride. FITT President and CEO Caroline Tompkins for one, spoke glowingly of Ken’s seven years with that organization as Vice Chair, Chair, and Past Chair. Of how Ken not only inspired everybody but led the transition from a government funded service to a self-sufficient NGO; the securing of third-party international accreditation and the formulation of the COVID-19, 2020–2021 Contingency Plan.

DFAIT reached out to him for many years afterwards to mentor first time ambassadors. The subject, “values and

ethics”. No surprise here as he was a standard bearer in both domains.

Ken also became a frequent visitor to his alma mater, the University of Regina, delivering lectures and leading discussions. He received a “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the alumni association and the university recognized his outstanding success and service to the country with an honorary doctorate.

Saskatchewan, and their alternate home at B-Say-Tah near Fort Qu’Appelle, remained a beacon of joy for Ken and his family – Prairie sunsets, Sports Day, the endless boat towing of grand-kids around the lake, cigars and whiskey with his boys, books and newspapers around the house, engaging neighbours and lake friends with tales of the Foreign Service. He and Carolyn were enthusiastic supporters of the Saskatchewan Roughriders with the two of them wearing all sorts of football team paraphernalia while watching a game – apparently, they did not go as far as to put the half-cut watermelons on their heads as favoured by other local fans. When adversity set in, weather related or not, Ken was among the first to assist – such as filling and deploying sandbags and staffing pumps in the neighbourhood during spring flooding.

It is said that the true measure of a person is not how they handle life during the good times, but rather through times of personal adversity. Here Ken stood tall as well. Despite dealing with the debilitating impact of cancer in his last few months, he continued to reach out and to remain positive. He never made conversation about himself. He wanted to know how you were doing and to share in any success you might have. He drew his cherished family close: Carolyn, Steve and his partner Sue and their daughter Kira, Sean and his wife Kate and their two sons Elliot and Trevlyn. And when time began to run out in Ottawa, he longed for one more trip to Saskatchewan.

The day of his funeral service, June 15, 2022, the University of Regina lowered its flag to half-mast in tribute to Ken. The main hall at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa was full to overflowing with well over 250 young and old colleagues, friends, neighbours, and family members. There were constant refrains, as there had been during the gathering for his departmental retirement. Ken was “a man of integrity”, “a man of trust”, “someone who would listen to you and cared about you regardless of your rank”.

In sum, it was said “he personified the best DFAIT had to offer”.

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VIGNETTES // À LA CARTE

The Hungry Diplomat

by Lisa Bitto

The incomparable “crêpes mikado” in Belgium. Crêpes, vanilla ice cream and warm Belgian chocolate sauce, finished with powdered sugar and chantilly. As you might guess, these are not eaten for breakfast!

PANCAKES. Say the word pancakes and the first thing that comes to my mind is a short stack with maple syrup, butter, and a side of bacon.

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.

ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC, those are referred to as “American pancakes” (ahem). I have discovered that – generally speaking – they are usually better served on the left side of the Atlantic. And for the love of all that is holy, do not ever order them in Rome (though that’s a story for another time.) Happily, there is a whole world of European pancakes to discover, though I’ve only had the chance to sample a few.

You are probably already familiar with crêpes, the thin French vehicle of both sweet and savoury toppings. Crêpes make my heart sing when Belgium adds vanilla ice cream and warm chocolate sauce to make Crêpes Mikado, but it’s a truly flexible instrument of deliciousness, equally able to transport savoury bits like ham and cheese with aplomb. These were born in Brittany centuries ago and were traditionally made with buckwheat; in Brittany they still are now. Good news for those who eat a gluten free diet!

I first heard about poffertjes (POHF-er-chesz) through a Dutch colleague. They sounded fine, but the idea of little sweet pancakes as a treat seemed a little ... anti-climactic? They’re also very labour

intensive to make, requiring both a yeast batter (which needs to be prepped in advance and allowed to rise) and a single-purpose divoted cast iron pan that you put tiny dribbles of batter into and then flip one at a time with a crochet hook or similar instrument. Oof. But my first taste at a Christmas market in Germany made me a believer. Topped with chocolate and coconut, they were magnificent. If you ever get the opportunity, you must try poffertjes, which are also super fun to say.

