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The University of the East Block (UEB)

By Eric Bergbusch



Photo: Wikipedia

The East Block of Parliament Hill

The University of the East Block was created after WWII to prepare new entrants for work in the Department of External Affairs and the government of Canada. Before the war, recruitment for the tiny department had been limited to one to three a year, many from university positions. Training then was working with a more experienced colleague and thus learning the ropes.

After the war, larger numbers of university graduates were recruited by competitive exam annually to meet the needs of Canada's growing international presence – still following the recruitment principles established by the redoubtable O. D. Skelton in earlier years. Some came directly

from the armed forces, others from post-war university studies; many had done military service. They, too, would work with more experienced colleagues, but the old methods would not suffice for this varied intake. The origins are obscure, but someone decided – in the era of Pearson, Robertson, Wilgress and Wrong – that these new entrants would benefit from a series of lectures explaining the work of the department: a straightforward introduction to the art of diplomacy. Senior officers from External, Trade, and Finance – including the ‘Undersecretary of State for External Affairs,’ the deputy himself – came to outline the tasks ahead and the techniques to be used.

Whether the title *University of the East Block* started as a convenient tag or as a jocular reference (possibly by a returning veteran weary of war, the military and academic studies), it soon became common usage. The UEB – an abbreviation never used in its lifetime – was found useful and lasted some 20-odd years, serving each new cohort as it arrived. Why it was abandoned in the early seventies is not clear. Perhaps the arrival of much larger classes and increased central management from the Public Service Commission – backed by Michael Pitfield’s steady hand at the PMO/PCO, the newly coined *Centre* – had something to do with it. In any event, the UEB did not survive the move to the Pearson Building in 1973

Global Affairs is a very different beast now. It is immensely larger with a much wider range of tasks, many different skill sets, and people of quite varied backgrounds and work-experience. If it is now moving towards steady annual recruitment from universities as in the past, a case may well be made that the need

is even greater to acquaint the new intake systematically with the many facets of the department’s work, and how the work should be done in the present administrative and policy environment.

As there are few records of the UEB, the above account is mainly based on the recollections of several retirees who took part in it. To ground that in the specific, one participant’s bemused recollections of the 1960/61 UEB are given below. When the author circulated it to others in his cohort, he found that he, as a late entrant, had missed one important event. The St Lawrence Seaway was inaugurated that summer and celebrated as an outstanding example of Canada-United States bilateral cooperation (after Canada had threatened to go it alone). In midsummer the class of 1960 was taken on an aerial tour of the Seaway accompanied by a few senior officers. Margaret Meagher was one of them, soon to become our first woman ambassador, first to Israel and later to Sweden. A teachable moment for the new class.

One can only speculate who paid for the flight. Personnel Division (the forerunner of Human Resources) surely did not have the money in its budget. Perhaps some researcher will enlighten us.

The University of the East Block (UEB), 1960-61

The University of the East Block (UEB) did not take place only in the East Block. Yet most of it did – in a conference room with large windows on the east side, facing the Rideau Canal. A long, wooden table with matching wooden chairs, with a few chairs behind, easily accommodated the twenty members of our class. Most of them, alas, are no longer with us, yet they are well remembered by those who remain.

The UEB began in the autumn after we had all arrived and it carried on till the next summer when a number of us left on first posting. Its purpose was, of course, to inculcate new members of External Affairs – budding diplomats – in the work of the department and other parts of the federal government. The means was a series of lectures.

Attendance was not obligatory; no one ever took attendance so far as I recall. Personnel Division sent us a timetable and told us we should attend – unless urgent work in our division authorized by our Head of Division called us away. We were all, ostensibly, on three-month training tours in different types of work – international security, regional affairs, economic policy, consular, legal, information, etc. In practice it did not always work out that way. Once assigned to the Minister’s or Prime Minister’s Office, colleagues rarely made it to the lectures.

