

bout de papier



Vol. 24, No. 4

A "Forgotten Peace" Rediscovered:

**Q&A with
Michael Small**

**La musique
canadienne au
milieu du monde**

par Denise Simard-Lapointe



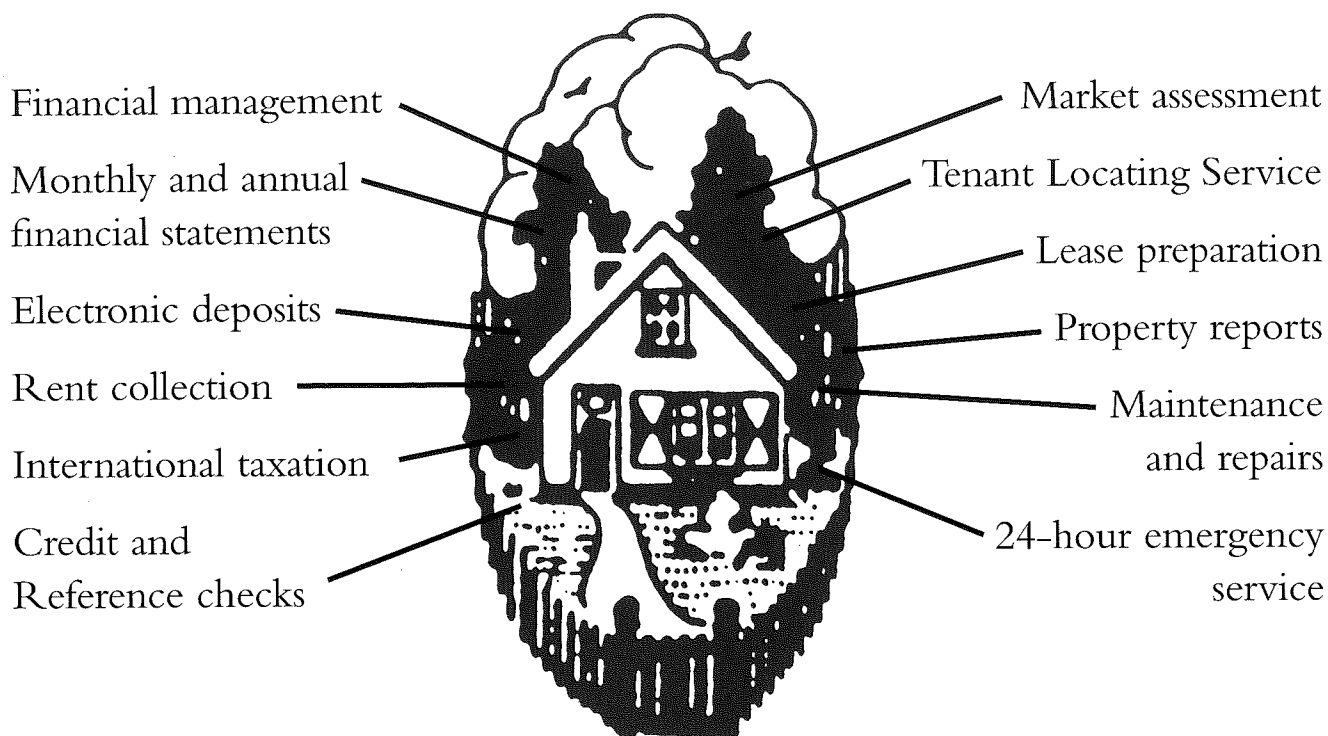
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Le magazine canadien de la diplomatie et du service extérieur



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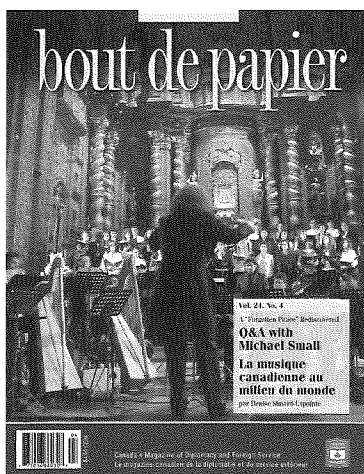
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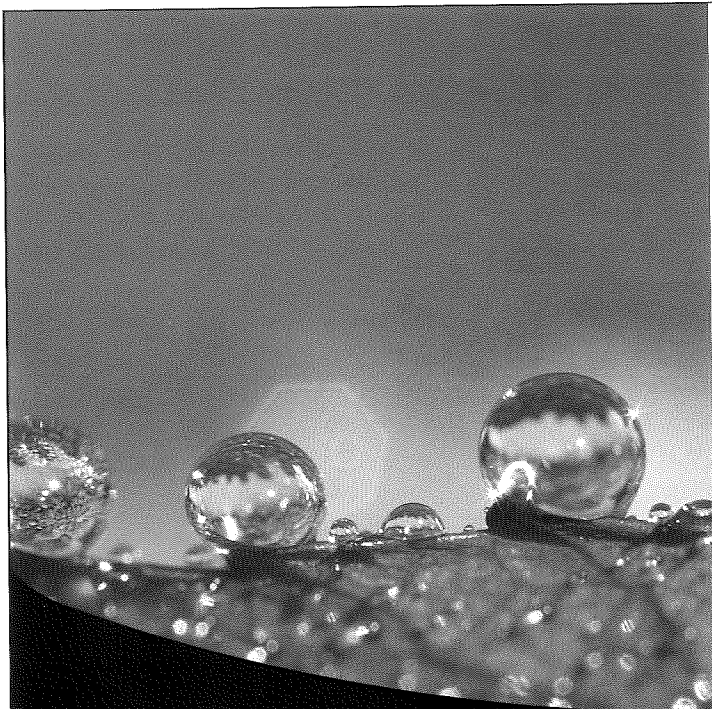


COUVERTURE / COVER:

Denise Simard-Lapointe anime la messe québécoise de Pierick Houdy à l'église jésuite de Quito (1604), que le prince Charles a récemment qualifiée de l'une des plus belles églises au monde. / Denise Simard-Lapointe conducting the Quebec Mass of Pierick Houdy at the Jesuit Church of Quito (1604). That church was qualified recently by Prince Charles as one of the most beautiful churches on Earth.

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While we deal with the shock of the earthquake in Haiti, we also must deal with a more symbolic *temblor* which rumbled through the Foreign Service when PAFSO member Richard Colvin spoke to Parliament about the alleged abuse of Afghan prisoners. In the aftermath, PAFSO issued a bulletin expressing deep concern for the "public, personal attacks on one of its members." Former Ambassadors followed suit with an open letter that warned against "creating a climate in which officers may be more inclined to report what they believe headquarters wants to hear rather than facts and perceptions deemed unpalatable." Against the backdrop of a prorogued Parliament, the debate has broadened to encompass the Public Service as a whole. The Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen's contends that principles of accountability have become deeply muddled as Canada drifts from Westminster rules to a US-style politicized public service. Some earthquakes are deceptive, leaving an edifice intact but with cracks running through its foundations; it seems that ours needs a thorough inspection.

Dans ce numéro, nous poursuivons le thème de « réinventer la diplomatie canadienne » par un synopsis de Daryl Copeland du Munk Centre à l'Université de Toronto. Lors d'une rencontre casse-croûte de l'APASE, il a fait valoir que nous devrions sortir de nos bureaux et aller se salir les mains sur le terrain. Il s'agit d'une question délicate : établir l'équilibre entre l'idéalisme de la prise de risques personnels pour la paix et la réalité des prises d'otages (entre autres choses) qui l'accompagne. Michael Small, ancien président de l'APASE, nous rappelle que, bien que l'exercice de la diplomatie puisse changer, les problèmes peuvent demeurer obstinément les mêmes. Dans son nouveau livre, *A Forgotten Peace: Mediation at Niagara Falls, 1914*, il dévoile un chapitre inconnu de l'histoire canadienne, américaine et mexicaine. Pour les observateurs de l'Amérique Latine, il est remarquable combien les événements de 1914 ressemblent à ceux qui se déroulent à l'heure actuelle au Honduras.

We also toast two spouses. Denise Simard-Lapointe in Ecuador recounts her extraordinary adventures as the guest

conductor of an "orquesta andino." She melds Andean talent with Canadian scores to produce music for the ears of all those who celebrate cultural diplomacy. Bravo Maestro! Mary Taylor offers a generous slice of official life in "Difficult Dinners." Married to a former Under-Secretary at DFAIT, Mary ran the gamut of hospitality from the spare cupboards of a junior diplomat's pantry in Delhi to the culinary rigours of Moscow and banquets for 150 in our gilded residence in Tokyo. Talent and wisdom in every canapé ...

Hector Mackenzie et Paulette Dozois ont déniché de nouveaux trésors dans les archives. Les lettres de Frank Pickersgill avant sa capture par les Nazis en France font état de la « sinistre inactivité » de la fausse guerre; bien pire devait ensuite survenir, notamment sa propre mort brutale. Remontant plus loin encore dans le temps, Roger Lucy nous parle de Théodoric le Grand, roi des Ostrogoths et successeur d'empereurs. David Edwards partage ses « vacances » dans l'ombre de la guerre en Afrique occidentale, et A Aalto nous offre un autre casse-tête pour stimuler les neurones.

No issue is complete without a few book reviews. Gar Pardy applauds General Rick Hillier for publishing *A Soldier First* on retirement, but laments that he does not reveal his own role in getting Canada into Afghanistan. Kurt Jensen delves into a new tome on the US intelligence service, *The Secret Sentry*, and finds transparency in murky waters. Personal passages are marked with warm salutes to the late Kenneth Williamson, Don Collier, and Janet Graham whose journeys ended too soon.

Le présent numéro marque un autre passage, la rédaction passant d'un vétéran de l'Amérique Latine à un autre. Les deux partagent la même vision pour **bout** : célébrer l'aspect humain de notre profession et engager lecteurs et lectrices dans une discussion réfléchie sur des questions de fond et d'ordre professionnel. Pour atteindre cet objectif, membres et amis devront mettre la main au clavier; vous pourriez être le prochain ou la prochaine sur la liste! Bonne lecture.

Harold Hickman and Stuart Hughes

Testimony of a Courageous

A Distinct

Readers of **bout de papier** will recall Georges Vanier's report of his visit to Buchenwald in April 1945, which was published in Volume 21, No. 2 (Spring 2005). One of the reasons for Vanier's mission had been to ascertain the fate of three Canadians — Frank Pickersgill, Ken Macalister and Guy Sabourin — who were among those Allied agents who had been parachuted into Nazi-occupied France in an effort to assist the French resistance. Vanier's grim finding was that all had been barbarously executed by their captors after lengthy imprisonment and torture. We know much more about the life of Frank Pickersgill than we do about his colleagues, as Frank was a prolific writer of letters and articles, which his family and friends have preserved. As well, a few survivors of the horrors of Buchenwald have attested to his extraordinary valour, as well as his remarkable spirit and fellowship when confronting the evils of Nazi Germany and its perverse talent for cruelty. These various recollections attest to Frank's love of France, his hatred for the German regime and his determination to employ his intelligence, his linguistic skills and his physical strength to confront the enemy personally and directly. In recognition of his courage and commitment, Pickersgill was posthumously awarded the Cross of a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour by the Government of France as "an obligation of gratitude for one of its best friends."

Pickersgill's letters home from Europe, before and during the Second World War, as well as an extract from a proposed book on France's first year of war (the first three paragraphs of which are identical to those in the

document below, though entitled "Cloudburst" in that version), have been published in two books by George H. Ford: *The Pickersgill Letters*, written by Frank Pickersgill during the period 1934–1943 and edited with a *Memoir by George H. Ford* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1948); *The Making of a Secret Agent, Letters of 1934-1943*, written by Frank Pickersgill and edited with a memoir by George H. Ford (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978). More recently, Jonathan F. Vance has drawn on these sources and others to convey the heroism of Pickersgill and Macalister in *Unlikely Soldiers: How Two Canadians Fought the Secret War Against Nazi Occupation*. More so than Ford's books, Vance's account intertwines the fate of these two Canadians (and others who attempted to assist French resistance to Nazi domination of Europe) to the failure of the Special Operations Executive in the United Kingdom to appreciate that key networks had been compromised and were effectively controlled by the Germans, thus dooming the SOE operatives (as well as their contacts in France) and ultimately imperiling the purposes of their work.

The narrative reprinted below was itself undated but attached to a note dated 15 April 1940 from the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, O.D. Skelton, to senior staff (Laurent Beaudry, John Read, Hugh Keenleyside and Norman Robertson). Skelton noted that he had written to Georges Vanier (then Canada's Minister to France) asking him, along with Scott Macdonald (then Counsellor in the Canadian Legation) and Pierre Dupuy (then First Secretary in that

Friend:

Perspective on the “Phoney War” in France

mission) to examine Pickersgill orally on his knowledge of French and possibly also to arrange for a test to be administered in London, presumably for admission to Canada's foreign service. Skelton undoubtedly received the manuscript from Frank's elder brother Jack, nominally a foreign service officer but already serving in the prime minister's office. That test never took place, as Frank Pickersgill was interned for two years in the wake of France's defeat before he escaped and made his way to England. As the narratives cited above indicate, Frank was offered safer options (including employment in Ottawa) which he rejected, in spite of entreaties from his family, in favour of the perilous service which he undertook. His love of France, as well as his appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses, are shown in this document, which may be found at Library and Archives Canada in the records of the Department of External Affairs (RG 25), Volume 2961, file 36. **bout de papier** is indebted to Paulette Dozois, a skilled and dedicated archivist who specializes in the records of DFAIT and its predecessors at LAC, for locating this document and for assisting in its editing for publication. We would also like to express our profound appreciation and gratitude for the helpfulness and generosity of Alan Pickersgill, Frank's nephew, who provided **bout de papier** with the photograph of his uncle which is reproduced here with his kind permission.

Paulette Dozois and Hector Mackenzie

War of Nerves

Paris, September 1, 1939: It was three o'clock in the afternoon when I got into the Gare de Lyon on the Simplon Express. I was a sort of Polish refugee. I had left Warsaw six days before. I had borrowed and begged a weary journey through Roumania back to France. Three days on the train from Bucharest, three days without news of the war that was being prepared in Europe. The train was a buzzing hive of wild rumours of every sort, ending up, toward the French-Swiss frontier, with stories of Polish capitulation and a general settlement, stories which no one quite believed but which were nevertheless listened to with that mixture of relief and alarm, hope and shame about one's own hope, which should by now be familiar to all followers of European crises.

It was a relief to be coming back to Paris, after the past turbulent months in Central Europe, and I was looking forward to seeing my friends, revisiting my favourite cafes and so on. In fact it was like coming home. I jumped out of the train into a subway. There the shock met me. Still I hadn't seen any newspapers. But the subway, crowded worse than a sardine tin, was as dismal as a funeral home. I was unnerved from several sleepless nights and expected more from Paris than this inexpressible gloom oozing up out of the subway's heat. I finally managed to look over a man's shoulder and read the newspaper headlines. Germany had invaded Poland, the Franco-British declaration of war would be a matter of days, or hours.

The subway got too much for me. I struggled out of it with my luggage and piled myself into a bus.

There were crowds everywhere, terrific crowds. Never before had I seen crowds completely silent. Some people were already carrying gas-masks. They knotted up round the posters proclaiming general mobilization, "provisions for three days including knife, fork, spoon, tin cup, tin plate etc., etc." They were reading the proclamations over and over, as though expecting them to change. Two people got off the bus to be sick. I was afraid I was going to be the third. People were unusually kindly and careful about not getting in each other's way or bumping into each other. I was sore all over, mentally, and felt afraid to touch anything or anybody for fear that I would yell; the cautious, considerate way in which people avoided each other and kept their voices down suggested that I was by no means alone in this feeling.

[up to this point, this text corresponds to "Cloudburst" — that manuscript is more detailed but less personal than what follows]

The next two days of waiting for what everyone knew was going to happen, passed like two years in the blazing heat. The extraordinary severity, harshness and violence of the regulations about keeping windows and shutters closed can be contrasted with the later laxness in these matters, as an example of the thunderstorm atmosphere of foreboding which was even working on the official nerves.

When the war was declared it was almost a relief. We heard the announcement of the British declaration of war in the morning; at five in the afternoon the sound of the "Marseillaise," penetrating to the street from somebody's radio, was the sign of the French entry into the general massacre. That "Marseillaise" was not being repeated in the streets, nor were they singing Tipperary or anything else. There was more than tragedy about the Parisians' faces that day; it was vaguer than tragedy. They all looked as though they had been hit by a blunt instrument.

And automatically I sent out postcards to all my friends to find out their whereabouts, when they would be mobilized, and what they would be

doing. Huddling together, really: I wanted to find the people I knew, who were suffering or going to suffer, and huddle with them.

You cannot keep a critical sense when your main immediate interest in life is finding others of your kind and crowding up miserably against them. The war had started, and with it a national solidarity which could not be called chauvinism, war psychosis or any other of the pet names used to cover these mass sentiments. Nobody was psychopathic, nobody hated the Germans because nobody was even thinking about the Germans. It was the thing that had cracked down on them, on the nape of the neck, pulverizing the whole scheme of their various existences, which was occupying their minds, and that thing was impersonal, was War, and had nothing in particular to do with Germans or with any other given group of people. So they were shoved together by the same instinct which was pushing me toward the people I knew.

For this reason, during those first days of the war no one questioned anything that was going on. Censorship, conduct of the war, reasons for going into the war, all were accepted as right, good and inevitable, the effort to think otherwise under the nervous strain of what had happened and was (we thought) going to happen was too great, it would have made us yell. Just like touching something or talking too loud that first day in the bus.

I found a friend of mine, who had long been a strong supporter of Communism and of Soviet Russia. He was going to be mobilized in a few days. He was, like me, like everyone, utterly blank on the subject of politics. He was suffering a violent revulsion from his former political views. Why? Because of the war. Even the out-and-out Communists were under the general strain and were, in the main, accepting the situation like everyone else without a murmur. No one thought about anything but the immediate fact of war; like a sort of horrible object it obsessed the mind of everyone, without any relation to its causes or possible outcome.

It is strange how the moral effects of the first shock differ from the moral effects of the pain which succeeds it. "Solidarity in misery" could be a definition of the French people's attitude during these first weeks. Every second shop closed down, with signs on the doors: "Closed because of general mobilization"; families broken up; thousands thrown out of work because of the enormous disorganization of small businesses; the young people, waiting about to be called up, spending two weeks of "tranquillity" which were like being suspended over the Grand Canyon on a silk thread; every night going to bed wondering if the night would bring general destruction in an aerial bombardment; with all this on their minds how could the French people think of anything but the immediate present? Never was this politically-minded race so utterly indifferent to politics of every sort, or to their ultimate fate, as during those first weeks of war. Automatically one did what one was supposed to; reacted as one was expected to — not through emotional excitement, nor even through strong conviction, but because, what else was there to do?

And the French Premier [Edouard Daladier (1884-1970); Leader of the Radical Party; Prime Minister of France (for the third time) from 10 April 1938 to 21 March 1940; imprisoned 1940-43; deported to Buchenwald, where he remained until the end of the war] made the best radio speeches of his political career those days; speeches whose tone was calculated to harmonize perfectly with the general feeling of devastation: "this war imposed on us," "this utterly futile, horrible and stupid war" — phrases which warmed people to Monsieur Daladier and to the government and to national solidarity more than any amount of band-playing, enthusiasm,

chauvinism, or ideals could have done in a hundred years.

Imagine the Communist leader, Maurice Thorez [(1900-64), Secretary General of the Communist Party of France from 1930 until his death; instrumental in formation of the Popular Front, which governed France from 1936 to 1938;



Frank Pickersgill
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deserted from the French Army and fled to the USSR; sentenced to death *in absentia* for desertion; pardoned in 1944], a deserter three weeks later, writing a passionately patriotic, sincere and tragic letter to the editor of one of the leading Paris morning papers about the middle of September! It happened; even the group which has since broken the "sacred union" of the nation was caught up during these first weeks by the feeling that swept the country, the automatic response to a situation bared of all its implications in the minds of individuals.

The news from the Front denoted a certain activity: there was the battle of the Warndt Forest; there was some progress toward the Siegfried Line; there was the news, changing every day, of the lightning-like advances of the Germans in Poland. This kept up the tension through September.

Then things slackened, people began relaxing. The Polish war came to an end and nothing at all was happening on the western front. Cinemas began reopening, and cafes; we began going out a bit in the evenings. And the renewed activity brought with it a return to critical thinking; people began to connect events together. The war seemed not so terrible after all. The stations were pouring bored evacuees back into Paris every day. Most of the people mobilized found themselves buried in a stationary existence somewhere in the provinces, ten chances to one a long way from the Maginot

Line. New habits of living were being formed, without husbands or fathers or sons, without stable businesses or occupations, sleeping on straw instead of spring mattresses, going about in the dark on the streets at night. They weren't like the old habits and they were tiresome, painful or inconvenient. People could not help thinking about this, too.