Let me now turn to some potato-based specimens: lefse, latkes, and rösti. Are they really pancakes if they aren’t made primarily with flour? I suppose you could argue either way, but they are flat, carb-y deliciousness and it’s my article, so yes. As a Maritimer, the potato base makes me love them even more. Norwegian lefse (LEF-suh) are made with mashed potato and rolled out like a tortilla. You can eat them sweet or savoury; my favourite way is with butter, sugar, and cinnamon. Latkes are (happy sigh) so good, little fried shredded potato morsels that could only (maaaybe) be improved with sour cream (or apple sauce, if you




Dutch poffertjes being prepared at a Christmas market. Each tiny one is poured and flipped by hand – very labour-intensive!

must). While they are famous as an oil-fried Hanukkah potato delicacy, they started out as a Jewish-Italian cheese pancake that was later adapted in Eastern Europe with a more readily-available ingredient. Swiss rösti is a much more robust shredded potato pancake, originating in Bern as a breakfast dish, but now usually served as a side dish at lunch or supper.

Having saved my favourite for last, I would like to introduce you to æbleskiver (EH-blüh-skee-wa). These are little pancake balls of delight haling from Denmark and served only at Christmas ... though the Danish Pancake Police have not yet come knocking on my door when I make them out of season. When I first mentioned my interest in trying them to a Danish colleague at work, his wife Lotte back in Denmark promptly went out, bought one for me and mailed it to Brussels, along with the 120-year-old recipe you'll find at the end of the article. The name of the dish comes from a small slice of apple that was traditionally added to the batter in the middle of preparation, a style extra I have not yet dared attempt. They already

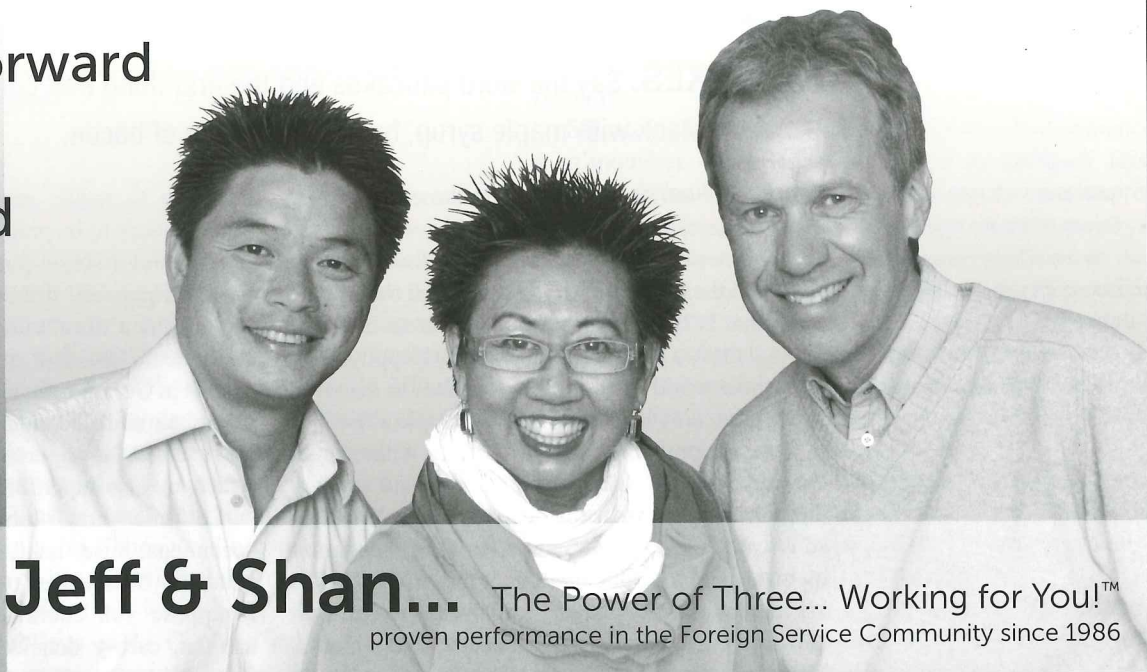
take both patience and technique to make, so adding apple just before flipping a half-baked ball of dough feels like it would be tempting the Viking gods to smite me. These little beauties are showered in powdered sugar and maybe dunked in strawberry jam (I've been instructed that strawberry is the only acceptable flavour) and are a mandatory part of the Danish delegation holiday festivities at NATO, though I'm horrified to report they buy theirs frozen and re-heat them in the microwave.

So there you have it: my Euro pancake shortlist. Had COVID not stolen several years of food tourism from me, I might have been able to tell you about even more. I am determined to use the experience as a reminder and inspiration to maintain proactive, enthusiastic research moving forward. If nothing else, the pandemic (and living amongst Europeans) has taught me not to treat travel as a rare treat any longer, but a means of pleasure, learning, and food exploration that should be enjoyed regularly. I hope you get out there regularly to see the world too. 

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RECIPE // RECETTE

Æbleskiver

Translated from *Frøken Jensen Kogebog* (Mrs. Jensen's Cookbook; 1901)

Note: you can easily buy an æbleskiver pan online. It looks great in the kitchen on display and is a wonderful conversation starter!

INGREDIENTS

2 cups all purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons sugar

1 teaspoon ground cardamom

1 teaspoon baking soda

3 eggs (separated)

400 mL buttermilk

Grated zest of one lemon

1/4 cup neutral oil (corn, vegetable, canola)

Butter for greasing the pan

Mix, flour, salt, sugar, cardamom, baking soda, and lemon zest in a bowl.

In another bowl, whisk together egg yolks and buttermilk, and add this mixture to the dry ingredients. Mix the two well. Add the oil at the end, and let the dough rest for 30 minutes.

Heat up the æbleskiver pan and add a small amount of butter to each hole when you are ready to start. Whip the egg whites to stiff peaks and carefully blend them into the dough just before cooking. The æbleskiver dough is then transferred to a pouring container.

Pour the dough 3/4 of the way up in each hole. When the dough rises at the edges and hardens on the outside, it is time to turn them over, adding a bit of extra batter to make a better sphere. (Lisa's note: I use chopsticks.) If you want to add a small apple slice, add just before turning over. Turn the æbleskiver over several times during baking to make the outer layer evenly browned.

Serve with powdered sugar, strawberry jam, or go rogue and try with maple syrup, maple butter, or dunked in butter, then cinnamon-sugar. Do not answer the door if the Danish Pancake Police come knocking. I will deny all knowledge.



Danish æbleskiver, traditionally made at Christmas (and only Christmas!). Top with powdered sugar and dunk in jam.



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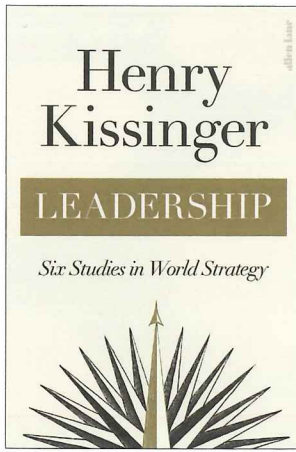
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BOOK REVIEW // CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

Leadership

Six Studies in World Strategy

Reviewed by David MacDuff

BY HENRY KISSINGER

PENGUIN

MARCH 2022, 528pp, \$48.37

ISBN 0241542006

DAVID MacDUFF is a Foreign Service Officer currently serving as deputy director in the Commonwealth and Francophonie Division of the Department of Global Affairs. This review reflects his personal opinions alone.

AT 100 YEARS OF AGE, former U.S. Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger shows few signs of slowing down. In *Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy*, he has provided yet another doorstopper that aims to be an authoritative guide to the essential qualities of a statesperson.

The book focuses on biographies of six leaders in the 20th century and their key strategic contribution: Konrad Adenauer (Germany, strategy of humility); Charles de Gaulle (France, strategy of will); Richard Nixon (United States, strategy of equilibrium); Anwar Sadat (Egypt, strategy of transcendence); Lee Kwan Yew (Singapore, strategy of excellence); and Margaret Thatcher (strategy of conviction). Readers of Kissinger's previous works will see a similar pattern: the combination of sweeping historical analysis with decisive personalities; and ongoing themes interwoven throughout the text, such as the importance of a sense of proportion (distinguishing between the critical and transient threats and opportunities) and of the role of nuance and subtlety in diplomacy (in short, keeping an eye on the details as well as the big picture)

For this reviewer, the section on Lee Kwan Yew was particularly pertinent. Having served in Singapore for four years, 2010-14, I had a first-hand view of Lee's legacy and his influence on his hand-picked successor, his son, Lee Hsien Loong, who is now nearing the end of his own prime ministership. (The elder Lee passed away in 2015.) Singapore is also especially relevant in the current geopolitical context, with increasing global focus on the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific, and for its position on the knife-edge between China and the United States – a choice that it does not wish to make.