Another friend, a "fascicule bleu," which meant that he would not be called up for an indefinite period, had lost his job the first day of the mobilization, because the place where he worked closed down. His "fascicule bleu" prevented him from getting another job; nobody seemed to want a man who was likely to be called up from one day to the next. He had been in the last war. He was over forty years old, had his life arranged, more or less, and he was past the age when it is easy to break out into new channels. He could not get work; was eating into his savings to live; he was frightfully bored and depressed with nothing to do, and the only prospect of change was the day when he would be mobilized. But he had already been in one war, and knew what it was like. Caught between present misery and the future one, he started drinking too much. He had nothing to do any more but hang around bars, anyway. "I got the Croix de Guerre in the last one for blowing a fellow's brains out and taking his machine-gun", he told me. "A nice decent-looking guy, too. I had to shoot him first or he would have shot me. I didn't know what the score was, either, and thought I was being patriotic. It's revolting to think about getting into that again. And what else do you expect me to think about, now that I'm out of work and have nothing to do. When I'm half-drunk I can forget about it."

The drag of a war that is not war has a bad effect on the morale. And people have too much time to think. Anything for a change from this dreary existence, anything at all. So, if you go about listening to conversations in bars, listening to the war-talk of the people who[se] brother has a friend whose nephew is a chauffeur to the cousin of Colonel X in the general staff, at Blank, you will hear that there is going to be a terrific offensive

in the spring. And you will hear that everywhere, where two or three are gathered together in front of aperitives, the one thing taken for granted as an incontrovertible fact is the gigantic spring offensive. Where it will be, and which side it will come from, are questions left unanswered, or very vaguely answered. No hint of this offensive has come out in any newspapers, no amount of logic could produce this offensive as the inevitable or even highly probable terms of a sequence of events. Where, when, does it come from, this sensational news which has no longer any news value but is the common property of every uneducated or half-educated person? It is, clearly, nothing but wishful thinking; anything at all would be preferable to this war as it is; the most obvious alternative is more war, so unthinkingly this bigger and more violent war is imagined into existence.

There is no getting around it: the new habits of life are dismally dreary ones for the vast majority of people. And without any action there is not even any drama or any heroism to compensate for the drag, boredom and disorientation.

Anything would be better than this, the "average man" is inclined to think. A moment's thought shows how wrong he is. It is no doubt a great blessing that the population has, up till now, been spared a really bloody war. But this is far from being a picnic. One wonders whether it is realized elsewhere, just what a strain this waiting about can be on the public's nerves. Everyone is leading a make-shift, temporary sort of life. Of six-million-and-a-half Frenchmen mobilized, only a tiny proportion has seen any action, even any peaceful action such as construction work or what you will. The vast majority fill in their time sitting around their camps and barracks playing cards, go out for a bit of drill, eat and sleep. The people who are not mobilized can no more lead normal, purposeful lives than those who are.

There is no doubt about it, war is a sinister form of inactivity, even when it is war that is no war. ③

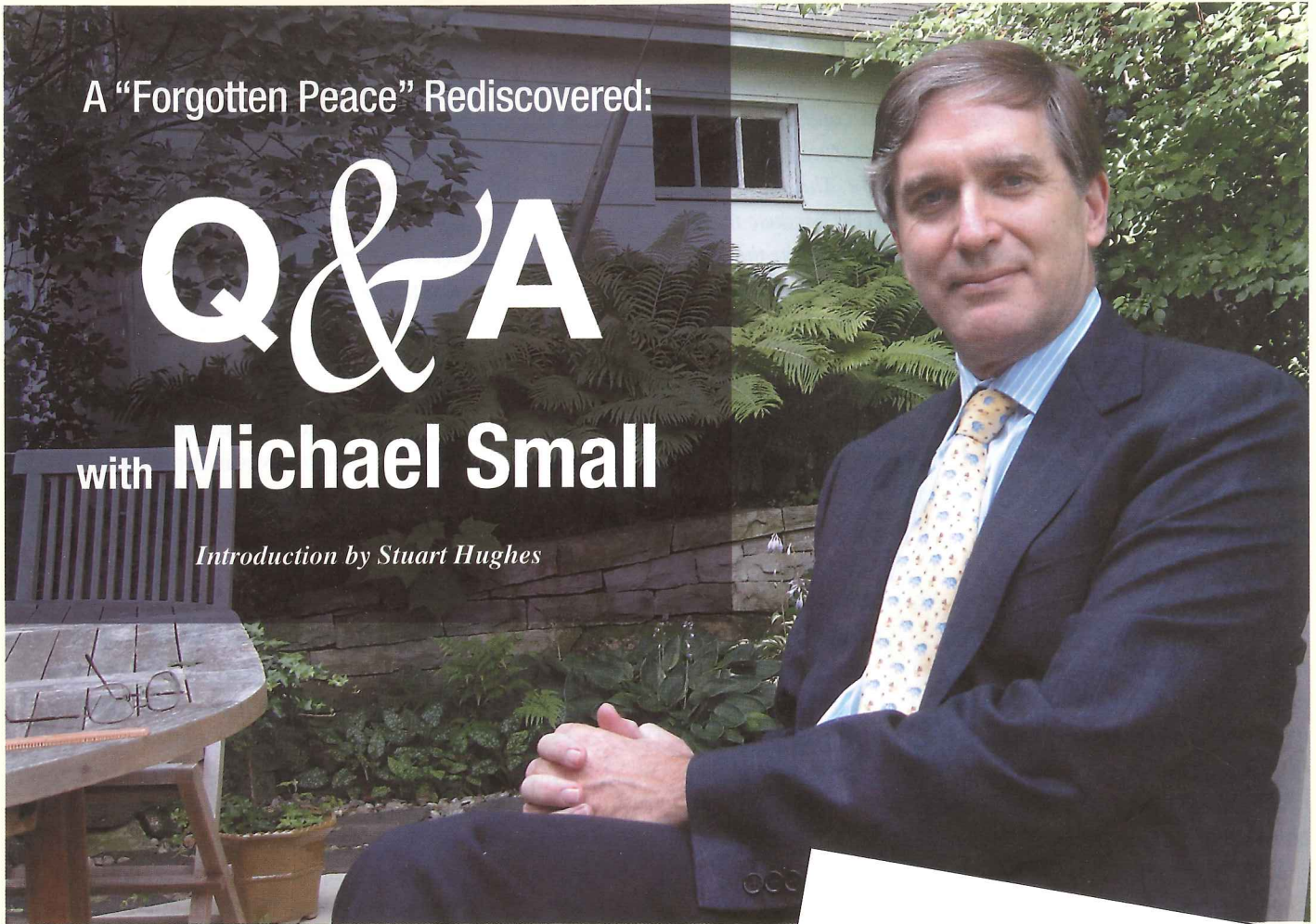
F. H. D. Pickersgill

A "Forgotten Peace" Rediscovered:

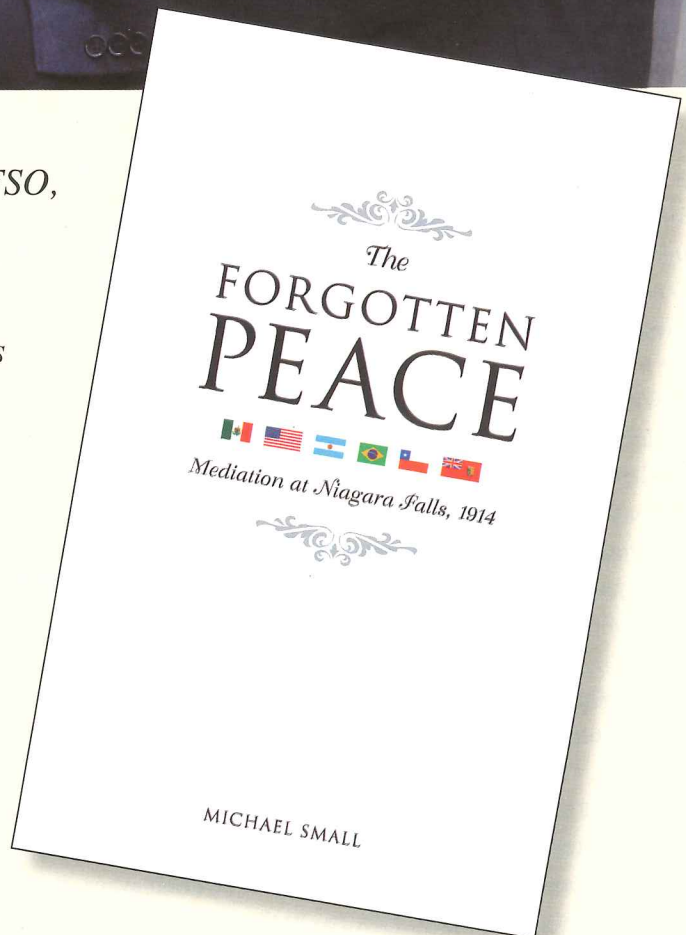
Q&A

with **Michael Small**

Introduction by Stuart Hughes



Michael Small, past President of PAFSO, contributor to **bout de papier** and now a senior officer with DFAIT, has just published a book of interest to a wide cross section of **bout**'s readers: *The Forgotten Peace: Mediation at Niagara Falls, 1914*, The University of Ottawa Press, 2009, 179 pp. It is the product of research first undertaken a few years ago while a fellow at Harvard University (see "A Posting to the People's Republic of Cambridge" in **bout**, Volume 22, No. 2, Autumn 2006), research undertaken to make sense of an almost unknown Canadian footnote in the history of conflict resolution in the Americas.



Some footnote! Although Canada played a modest role in the proceedings as the provider of a venue all could agree on, the issues at stake were anything but modest: US intervention under President Woodrow Wilson in the Mexican Revolution (and American occupation of the port of Veracruz) and South American mediation to help end the war there. The conference was deemed a “failure” in immediate hindsight because the Mexican civil war continued apace — with the results that formed modern Mexico. However, in broader perspective, it was also a seminal moment in the construction of inter-American institutionalism, in peacebuilding in the hemisphere, and marked something of a sea-change in US policy toward the Americas.

For today’s readers, up-to-speed with events in Central America, Michael Small’s account offers a remarkable sense of déjà vu. From the nature of the conflict itself and its underlying causes to well-meaning but often misplaced intentions of the mediators of 1914, one might well be reading about the international community’s attempt to deal with the struggle in Honduras. The parallels in efforts to find common ground in the containment of conflict and in restoring constitutional continuity in Mexico in 1914 and in Honduras today seem so close that one wonders if Michael was prescient or if the nature of politics in much of our hemisphere has changed so little.

Whatever the reality, the book is short, lucid, eminently readable, well-illustrated (great cartoons!), and ultimately a good antidote to facile cynicism about the craft of diplomacy. The fact that Canadians know almost nothing about a conference that took place long ago on our soil suggests that we may still underestimate our potential to promote peace building in this hemisphere and beyond.

bout: What prompted you to study a forgotten conference about a conflict many find obscure?

MS: I first learned about the Niagara Falls Peace Conference in a single paragraph in a book on the Mexican Revolution which I read 16 years ago while studying Spanish at Cuernavaca, just before starting a posting to Mexico. At the time, I wondered what the good citizens of Niagara Falls in 1914 would have

made of South American diplomats and Mexican and American envoys, all in top hats, conferring in a Canadian resort hotel. So, 10 years later, when I had the time and the access to an outstanding research library at Harvard, I began doing a little digging to see what I could find. I was given a lead to look up Volume XVIII of the Proceedings of the Buffalo Historical Society, published in 1914, entitled *Peace Episodes on the Niagara*. Not exactly a best seller — but Harvard had it on their shelves and to judge by the slip, I was the first person to have checked it out in over 50 years. It contained a detailed contemporary account of the Conference, written by a local Buffalo historian using newspaper accounts as his sources.

A little more browsing on the shelves indicated that the treatment of the Conference in the secondary literature on the Mexican Revolution since had been cursory at best; no one had written a full length analysis of it in English since 1914; and there was absolutely nothing from a Canadian perspective. So, I knew there was an untold story to tell.

As I read more deeply into contemporary newspapers and diplomatic archives, I realized what a big event this was at the time. The Mexican Revolution was as familiar and important to North American newspaper readers in 1914 as the conflicts in Iraq or Afghanistan are to us today. If anything, the reading

public of 1914 was much more knowledgeable than the public of today: for example, American cartoonists would frequently draw parodies of the leading figures in the Mexican conflict and expect their readers to recognize them as readily as American politicians. As for the peace conference itself, 150 journalists covered the conference for papers from all over North America. I found it amazing that an event like this — certainly unprecedented in Canadian history — could have so completely dropped out of historical memory.

Beyond my curiosity in unearthing the tale of the “Forgotten Peace,” I had a few other personal reasons for choosing the topic. I had just completed four postings in Latin America, including in Mexico and Cuba, and had periodically encountered suggestions that Canada could or should somehow mediate or mitigate tensions between the United States and Latin America. So, that drew me to the topic. As well, the year that I did the research, I was living in the United States in the first months after the Iraq war, while the United States was



still the occupying power. I went to every talk I could find on American intervention in Iraq, which was a subject of intense debate. That unfolding morality play was always a mental point of comparison for me in writing this story, since I was dealing with an earlier attempt by a very different President — Woodrow Wilson — to carry out in Mexico exactly what today would be called “regime change.”

Finally, as a professional diplomat, I thought I could bring something to the research and writing of this story that a professional historian might not. I kept my eye all the time on the three South American mediators who convened the conference, and cross-referenced what they were doing with what the American and Mexican envoys and their masters were doing — to judge by the diplomatic archives which I also found at Harvard. The advantage of course of writing history is that you have hindsight. In this case, I tried to use that to understand why the mediators succeeded at first and why they ultimately failed, while remaining sympathetic all the time to their attempt.

bout: You argue, sometimes by implication, that the Niagara conference was a milestone in the evolution of today’s inter-American system — why? how?

MS: It was certainly heralded by many commentators at the time as a new high-water mark in inter-American diplomacy. There had been a growing “pan-American movement” over the preceding 20 years to promote a culture of peaceful resolution of disputes in the Hemisphere — something that was very new for diplomacy, both in Europe and in the Americas. That movement resulted in the founding of the Pan-American Union in 1910 — the precursor organization to the Organization of American States (OAS). The mediators from the three “ABC” countries, Argentina, Brazil and Chile, who convened the Conference, were their countries’ representatives to the Pan-American Union. So the mediation at Niagara Falls was certainly a precursor to modern day diplomacy within the inter-American system, as it has evolved over the 20th century.

What was striking for me, though, was how modern-looking were the goals of the mediation. All sides recognized that while they were formally mediating an inter-state conflict between the United States and Mexico, what they were really doing was trying to constitute a new provisional government within Mexico that could end a civil war. For most of the subsequent decades after 1914, that would have been deemed unacceptable by most members of the OAS — first and foremost by Mexico — on the grounds of external interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. It was not until the beginning of the 1990s, once almost all the states in the Hemisphere had become legitimate elected democracies, that the norms in the inter-American system changed to embrace the defence of democracy

within member states as a core value of the OAS. So, in 1914, the mediators and envoys were trying to negotiate a peace on terms which would have been impossible again until the 1990s. At the same time, when I read how Woodrow Wilson tried to use the Niagara Falls Conference to legitimize his attempt at regime change in Mexico, I understood why so many Latin American states, with Mexico in the vanguard, were so allergic for so long to any proposals to use inter-American institutions to mediate internal political disputes.

bout: There are striking parallels between the conflict to be resolved then and the crisis in Honduras today — as a disinterested observer, in your view what can diplomacy learn from Niagara that we might usefully apply today?

MS: There at least two clear lessons for me. The first is that internal political instability always creates instability for a country’s neighbours. This can happen directly, e.g. through refugee flows, cross-border arms shipments and internal factions seeking external allies — all of which happened in Mexico during its Revolution or in Central America in the 1980s. It could easily happen in any contemporary conflict. Instability also spills over indirectly: the demonstration effect of a democratic government being successfully overthrown in a coup weakens confidence in democracy through the region. And when neighbouring powers intervene in an internal conflict on one side or another, even distant neighbours fear the same thing could happen to them, if their internal order ever broke down. All of these factors were reasons why the leading democratic countries of South America — Argentina, Brazil and Chile — were keen to mediate an end to the American intervention in Mexico in 1914; and equally, why so many member states of OAS were prepared to support aggressive diplomatic intervention in 2009 after the ousting of the elected President of Honduras.

The second lesson is that it is much harder to mediate a conflict if there are no established ground rules for the exercise or an institutional framework which commands some respect from all parties. That did not yet exist in 1914. The Pan-American Union had not yet been given any political teeth, so the three “ABC” countries had to create their own ground rules for the mediation. Disagreement over the rules of the game ultimately led to the failure of the conference. Today, we have a comparatively robust regional political institution in the OAS, with universal adherence to key documents like the Inter-American Democratic Charter. It is easy to take these normative frameworks for granted and minimize their efficacy. But when you look at how much harder it was to carry out peaceful conflict resolution before such norms were entrenched, you appreciate their value. Both of these are simple but profound lessons for diplomacy that are illustrated well by this story.

bout: Only four decades separate Niagara from Pearson's Nobel Peace Prize — are there specific lessons from Niagara for Canada and its diplomats?

MS: I think so. The first is an appreciation of how far we evolved as an independent country with its own capacity for conducting foreign policy in the 20th century. At Niagara Falls in 1914, Canada provided the neutral venue, but Canadians were spectators not actors at the peace conference. By 1957, Lester Pearson was awarded the Nobel Prize, not just for helping to end a specific crisis in Suez, but for creating a whole new international instrument for promoting peace, namely peacekeeping. Today, another 50 years later, we have an even wider set of tools in our tool kit for peace-building: look at all the ways we operate now to build or rebuild institutions in fragile states. However, the one tool that was at the forefront of the story in 1914, in which I think we have not invested as much as we could, is a diplomatic capacity for mediation. Today, this happens more often through unofficial "track two" exercises, compared to formal, state-sponsored conferences like the one at Niagara Falls. But there is a common set of skills in managing both "track one" and "track two" processes which a Foreign Ministry as well-connected as ours, in so many international organizations, would do well to master.

Building this kind of capacity would be a great project to launch the Department's next 100 years.

The second lesson, which should serve to temper the first, is the importance of keeping some sense of perspective while serving as a mediator. I came to the conclusion piecing together this story that the three ABC mediators became too attached to the rules they had set out for the process, and ceased paying enough attention to what was really happening on the ground in Mexico. As a result, the conference started out being highly relevant to the immediate needs of the belligerents, but ended up being a sideshow. It concluded as a formal diplomatic "success," followed by self-congratulatory telegrams all around, which overlooked the failure to achieve any lasting results. This ending seems all too familiar to anyone who has been in this business. The risk of falling into self-serving illusions of greatness is even greater, I think, for middle powers — since they can easily over-estimate their moral authority relative to their actual clout in any given conflict. In this story, Argentina, Brazil and Chile, were acting in the classic middle power role that Canada has often sought to play in resolving modern conflicts. There is a cautionary tale here about perils of middle power diplomacy which future Canadian mediators would do well to learn.

bout: Thank you, Michael. No better place to start learning these lessons than by reading your book. ☺



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La musique canadienne au milieu du monde

par Denise Simard-Lapointe



Denise Simard-Lapointe dirige la fanfare de l'Équateur à l'inauguration de la Semaine du Canada dans ce pays en 2007.

Mais qu'est-ce qu'une épouse d'ambassadeur Canadien peut-elle bien faire pendant son séjour dans un autre pays?

Sa responsabilité et son devoir sont très certainement de représenter au mieux son pays et, idéalement, de le faire en mettant à profit ses talents et ses capacités auprès de la population locale. Infirmière, secrétaire, professeur, scientifique ou musicienne!

À mon arrivée en république d'Équateur, fin juillet 2006, j'ai découvert de nombreuses institutions musicales dans ce pays de l'Amérique équinoxiale et j'ai découvert une puissante tradition musicale construite au fil de presque cinq siècles de fusion culturelle entre la culture hispanique et celles des nombreux groupes indigènes, réalité que l'on interpelle ici par le vocable de « métissage ». On retrouve cette réalité partout dans la quotidienneté, d'abord chez le peuple lui-même, dans leurs manières de vivre, dans l'alimentation, dans l'architecture et dans toutes les formes d'art! Cette caractéristique, longtemps rejetée par la classe dominante, est devenue une véritable source de fierté et même d'identité nationale dans ce pays qui fut, jusqu'en 1534, l'épicentre de l'empire Inca.