A strategy of excellence is a particularly suitable way to understand Singapore's domestic transformation. From its independence in 1965, the city-state went from a small developing country recently separated from its larger neighbour, Malaysia, to a global economic dynamo. In the World Economic Forum's 2022 competitiveness index, it is in the top spot. And, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, Singapore's estimated GDP per capita next year will be USD70,350; for comparison purposes, Canada's will be USD56,640.

Kissinger outlines Lee's distinctive economic strategy at attracting multinational firms, bucking the tendency at the time of many newly independent developing economies in pursuing a state-led national model. The author also candidly refers to the country's political system as "authoritarian" (illiberal democracy might be a better term), observing Lee's belief that a more free-wheeling political system organized on ethnic divisions would have damaged Singapore's emergence and sharing this concern for the future. What goes unsaid is whether a competitive system oriented toward policy differences may be both viable and desirable. (Singapore is also the world's most expensive city, along with New York, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2022, gene-rating domestic pressures.)

But it is Singapore's geopolitical status and strategy that will interest most readers. Kissinger portrays Lee as attracted to both the United States' modern capitalist economy, on the one hand, and to China's traditional Confucian values on

A second area of interest for many readers will be Kissinger's overarching thoughts about the future of leadership, with leaders learning their skills in a far different environment than their predecessors.

the other. Although ethnically Chinese and leading a majority ethnically Chinese country, Lee did not see these as automatic reasons to support Beijing. Indeed, Singapore only formally recognized China in 1990, much later than most other countries. (Canada did so in 1970.)

Rather, Lee was fixated on making unsentimental calculations of Singapore's best interests amid the complex geopolitical landscape. Although he formally left office in 1990, he continued to have influence on world leaders far afterwards. Towards the end of his life, as the book shows, he was searching for a way that the United States could accommodate and integrate China's rise while China would learn the lessons of its turbulent 20th century history and gradually take a peaceful leadership role. Kissinger, however, leaves off with this aspiration, and the book does not take us up to the present time, with the countries' much sharper postures toward each other. Furthermore, at his level of abstraction, he does not specify areas where the two countries could work together – climate change would be a prime example – and how this cooperation might evolve into a wider relationship of trust.

A second area of interest for many readers will be Kissinger's overarching thoughts about the future of leadership, with leaders learning their skills in a far different

environment than their predecessors. In the introduction to the book, Kissinger references Winston Churchill's advice about how leaders should prepare for their heavy burdens: "study history". Kissinger laments the waning of "deep literacy" and the rise of visual culture, with the latter's emphasis on feeling over thinking. Moreover, he expresses dismay over the contemporary education of elites, who, in his view, are either activists or technocrats, compared to the six leaders he profiles, who benefited from humanistic educations. But after highlighting these key concerns in the conclusion, he then moves on to discuss a different topic, the risks of destructive weaponry in today's world, including cyberweapons powered by artificial intelligence. The reader is left wanting more about the solutions to the problems of the formation of leaders. There is no going back to the 20th century.

Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy is not a book for everyone. For those who are looking for a list of "top 10" leadership secrets from the masters, they are likely to be disappointed by the historical sweep and level of abstraction in this work. However, with its examination of leaders from different regions and periods, a diverse array of readers will glean insights that will inform their particular interests in the craft of leadership and its application.

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ENTERTAINMENT // DIVERTISSEMENT

Nirvana's Not Just a Punk Rock Band

THE LIEBNITZ BROTHERS ON SAFFRON STREET

by A Aalto

They sat at a window table in Safi's, overlooking Saffron Street.

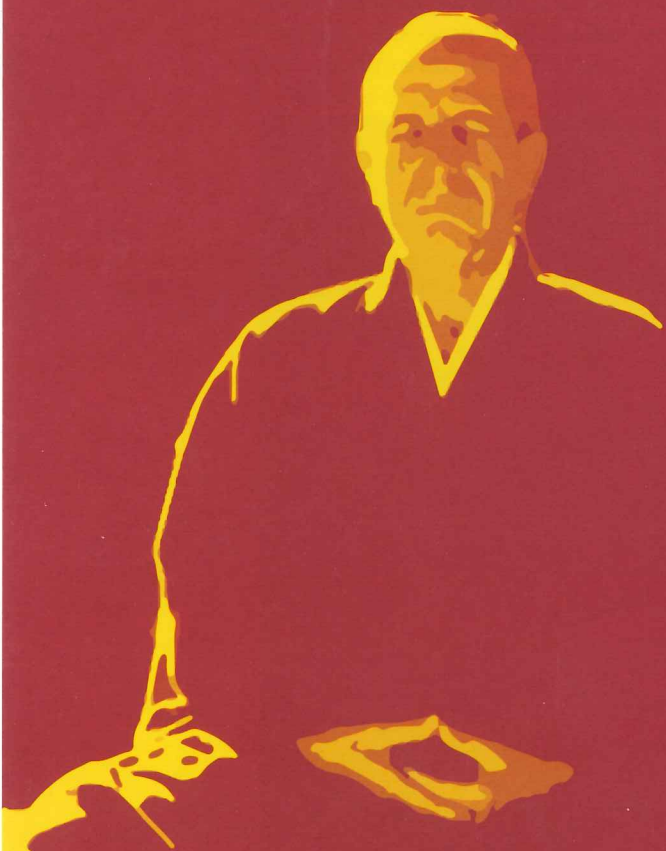
A young man on an electric unicycle glided past banks of sun-splashed daffodils. Ludwig sipped a double espresso. Leo was alternating a kumquat smoothie with marshmallow macaroons.

HE SAID, "SO STING WANTED to do a retrospective CD for charity – this was back when CDs were a thing – but Stewart and Andy had other gigs, so Sting, he recorded a bunch of their old songs by himself, faking their parts and overdubbing." Ludwig replied, "If you say 'He do The Police in different voices', I will probably hit you." Leo grinned, "Wouldn't think of it."

A silver-haired man in white robes appeared in the chair beside Ludwig. He said calmly, "I am quite sure that both T.S. Eliot and Charles Dickens would object as well, but I can check the next time I see them."

Ludwig said, "Since you don't appear to be joking, I assume you are the Taoist immortal that Shamus Dikk asked us to meet here." "Correct. My name is Yi Xing. I am on a mission from the August Personage of Jade and I need your help. Including your brother's. The Jade Emperor made that clear." He looked doubtfully at Leo, who was dunking a macaroon in Ludwig's espresso.

Ludwig nodded, "Shamus vouched for you, so we'll listen. What is this mission?" Yi Xing folded his hands. "My gratitude. To explain, I must go back some centuries, into a different reality. You may find it hard to accept." "Great," exclaimed Leo, "Cue the Twilight Zone theme. It's been getting dull around here."



Freelance prestidigitator **A AALTO** is an acolyte at the Ishisugi Buddhist/Inari shrine. Saff's and the garden of doors are both in Sandy Hill, although Saffron Street is not. Unfortunately, Aalto doesn't have a jade key. "He do the police in different voices," originally a line from Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, was the working title for Elliot's *The Waste Land*.

"Very well. In the Lotus Sutra is the story of Ryūnyo, daughter of the dragon king Sāgara. She achieved enlightenment under the guidance of Bodhisattva Manjushrī and sought Buddhahood. This was opposed by the Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulated, who said that women could not reach that level. Ryūnyo provided a brilliant exposition of the sutras, offered a priceless dragon pearl to the Buddha, changed herself into a man and transcended. She has become one of the religion's great teachers."

"So much is clear from the Sutra. What came after is less well known. In your mundane world, the debate over the ability of women to achieve Buddhahood has swung toward acceptance. In the celestial sphere, the debate continues fiercely, with Ryūnyo and Manjushrī facing off with Wisdom Accumulated and his disciples. As if reflecting this, the pearl has developed a large crack."

"Recently, events above have moved in Ryūnyo's direction. She has prepared a great ritual to confirm women's equality before Buddha. And restore her preferred gender. But to carry it out, she needs the fractured pearl. And no one knows where it is."

Ludwig interjected, "I'm guessing that's where we you – and maybe we – come in." "Yes. The antagonists needed a neutral investigator. Both factions want the pearl, one to revise the original settlement, the other to reverse it by destroying the gem."

"The pearl rested for a long time in a Zen monastery in Kyoto. In the early 1960s of your timeline, the divine disagreement spilled over to the mundane side and it was sent for safekeeping to a monastery in California. After 30 years, though, the earthly agents of Wisdom Accumulated were closing in. In 1999, it vanished. The abbott's assistant, a monk named Jikan, disappeared at the same time. Many believe he has the pearl, but no one knows where he is. The pearl is sheltered by a special glamour in your world. Not even the gods can detect it."

"Then how are we expected to find it?" "Someone offered to help. It is dark, so we can meet him now. He has been dead for almost 300 years, so he prefers the night. If you are willing."