Rapidement après mon arrivée, plusieurs de ces institutions m'ont invitée à les rejoindre pour amorcer une collaboration. Je n'aurais pu deviner quelle ampleur cette association prendrait en ces premiers jours de septembre 2006 lors de ma première visite au patron de la fondation du Teatro nacional Sucre (Théâtre national Sucre), aux dirigeants du Brass Band de l'Équateur, ni lors de mes premières rencontres des directeurs musicaux de l'Orchestre métropolitain de Quito, de l'orchestre provincial de Pichincha (province où se trouve la capitale nationale) ou encore des orchestres symphoniques de Guayaquil (métropole industrielle du pays de 4,5 M d'habitants) et de Cuenca

(fabuleuse ville du centre du pays et proclamée patrimoine de l'humanité tout comme la capitale Quito).

Et que dire de ma découverte de ce trésor national, l'Orchestre national des instruments andins (OIA), modelé sur la structure d'un petit orchestre symphonique mais dont chacune des sections est assumée par la panoplie formidablement diversifiée des instruments andins, à vents, à cordes et percussions. Rien de folklorique, presque tous les musiciens de cet orchestre sont de véritables virtuoses et il comporte un nombre impressionnant de compositeurs et arrangeurs. Aucun autre orchestre de cette envergure n'existe ailleurs dans les autres pays Andins. Orchestre fondé il y a 20 ans par Patricio Mantilla Ortega, j'ai eu l'honneur de devenir la première directrice musicale invitée de ce joyau musical et qui plus est, orchestre composé que par des hommes! Il fallait voir leur réaction la première fois que je suis montée sur leur podium. Nous avons tricoté depuis, un lien professionnel et amical d'une grande profondeur. Je n'en suis pas peu fière! Surtout, j'ai travaillé main dans la main avec Patricio. J'ai dirigé la grande majorité des nombreux concerts avec cette formation en alternance avec son directeur-fondateur, produisant ainsi des concerts diversifiés en style et en performance.

En deux ans et demie de travail, j'ai monté et dirigé 38 concerts avec ces 6 orchestres (incluant 4 formations chorales du pays) dans 8 villes dont 16 théâtres et grandes places. Mon lieu de résidence plus permanent fut et demeure encore le Théâtre national Sucre où son directeur général et mon ami, le maestro Julio Bueno, m'accueille et me fait partager les saisons musicales avec les directeurs Jorge Oviedo et Patricio Mantilla Ortega.



Le Théâtre national Sucre de Quito, 1880 — complètement restauré en 2003 — fait partie du patrimoine mondial.

Et le Canada dans tout cela?

Sur ces 38 concerts réalisés dans ce pays, j'ai eu le grand privilège d'y introduire un très grand nombre d'œuvres de compositeurs du Canada grâce à une collaboration de Mireille Gagné, directrice du Centre de musique canadienne au Québec et plusieurs de ses collègues d'ailleurs au Canada. Mon partenariat avec Mireille remonte au temps de mes activités orchestrales et chorales à Paris entre 1994 et 1998. Ceci nous a conduit à diffuser pour la première fois en Amérique latine une panoplie d'œuvres remarquables de compositeurs canadiens provenant d'un océan à l'autre, de l'émouvante Jean Coulthard jusqu'au plus diversifié Scott MacMillan en passant par la puissante profondeur de Steven Gellman et la référence absolue de Guillaume Couture.

J'ai dirigé ce concert singulier avec l'Orchestre Symphonique de Guayaquil, intitulé « 100 ans de musique symphonique du Canada », presque le jour même de la célébration du centenaire de la naissance de Jean Coulthard. Ce très bel orchestre symphonique, en tournée européenne en ce début 2009, m'a rendu la « Mosaïque canadienne » de la grande dame de la musique de Vancouver de manière fine et émouvante. Des critiques musicales nous ont déclaré avoir eu l'impression, en écoutant cet œuvre, d'un survol du Canada à dos de bernaches. Étudiants et étudiantes en musique du Canada, écoutez et apprenez les œuvres de la grande Jean Coulthard. Et surtout, diffusez-les!

J'ai passé toute ma carrière à monter et à diriger des orchestres de jeunes ainsi que de nombreuses chorales sur plusieurs continents. Je me suis concentrée sur la formation des jeunes dans un apprentissage bien discipliné de la musique. Sur ce plan, je m'affiche dans l'esprit de la continuation du travail amorcé par Guillaume Couture au XIX^{ème} siècle au Québec. D'ailleurs, l'un de mes principaux maîtres de

direction musicale à l'Université d'Ottawa, Miklos Takacs, a fondé en 1982 à Montréal le « Chœur Guillaume Couture ». Diriger « Rêverie » de Couture m'a permis de toucher une corde sensible et commune au romantisme culminant de cette époque formée de valeurs similaires qu'on y retrouvait dans nos deux pays. Les Équatoriens se sont reconnus dans cette fresque symphonique de 1875, magnifique image sonore de l'impressionnisme naissant.

Finir ce tour d'horizon d'un siècle symphonique canadien avec le « Jaya ouverture » du très contemporain Steven Gellman fut une belle démonstration de la grande maturité des compositeurs canadiens hérités d'un grand labeur et d'un long cheminement depuis Couture. Diriger cet œuvre de Gellman comporte un niveau maximum de satisfaction sur tous les plans pour un directeur musical. Cet œuvre va certainement entrer au répertoire des grands ouvrages classiques universels. Tout ce que je peux conseiller aux étudiants et étudiantes au Canada, c'est de faire tout votre possible pour être en contact avec ce formidable compositeur. Profitez de sa présence pour assister à ses cours ou ses ateliers. Cette nouveauté en Équateur a été accueillie avec bonheur tant par les musiciens des orchestres symphoniques de Cuenca et de Guayaquil que par les audiences qui en ont bénéficiée.

Dans chacun des deux concerts avec ces orchestres symphoniques, nous avons toujours également la préoccupation d'offrir à l'auditoire, une sorte de grande fresque du Canada, une image sonore représentative du pays. À Cuenca, j'ai eu l'honneur d'offrir « l'Ouverture canadienne » de la Montréalaise Anne Lauber. Cet œuvre est une fascinante peinture sonore de l'immense diversité canadienne. Elle fait appel, dans cet ouvrage musical, tout comme le fait Coulthard dans sa « Mosaïque », à des évocations du folklore canadien. Musique sensible, bien structurée et magnifiquement intelligente.

Je remercie le Centre de musique canadienne pour avoir facilité l'apport des partitions de ces œuvres ainsi que la généreuse permission donnée par les compositeurs ou leurs héritiers légaux pour me permettre d'introduire cette musique du nord en plein cœur du milieu du monde dans la grande famille des Amériques.

Unir musicalement l'époque baroque Italienne aux Amériques septentrional, austral et équinoxial!

Au début de l'automne 2007, j'ai proposé au directeur général du Théâtre national Sucre d'Équateur de monter avec l'Orchestre national des instruments andins (OIA) les 4 saisons de Vivaldi et les 4 saisons de Piazzolla. Pour ces dernières, nul problème car l'OIA venait d'en proposer de nombreux extraits lors de leur tournée estivale en Allemagne. Mais l'œuvre de Vivaldi, à part une interprétation de courts extraits adaptés voilà quelques années par leur contrebassiste et arrangeur Enrique Sanchez de la Vega, était pleine de défi! Cet œuvre de Vivaldi n'avait jamais été montée dans son intégralité pour instruments andins et de plus, j'insistais que le tout soit joué avec un violoniste solo afin de préserver la couleur mélodique originale.

La partition de Vivaldi a été arrangée par le brillant compositeur et arrangeur Wilson Haro Lopez et celle de Piazzolla par le tout aussi brillant Sanchez de la Vega. Le pari était lancé et accepté par les autorités du Théâtre national. J'ai fait appel au formidable couple de violonistes canadiens David Stewart et Paule Préfontaine de mon *alma mater*, soit la faculté de musique de l'Université d'Ottawa. Ces grands musiciens ont pu intégrer ce projet dans leur horaire folle d'une fin d'année 2007 qui s'enchaînait de suite sur une année 2008 toute aussi active, terminant ici au milieu du monde avant Noël pour se rendre ensuite à Bergen en Norvège et la Chine et le Japon. Essoufflant juste à y penser!

Interpréter les huit saisons de Vivaldi et de Piazzolla a quelque chose de très physique aussi, voire olympique pour les musiciens et les directeurs musicaux. Si son intensité invite l'auditeur au repos, son exécution, elle, vous vide d'énergie comme peu d'autres œuvres le feront. De plus, nos violonistes ont eu à se frotter à la réalité d'une prestation à une altitude de plus de 2 800 mètres. La petite semaine de répétition ne fut pas de trop pour l'adaptation. Et que dire de la fusion de ces sonorités somptueuses.

Denise Simard-Lapointe,
la Directrice musicale



L'OIA est formé de trois grandes familles sonores : les vents, les cordes et les percussions. Tant leurs noms, leurs formes que leurs sonorités sont d'un exotisme total. On retrouve chez les vents des *quenás*, *quenillas*, *pitos*, *flautas de pan*, *rondador*, *pinguillos*, *ocarina*, *palla*, *bocina* et *silbatos* pré-Colombiens, les *zampoñas* et les *trompetas andinas*. Les cordes nous offrent le *charango*, le *bandolin*, le *tiple*, la *guitare*, le *cuatro*, la *contrebasse* et la *harpe diatonique* ou dite *Paraguayenne*. Le tout complété par deux catégories de percussions, l'une dite mineure et l'autre majeure où l'on retrouve le fameux *bombo*, le *redoblante*, *marimba*, *congas*, *bongoes*, *cajon* du Pérou et *bomba* équatorienne. Et de nombreux autres dont les caractéristiques et définitions sont faciles à trouver sur de nombreux sites Internet sous le vocable de « instrumentos andinos ».

Les musiciens de cet orchestre n'ont rien de la sonorité folklorique de ceux que l'on retrouve partout dans les campagnes andines. Orchestre unique au monde, ses quelques 40 membres sont presque tous des virtuoses qui ont poussé très loin la justesse et la maîtrise sonore de leur instruments, donnant ainsi une couleur et une texture étonnante à l'ensemble. Cet orchestre peut interpréter des centaines d'œuvres de grands classiques, de Bach à Villa-Lobos avec une clarté limpide. Mais je dois admettre que le résultat sonore est sans doute celui qui convient le mieux à la texture baroque du type Vivaldi.

Les 14 et 15 décembre 2007, au Théâtre national, les 4 saisons ont été jouées en ordre du printemps jusqu'à l'hiver, en alternance Vivaldi-Piazzolla ainsi que les directeurs musicaux. J'ai monté le Vivaldi et le directeur titulaire de cet orchestre, mon camarade Patricio Mantilla Ortega, s'est chargé du Piazzolla. Chacune des saisons a été introduite par les textes de Georges-Michel Darricades, décrivant chacune des saisons à compter de la poésie de Michel-Ange gravée sur la pierre et celle de Vivaldi imprimée sur la portée musicale. Ces textes ont été lus de la

voix rauque et si chaude de l'ancienne Ministre de l'Éducation d'Équateur, Rosangela Adoum, fille du géant de la littérature équatorienne, Jorge Enrique Adoum.

Ces concerts nous ont véritablement permis de construire un pont temporel musical d'une grande pertinence et intensité ainsi qu'une fusion culturelle sur les quatre points cardinaux. La fougue du jeu de Paule Préfontaine dans Vivaldi alimentait l'élan et l'enthousiasme des instrumentistes du milieu du monde. La gaieté et l'intensité du jeu de David Stewart dans les Piazzolla accrochaient le nerf culturel de l'audience qui se levait debout à la fin de chacune des saisons!

Pas étonnant que de nombreuses personnes nous parlent encore de ce concert singulier qu'ils n'ont pas oublié.

Long parcours du Canada à travers ses compositeurs

Quoi de plus satisfaisant que d'introduire à d'autres personnes quelque chose que l'on admire, une belle sculpture, un tableau de maître, son époux, ses enfants et aussi sa belle maison que l'on a mis des années à construire et à configurer à son goût? Alors, imaginez, offrir à une population étrangère, située à 8 000 kilomètres de votre pays, des dizaines d'œuvres musicales provenant de compositeurs canadiens de Halifax à Vancouver!

Oui, j'ai bel et bien eu ce grand honneur d'offrir ces formidables musiques du nord à des milliers et des milliers d'auditeurs du centre de l'Amérique latine. Cette Amérique équinoxiale, jadis le principal centre de l'empire Inca, cette République d'Équateur si attachée à la musique qu'elle est presque devenue une manière de vivre, une manière de penser ou de se comporter! Dans les dizaines et les dizaines de pays du monde qui me fut donné le plaisir de visiter ou même d'y vivre dans certains cas, je n'ai jamais rencontré un autre endroit comme l'Équateur où l'on retrouve autant de maires, de députés, d'ingénieurs, de médecins, de professeurs ou même un ministre qui tous et toutes s'installent sur une guitare ou autre instrument musical et vous exécutent un air connu ou une chanson de folklore avec un aplomb à vous couper le souffle. Dans une même journée, dans une seule et même province, deux maires et leur Premier ministre nous ont fait chacun l'honneur de nous exécuter une chanson digne des plus belles séductions romantiques. Dans la somptueuse ville andine de Loja, au sud du pays, réputée capitale de la musique, une rumeur voudrait que la moitié de la population y joue d'un instrument et l'autre moitié, loin de se contenter d'écouter, aurait tout au moins essayé laborieusement d'y jouer! En tous les cas, cette zone a produit un nombre incalculable de musiciens célèbres et d'importants compositeurs passés à l'histoire nationale.

En trois saisons musicales passées en Équateur, sur 38 concerts donnés avec six orchestres et quatre chœurs dans une quinzaine de théâtres et grandes places publiques, plus de la moitié contenaient des œuvres de compositeurs canadiens. J'ai déjà parlé abondamment de mon concert thématique sur les 100 ans de musique symphonique du Canada avec le bel Orchestre symphonique de Guayaquil, métropole du Pacifique nord et dans la ville patrimoniale de Cuenca et son fort sérieux orchestre. Les sonorités canadiennes ont imprégné les cœurs de ces latinos rompus aux couleurs musicales d'ailleurs.

D'autres expériences dignes de mention devant l'Orchestre métropolitain de Quito. Et encore celui de la province de Pichincha, en baguette partagée avec son regretté chef et si bon ami, Richard Anton, qui m'avait adapté pour son grand

orchestre les « Quatre fantaisies sur thèmes folkloriques canadiens » de Robert Fleming de Saskatchewan. L'audience avait hautement apprécié ce véritable bouquet d'évocations identitaires de notre grand pays, une magnifique fresque des quatre grandes régions du Canada. J'ai reçu de nombreux témoignages de personnes qui, au cours de ces concerts, eurent l'impression de voyager à travers nos grands espaces.

J'ai pu faire entendre de nombreux autres genres musicaux venant du Canada grâce aussi à mon travail avec le Brass Band de l'Équateur. Type d'orchestre formé que d'instruments de cuivre, genre que l'on retrouve que rarement au Canada et qui tient son origine en Grande Bretagne de la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle. Ce bel ensemble orchestral, fondé à la fin du XX^{ème} siècle par un étudiant émérite de trompette du grand Maurice André, le très discipliné Jorge Pachacama, a déjà tout un parcours à son actif dans plus d'une demi douzaine de pays, dont la Suisse, la Grande Bretagne et les États-Unis. J'ai pu monter, au fil de plus d'une dizaine de concerts avec cette formation remarquable, de nombreuses œuvres de Canadiens. D'abord la somptueuse « Rose Nuptiale » de Calixa Lavallée, musique qui vous donne envie d'assister à un mariage dans le plus grand des styles! Cet auteur de notre hymne national est sans doute le premier compositeur canadien à avoir mis les pieds en Amérique du sud. Il a produit de nombreuses œuvres relativement méconnues et d'un grand esthétisme sonore. Nous avons proposé devant plusieurs publics fort réceptifs des œuvres de Morley Calvert, entre autres, ses « Three Dances Impressions » et sa « Suite From Monteregean Hills », belles musiques respirant les espaces et les valeurs traditionnelles des Canadiens. Les musiciens de ces trois orchestres ont également apprécié leur expérience avec le singulier « Détours » de Gilles Bellemare et le « I went to the market » de Donald Patriquin. Le public latino-américain a parfaitement saisi tout l'humour de cette dernière œuvre.

Une belle initiative de coopération musicale internationale ou le milieu du monde au Canada

La faculté de musique de l'Université d'Ottawa m'aura encore procuré les moyens nécessaires d'un beau projet de coopération musicale, apportant ainsi une superbe contribution au développement institutionnel du Brass Band de l'Équateur. Cette institution musicale est en fait une sorte de conservatoire privé dédié à l'apprentissage et à la diffusion de la musique orchestrale pour instruments de cuivre. Plus d'une centaine de jeunes équatoriens y suivent quotidiennement leurs cours d'instrument ainsi que d'autres disciplines musicales académiques. Le seul critère d'admission est le choix de jeunes disciplinés, volontaires et doués. Pour s'assurer de ce dernier facteur, on va souvent étirer le temps des épreuves du faire valoir jusqu'à six mois d'essai. Le résultat net est que l'on se retrouve avec une communauté fort homogène d'une jeunesse dotée d'un dénominateur commun évident : la combinaison

du talent et du travail. L'engagement personnel de chacun est bien présent dès le premier contact avec cet ensemble des plus intéressants. Le public équatorien s'étonne à chaque concert auquel il assiste de savoir que leur pays a pu produire un tel niveau d'excellence!

Lorsque le Brass Band d'Équateur se présenta en concert à la célèbre école Duke Ellington de Washington, le corps professoral qui assistait à la représentation se demanda bien où a-t-on pu produire un tel phénomène d'orchestre juvénile doté d'un aplomb aussi saisissant. Il en sera de même lors de leur passage au Juilliard School of Music de New York. Le petit Kevin Guerra ira, en 2006, à l'âge de 11 ans, effectuer un Master Class de trompette avec Maurice André. Le grand maître, habitué plutôt à recevoir les premières trompettes des orchestres du monde entier, sera ému du talent de Kevin! De nombreux autres membres de cet orchestre fort singulier, se retrouveront au fil des dernières années, en stage auprès des plus grands maîtres du monde, partout aux États-Unis, en Grande Bretagne, en Suisse, en France, en Allemagne et en Italie.

Février-mars 2008, c'est au tour de Estefania Campana et Cesar Lahuate d'être reçus en stage de perfectionnement par le grand Daniel Gress de la faculté de musique de l'Université d'Ottawa. Le programme de formation et d'insertion musicale que recevront les deux étudiants équatoriens sera d'une grande intensité et d'une immense qualité. Les intéressés déclareront, à leur retour, que leur programme de quatre semaines au Canada leur aura fait passer à un horizon totalement nouveau par un progrès technique déterminant sur leur instrument, une dynamique renouvelée en musique orchestrale et de nouvelles dimensions quant aux approches pédagogiques vis-à-vis des plus jeunes dont ils ont la responsabilité de guider le progrès. Les deux étudiants ont été hautement appréciés à la faculté par leur haut niveau de maturité musicale et personnelle et par leur degré de préparation avec lequel ils se sont pointés à l'Université d'Ottawa. Ils s'étaient en effet préparés en vue de prodiguer aux étudiants de la faculté, un séminaire fort élaboré sur la musique de leur continent et celle de leur pays en particulier. Le tout était illustré de quelques démonstrations de musique de chambre sur leurs instruments, au grand plaisir de leur auditoire. À leur retour, ils ont préparé un rapport écrit détaillé de leur programme de formation reçu ainsi qu'une présentation électronique qu'ils ont partagée avec tous les étudiants du Brass Band de l'Équateur. Un formidable exemple de coopération musicale internationale bien tempérée et surtout faisant preuve d'une grande pertinence, contribuant ainsi au progrès de l'institution et des individus qui la composent. Un grand merci à Daniel Gress, à tout le corps enseignant de la faculté pour leur immense générosité et pour l'hospitalité affectueuse et amicale dont ont fait preuve les étudiants de cette belle faculté de musique d'Ottawa.

La messe québécoise de Pierick Houdy

Compositeur canadien d'origine française, Pierick Houdy (1929) a composé la Messe pour chœur et petit orchestre comprenant un violon, orque, contrebasse et cuillères au début des années 1970. Houdy a truffé cet œuvre de tous les éléments qui font des Québécois ce qu'il sont en terme de fusion culturelle. J'ai alors proposé de monter cet œuvre pour le VIII^{ème} Festival International de Musique Sacrée de Pâques 2009 en Équateur où des musiciens de 13 pays proposeraient plus de 45 concerts échelonnés sur 15 jours. À plusieurs mois d'avis, j'ai monté avec deux arrangeurs l'œuvre pour l'Orchestre national des instruments andins et deux chœurs. Les pulsions clairement



Denise Simard-Lapointe anime la messe québécoise de Pierick Houdy à l'église jésuite de Quito (1604), que le prince Charles a récemment qualifiée de l'une des plus belles églises au monde.

françaises, amérindiennes et celtiques que nous offre cet œuvre a créé une fusion culturelle formidable dans laquelle le public latino-américain s'est magnifiquement reconnu. Des trois représentations données au théâtre national et dans deux églises jésuites, celle proposée à la célèbre église de la Compania de Jesus fut d'une grande intensité par l'ambiance créée dans ce lieu exceptionnel. CNN a demandé la permission d'en diffuser des extraits dans le monde entier et le concert fut diffusé à la télévision internationale partout aux États-Unis et en Espagne. ☺

Denise Simard-Lapointe est la Directrice musicale invitée, Théâtre national Sucre, Quito, République d'Équateur

The Secret Sentry: The Untold History of the National Security Agency

Reviewed by Kurt F. Jensen

A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War

Reviewed by Gar Pardy

THE SECRET SENTRY: THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, by Matthew M. Aid. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009, 311 pp plus notes and index, \$24.75.