Ludwig shook his head. "Against my better judgement ... but the cause is good. Leo?" "Right on, good cause. I can skip my tuba lesson."

They went out onto Saffron Street and Yi Xing led them west under a dusky moon. Two houses down, he slipped into the forecourt of a darkened residence. They moved around the side onto a garden with a wall of doors on three sides. Doors of all kinds: wooden and metal, ornate and shabby, suburban ordinary and palace fancy, solid and windowed and screened, all set upright on the ground, tightly joined edge to edge.

The immortal approached an unpainted cedar door in a red frame. Leo said, "That door goes nowhere except maybe into the parking lot next door." Yi Xing replied, "My jade key may help." Pulling a small object from the pouch at his belt, he touched it to the knob. The door opened a few inches. The cry of cicadas. The immortal pushed it open and went through. Ludwig squared his shoulders and followed. So did Leo, tripping over the sill.

They stood before an oriental temple, its white walls and steep black-tiled roofs half-hidden among trees. "Sengakuji, in Tokyo," said Yi Xing. Leo said, "Very funny, Scotty, now beam down my

clothes!" The immortal turned to Ludwig. "Does your brother often make incomprehensible cultural references?" "Constantly. Just don't get him started on Leonard Cohen – his latest obsession."

The immortal led them to a stone-paved courtyard enclosed by a low wooden wall with tens of identical gravestones around its inner face. "Here since the 18th century lie buried the bodies of the 47 loyal Samurai who avenged the execution of their master, Daimyo Asano of Ako, by invading the mansion of his accuser, Lord Kira, cutting off his head and delivering it to their master's grave. They did not try to evade capture. Many Samurai of the day applauded their loyalty but the Shogun made them commit seppuku, which they did without demur. All except one, the young Terasaka Kichiemon, who was either sent back to report to Asano's family in Ako before the rest surrendered or cut and ran. Curiously, he was not prosecuted by the Shogun when he did surface, nor allowed to commit seppuku."

"Whatever the story behind the separation from his 46 sworn brothers, it must have been serious. They rest in peace, but he has haunted this temple since his death in 1747. He is the one who made contact with word he had news of the pearl."

He pulled a small stick from his belt-pouch and stuck it in a stone bowl of fine sand. "Incense," he said. "It calls the spirits." He touched a finger to the top of the stick and it started to smoke. "I invoke you, Terasaka Kichiemon. We are here. The fractured pearl must be returned."

A ghostly form took shape under the eaves. A spirit in ragged clothes of another time. His hair was long, face lined, eyes mournful. He approached sweeping the path with a straw broom. "My lord, I report for duty. May my service be accepted." The immortal replied, "You have served well these many years, guarding the graves of your comrades, whose loyalty is legendary." The ghost flinched. Yi Xing went on, "Now you may be able to help us find the dragon's pearl. You will not go unrewarded."

"There is only one reward I seek, which no-one can grant me. But I gladly help a just cause. A few years ago as the living count it, I was visited by a tall Zen monk from another house. He said he was the guardian of a magical pearl, one that must stay hidden. He was not worried it would be found by the unworthy. But he was dying and had to leave a trail for the gem's rightful finders when the right time came. I would know that time when a crane flew across the full moon at sunset, and I could summon the pearl's finders by burning sandalwood and cinnamon in the incense bowl under that same moon. This all happened three days ago."

He pulled a small scroll from his rags. "Here is the monk's last message." He handed it to the immortal, who bowed, unrolled the scroll, frowned and handed it to Ludwig. "We have clearly reached the bend in the road where your navigation is required. What do you make of this?"

Ludwig examined it and said, "It is a cypher, a simple number-for-letter substitution. The first column here seems to be song lyrics. I would guess the number-sequences in the second column are the related song titles. Filling in the blanks should give you the number-letter correspondences, which you use in the message above. The bad news is I have no idea on the source of the lyrics."

Leo looked over his shoulder. "No problem, bro. They're all from Leonard Cohen's albums." Yi Xing looked at him appraisingly. Ludwig asked Leo to spell out the titles. Soon they had deciphered the message.

"Ok," said Ludwig. "We need to go to the monastery Jikan left 25 years ago. Can you get us there, Yi Xing?" "Of course." Thanking the ghost, they returned to the garden. Yi Xing crossed to a door of rough salt-stained planks and opened it with his jade key. Soon they stood in a large but austere Buddhist hall, facing a large but austere abbot in saffron robes. "The story of the pearl was handed down by my predecessor, who was Jikan's abbot. I am afraid you will be disappointed. Jikan's room has been searched many times. Including by a group of celestial beings I have no desire to meet again in this life or the next."

He showed them into a small cell. "It has been left untouched since Jikan's departure, by the old abbot's orders and mine." The room was panelled with pale wood, one panel painted with the words "Make me one with everything". The floor was covered in tightly woven straw mats. Worktables held numerous religious texts, three small stone Buddhas, a wooden mallet, and a bowl of white sand. From a wooden rack under the window hung three bells of what had been five; the others lay on the floor. Yi Xing nodded at Ludwig. "Go ahead."

Ludwig picked up the mallet and struck the three bells. Their soft notes lingered. He approached the painted panel and put his hand on the final word. He spoke the last line of Jikan's message. The panel cracked under his hand and pulled back on both sides. A brilliant light filled the room. On a deep red cushion rested a giant pearl, its lustre rich, one side marred by a jagged scar. Yi Xing picked it up reverently. "We would best deliver this to the Bodhisattva before it gathers much celestial attention. We will not need the garden. The pearl knows where to go." He scattered sand from the bowl on the gem and California disappeared.

Under their feet was a white sand beach fringed with palms and calm water. Three figures awaiting them in rich robes. In the centre a slender androgynous presence in white. A tall aesthetic man smiled on the left and a huge man scowled on the right. Leo looked at the last of these and muttered, "Geez, he's got more chins than the Taipei phonebook." The corners of Yi Xing's mouth twitched.

The immortal bowed to the figure in the centre. "Celestial brightness, I return your pearl." "Revered immortal, you have our gratitude. Not just for me, although I will be glad to return to my true self, but for all women whose aspiration to Buddhahood has too long been thwarted by what mortals call the patriarchy. Our pleasure will be made known to the August Personage." She took the pearl. It gave a low throbbing sound and the crack healed.

Yi Xing said, "Celestial lady, I present two mortals instrumental in the recovery." Ryūnyo smiled at them. "You have helped right a great wrong. How can I reward you?" Ludwig replied, "The honour of serving you is enough, and the memory of your grace. Besides, as a civil servant I'm not allowed to accept foreign emoluments." Leo put his hand up and said, "Yes, there is something you can do for me." Yi Xing and Ludwig frowned but Ryūnyo put her hand under his chin and searched his face. "Ah yes, I see. I accept your plea."

Not long after, she, the immortal and the brothers were in the moonlit courtyard of the Sengakuji. Yi Xing lit more incense and

invoked Kichiemon. The ragged ghost appeared, leaning on his broom. "The pearl has been returned, my lord? That is good to know. And gracious of you to inform this humble person." The immortal replied, "We are here for more than that." He intoned, "I invoke you, Ōishi Kuranosuke, and your comrades." The ghost fell to his knees and cried out, "No! No!"

From among the gravestones came rows and rows of ghosts, in sparkling lacquer armour of black and red, crested helmets on their heads and swords at their waists. Their leader stepped forward, "Who dares disturb our rest and why? I will have answers or there will be vengeance." Ludwig turned to Leo, "You're up, kid. Knock 'em dead."

Leo started, "Respected samurai. You are famous for your loyalty. And you earned the rep. But one of you got left behind. Kichiemon over there. I don't know what happened..." The samurai leader interjected, "We didn't leave him, he left us when things got tough." "Well maybe he did, but he was a scared kid caught up in a fight with some of the toughest soldiers in the world." Kichiemon was kneeling stiffly on his heels, his face a rigid mask.


Leo continued. "He lived 50 years in disgrace. He died and couldn't rest even then. He wasn't allowed to join you. That's harsh. So he spent centuries guarding your graves instead. You are all about loyalty. He has been loyal to you."

After a pause, Ōishi said, "We never forbade him to join us. Hatred of himself made it so. He felt so unworthy that he couldn't move on."

Leo held up a hand. "Well now he has done something worthy. If he hadn't kept the faith, we would be nowhere. So I am asking you to take him in. And telling Kichiemon it's time." Ryūnyo spoke, "Be it so. Pride and regret are two of the toughest barriers to enlightenment."

Ōishi rolled his shoulders and strode over to the kneeling figure. "All right, enough talk. Are you ready, Terasaka Kichiemon? If so, stand up and follow me. We need to get you some decent armour." Kichiemon rose, walked over to the Samurai and bowed. They bowed back.