Kurt F. Jensen is a retired foreign service officer who spent a good portion of his career in foreign intelligence. He is now an Adjunct Professor at Carleton University.

If you read only one book on intelligence this year, make it *The Secret Sentry* by Matthew M. Aid.

Unlike many books on intelligence on the shelves of the big box booksellers, this one actually is knowledgeable and insightful. It will help those in the foreign policy field to understand the capabilities and limitations of foreign intelligence, at least that which originates with Signals Intelligence, the interception and decryption of communications. It shows the strengths and weaknesses, the successes and failures.

Matthew Aid has been working on this book for more than a decade and is probably the person with the greatest historical insight on the true workings of Signals Intelligence or SIGINT, as it is known in the business. This book reflects only some of the phenomenal information which he has succeeded in uncovering. His reserve of documents contains examples which are no longer publicly accessible anywhere else since he managed to make copies before the Bush II administration reclassified the material and removed it from public access in American archives.

The strength of this book rests with the fact that it simply tries to show the role of SIGINT in American foreign policy decision-making since the eve of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which

precipitated America's entry into World War II. And it ends, figuratively speaking, with yesterday.

Unlike so much of the popular genre on American intelligence activities this book neither eulogizes intelligence nor portrays it as the failings of incompetents bent, intentionally or otherwise, on harming democracy. Aid presents intelligence as a tool of foreign policy making. Sometimes intelligence works well and helps the process, at other times it fails miserably. Aid demonstrates the role of leadership, and the significance of good leadership, at the helm of the American National Security Agency (NSA). He points out the dangers when intelligence becomes politicized. He shows what happens when truth loses out to policy direction — and not just the recent example of Bush and his failure in Iraq.

Aid also points out another weakness in the intelligence process. And this one may have equal application to Canada. There is no doubt that SIGINT is the premier intelligence service. Overall it is of exceptional quality and quantity. SIGINT exceeds the very useful but narrowly beneficial results of foreign Human Intelligence, HUMINT, and the problematic results of Security Intelligence. In a sense, at times Aid suggests that SIGINT fails because of its successes.

The success of SIGINT has permitted those engaged in these activities to receive more and more money to maintain their genuine successes — as well as to placate the voting public which is terrified of the terrorist threat. Granted, SIGINT is terribly expensive and requires a great deal of money to function. It seems, however, that the constant effort to keep up with technology to collect SIGINT from the "bad guys," who constantly attain new means of evading interception, has placed the emphasis on collecting rather than exploiting.

The American NSA now has a potential to collect more raw intelligence data than it can possibly exploit in a timely manner. In several examples, Aid shows that the necessary and significant intelligence had been collected but there was no one to read, interpret, assess, and disseminate the information. In most cases, of course, the volume of SIGINT is overwhelming but helpful to policy makers. Often the volume of material exceeds the capabilities of the clients to read and digest the material.

Because of being captivated and enamoured by electronic gadgetry the American focus seems to have been on buying bigger and better collection platforms to the detriment of investing in the human resources to exploit the material. For most of America's

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history, this has, nevertheless, worked exceptionally well and to the benefit of American global interests. Whether it will continue to do so remains to be seen. Is this likely to be any different in Canada? Canada's small but successful Communications Security Establishment (CSE) works in much the same manner.

Although Aid's book deals only cursorily with Canada and the other American allies, Canadians must acknowledge that the CSE is a branch plant of the NSA. We don't like to hear that. But it remains correct. Canada is part of a "Five Eyes" SIGINT alliance which has worked to our enormous benefit at a pittance of the cost of the material to which we have access. Reality is that Canada cannot do it alone — ever. For that reason alone, it is important for Canadian policy makers to understand the capabilities and collection context of the American NSA which, whether we like it or not, is probably the agency which has collected the intelligence on which decisions vital to Canada's national interests are made. And there is no conspiracy where the Americans attempt to influence Canadian or other decisions by manipulating the information to which we have access. The volume of the material and the cost of maintaining such a conspiracy (with limited realistic potential achievements) would be prohibitive.

Aid's book is immensely readable. He takes the highlights of American foreign policy decisions and explores the impact which SIGINT had on the events. In some instances the United States was at a distinct advantage from its access to the inner decisions being made by opponents. At other times there was no substantial available intelligence to influence decisions. And in some instances the intelligence had no impact because it deviated from the preferred direction of the White House.

Particularly fascinating insights are provided for the Vietnam war — where the SIGINT was largely correct but unpalatable to the US military and civilian leadership. Similarly, the SIGINT on the lead-up to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Americans and the decision to invade Iraq demonstrates the difficulty of making decisions where

clear-cut intelligence is unavailable in the face of strong policy direction.

Aid captures the immensity of the challenges of SIGINT, and the at times mismanagement in developing personnel resources, when he reveals that during the attack on Iraq, half of the linguists for SIGINT support assigned to the 101st Airborne during the invasion only spoke Korean and the remaining Arab-speakers could not understand the Iraqi dialect. And during the Six Day War in the Middle East the key American SIGINT collector in the region included no one who spoke Hebrew.

Finally, Aid lays to rest various urban myths which have arisen. For example, the Americans have never been able to read high-level communications of significant adversaries, including the Soviet Union (and presumably now Russia, as well), North Korea, or anyone else who understood American SIGINT capabilities. Similarly, Aid states conclusively that, based on the SIGINT record, the Israelis did not consciously attack the US spy ship, *USS Liberty*, during the Six Day War.

Aid's book shows the successes and weaknesses of this intelligence mode, and the role luck and proper management of resources play in achieving success.

A SOLDIER FIRST: BULLETS, BUREAUCRATS AND THE POLITICS OF WAR, by General Rick Hillier, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 2009, 509 pp, \$34.99.

Gar Pardy retired from the Foreign Service in 2003 and since comments on foreign and public policy issues from Ottawa.

I read General Rick Hillier's *A Soldier First* with mixed feelings. I was impressed that our popular General came out with a book on his experience so soon after retirement, but I was disappointed that he did not explain his own role in framing Canada's engagement in Afghanistan. By the end I was also frustrated that he offered little insight into how to conduct ourselves in the closing chapters of our engagement. For that, we need to

look elsewhere. Gordon Goldstein's aptly titled *Lessons in Disasters*, which I will also discuss, is a good place to start.

It is rare in public life to see a substantive book written within a year of a senior officer leaving office and offering a detailed and provocative description of military life overlapping with life in Ottawa's fast lane. And there is much more: it also offers penetrating prescription for the many potholes that mar the Ottawa fast lane; the problems with peacekeeping and the misnamed peacemaking in a variety of dangerous places; and the failures of NATO and the United Nations in organizing the international community in such matters. General Rick Hillier has done exactly that. News reports have already cherry-picked the book of some of its provocative views and descriptions of many around Ottawa and its arcane processes. However, the book has not been examined in any detail, nor its various conclusions tested against the world as seen by others.

It is worth emphasizing what an unusual event this book represents. General Hillier is the first Chief of Defence Staff to write a book upon his retirement since the time General Jacques Dextraze did so in 1977. Only Dextraze and Hillier have recounted their unique contributions in the service of Canadians since the position of Chief of Defence Staff was established in 1964. There have been 15 Chiefs since then. Equally, there are few others in the military at Hillier's rank who have written such works. General Lew MacKenzie is a singular exception.

Hillier's book is a breezy romp through the life of a dedicated soldier with two important overarching themes. First, Canada and Canadians have consciously devalued both the importance and the role of the military in achieving national goals. He writes "I'm not sure that the CF [Canadian Forces] ever had a significant relationship with the people of Canada. Since the Second World War, our military was never really regarded as the armed forces of Canada by Canadians themselves; Canadians never took ownership of the military." The second theme of the book emphasizes that the role Canada

plays in today's world is more tied to having a well-trained, well-led and well-equipped military than any other factor. Not for Hillier the idea that "soft power" as the road for Canadians when they confront nasty and dangerous states sliding towards failure.

In the view of the General "... for many years our political landscape had been dominated by a select group in Canadian society, self-proclaimed opinion leaders who I prefer to think of as snake-oil salesmen, who had been allowed to create the impression that Canadians were very sensitive, would advocate only "soft power" and would support their military only in the role of peacekeepers." He goes on to state that, "To the contrary, Canadians, in enormous numbers, understand the sheer lunacy of 'soft power' and that really, in life, there is just power, soft or hard, and that the levers of influence always work both ways."

In his view what the "vast majority of Canadians" wanted was "more information on the Afghanistan mission — they were starved ... on why we were there, what our national interests were, what activities our troops were involved in and what else we were doing on the ground to support those activities." Hillier writes that he gave a lot of speeches and public presentations and validated the value of his words by comparing shows of hands by audiences before and after of their support for his position. "At every speech I gave, the audience would start out at about 50-50 in their support for our presence in Afghanistan. By the time I wrapped, that support would be at 75 to 80 percent or higher in favour."

Hillier's description of what Canadians needed by way of information is correct. Unfortunately, apart from the afterglow of his speeches, there is little evidence to support the view that Canadians were significantly changed by his public endeavours in their opinion on the war. In June 2006, a year after General Hillier was appointed Chief of Defence Staff, polling reported 59 percent of Canadians supported the combat mission in Afghanistan. In October, 2009, more than a year after he retired, the same pollsters reported less than 50 per cent support. In the same period, Liberal and

Conservative politicians who read the national tea leaves better than most united and voted a parliamentary deadline on the mission for mid 2011. There are many reasons for this change in public support for the mission but it can be said with some certainty that the efforts by the General to explain the war did not have the effect that he claims in his autobiography. His outreach to the paparazzi of the sports and entertainment world appears to have been seen by many Canadians for what it was, warm words without serious content.

One of the amazing dark holes in the General's account of the war in Afghanistan is how and why the decision was made to deploy a Canadian combat mission to Kandahar in 2005. At the time General Hillier had just been appointed (February 2005) Chief of Defence Staff and Paul Martin was Prime Minister. There was a policy vacuum in Ottawa on both defence and foreign policy matters. The Prime Minister was looking for policies that would be "transformational" in both areas or at least policies that would sharply differentiate his government from that of Prime Minister Chrétien. Nowhere has there been a cogent explanation of just what the transformation would entail and for many months officials in Foreign Affairs, Defence and the PCO/PMO laboured to satisfy the Prime Minister.

General Hillier skates around his role in this debate and the success he ultimately had (and surprisingly does not claim) in obtaining agreement for the five elements that became our Afghan policy in 2005. Other writers give General Hillier pride of place in developing, selling and carrying out the Kandahar policy. Paul Martin in his 2008 autobiography *Hell or High Water* writes that the "burden of my message to General Hillier was that our commitment in Afghanistan had to be shaped in the context not only of other current commitments but potential new ones. He assured me that he understood, and that whatever the next stage might be in our Afghanistan mission, it would not preclude our capacity to deploy elsewhere." In Mr. Martin's mind the "potential new ones" included Darfur, the Middle East and Haiti.

Mr. Martin also writes that he was impressed by General Hillier's advocacy of what was called "the three block war" as the basis for Canadian combat operations in Afghanistan. The concept originated with an American General who in the late 1990s used it to describe the various challenges faced by soldiers on the modern battlefield. Within a three block area these could range from full scale military action, to peace-keeping in the traditional sense to organizing humanitarian assistance. The war in Mogadishu, Somalia in the early 1990s reflected the concept but its future utility was undermined once two American Blackhawk helicopters were shot down with a significant loss of life. However, Mr. Martin spends some time explaining that his agreement for the deployment to Kandahar was a limited one. He did not want to be locked into an open-ended commitment. "We did not have the capacity to do everything we wanted to do militarily in the world. ... And it was important that our military commitment in Afghanistan not crowd out every other mission we might choose to undertake," Martin writes.

Mr. Martin's account of the Kandahar deployment is supported in large part by Janice Stein and Eugene Lang's 2007 book *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar*. Both carried out extensive interviews with the principal participants in the Kandahar deployment debate and Mr. Lang was chief of staff to the defence minister at the time. As such there is high credibility for their account of the debate and it is all the more surprising in light of these public accounts of General Hillier's role, that he underplays his involvement throughout his book. One would have hoped *A Soldier First* would have contained a detailed firsthand account of why Canada became a participant in its first ground war since Korea. General Hillier spends more time detailing his activities while head of the ISAF in Kabul starting in December 2003 than he does in his role in Ottawa in 2005.

Of equal note is the lack of reference in the book to any detailed examination or intelligence assessment of what the deployment in Kandahar would involve.

Mr. Martin's description of what he understood would be the environment in Kandahar is worth recording:

The plan General Hillier presented to me was based on Provincial Reconstruction Teams, meaning the gradual restoration of order by the military in expanding circles, with reconstruction intimately linked and immediately underway once the area was secured. . . . In my time as Prime Minister, we never envisaged a broad military campaign that would make reconstruction efforts more difficult, if not impossible, as we bit off more than we could chew. In my view, the change in strategy under the subsequent government was unfortunate. I don't think anyone, including me, expected the Taliban resurgence that Canadian troops encountered when they moved to Kandahar. I do believe, however, that the virtual abandonment of reconstruction efforts in the first year or so of the new government was a mistake.

By 2005 there was ample evidence that the Taliban resurgence was well underway in both the south and east of Afghanistan. The lack of any understanding or apparent willingness to assess what would be encountered in Kandahar province would seem to border on folly on the part of those, including General Hillier, who put together the Kandahar plan. This lack of assessment or even some measure of the risks led to an undermanned, underequipped and in some measure under-led Canadian force on the ground in Kandahar and that has continued to this day.

General Hillier does not offer any reflections on this sad outcome of his efforts. For him the rehabilitation of the Canadian Armed Forces, their reconnection with Canadians and such ephemeral events as the Highway of Heroes is more important than providing his successors and others with signposts and recommendations for the future. Towards the end of the book he writes, "If anybody had told me that we were going to go into intense combat operations, sustain total casualties of over

100 soldiers killed and about 400 wounded, and suffer all these losses within three years and that Canadians would still support the mission, I would not have believed them." The jury is still out on the depth of that support. One would hope that in the future the General would offer advice and help as Canadians grapple with ongoing casualties, the possible exit from Afghanistan and what will be the next overseas operation for the new Canadian army. Unfortunately the new Chief of Defence Staff seems to have taken a vow of silence and as such seems unlikely to offer Canadians any advice on these issues.

The debate in the United States on increasing its troop levels in Afghanistan is instructive for Canadians on how a country should examine the conditions under which soldiers are sent abroad to die. Already history's judgement on American policy in Afghanistan will be that it is solely responsible for the present disaster. Not only is Afghanistan on the verge of implosion but, equally, the spillover of the war into large parts of Pakistan adds a dimension that is downright scary. The world can live with a failed Afghan state but it cannot live with a failed Pakistan.

It is these mutually supporting disasters that the Administration is now facing as it seeks to come up with a policy that does not dominate the last three years of President Obama's first term. The decision to send significant numbers of additional American troops to Afghanistan is accompanied by the search for "off-ramps" where it can start to withdraw troops without precipitating a faster slide to failure in Afghanistan.

It is the squaring of these concerns that has given importance and prominence to Gordon M. Goldstein's 2008 book *Lessons in Disaster: McGeorge Bundy and the Path to the War in Vietnam*. Professor Goldstein examines the discussions and actions in the Kennedy administration through the eyes of McGeorge Bundy, national security adviser to both Kennedy and Johnson. After leaving Washington in 1966 Bundy was troubled by the role he played in the disaster in Vietnam and these are seriously explored and analyzed and the parallels they offer in the

debate over Afghanistan today. He gives very high marks to the role that Kennedy played in looking down the road further than any of his advisers and, fresh from the disaster at the Bay of Pigs, did not see his military advisers as providing either impartial or even sound advice.

Lessons in Disaster has become essential reading in today's White House but there is more than just time separating 1962 and 2009. However, political leadership is one element that can save us from disasters on the scale of both Vietnam and Afghanistan. Military advisers, including Chiefs of Defence Staff, have large roles to play in the decision making associated with wars in foreign places. However, as Professor Goldstein emphasizes, prime ministers and presidents decide and, in doing so, there is a need for greater wisdom and foresight than we have seen so far on Afghanistan. There is not much time left for Afghanistan or for Pakistan and *Lessons in Disaster* more so than *A Soldier First* should be required reading for those involved.

Setting aside his book's shortcomings, General Hillier was a unique star that flashed across the Canadian skies. It would be wrong to suggest that he had no impact on us. At a time when there is little faith or trust in current leaders and governments generally, there is ample evidence that General Hillier, for many Canadians, represented values and attributes not seen in many of our leaders. A letter by Monique Kok in the *Ottawa Citizen* recently reflected the legacy of the General for many Canadians:

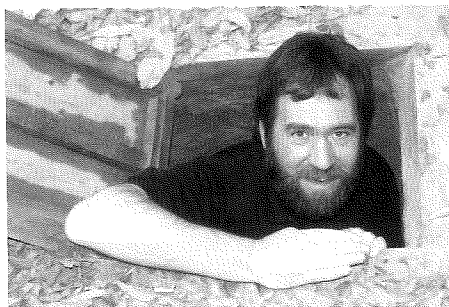
A year ago when I read that Gen. Rick Hillier, then Chief of Defence Staff, was retiring, I surprised myself by bursting into tears. I'm not the type of person to cry about this sort of thing, having no family members in the Canadian Forces. To my shame, I'm not sure I can even name the current Chief of Defence Staff. But when I read that Gen. Hillier was retiring, I felt a tremendous sense of loss. . . . Hillier's guileless and frank reports made it seem as if one of us — albeit the one with the best vantage point — was reporting faithfully back to us. ☺

Guerrilla Diplomacy:

Delivering International Policy in a World of Insecurity

by Daryl Copeland

Editor's Note: Daryl Copeland, a colleague and committed critic of Canadian diplomacy currently with the Munk Centre at the University of Toronto, paid the Pearson Building a visit on September 20, 2009. At the invitation of PAFSO's Professional Committee, he addressed a full house on his first book: *Guerrilla Diplomacy*. Daryl is neither nostalgic for diplomatic glories of the past nor an apologist for today's diplomacy where process and "products" seem to have overtaken ideas and policy as the hallmarks of the craft. He has another vision: that of a BlackBerry-toting, conflict management specialist who is prepared to get his or her boots dirty locking-in greater global security through meaningful development where inequities are worst. That's a mouthful; Daryl expresses it best in his own synopsis of the talk.



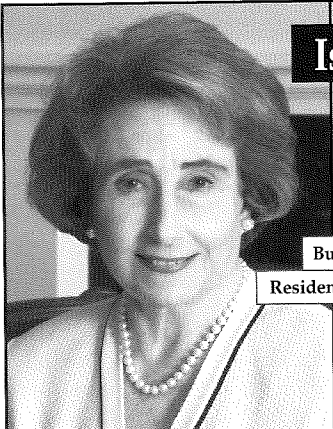
We could begin by asking: does diplomacy still matter? Yes, but the entire diplomatic edifice is in crisis and radical reconstruction is required. Viewed through the lens of those who favour talking over fighting, dialogue over diktat, and negotiation and compromise over compulsion, too many governments are still relying on armed force as the international policy instrument of choice, with calamitous consequences. Diplomacy can help make the planet a better place, but it has failed to adapt to the imperatives of world order management in the 21st century. It has been sidelined. If this is to change, grand strategy will have to be de-militarized, and the foreign ministry, foreign service and, most crucially, the diplomatic method

re-imagined and transformed from the ground up. This will involve addressing both the immediate and underlying drivers of insecurity and underdevelopment by generating better intelligence, working smarter, engaging strategically, and ... by building a better diplomat.

Diplomacy's front lines are now far removed from quiet clubs or closed meeting rooms, grand hotels or formal chancelleries. Today's diplomatic encounters tend to take place publicly and cross-culturally: in a barrio or a souk, in an Internet chat room or a blog, on Main Street or in a Quonset hut set astride the wire in a conflict zone. Unlike all too many serving envoys, the guerrilla diplomat will know how to swim with comfort and ease in the sea of the people rather than flop around like a fish out of water, and prefer to mix with the population rather than mingle with colleagues inside the embassy walls. The *guerrilla diplomat* is a renaissance polymath — part activist, part advocate, part policy entrepreneur with the sensibilities and inclination of a back-packing world traveller.