Yi Xing and Ryūnyo vanished to their celestial destinations. As the brothers reached the door back into the garden, Leo turned to Ludwig. "Just for the record, how was I supposed to knock 'em dead? A bit late, no?"

Can you can you duplicate the brothers' feat and provide the text for Jikan's enciphered message? Send your answer to boutdepapier@pafso-apase.com. **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 December 1, 2023. Not necessary for winning, but can you also name the 10 song titles? And who was Jikan anyway? 

21	2	16	26	12	3	17	11	6	17	5	3	6	4	15	16	5	15	1	13	21					
2	6	4	4	21	13	15	6	12	22	16	26	5	6	3	4	22	6	3	25	21	2	16			
1	16	24	24	4	21	2	5	21	4	21	6	24	24	10	5	3	22	6	3	25	4	5	19		
21	2	16	22	16	6	4	5	10	22	5	10	17	5	10	22	5	10	17	6	3					
16	8	16	22	19	21	2	6	3	25	21	2	5	21	4	2	12	20	21	2	16	24	6	25	2	21
25	16	21	4	6	3																				

LYRICS

Like a drunk in a midnight choir, I have tried
in my way to be free.

So come, my friends, be not afraid, we are so
lightly here; it is in love that we are made; in love
we disappear.

Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin, dance
me through the panic till I'm gathered safely in.

You'd been to the station to meet every train
and you came home without Lili Marlene.

I'm guided by a signal in the heavens, I'm guided
by this birthmark on my skin, I'm guided by the
beauty of our weapons.

Now I've heard there was a secret chord that
David played, and it pleased the Lord.

If your life is a leaf that the seasons tear off
and condemn, they will bind you with love that
is graceful and green as a stem.

It's time that we began to laugh and cry and
cry and laugh about it all again.

And she feeds you tea and oranges that come
all the way from China.

Si tu vois mon pays, mon pays malheureux,
va dire à mes amis que je me souviens d'eux.

TITLES

1 6 22 15 12 3 21 2 16 20 6 22 16

1 12 12 25 6 16 4 21 22 16 16 21

15 5 3 10 16 26 16 21 12 21 2 16
16 3 15 12 23 24 12 8 16

23 5 26 12 13 4 1 24 13 16
22 5 6 3 10 12 5 21

23 6 22 4 21 20 16 21 5 17 16
26 5 3 2 5 21 21 5 3

2 5 24 24 16 24 13 11 5 2

4 6 4 21 16 22 4 12 23 26 16 22 10 19

4 12 24 12 3 25 26 5 22 6 5 3 3 16

4 13 9 5 3 3 16

13 3 10 5 3 5 15 6 16 3 16 22 22 5 3 21

RAGNARÖK ON THE RIDEAU

Answers

The Old Norse phrase with which Felix dismissed Odin was “Fara Heil Ok Vel”, a formal goodbye which means “Farewell and Prosper” (although you don’t need the translation for the answer). A Aalto thought of using “Fara Fra”, which means the blunter “Back off” but decided Odin wouldn’t have liked it. The full chart is given below:

1	V	A	N	I	T	Y	F	A	I	R				
2	P	A	R	I	S	M	A	T	C	H				
3				W	I	R	E	D						
4	L	A	C	T	U	A	L	I	T	É				
5						H	A	R	P	E	R	S		
6			C	H	A	T	E	L	A	I	N	E		
7			R	O	L	L	I	N	G	S	T	O	N	E
8	T	H	E	W	A	L	R	U	S					
9			E	C	O	N	O	M	I	S	T			
10	N	E	W	Y	O	R	K	E	R					
11		D	I	S	C	O	V	E	R					
12	D	E	R	S	P	I	E	G	E	L				
13			M	A	C	L	E	A	N	S				

As some readers will remember, “Great Balls of Fire” was the signature song of the live-wire rocker Jerry Lee Lewis and GEODE’s signoff is the chorus. Lewis died in October 2022, after the puzzle was published. The Cup is named after Scott Abbott and Chris Haney, the two Canadians who invented Trivial Pursuit. A lot of the historical references in the puzzle are real, including among others “glisters”, the debate over who wrote Shakespeare, Bishop Berkeley’s chair and Sartre’s coffee (the philosophical point at least).

Winner

Congratulations, once again, to **Julia Drew-Watt**.

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