The time is long overdue to puncture the myth of pearl and pin-stripe festooned cartoon cut-outs lost in a haze of irrelevance somewhere between protocol and alcohol. Brian Tobin did it in 1994 by hoisting undersized Spanish fishing nets before the world press on the East River across from UN headquarters; Ken Taylor did it in Tehran after the US Embassy was overrun by revolutionary guards in 1979; Marc Dolgin did it by offering sanctuary to Chilean cabinet ministers after the 1973 coup. Today's effective emissary might

At a time of glaring capacity gaps and acute resource shortages, there is an urgent need to rethink key elements of international relations — security and development — from the perspective of diplomacy in the age of globalization.



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more closely resemble a street-smart, BlackBerry-toting problem solver in sandals and denim. But examples and case studies are all too few.

The *Guerrilla Diplomat* is at home in the erstwhile global village, navigating with purpose between the patchwork of gated communities surrounded by a roiling sprawl of shantytowns. He or she knows the conventional causes of conflict, such as ideological rivalry and territorial conflict, have been displaced by a raft of transnational issues, many rooted in science and driven by technology — climate change and bio-engineering, resource scarcity and environmental collapse, pandemic disease and genomics. Above all, the guerrilla diplomat appreciates not only the importance of granular local knowledge and the distinction between policy and intelligence, but also the imperative to get beyond the psychological hangover of the Cold War and into the dynamic flux of the globalization age. This means transforming traditional, Westphalian-style, state to state relations, with all of their associated conventions and rigidities, into a post-modern mix which includes new partners and actors from civil society, supra-national bodies, other departments and levels of government, and the private sector.

As a subject of popular and scholarly interest, diplomacy has been ignored, if not scorned by journalists, think tanks, universities and, most surprisingly, governments. That neglect has proven costly. The stage is set for change, and the case for advancing diplomatic alternatives — and alternative diplomacy — overwhelming. ☺

Daryl Copeland is an analyst, foreign service officer, author and educator specializing in diplomacy, foreign policy, global issues and public management. His first book, Guerrilla Diplomacy: Rethinking International Relations, was released in July 2009 by Lynne Rienner Publishers. www.guerrilladiplomacy.com.



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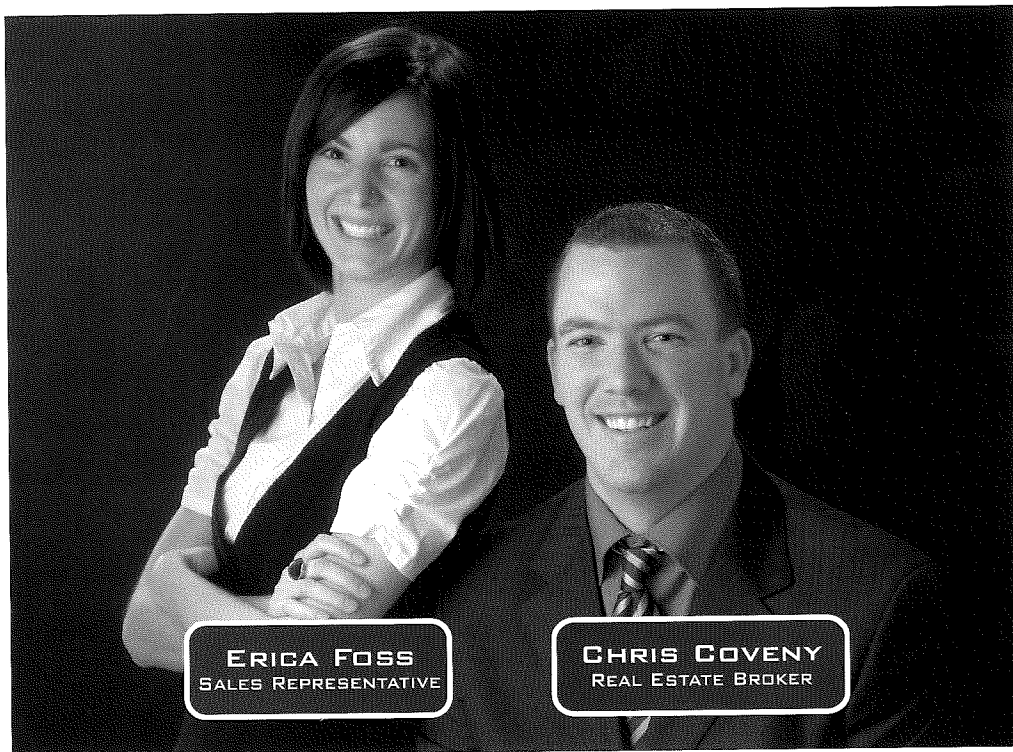
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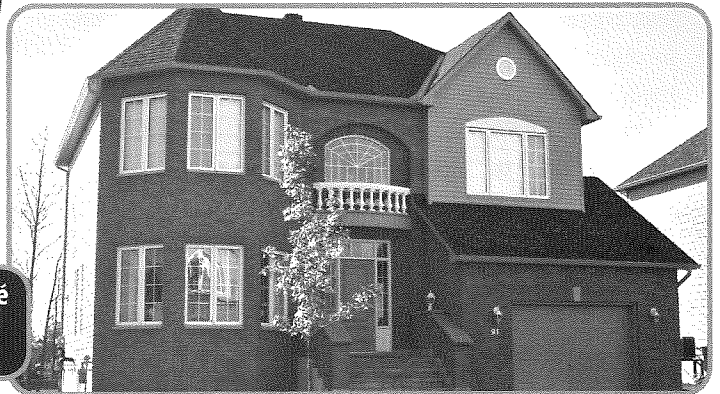
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Difficult Dinners

by Mary Taylor

Diplomats eat a lot of dinners. So of course do we all but diplomatic dinners are a little different. On these occasions formally dressed people are usually served elaborate food, often in the company of those they barely know and with whom they may even share no common language. Some such events are wonderful. You enjoy gourmet food in beautiful surroundings with fellow guests who make one feel witty and attractive. But many such evenings are not so good and, as Tolstoy so famously observed, it is the unhappy times that are memorable.

Early in our time in Moscow we gave the dinner, which was expected of us, for our ambassador, Robert Ford, and his formidable wife Thereza. As was his custom Robert sat at the head of our table, both his right as our ambassador and a convenience for his disability. Unfortunately I had failed to warn our Russian helper of this change in the arrangements and so she followed her normal procedure serving those at the ends of the table last. In an attempt to correct this I whispered to her, "Serve Mrs. Ford first." She looked at me skeptically but I nodded firmly trusting that the situation would be corrected by the second course. Imagine my horror, a few seconds later, to see Vyera appearing with a silver salver on which stood a bottle of beer. Unfortunately I must have pronounced the word for first, "pervaya," so badly that it sounded like "piva." There was worse to come. Later as was the custom the guests were served drinks including orange juice. What was available locally was very poor, and with my fourth child only a few months old, I had not had the time to squeeze sufficient oranges, so made the mistake of mixing the two kinds. The result was no doubt lamentable — as half measures so often are. Thereza took one sip and enquired in her usual drawly voice, "What is this

darling, Chanel no 5?" At least the government sofa did not collapse beneath her, something which was to happen, though with a different guest, during our successors' stay in that Kutusovskiy apartment.

The menu at these Moscow dinners was not a big issue. What was available locally was limited. Perishable food could only be obtained by air, and was therefore very expensive. Good filet mignon was available to the diplomats and caviar was still relatively cheap, so we ate a lot of boeuf Wellington and blinis. In the winter some of us would arrange our dinners in the same week, order flowers from Helsinki by air and rush them from one apartment to the other swathed in plastic. The French were blessed in that Air France provided their ambassador with a weekly shipment of cheese, something he generously shared with his staff. At a later dinner for the Fords a French friend nobly lent me her cheese assignment to add lustre to the occasion. There again disaster was narrowly averted when I discovered at the last moment that my Russian treasure was, reasonably enough, preparing to serve this at the beginning of the meal as Zakuski instead of before the dessert.

If no one expected you to produce a gourmet meal in Moscow the same was certainly not true in Belgium where the standard was exceptionally high not only in restaurants but in private homes. But it was not trouble with the food but a slow eater which caused me alarm at the first dinner party I gave in Brussels. Struggling to converse with an Italian general — my Italian was non-existent, his English very limited — I longed for the second course to provide a distraction. It never came and as time passed I began to wonder whether something awful had happened in the kitchen and how long I should wait before excusing myself and going to investigate. I remembered the

tale of a colleague's wife who in a similar dilemma had finally gone behind the scenes to find her cook chasing the waiter with a knife. Could something like that possibly be happening here? Just as I was about to give up hope the plates were removed and the second course duly appeared. The problem, I later found out, had been a guest at the far end of the table who ate so slowly that the whole procedure had been held up until he finished.

The diplomatic protocol for those who feel they have been misplaced at a table is to turn over one's plate, sit through the first course, and then leave without giving any explanation. I never actually witnessed this diplomatic myth — I also never saw a maid serve suckling pig holding the apple in her own mouth, though difficulty with the declensions of Russian pronouns made this conceivable — but I had two friends who swore they had seen a plate turned over. One occasion, many years earlier, had been in Moscow where great importance was attached to one's place in the hierarchy and where the to and fro of ambassadors often made it difficult to know who was a *chargé d'affaires*. My friend reported that most of the other guests simply assumed the Latin American in question was having a nervous breakdown. I did attend one meal, however, where a guest ate absolutely nothing, though not for reasons of protocol. This was a small dinner given by the Austrian cultural attaché in Moscow for a formerly renowned architect, Melnikov. The regime tolerated him but presumably kept him under surveillance. He himself was charm personified and obviously enjoyed the outing, but not so his wife. Whatever the reason, perhaps fear of what this might lead to, she ate nothing throughout the whole meal.

Because they represent their country, diplomats, especially junior ones, may find themselves seated beside people who are much more prominent than they are. Sometimes the great are charming, sometimes not. I once sat beside a French foreign minister — one who rather to my satisfaction was later taken to court — who obviously found me unutterably boring and barely spoke. Long before in Delhi my husband had attended a dinner where Krishna Menon had clearly indicated that he did not expect to dine in the company of anyone as junior. Others, Maureen Forrester was an example, could be delightful and treated everyone alike. Sometimes one didn't take on board just how prominent one's fellow guest might be. A young friend seeing "Ionesco" on the place card beside her assumed it was a common Romanian name and asked her companion what he did. "I write plays," was the laconic reply. The first time I met Henryk Szering, at a dinner given by Giles Lefebvre, the founder of the Jeunesses Musicales, I was not sure who he was. I was left in no doubt, however, as to his importance when the young woman next to me, sank to her knees and murmured "Maître."

Another problem at these dinners is what to wear and often the simpler and more remote the post the grander the attire. One

of the most pleasant events I ever attended was given by the president of Dior to celebrate the company's long association with Holt Renfrew. It was in July and I had bought myself a summer evening dress which, even on sale, strained my budget. I was very pleased with it despite the fact that my teenage daughters had murmured something about mutton dressed as lamb, but the minute I entered our host's elegant apartment I knew that I was the worst dressed person in the room. Everyone else was sporting Dior, apart from one whose obvious loyalty to another couturier later gave rise to some malicious remarks. There were also the jewels from the bank. But despite the dress it was a wonderful evening. Not only had the jewels come from the bank but so had the plates, a marvellous set of Creil, edged in coral, which proved an ideal subject of conversation with my host.

Many years later at the time of the French Bicentenary I accompanied Maureen McTeer to an outdoor performance of opera at Versailles. The invitation had stated that we should dress warmly which we had interpreted as wearing rather simple dresses under our raincoats. Not so le tout Paris by whom we were surrounded. For them it meant a full-length couturier coat well cut so as to show off the jewels. Our attire did not go unnoticed. When we approached the VIP tent at the intermission the official took one look at us and demanded haughtily, "Where did you find these tickets?" Fortunately a friend of Maureen's was standing near the door and waved us in.

Diplomatic dinners are sometimes marked by speeches, only too often recitals of banalities about good will and friendship, since no one wishes to offend either the guest or the host. Occasionally, however, things go wrong, and one comes to with a start. It was a French foreign minister, at a time when relations with Quebec were still pretty tense, who remarked at a dinner on the 9th floor of the Pearson Building how glad he was to be in Montreal. The slip almost passed unnoticed, but not so the comment of a Chinese visitor, who remarked, presumably due to a faulty translation, that he looked forward to a third world war.

It is usually the host and hostess who suffer most on these occasions, particularly if they are living in very different cultures and are dependent on staff for whom their ways are a mystery. But the guests can have a hard time too. They may be served food which is at best unappetizing, live seafood, fried grasshoppers, sheep's eyes. They may be expected to eat far more than they want and to sit or kneel uneasily, embarrassed by the still grace of their hosts. So how to cope with these difficult dinners? Do one's best and then let things roll. Remember that this too will pass and that even the worst disaster at table is insignificant compared to what is happening in the outside world. ☺

Mary Taylor is the author of If Only I Had Known, and A Black Mark.

Dark Age of Diplomacy

by Roger Lucy

One does not expect a barbarian warlord — especially one who secured his control over Italy by bisecting his rival with a sword during a state dinner — to maintain an active foreign policy of constructive engagement, through skillful diplomacy with his neighbours. However, thanks to surviving diplomatic correspondence, and to the highly descriptive epitaph of one of his senior Roman diplomats, we are left with a remarkably clear picture of how the Ostrogothic king, Theoderic the Great, who ruled Italy from 493 to 526, conducted his foreign relations.



Patrician and Magister Militum (Master of Soldiers) Flavius Theodericus — known to his Ostrogothic people as King Thiudareiks son of Thuidimir and to posterity as Theoderic the Great — was very much a man of two worlds. Born in Pannonia (modern Hungary), in the mid 5th century — shortly after the death

of Attila the Hun — he spent much of his youth as princely hostage in Constantinople. There, as part of the Roman policy of grooming suitably indoctrinated client kings, he received a good classical education. On his father's death, Theoderic returned to Pannonia to take command of his Ostrogothic tribe.

He was soon embroiled in protracted three-way struggle involving his people; a rival Ostrogoth leader, Theoderic Strabo (the squinter); and the east Roman government (which played one Gothic faction off against the other). In 481, Strabo died in a riding accident, and Theoderic, having ensured that Strabo's son Recitach did not long survive him, proclaimed himself king of the united Ostrogoths. The eastern Emperor, Zeno, soon found that Theoderic's now combined force of 30,000 Gothic soldiers was a bit too much of a good thing. In 488, he persuaded Theoderic to take his people to Italy to displace Odovacar (who had overthrown the last western Emperor in 476) and to rule Italy until the Emperor could "come in person". Once Theoderic had finally disposed of Odovacar in 493 (commenting as he cleaned his sword, "The old man had no bones in him") he

set about restoring peace, order and good government to the battered peninsula. His formula was simple: the Goths formed the Army, the Romans ran the civil administration.

Following the deposition of its last Emperor, the territories of the former western Roman Empire had become the domains of a number of tribal kings, governing with a greater or lesser degree of imperial sanction. France north of the Loire was taken over by Clovis, king of the Salian Franks; southern Gaul and most of Spain were ruled by Alaric II, king of the Visigoths; south-eastern Gaul was governed by Gundobad the Burgundian, who maintained the fiction that he was an Imperial general (Magister Militum). For the past half century, North Africa had been controlled by the Vandals, now led by their king, Thrasamund. Other lesser peoples grabbed odd corners of the empire. The Suevi (Swabians) were ensconced in north-west Spain; the Alamanni straddled the upper Rhine, while the Angles and Saxons were slowly filling the vacuum that was post-Roman Britain. Theoderic was particularly fortunate compared to his peers. He alone had (as he said in a letter to the eastern Emperor) "... learned in your Republic the art of governing Romans with equity." Moreover, unlike the other rulers, who could only call upon whatever remained of the local administration of the provinces they had taken over, Theoderic had inherited the central government of the western Empire, which — despite the past century's vicissitudes — still functioned, staffed by a cadre of well-educated, effective and loyal Roman bureaucrats.

Helped by able officials on the staff of his Master of Offices (the minister responsible for foreign affairs), Theoderic pursued an active foreign policy aimed at securing and extending the frontiers and sphere of influence of his realm.

As ruler of the core of the lost western Empire, Theoderic saw himself as more than first among equals, within this constellation of Germanic successor states. Helped by able officials on the staff of his Master of Offices (the minister responsible for foreign affairs), Theoderic pursued an active foreign policy aimed at securing and extending the frontiers and sphere of influence of his realm, as well as trying to prevent any of his co-rulers (in particular the very expansionist Clovis) from becoming over-mighty. At the same time he had to watch his eastern flank, lest his formal suzerain, the Emperor in Constantinople, might indeed one day choose to “come in person” to Italy, to reassert the rights that Theoderic was exercising on his behalf.

One of the keys to Theoderic’s western foreign policy was to weave a web of marriage alliances to link the Germanic rulers of western Europe. From the Bronze Age to the Great War, royal marriages were a standard tool of diplomacy, sealing alliances, cementing peace treaties, or even, through the skillful selection of heiresses, making territorial gains. In 493, shortly after consolidating his rule over Italy, Theoderic had requested and received the hand of Clovis’ sister Audofleda. At the same time, Clovis married the daughter of Gundobad of the Burgundians. To complete the triangle, Theoderic’s daughter by his first marriage, Ostrogotho, was married to Gundobad’s son, Sigismund. Another of Theoderic’s daughters, Theodegotho, married Alaric II, king of the Visigoths, while his sister Amalafrida was wed to Thrasamund, king of the Vandals. This last was particularly important as North Africa was Italy’s major trading partner, a source of grain, wine, oil and even fine table-ware. Moreover, the Vandal fleet posed a formidable threat. Amalfida arrived in Carthage with a bodyguard of 5,000 Gothic soldiers to ensure Thrasamund’s good behaviour (the Vandals had a bad habit of mistreating royal brides who had become surplus to requirements). Amalfida’s daughter by her first marriage, Amalabirga, was later married to Hermiafrid, king of the Thuringians, a potential threat to Clovis’ eastern flank and a demonstration that Theoderic’s interest extended even beyond the old Roman frontier.

Over and above these connubial activities, Theoderic pursued a very active diplomacy, sending out a constant stream of letters and envoys to Constantinople, and to the Frankish, Visigothic, Burgundian, Vandal and other lesser courts. In an era before resident missions, 6th century diplomacy was based on the regular despatch of envoys, bearing letters from one ruler

to another. These letters ranged from the routine exchange of greetings; notifications of the accession or death of rulers; up to the complex negotiations of alliances. The letter itself served as the envoy’s credentials, attesting to his *bona fides*. It contained the essential message, but it was up to the bearer to explain the issue in detail. For this reason the effectiveness of an embassy depended to a great extent on the ambassador’s skill as an advocate. As the chief aim of the ancient education system was to produce skilled orators by honing the student’s rhetorical skills, Theoderic could draw upon a pool of well educated, upper-class Romans to serve effectively as his envoys.

We are fortunate that one of Theoderic’s most important senior officials, Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator, collected and published examples of the very extensive and wide-ranging correspondence he had drafted on his master’s behalf, for use as templates by some future administration. Cassiodorus held a succession of offices, starting as Quaestor (in charge of drafting legislation and replies to petitions, and — by extension — government spokesman). He rose to become Theoderic’s Master of Offices (in effect “minister of everything” — including the postal service, the secret service and foreign affairs) and under Theoderic’s successors, Praetorian Prefect of Italy (in effect Prime Minister). Among his *Variae*, as he called them, are a number of letters related to diplomatic issues. These cover all aspects of diplomacy including: the care and feeding of foreign delegations, instructions to ambassadors, the provision of diplomatic gifts, and a number of letters drafted in Theoderic’s name to fellow princes. In the first category we get a request to the city of Ticinium (Pavia) to provide envoys from the Heruli (a trans-Danubian tribe related to the Goths) with provisions for five days, “that they may at once see the difference between Italy and their own hungry country.” A more general instruction noted that returning embassies should be well provisioned so that

“... they should feel that they have been well treated ... Nothing pleases those who have commenced their return journey better than speeding them on their way.”

To his eastern counterpart the Praetorian Prefect in Thessalonica Cassiodorus wrote:

“We are sending two ambassadors to the most serene Emperor, who will salute your Greatness. We earnestly hope that your Excellency will speed them on their journey.”

Cassiodorus also described some of the qualities required for ambassadors, in his (admittedly rhetorical) description of

One of the keys to Theoderic’s western foreign policy was to weave a web of marriage alliances to link the Germanic rulers of western Europe. From the Bronze Age to the Great War, royal marriages were a standard tool of diplomacy.

He was, he says, known in the East, in the furthest clime of Spain, the frigid North and in sun-drenched Africa. In all, he took part in 25 embassies which (how like our own) "never failed in their task."

his grandfather's performance on his mission from the western Emperor to Attila, some time in the 440s:

"He showed himself intrepid before the man who made the Empire quail He found the King insolent; he left him pacified; and so countered [Attila's] slanders and allegations with the truth that the king, instead of quarreling with the Empire, condescended to seek its favour. ... Thus did he bring back the peace which men had despaired of, and his countrymen men felt that Rome could not be pronounced defenceless, while she was armed with such ambassadors."

It was one thing to soothe a ferocious barbarian, but the real test of an envoy's rhetorical skills was a mission to Constantinople. The relationship was a delicate one. Constitutionally Italy was still part of a united Roman Empire, which Theoderic administered and defended in the Emperor's name. The Roman Senate was still alive and well in Italy, and each year it still nominated (or rather rubber-stamped Theoderic's appointee) one of the two Consuls — a thousand-year-old, if now honorific, post. A barometer of the health of the east/west relationship was whether Constantinople formally accepted the western nominee. While Theoderic called himself King, it was in his capacity as king of the Goths. He claimed no such title over Italy, preferring such titles as *Princeps*-first citizen. The *status quo* that he sought to have accepted was of "... two Republics, which have forever been declared to form one body under their ancient princes." His Roman subjects were willing to put up with an alien and heretical ruler so long as they felt they were still part of the Empire. Besides, Emperor Anastasius was also a heretic, if of a different stripe, not to mention a Greek.

While for his part Emperor Anastasius was normally content to observe this fiction, Theoderic's representatives in Constantinople had to tread carefully. Writing in Theoderic's name, Cassiodorus warned one prospective envoy, Agapitus:

"... here there is need of especial prudence, because you will have to dispute against the most subtle persons — artificers of words, who think they can foresee every possible answer to their arguments. Do your best therefore to justify the opinion which I formed of you before full trial of your powers."

Extolling the conduct of another senior official, Cyprian, after a mission to Constantinople, Cassiodorus told the Senate:

"Thus prepared he was sent on an embassy to the East, a commission which he discharged with conspicuous ability."

Versed in three languages he found that Greece had nothing to show him that was new; as for subtlety, he was a match for the keenest of the Greeks."

The subtle East used, it seems, more than words to ensnare western delegations. One poetic diplomat, Maximianus, wrote an epigram lamenting how, on a mission to Constantinople, he fell into what sounds like a "honey-trap":

"Sent as an envoy to the lands of the Dawn ... to weave a tranquil work of peace ... impious wars entered into my own heart."

We know more about the career of another of Theoderic's diplomats, Senarius, who from the number of missions he undertook, was the nearest equivalent to a professional foreign service officer. Clearly of good birth and with an excellent education, Senarius joined, at an early age, the staff of the Palace, becoming an *exceptor* (secretary) to Theoderic's Consistory — in effect his Cabinet. Frequently charged with ensuring royal commands were carried out, and distinguished (according to Cassiodorus' glowing rating) for his eloquence, discretion and diligence, he was soon charged with undertaking diplomatic missions. Senarius is credited with many other virtues:

"... his success as an advocate, the charm of his pronunciation, his purity of morals; his popularity with high and low ... his affable demeanour ... moderation and reserve in the midst of success."

Rating inflation is, it seems, no new phenomenon.

Senarius' epitaph has survived, written in elegant Latin hexameters. He tells us:

*I am that former traveller without borders, Senarius.
My limbs, but not my name, are confined to this tomb.
Distinguished by my love for my invincible prince,
I was, while in this world, the voice of kings,
The language of Security, the orator of treaties,
The way of Peace, the terminator of Wrath,
The seed of Friendship, the banishment of War,
the foe of Strife.*

Allowing for some poetic license, this job description seems as good a rejoinder, as any, to those who question what Foreign Service Officers actually do. Senarius' epitaph then provides his curriculum vitae. He was, he says, known in the East, in

the furthest clime of Spain, the frigid North and in sun-drenched Africa. In all, he took part in 25 embassies which (how like our own) "never failed in their task." His crowning achievement however was the year when he:

"Twice saw the shores of the [Atlantic] Ocean, and twice the Pontic [Black] Sea,

Traversing both Europe and Asia, the two limits of the World."

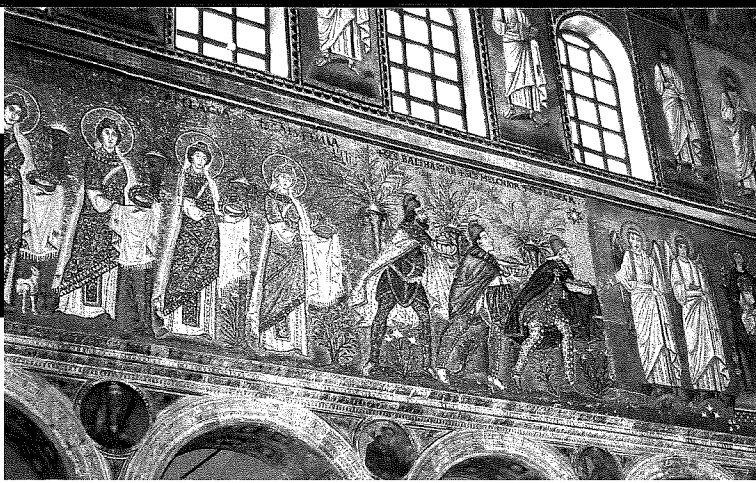
This last, clearly a major exercise in shuttle diplomacy, was likely related to a major crisis which took place in 506 that will be examined in a future article. In 510, as a reward for these efforts, Senarius was appointed Comes Patrimonium in charge of administering Crown Lands (the proceeds of which covered such things as provisioning the governors of distant provinces or bailing out distressed ship-owners), and made a Patrician and a Senator. In his letter of appointment Theoderic alludes to some of the challenges which had faced Senarius, as a diplomat (and gives a less than flattering description of some of his brother monarchs):

"... standing up to kings, he was an advocate not unequal to the task, constrained to reveal Justice even to those who, in their base obstinacy, were barely able to understand reason ... you subjected insolence to truth and following our instructions forced the barbarians to their senses."

Not all of Theoderic's envoys were Roman, some were Goths. In a letter to the king of the Heruli, conveying him a gift of horses, weapons and armour (archaeology indicates that highly decorated helmets were a favourite Ostrogothic diplomatic gift) and making him his "son in arms," Theoderic concludes "... the bearers of these letters will explain to you in your native tongue the rest of our message to you."

It was also probably Goths who made the long journey from Ravenna to the eastern Baltic with a reply to an embassy from the Haesti, thanking them for their present of amber and assuring them that Theoderic would

"... be glad to receive further visits from you by the road which you have now opened and to show you future favours."



In drafting the letter, Cassiodorus cannot resist showing off his erudition to the Haesti:

"You say that you gather this lightest of all substances from the shores of the Ocean, but do not know where it comes from."

With a long-winded citation from Tacitus, he informs them, that amber is hardened pine resin.

"We have thought it better to point this out to you, lest you should imagine that your supposed secrets have escaped our knowledge."

Cassiodorus also could not resist showing off in delegating two somewhat unusual requests for diplomatic gifts. The first was a request from Clovis for a harpist. Cassiodorus (writing in Theoderic's name) delegated the task of recruiting one to the philosopher Boethius. Deeming it

"... important to oblige our royal neighbours, even in trifles, for none can tell what great matters may be aided thereby. ... The King of the Franks has asked us to send him a harpist. We felt that in you lay our best chance of complying with his request, because you, being such a lover of music yourself, will be able to introduce us to the right man."

Following a long discourse on music, Cassiodorus/Theoderic concludes

"We have indulged ourselves in a pleasant digression, because it is always agreeable to talk of learning with the learned; but be sure to get us a citharist, who will go forth like another Orpheus to charm the bestial hearts of the Barbarians. You will thus both obey us and render yourself famous."

Another request came from the Burgundian king, Gundobad, who had asked for what sounds like a combined water-clock, sun-dial and mechanical planetarium. Again the task was delegated to poor Boethius, with detailed specifications, a list of all the scientific works that Boethius had translated from Greek and the exhortation:

"It will be a great gain to us that the Burgundians should daily look upon something sent by us which will appear to

**As things fell apart, Cassiodorus retired to a monastery,
to devote himself to collecting and preserving classical works
for posterity.**

them little short of miraculous. Exert yourself therefore, oh Boethius, to get this thing put in hand."

The covering letter which Cassiodorus drafted for Theoderic, conveying the completed clock to Gundobad, expounded on the civilizing effect of being able to tell time accurately, rather than

"... like beasts, only knowing the passage of the hours by the pangs of hunger, and having no greater certainty as to the flight of time than as is afforded them by their bellies."

One hopes Theoderic reviewed Cassiodorus' draft, and edited out that less than tactful passage.

Theoderic ruled Italy until his death in 526. Alas things did not always go his way. A subsequent article will discuss his vain efforts to forestall a war between the Franks and the Visigoths in 506, which led to the death of his son-in-law Alaric II. Nor did Theoderic's Herul son-in-arms prosper. He was killed by the Lombards. Some of his people were forced to seek shelter in Gothic territory, others migrated back to their ancestral home in Denmark.

Moreover, some of Theoderic's diplomatic marriages had unhappy endings. After Theoderic's daughter Ostrogotho died, her husband, Sigismund, married a Frankish princess. Sigismund's new bride turned out to be a prototypical "ugly step-mother," persuading Sigismund to kill Sigeric, his son by Ostrogotho.

Theoderic's sister Amalafrida also met an unhappy end. When her Vandal husband king Thrasamund died in 523, his successor Hilderic had her imprisoned, killing her Gothic retainers. On receiving news of her death in 527, Theoderic's daughter and heiress, Amalasuintha sent a stiff note to Carthage, demanding an explanation.

"Friendship and relationship are turned to bitterness by the tidings that Amalafrida, of divine memory, the distinguished ornament of our race, has been put to death by you. ... Our Goths keenly feel the insults conveyed in this deed. ... We hear that you pretend that her death was natural. You must send us ambassadors to explain the matter. ... If you do not do this, all ties of alliance between us are broken, and we must leave you to the judgment of the Divine Majesty."

Amalasuintha lacked the naval power to follow up, but she gladly facilitated the east Roman general Belisarius' expedition to overthrow the Vandal kingdom in 533 (ironically, Belisarius' *casus belli* was to avenge Hilderic's own overthrow).

Cassiodorus continued to serve the Goths until 538. His correspondence shows he was heavily involved in the negotiations with the east Roman diplomat, Peter the Patrician, whose failed mission in 535 precipitated the fall of Theoderic's dynasty (see *Peter and the Goths* **bout de papier** Vol. 23 No. 4). As things fell apart, Cassiodorus retired to a monastery, to devote himself to collecting and preserving classical works for posterity. ☺

Roger Lucy is a retired Foreign Service Officer (1974 to 2004), who has contributed many articles to **bout** on ancient and medieval diplomacy. Questions and comments about this article or suggestions for future ones may be addressed to him at galea.hortus@sympatico.ca.

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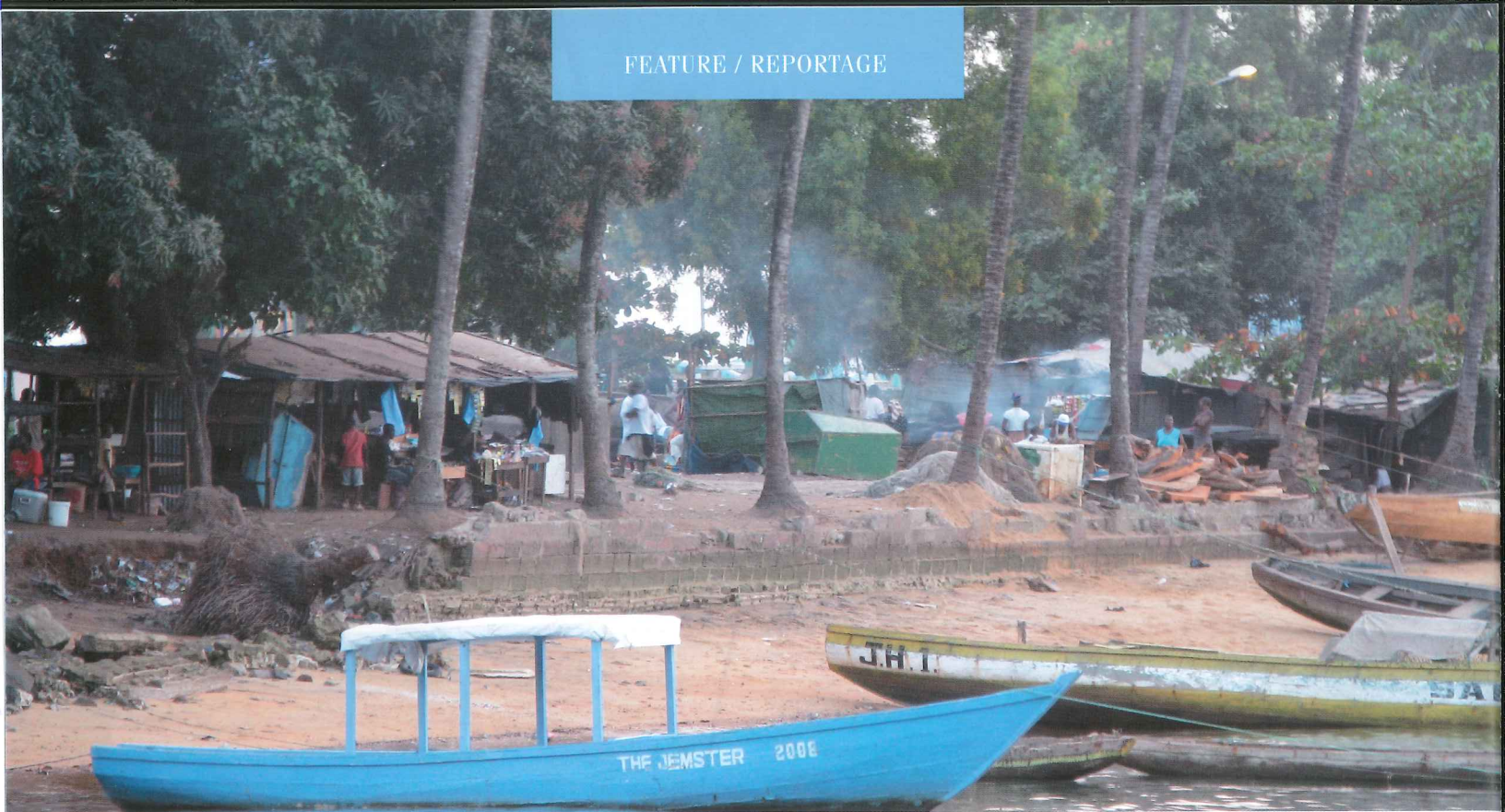
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A holiday in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea

story and photos by David Edwards

In the early 1990s, as communism collapsed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union disintegrated bringing the Cold War to an end, a number of eminent thinkers suggested new paradigms of our global future. These included Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*, Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, and Robert Kaplan's *The Coming Anarchy*. Kaplan's bleak prognosis, written in an article in *Atlantic* magazine in February 1994, posited that the disintegration of states, such as Sierra Leone, was a harbinger of an emerging Hobbesian global anarchy that would be replicated in many other parts of the world. To quote one paragraph in his provocative article:

“Sierra Leone is a microcosm of what is occurring, albeit in a more tempered and gradual manner, throughout West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering

*away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war. West Africa is reverting to the Africa of the Victorian atlas. It consists now of a series of coastal trading posts, such as Freetown and Conakry, and an interior that, owing to violence, volatility, and disease, is again becoming, as Graham Greene once observed, ‘blank’ and ‘unexplored.’ However, whereas Greene’s vision implies a certain romance, as in the somnolent and charmingly seedy Freetown of his celebrated novel *The Heart of the Matter*, it is Thomas Malthus, the philosopher of demographic doomsday, who is now the prophet of West Africa’s future. And West Africa’s future, eventually, will also be that of most of the rest of the world.”*

While certainly unusual as a holiday destination, the countries are emerging from the nightmare which had engulfed them in the 1990s.

Sierra Leone and Liberia, in particular, fell into a chaos that appeared to validate part of Kaplan's thesis. Over most of the last years of the 20th century, they were synonymous with ghastly, long-lasting civil wars, blood diamonds, child soldiers and unspeakable atrocities. Yet, ever so tentatively, these countries are recovering from their recent terrible past. It is now possible for a traveller to visit these countries, albeit cautiously, in a way that was not possible in the decade after Kaplan wrote his article. While certainly unusual as a holiday destination, the countries are emerging from the nightmare which had engulfed them in the 1990s. It was for this reason that I decided to go for a first-hand look. One of the advantages of life in the foreign service is that however obscure or distant a country one is likely to find a colleague or two who, for professional reasons, has visited in recent years. I am indebted to Abdul Omar, Lee-Anne Hermann and Mona Yacoub for providing valuable advice prior to my departure. Below are some of my observations and experiences.

Sierra Leone has made the most significant recovery. Evidence of the previous conflict is now mainly visible in the high number of amputees begging in the streets of the capital. Freetown's physical location is among the most attractive in West Africa. It is situated across a wide bay from the international airport at Lungi, ringed by hills and low mountains and blessed with magnificent beaches along the length of the peninsula to the south of the capital. Investors are snapping up real estate along the Freetown Peninsula. Luxury accommodation is being built along Lumley Beach on the western outskirts of Freetown and, even more significantly, at Goderich Beach a few kilometres to the south. Further south along the peninsula are some of the best beaches in Africa. While still somewhat rough around the edges, *Lonely Planet* recently listed it (along with Canada) as among the top 10 destinations in the world. Sierra Leone now even has a tourist website with the sub-title "Do Something Different: Visit Sierra Leone."

Liberia is a different matter and the trauma of the war years is still highly visible. For years during the war, factions contested and fought over large parts of the capital, Monrovia. Much of the city remains devastated. The presence of large numbers of United Nations peacekeeping forces is far more visible. Numerous development agencies and NGOs, many religiously based, are now present in the city. Travel outside the capital city is still considered dangerous and insecure. The cost of living is high, inflated by the peacekeeping presence and the ancillary services supporting it. Liberia has a much tougher, pushier and more aggressive interpersonal edge on the street in comparison to Sierra Leone, or even Guinea. Even by coastal West African standards, the humidity

in Monrovia felt particularly oppressive. What was similar in both countries was the lack of electricity. Drowning out the sound of insect life at night was the endless drone of generators, keeping a handful of buildings with light, as the rest of the cities were reduced to candle light. There were also other "dysfunctionalities."

Although public campaigns against corruption have started, including large billboards at borders and in the capital cities, evidence of opportunistic corruption is pervasive, and sometimes unavoidable, throughout the three countries and among the worst I have ever encountered. At immigration entry at Spriggs Payne airport in Monrovia, despite having a visa, the two immigration officials questioned me on my motives for visiting the country for 15 minutes. After they agreed to allow me into Liberia for seven days, they then asked how much I was going to give to them. At the Central Immigration Department in downtown Freetown, the woman responsible for my file slipped the equivalent of 15 dollars down her pocket and then insisted that I had not given enough money to cover the cost of renewing the visa. At Conakry airport, the woman at customs repeatedly stated, "Qu'est-ce que vous me donnerai comme cadeau." At a Guinean customs inspection post 20 kilometres before the border with Sierra Leone, I was taken off a bus and shaken down for close to 30 minutes for a bribe. And during the countless series of roadblocks on the road between Conakry and Freetown, the driver repeatedly had to slip money to the police. Perhaps like reform on Wall Street, appeals to responsibility and civic consciousness have yet to really take hold. Those in power continue to use their positions to enhance their financial well-being at the expense of the more vulnerable.

Internal travel also posed challenges. There was only one flight per week between Conakry and Freetown and it would have been uncomfortably close to my return flight back to Heathrow and Canada. Given that West African flight departures are notoriously unreliable (an experience re-confirmed by a six-hour delay on the flight between Monrovia and Conakry), I decided to travel the route by local bus. It was a remarkable way to experience West Africa at ground level. It also ended up as a reminder of some of the more

gruelling Third World transportation experiences I endured when backpacking around the world in the late 1970s.

Buses and long distance collective taxis in Guinea and Sierra Leone do not leave at any scheduled departure time. They leave when all the seats have been sold. I was advised by locals to get to the Benneto bus station, at the edge of the Commune de Ratoma, early in the morning, ideally between 0630–0700, if I wanted to ensure a relatively quick departure. I left the Pension Ghussein, where I had been staying, in darkness and arrived at Benneto by urban collective taxi just as the first slivers of light were starting to appear over Conakry. Packed among the scores of vehicles lined up tight in the small dirt station was an older mid-sized bus, with an agent yelling out “Freetown direct.”

At first, things seemed to go well. I purchased my tickets. Others arrived every few minutes and were starting to fill up the van. Luggage was being loaded on the roof, and by about 0710 we were just waiting for two remaining passengers to fill up the bus. The cry of “Freetown direct” coursed repeatedly above the sounds of engines. Then there was an argument and two passengers stormed away in anger amidst some pushing and shoving. Finally at 0745, we were told to cram ourselves into the bus. Vehicles blocked the route behind and ahead of us. The slow motion exit involved an inordinate amount of high-pitched yelling and endless horn honking. It also required intimidating the fruit and vegetable vendors blocking the route by inching the bus forward at the speed of a tortoise. It took almost an

hour to get around the perimeter of the station to the exit. At 0840, just as we arrived at the exit, perhaps 50 metres from where we had first started, the driver put the vehicle into park and disappeared. Apparently, despite the already overpacked conditions, they were still one passenger short. After 20 minutes, I went looking for the driver. Finally at 0915, over three hours after I had first arrived at Benneto, and now with yet another passenger jammed into the bus, we were finally ready to be on our way.

We left the station, and began a fairly long ascent toward the edge of town. Within three kilometres of the bus station, the engine started to lose power and stall. After another kilometre of losing power every 100 metres or so, the vehicle completely broke down in the middle of the road. The driver and his sidekick played around with the engine for a while, finally replacing a spark plug. Now at 0955 we were on our way again, though the engine continued to backfire, and occasionally lose power, for the rest of the route to Freetown.

At the edge of Conakry around 1030, we were pulled over at a police roadblock. The driver got into an argument, and the police ordered the driver to pull the vehicle over for a longer wait. A number of people, both bus passengers as well as street vendors nearby, stated over and over again, “Les polices ne sont pas bon, ici.” Although I was aware of the corruption potential that these roadblocks represented, I was more than a bit surprised that the “payout” was something that had to be

Monrovia, Liberia



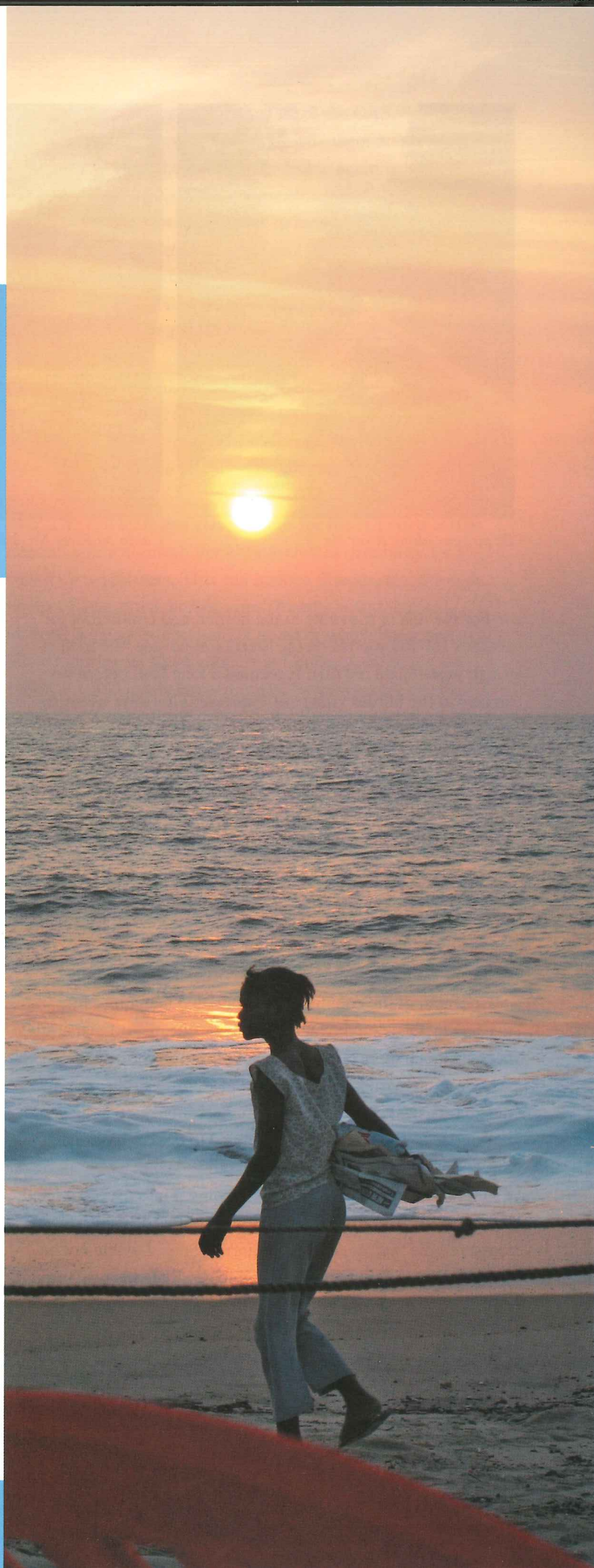
negotiated, often at great length, each time. A little more than an hour later, we were allowed past that roadblock. The driver started the struggling engine and we were on our way again. The road was paved and in quite good condition and we at last started to make good time. For the next stretch, payoffs at the roadblocks seemed more regularized, if noisy and animated.

My normal tactic, when faced with an incident such as this, is to remain confident and polite, but to feign ignorance and continue to not comprehend what is being asked or implied.

Twenty kilometres before the border, at the point where the pavement ends and the road degenerates to a dirt track, there was yet another roadblock — “Douane.” This time, I was the one who was questioned and then taken off the bus. The Guinean official first addressed me in English, asking if I was smuggling gems or currency. I asked the driver to accompany me as they took me into a separate room in the shed and the shakedown began.

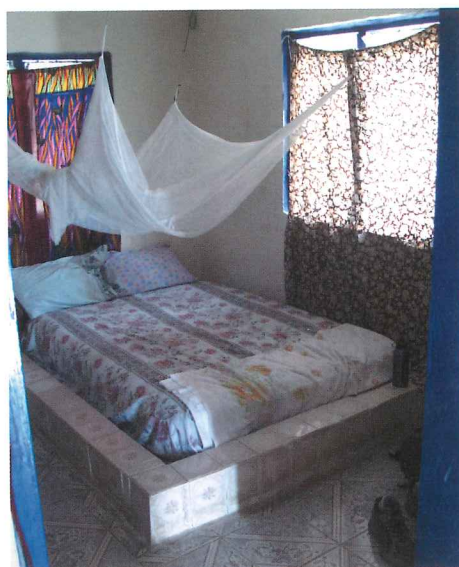
My normal tactic, when faced with an incident such as this, is to remain confident and polite, but to feign ignorance and continue to not comprehend what is being asked or implied. Somewhat exasperated at my apparent obtuseness, the official finally turned to the driver and slipped back into French. Although, of course, I knew exactly what the customs official was saying in French, I asked the driver to translate for me. At a certain point during this standoff, and while continuing to express bewilderment, the benefits of continuing to stall in the hopes that the official would eventually give up slid into how little I could get away with to end the encounter. Situational awareness made me realize that unlike at an airport where another potential victim might be arriving shortly and there was some form of hierarchy, these officials were the top authority in this isolated location and had all day to extract their payout. Finally, after the shakedown, I agreed that he could have the rest of my Guinean money (about \$9) as I was leaving the country. Then the customs official next to him, who was physically holding on to my passport, demanded the Guinean equivalent of \$2 to get it back. I was now, of course, bereft of any local currency. At this point the driver paid the other official, I was given my passport back, and we were off again.

Young beach vendor, Lumley Beach





By pirogue along River No. 2



Cabin on River No. 2 Beach



Pelican Water Taxi at Lungi, speedboat between Lungi airport and Freetown

For the rest of the route to the border, and continuing for another 150 kilometres on the Sierra Leone side, the road is rough unsurfaced red dirt. It seemed a long haul before we arrived at the border village of Pamelap. This time we were stuck for more than two hours. The other passengers went to have a meal of rice and goat at a basic “chop house.” At one point, after the driver had been inside the customs shed for almost 90 minutes, customs insisted that they wanted to search all of the passengers’ bags. They later agreed to check four bags. Three of the better dressed passengers were hauled inside the customs house as I waited outside. About 30 minutes later, the hapless affected passengers came back outside, the luggage was put back on the roof and tied down, and we were allowed to go.

At the Guinean immigration, the official stamping my passport out of the country asked if I could help him immigrate to Canada. Once on the Sierra Leonean side, the official attitude became much more personable, but the admiration of my nationality remained the same. My passport was checked and the guard asked if I could send him my e-mail so that he could immigrate to Canada. There continued to be roadblocks on the Sierra Leone side, and each time I could see the driver taking out a sum of money from his pocket, slipping it into his other hand, then walking over to negotiate with the police official. The driver reassured me that, once back in Sierra Leone, I would not be shaken down again, but he still had to negotiate his way through each roadblock. From my observations, all of the interchanges

in Sierra Leone were relatively good natured and cheerful, compared to what had prevailed on the Guinean side.

Much of the rural Sierra Leone landscape on this route looked degraded, depopulated and exhausted. One can see why Sierra Leone ranks near or at the bottom of the Human Development Index. Finally in late afternoon we reached the end of the unpaved road at the junction of the Freetown–Makeni highway. All of us were, by now, bruised and caked in the African red dust that had been accumulating inside the bus over the previous many hours. Just as we were coming off the unpaved stretch, the bus had a flat tire. Once the tire was changed, the bus continued its route towards Freetown as dusk gave way to twilight and finally darkness. Large trucks with super-bright headlights and powerful air horns barrelled toward us in the warm dusty night air. By the time our bus arrived at its final station, parking on a darkened side street in the notoriously dodgy, crime-ridden and impoverished eastern edge of Freetown it was 2230, more than 16 exhausting hours after I had arrived at Benneto.

The bus journey, inadvertently, proved that in my fifties I could still endure the “grassroots level” third-world way of transportation that allowed me to extend global travel for years when I was in my twenties. The following day, though, I thought I would go a little easy on myself, and enjoy my last few days by a beach. The trump card for Sierra Leone, if the tourism sector ever really does take off, is the beaches of the Freetown

Despite all of the inconveniences and hardships inherent in travelling in West Africa, particularly this part of West Africa, there is still something about the land and the rich red earth that constitutes a powerful draw.

Peninsula. The unimaginatively named River No. 2 Beach is, in my estimation, the crown jewel of them all.

The first guidebook I ever bought about Africa was Susan Blumenthal's *Bright Continent: A Shoestring Guide to Sub-Saharan Africa* published in 1974. This is her quote from the book: "Partisans of River No. 2 Beach say it is the most beautiful in the world. I agree." While this is a highly subjective question, it is certainly one of the most gorgeous beaches in the world — an isolated, scimitar-shaped, five- to six-kilometre long "talcum powder" white sand beach, bisected by a fresh water river and framed by the low mountains of the peninsula. A community association has constructed a handful of simple cabins at the northern edge of the long beach. Those working with the community association provided some insights into the war years. While the minimal tourist sector dried up completely, depriving the villagers of a source of income, the war and fighting never actually reached that part of Sierra Leone.

One night, the community association prepared a large bonfire by the beach. As it was the weekend, there were a number of British and a young Canadian expatriate based in Freetown staying there. The British were working for IMAT, the British military assistance program, and the Canadian was on a seven-month contract working for the organization Reporters for Human Rights. The Canadian, Robert, had been

there for five months and observed that I was the first person he had met visiting, on holiday, in Sierra Leone, without having another professional reason (e.g., working for the UN in Liberia) for choosing to be there. Chatting at night around the bonfire with the expats over beer, then slipping back into the warm ocean water by moonlight was a fine antidote to the Conakry to Freetown bus experience. That a country sometimes portrayed as one of the most unfortunate should also have one of the world's most sublimely beautiful beaches provided some moments of reflection.

Fifteen years later, it turns out Kaplan's apocalyptic thesis has not, in the end, unfolded in quite as catastrophic a way as he had posited. Reflecting on my experiences, I draw a more hopeful and optimistic conclusion. I was witness to a slow and halting recovery to something resembling normality after a decade-long horror. Beyond that is the human dimension, the indomitable spirit of the thousands and millions of Africans trying to make their way through life, despite all of the calamities and misrule to which they may be affected, that still brings forth humility, inspiration and affection. ☺

David Edwards joined DFAIT in 1981 and has served in New Delhi, Lusaka, Harare and Yaounde. He is currently Senior Policy Advisor on the Haiti Task Force, DFAIT.

Freetown, on the shores of Aberdeen Creek



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Janet Graham 1950–2009

*A Personal and Professional Tribute
by Michael Dawson given at the Good
Shephard Wakefield Anglican Church,
November 18, 2009.*

Janet Graham joined the Department of External Affairs in 1975 and was posted to Pretoria, Port of Spain, Harare and Lago. She was appointed High Commissioner to Ghana and in 2001, High Commissioner to Tanzania and Ambassador of Canada to Ethiopia in March of 2009. She is survived by her husband, John Shearman, and children, Leah, Georgia and Jonathan.

Janet's husband, John Shearman, has asked me to offer a few words of remembrance because, perhaps uniquely, Janet was a relative by a happy circumstance of my marriage to her cousin, one of my first friends in Ottawa when I arrived to join External Affairs, and my colleague.

My first observation is that while Janet maintained a healthy separation between her professional and domestic lives, she was very much the same person at all times. Empathy, integrity, good humour, hard work and a sense of the transcendent characterized Janet's approach to her life.

Like her beloved father David, Janet possessed formidable intellectual gifts. Well read and thoughtful, always a delightful debating companion, her home and her professional lives were intellectually alive and imbued with a sense of adventure and an openness to the world around us.

What made her a devoted parent made her a mentor to many. Janet's encouragement, her gentle insistence on quality and her good advice influenced more than a few individuals. Some may not have even realized that they were being mentored.

By any standards, Janet's career in the foreign service was a notable one. She was one of the Department's foremost experts on Africa, beginning with her first posting, to South Africa. She once said that

she returned from South Africa with a husband and a good supply of wine; the wine had been consumed but the husband was still here.

Among her other African assignments were Acting High Commissioner in Nigeria, High Commissioner in Ghana, High Commissioner in Tanzania and lastly, Ambassador to Ethiopia and representative to the African Union.

Her work in Africa was full of challenges and interesting, indeed unique, experiences. Sent as Acting High Commissioner in Nigeria, this status was deliberately established to express Canada's displeasure with negative developments affecting human rights and governance in that country at that time. Not surprisingly, her tenure was tense and brief and culminated in the closure of our mission. She then had the relatively unusual experience of implementing the emergency plan to ensure the destruction of all classified files with John wielding a large sledgehammer to ensure the destruction of the computer discs. And of course there were the challenges of the diplomatic social circuit, especially the cocktail party in Tanzania that ended badly for John when he was bitten by an intruding viper. Janet had to help identify the exact species so that the correct anti-venom was administered. Strange work for a High Commissioner.

While vipers may be at the outer limits of the unexpected, in the foreign service we recognize that the world and life draw from an often dark, bottomless well of the unplanned and unexpected. And we set great store in our ability to face and surmount these events. Janet's year that ended last Friday was by any measure the epitome of facing and surmounting such obstacles.

Having just overcome her first meeting with cancer, anyone would have understood if she settled for something quiet. But when unplanned events occurred, she stepped into the position of Director General for Africa in September 2008. In that capacity, Janet had to deal with issues that were intractable and tragic such as the genocide in Darfur.

She was supposed to fill the position for just a few months. But Africa, never a quiet predictable place, had other plans. Along with all of her regular duties, within a short time, she faced the terrorist kidnapping of Bob Fowler and Louis Guay.

She threw herself into the whirlpool of this crisis without any thought or reflection other than selfless desire to help resolve it and bring our colleagues safely home. She did this day-in and day-out, with good humour, skill and tireless dedication.

Janet was also very much blessed with the mandatory departmental skill of picking up an unfamiliar file, absorbing its essence and carrying it forward.

One of the few times our professional careers intersected was when she was appointed director of the division responsible for Canada-US defence relations, a subject full of arcane knowledge and incomprehensible jargon. I recall that she said to me that she had little experience of these issues but to no one's surprise, within weeks

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she was fully conversant with issues such as the all-important NORAD treaty which was up for renewal.

She was the keystone in the process of negotiating a new NORAD treaty with the United States, shepherding it through the system and to a final implementation.

However it was always clear to everyone that Janet very much preferred working in the field rather than in the corridors of the Pearson Building. Her assignment to Ethiopia was eagerly anticipated and I know would have given her much professional and personal satisfaction.

For Janet, the foreign service was not just an attractive career but a calling. She reflected deeply on the conduct of our foreign policy through the lens of her extensive experience. She had little patience with simplistic arguments over whether our foreign policy should be interests-based or values-based. She never allowed herself to lapse into cynicism.

For Janet, the kernel of the issue was the pursuit of our interests in ways that would reflect our most profound Canadian values. She stood for negotiation and compromise, and pragmatic engagement with even the most difficult governments. She believed in working with coalitions of like-minded countries and NGOs and she had a broad, 21st century view of what a modern coalition should look like. She valued multilateral institutions but had no naive faith in their effectiveness. She worked effortlessly with the full Canadian international team, including National Defence and CIDA. At all times, her counsel was to exercise persistence and patience.

This I think is Janet's legacy to her colleagues in the Department of Foreign Affairs. She was an exemplar of the finest traditions of the Canadian foreign service, its sense of duty to our country and to the global community, its high standards of intellectual rigour and integrity, its fearless advice to our political leadership.

Janet met her last challenge with serene courage. Her passing leaves her many devoted friends and colleagues with a void

in their hearts. However as time passes, our memories of her will surely warm our hearts and bring a smile to our faces.

Don Collier 1947–2009

Don Collier was a foreign service officer who was happiest when on a posting. His love of travel and seeing the world began soon after he discovered studying engineering did not play to his strengths. Working at the university radio station did play to his strengths and he soon left the study of engineering and university life temporarily, picked up a back pack and started travelling the globe. This led him eventually to joining External Affairs and going on a posting as soon as possible.

Don's first posting was to Seoul, South Korea and this marked the beginning of his love of things Asian. A variety of postings ensued, including Islamabad, Pakistan; Port-of-Spain, Trinidad (it wasn't Asia, but it also didn't have snow in winter); Dhaka, Bangladesh; Bangkok, Thailand; and Hong Kong. Along with his love of postings, Don also became a very active member of the Hash House Harriers, travelling to far away places to take part in the reunions and events. One of his favourite lines was that the Harriers were a group of drinkers with a running problem.

Being rotational meant that Don had to spend an occasional interlude in Ottawa at a headquarters assignment and endure several dreaded winters. However, given Don's enjoyment of life, even time in Ottawa was meant to be lived to the fullest. With Cathy Brownrigg, his wife, gardener and travelling companion, he built a cottage retreat on Kennebec Lake near Sharbot Lake in Ontario. There they enjoyed reading, cooking, canoeing and most of all visiting with friends and family. Don loved classical music so it was natural that he was a great supporter of the annual Chamber

Music Festival in Ottawa and a champion of CBC Radio 2.

Don was a conversationalist and a raconteur of ribald stories. He had a warmth and passion for life, mixed with a great curiosity, that were contagious and brought him closer to his friends and family. Don was quietly courageous. He fought off an attack of leukemia in 2003 and was just emerging from its aftermath when Cathy suddenly became ill and passed on. Don moved to Victoria, BC and re-engaged in life, meeting old friends and making new ones, often among the Hash House Harriers. Don was delighted when his doctors gave him the go ahead for a several-month tour of Asia and New Zealand. He returned from the trip energized and enthused.

While in Victoria Don met Helen Estlin, who was not deterred by his globe-trotting ambitions, and they were married in December 2008. Don was tickled to inherit four grown children and four grandchildren when he and Helen married, enjoying another adventure life had brought him. Don and Helen were in the midst of planning their annual trip to Kennebec Lake and visiting his many Ottawa friends when the leukemia came back with a vengeance, cutting short Don's adventures with us.

*Harold Hickman, is Editor of **bout**.*

Kenneth Bryce Williamson 1922–2009

As a young officer in 1955 I was assigned to work for Ken Williamson in the Eastern European section of European division. Because my older sister had been one of his classmates I was aware of his brilliant academic record at the University of Manitoba: editor of the student paper, member of the student council, gold medalist. Now I had a chance to see for myself. Recently returned from Prague, after a

previous posting in Rome, he was a knowledgeable and shrewd analyst who produced clear, incisive documents with great speed. He went beyond the usual formal mentoring of a new recruit by inviting me to his home where I met his wife Pat, a musician, and his young children.

As the years passed we never worked together again, but we met whenever we were both in Ottawa, and I kept track of his impressive career. He had subsequent postings in Santiago, Berlin and Washington. There followed three assignments as Head of Mission: Ankara, the Organization of American States and Havana. I learned that at each of these he and Pat voluntarily went native, speaking Italian, Czech, Spanish, German and Turkish, in addition to the usual civil service French.

On retirement he returned to the academic pursuits he had given up to join the foreign service. As a student in the Religious Studies Department of the University of Ottawa he earned an M.A.

for a thesis on liberation theology, a subject which had fascinated him as a result of his Latin American postings. He went on to complete a PhD with a thesis on concepts of the Church in contemporary theology. He was an active member of the Anglican church. He was finishing a study of divinity and the universality of the human spirit at the time of his death.

Despite his studies he found time to participate in various organizations relating to international affairs. The Retired Heads of Mission Association of course, but also the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Society for International Development and the Group of 78. We attended their meetings together. He was a frequent commentator and questioner, especially on areas such as Latin America and the Middle East where he had first-hand knowledge. His particular concern was with Canada's ethical stance in a world of haves and

have-nots. I have happy memories of working with him in a CHIA study group, of which I was host, on an appropriate security policy for Canada and on preparations for a Group of 78 conference on the same subject.

Ken and Pat loved to travel — particularly to Oman where one of his daughters now lives. (He made enough of an impression there that his daughter had to turn down offers to sacrifice camels to mark his passing — which would have given him quiet amusement.) They were frequently at concerts, dance performances and plays. They were excellent hosts — their annual buffet dinner with carols (Pat at the harpsichord) was always a highlight of our Christmas season.

Ken will be greatly missed by his many friends. ☹

Ross Francis is a former High Commissioner to Malaysia and Ambassador to Finland.

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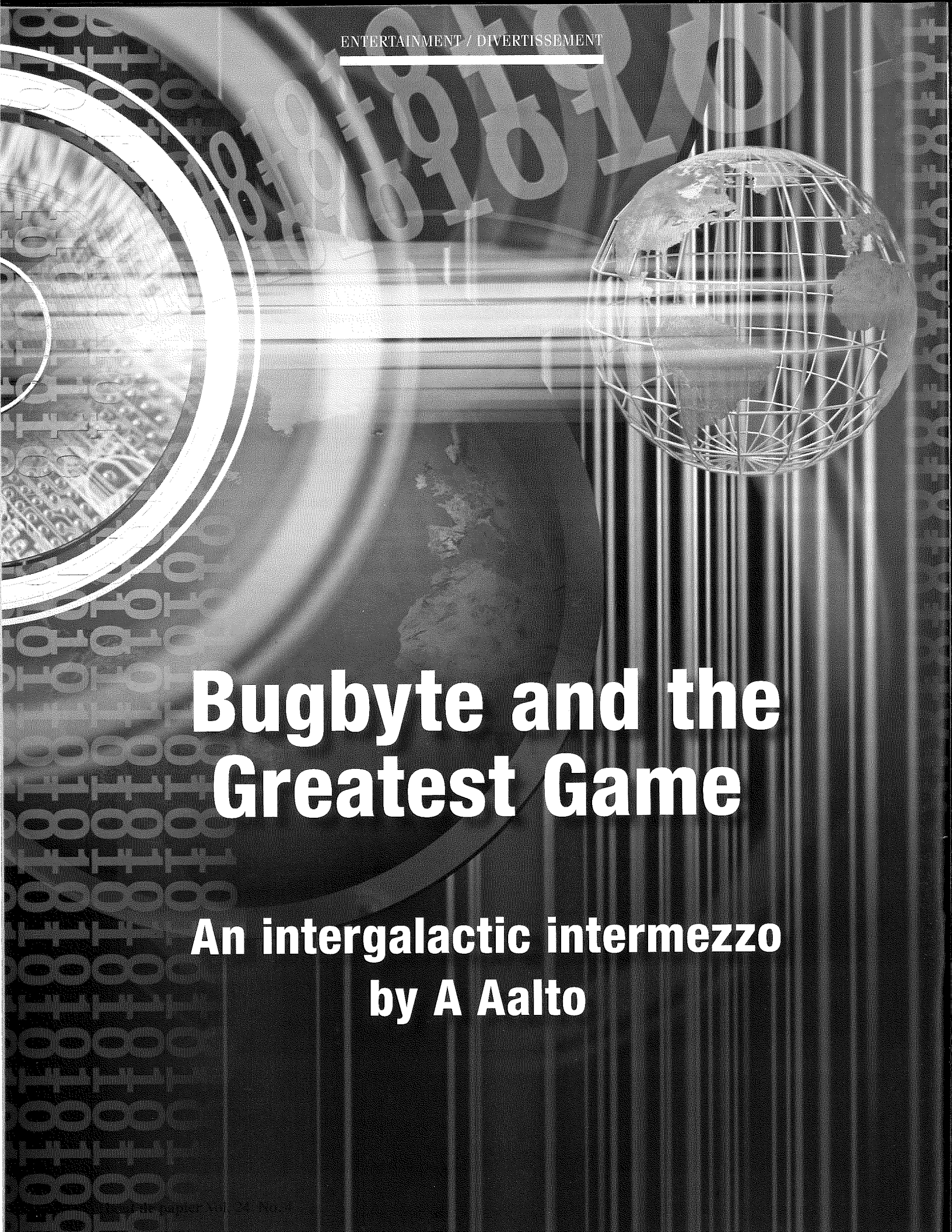
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Bugbyte and the Greatest Game

An intergalactic intermezzo
by A Aalto

The walls of the vast hall glistened with ochre slime dripping down green and purple velvet. Overhead, mirror-balls randomly reflected laser beams through a drifting fog, reeking of stale Saturday nights and old gym socks. Underfoot, flaccid creatures scurried on too many scaly legs through decaying food and the gnawed bones of creatures you'd hope never to meet, while in the corner an enormous blob of used chewing gum groped toward sentience.

A raucous crowd circled an enclosure in mid-room, where stood a five-metre cube, a hazy hologram punctuated by brighter drifts and pinpoints of light. Around the cube lounged three gigantic creatures. One had the fore-quarters of a warthog, the back end of a slug and the twin heads of Bob and Doug McKenzie, a beer held to each ear. The second was a gorilla with the head of a manta ray, dressed in a rhinestone-studded gold lamé jumpsuit, a granite baseball cap and Styrofoam wedgies. Wrapping up was a vast open tub of guacamole with eye-stalks, mounted on REO Speedwagon firetruck with multiple speakers blasting out *Billy Ray sings Liberace*.

The ape reached into the cube to place a spark and complete a crooked line of light. "The full Arc of Gr'mlax," he rasped. "That means the Andromeda Sector is mine." "Cute, hoser," sneered the wartslug heads in unison, "But you forget the sentient planet rule. That sector remains open while there's still life on Gaia." "Which won't be for long," his opponent replied. The guacamole gurgled and quietly set a fiery spiral spinning in the far corner of the cube.

The hall flickered and winked out. From a chair in the bridge of the spaceship *Heart of Glod*, a black-clad Bugbyte O'Nanotek gazed at the elegant golden robot, eyebrows lifting. "I have to say, GEODE, that I was expecting the future to be more like *Star Wars* and less like *Tripping the Rift*. Who are those clowns?" The robot shrugged. "What you are seeing is not really the future, but a simulacrum of the 11-dimensional space-time continuum in which our 3-D world is embedded. Even your fine mind couldn't grasp the reality of that meta-space, so the ship's computers created an analogy that reflected the inwardness of what was going on, expressed in terms of the Earth culture of your time. Unfortunately, being an 11th-dimensional demigod doesn't necessarily mean you have class."

"Those are gods?" she sputtered. GEODE replied, "They might as well be, given the power they wield. The important thing, however, is the game they are playing. It is a kind of Intergalactic Go, at tournament level. The playing pieces, those points of light, are the stars and galaxies of our own universe. Fortunately, the play of the game, even victory or defeat, won't directly affect us. But the reference to the sentient planet rule could. A planet like Earth, which harbours a certain level of life, has a will of its own and an independent role in the game. It does not count as a piece for any of the players. Gorilla Ray's strategy won't work unless he controls all the pieces in the Arc. So he needs to wipe out humanity to win."

Bugbyte recoiled in shock. "He'd eliminate us all — to win a game? Doesn't that bother anyone?" GEODE replied impassively, "Do those people look like they care? For that matter, do you mourn the germs you kill every time you use mouth-wash?" Bugbyte thought frantically, "So how will he do it? And how can we stop him?" GEODE's metal face somehow showed a wry smile. "Oh, he's already started. Time isn't one-to-one between dimensions. Where do you think we got the Black Plague? Nuclear arms? Global warming? Fortunately, we have allies — higher beings on this 3-D island, like me and my silicon-based friends, and people from eleven-space who don't want that ape to win."

"So what's the crisis?" asked Bugbyte. "Why call me here?" GEODE replied, "The latest try at destroying Gaia involves teleporting a major chunk of the sun into the core of the Earth. The resulting explosion will vaporize the solar system as far as Saturn. I have parked this spaceship in orbit close to the inter-brane relay that will carry out this task in about half an earth-standard hour from now. Unfortunately, it is heavily defended and I have nothing strong enough to destroy it, or even get close to it."

"There is a way to abort the program, a fail-safe self-destruct command. If we can activate it, Earth will be protected for millennia, since the rules allow only a certain number of tries at destroying a sentient blockade. But only a few people know the self-destruct command and none of them are allowed into this dimensional space. Fortunately, the Speedwagon under the guacamole is a fellow silicon avatar and has agreed to help — he can't stand Billy Ray Cyrus. By the rules, he can't just tell us the

command, but he found a loophole — this puzzle gives us the answer. If we can solve it."

"This is the kind of thing that we are just not programmed to solve, but I know you have had some experience. Can you help?" Bugbyte frowned. "I wouldn't think it's all that tough. The last four columns can be filled using logic, and then the second column can be completed using the Internet if nothing else. But I'm not the expert, Liebnitz is. Can you get him here pronto?" The robot sighed. "Negative. I had to move us into the future to make contact with the relay at the one moment it is vulnerable. Given quantum uncertainties, I am not sure that we would be safe, doing the time warp again."

Bugbyte thought a minute. "You once told me that a full recording of Liebnitz's brain-patterns was made before his death and sealed in a tesseract." "That's right," said the robot. "It was retained by the MacBannock family for generations and used to help them out of one scrape after another." "Where is it now?" "No-one knows. Hashish MacBannock VII left it in an open airlock during the evacuation of the Spaceship Titanic, which the family had just purchased from inter-galactic cyber-dwarves, along

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In the chart below, each row gives the name of a science fiction movie or TV show from the late 20th or early 21st centuries, the species of a non-human character in that movie or show, the name of the character, his/her/its place of origin and the actor who played him/her/it. No entry appears more than once. The 12 clues (A to L) will enable you to fill in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth columns in the chart relating to these non-human characters. From there, you should be able to work out the names of the movie or show, to be placed in the corresponding squares of the second column.

Each of these second-column squares currently contains a series of numbers. The numbers *outside* the parentheses give the number of letters in each word of the name (dropping any "The" at the beginning). The numbers inside the parentheses indicate the location within that word of the key letters making up the command code. For example, if the notation 3-2-3(2)-8(5) turned out to be "DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS", then the key letters would be H (the second letter in THE) and F (the fifth letter in TRIFFIDS). The command code is made up of the letters in order from column 2, box 1 to box 10.

with the latest charts. No-one ever saw the tesseract (or the Titanic) again."

"Hmm. What would be the odds of that tesseract suddenly bumping into this ship out here in the farthest reaches of space, just at the moment we most need it?" GEODE cocked a quirky metal eyebrow, paused infinitesimally and said, "About 1 in 10 to the 73 trillionth power. Plus 3." "And if this really is the ship that Zaphod Beeblebrox stole, do you ever use the Infinite Improbability Drive?" "As a last resort, yes." "So plug in the number. What have we got to lose?"

Meanwhile, in near space, a small faceted object of diamond-like brilliance hurtled ever closer, force-fields at maximum. Within, a tiny imago in comfortable-looking cords wildly conducting an invisible orchestra in an enthusiastic

PUZZLE CHART

Rank	Film or TV Show	Non-Human Type	Name	Place of Origin	Actor
1	4-4(4)-8				
2	6(2,3)-2-3-4(1)				
3	6(3,4)-2-3-4				
4	5(1)-8(1)				
5	6(4)				
6	6(3)				
7	8(1)-1				
8	5(3)-6(3)				
9	11(2, 8)-5-2-3-6				
10	6(4)-3(3)				

- A Cornelius the gorilla (type) from Earth falls on the list directly below the Borg (type) and directly above the character played by Warwick Davis.
- B God (name) in line 4 is played by Morgan Freeman.
- C The character named Christopher Johnson, from an unknown planet, is three lines up from the Time Lord (type) and four down from the Ewok (type).
- D The character played by Roddy McDowall, the one named Smith and the Prawn (type) are on different lines with prime numbers, in that numerical order.
- E The Jatravartid (type) named Humma Kavula, from Viltvogel 6, is found on line 9.
- F The character named 7 of 9, the character of Na'vi type and the character played by John Malkovich are in different lines. The numbers of those lines are not adjacent but do ascend in that order, and they total 16.
- G The replicant (type) named Pris, from the outer planets, is found one line below the character played by Jason Cope and two lines below the character from Pandora.
- H The character from Heaven, the Agent (type) from cyberspace and the character named Neytiri are on three adjacent lines in that numerical order.
- I The character played by Jeri Ryan, from Delta Quadrant, is found on line 1.
- J The character played (as of this year) by Matt Smith is on a line whose number is twice that of the line of the character played by Hugo Weaving.
- K The character Wicket W Warrick from Endor is on a line whose number is seven less than that of the line of the character Dr Who from Gallifrey.
- L The character played by Zoe Saldana is on a line exactly half-way between the lines of the deity (type) and the character played by Daryl Hannah.

version of *The Ride of the Valkyries* — totally wasted on any outside observers, since sound does not travel in the vacuum of space — and screaming, “I love the smell of neutrons in the morning!”

Disappearing nanoseconds before crashing into the bow of the *Heart of Glod*, the tesseract reappeared in the bridge, tumbling wildly, and bounced to a stop in the captain’s chair. Liebnitz appeared before them as a life-sized hologram. “Good call, Bugbyte,” he cried warmly. “Now, GEODE, let’s see that puzzle.” The ace logician had the puzzle solved in minutes. “Interesting,” he said. “The fail-safe code is in fact a highly traditional one, used before by expats like Rennie and Reeves. It never did mean anything, but let’s see if it works.” GEODE punched the command into an all-wavelengths format and narrow-cast it to the relay station. At first nothing happened, then the station turned abruptly into an incandescent turquoise and cerulean rutabaga before erupting into fireworks spelling out “Oh fuddle-duddle.”

In an eye-wateringly ugly hall somewhere in the 11th dimension, a patch of lights in the hypercube winked from carmine to puce. The crowd bayed. Millions of ululating clams changed hands as bets were

paid off. A gorilla cursed in fluent Esperanto as his grinning two-headed opponent doused him in brew. A plastic tub of guacamole quietly changed the flash-stick ported into his sound system, as the firetruck beneath him sighed in relief. Avocados always play the long game.

Can you duplicate Bugbyte’s and Liebnitz’s feat by providing the three-word (6-6-5 letters) fail-safe command? **bout de papier** will choose the winner by drawing one entry from all those with correct answers submitted by March 31, 2010. The prize will be a book autographed by A Aalto. Not necessary to solve the puzzle, but can you also fill in the chart, including the names of the movies/shows? Also, where does the command phrase come from? ☺

Free-lance prestidigitator A Aalto continues to evade arrest for impersonating an Ambassador. It is infinitely probable that he stole the Heart of Gold and its Drive (with thanks) from Douglas Adams, who created it to get himself out of a similar dead end. [And no, the answer to the puzzle is not 42.] He recommends in particular the recently-released movies used in lines 6 and 7 of the chart, both of which are spectacular (as of course are many of the other classics).

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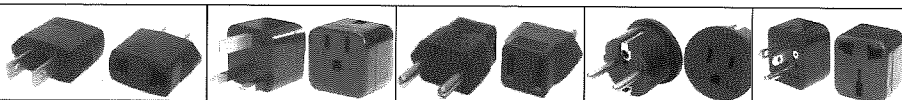
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Shamus Dikk and the Dark Carnival

Answers from Vol. 24, No. 3

The name giving the 10 letters that allow MacBannock to step safely to the edge of the board is OSCAR WILDE (see chart). Wilde was the author of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his only novel.

The coded passage, which is a direct substitution of standard English letters by letters having a comparable sound from another alphabet, is an abridged version of the last few paragraphs of that work:

"He looked round and saw the knife that had stabbed Basil Hallward. He had cleaned it many times, till there was no stain left upon it. It was bright, and glistened. He seized the thing, and stabbed the picture with it. There was a cry heard, and a crash. The cry was so horrible in its agony that the frightened servants woke and crept out of their rooms. Francis was as pale as death. After about a quarter of an hour, he got the coachman and one of the footmen and crept upstairs. When they entered, they found hanging upon the wall a splendid portrait of their master as they had last seen him, in all the wonder of his exquisite youth and beauty. Lying on the floor was a

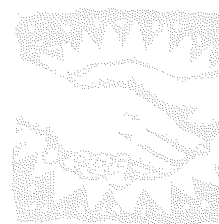
dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was."
— from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

The other six names or phrases to be found by linking the letters on the board are IDUNN, PONCE DE LEON, SERGEI VORONOFF, [Peter] PAN, AAB-E-HAYAT and TITHONOS. Idunn was the Norse goddess of youth and carried a basket of magic apples. Ponce de Leon and Sergei Voronoff are historical figures. Peter Pan was created by James Barrie but has many echoes in our folklore. The Aab-e-Hayat was a goal of many Arab alchemists, parallel in some ways to the philosophers' stone in the West. In Greek myth, Tithonos was the lover of Eos, goddess of the dawn. She asked Zeus to make him immortal so that he could stay with her always, but she forgot to ask for eternal youth as well. Unable to die, Tithonos shrivelled up, eventually becoming a cicada (or in some versions a grasshopper).

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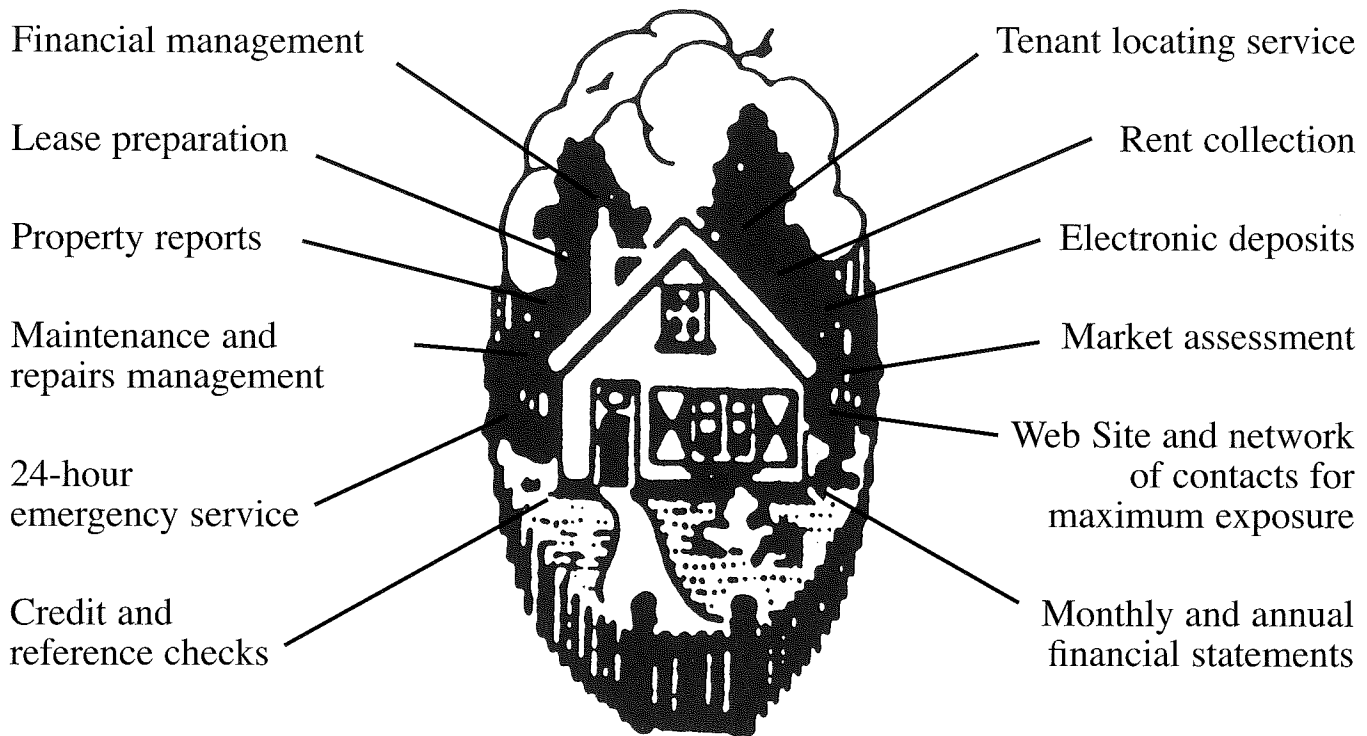
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