We enjoyed the UEB but did not take it too seriously. Not all of us were sedulous about getting to a morning lecture sharply at 9:00 am; the lecturers themselves strolled in at their ease. (Work in the department started at 8:30, and divisional secretaries were certain to have their offices open by that time.) We sometimes crept in late and found a place without much ado; if someone came in very late, it was generously assumed that they had been delayed by urgent work in their division.

Our casual attitude worked well enough till the day we were to be addressed by the Head of the Trade Commissioner Service in his own conference room in the Trade & Commerce Building (one of ‘Howe’s horrors’). This was our first foray outside the East Block, and while some arrived on time, a number did not. The Head of the Trade Commissioner Service, a middling eminence to us, reproved our conduct with heavy irony. Was this how

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External Affairs was preparing its officers to represent Canada abroad? He recognised a prominent member of our cohort whose father was a Vice-President at the Royal Bank and wondered whether these were bankers' hours!

As a group, we were mildly regretful rather than embarrassed or chagrined. The incident evoked some sympathy for our colleagues, the probationary trade commissioners, who were subject to this iron discipline, so unlike the relaxed spirit we were used to.

The schedule of the UEB was irregular as I recall it: usually one day a week with two lectures – and questions afterward – to fill the morning. Some were quite boring either because of the presentation or the subject matter. Reports on consular and information work (divisions I never got to) did not make my heart leap. Little did I know then how much they meant, practically and politically. Still, most lectures were interesting; a few fascinating.

As the presentations varied greatly in style and substance, so did our reactions. The Head of the USA Division regaled us with accounts of the bizarre bilateral problems – mainly along the border – he had been dealing with. Some serious types questioned whether he had really enlightened us on the nature of Canada-USA relations. It had not yet come to our attention that the USA Division of the day dealt only with border and technical issues. It was the Economic, Legal and International Security Divisions that covered the substantial issues in our relations with the USA in conjunction with other government departments. And only the Undersecretary, ministers and the prime minister had (or should have had) a view of the whole.

One singular lecturer was the tall, lean ADM in charge of Asia, Africa,



Detail of East Block

and the Commonwealth, George Parkin de Twenebroke Glazebrook. A distinguished historian at the University of Toronto with many publications to his name (e.g. “The History of Transportation in Canada,” a weighty tome),

Glazebrook had joined the department during the war to help with economic intelligence. He had headed the Joint Intelligence Bureau before going to Washington as Minister Counselor. In speaking to us, he focused on how to deal with a host government. He recalled a particular interview at the State Department where he had presented his case and noted the points made in response: the important thing then was to get this information quickly back to Ottawa. So his practice was to make notes in the car for the telex he would immediately dictate to his secretary back at our embassy on Massachusetts Avenue. Our reaction to all this good advice? It would be a hell of a long time before we would have a car and driver, let alone a designated secretary, to assist us! (On the whole, it did not take as long as we thought.)

We followed most lectures closely and were, therefore, well-prepared to respond with leading questions. Hardly surprising when people such as Doug Turner, Raymond Robert, Wayne Hubble, Ivan Head, Paul Lapointe, Roberto Gualtieri and David Jackson were involved. Interlocutors within the department usually enjoyed a spirited discussion, but on one occasion, with an outsider, it went beyond that.

Canada's monetary and financial policies were the subject of a lively political debate in those years. H. Scott Gordon's “The Economists vs the Bank of Canada” came out early in 1961, and James Coyne (Andrew's dad) was famously forced to resign from the Bank in a fierce controversy later that year. When Wynne Plumptre, the distinguished Associate Deputy Minister of Finance, himself came to explain where Finance and the government stood on these matters, several of his listeners took up cudgels against the evident folly of government policy. There were some heated exchanges.

As Plumptre left the room, he met Gerry Stoner coming in to brief us on commercial policy: “I tell you, Gerry,” he said ruefully, “some of these young fellows don’t believe anything you tell them!” I should add that when I came to work with Wynne Plumptre some years later, I found him to be a fount of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.

That was probably the highlight of the UEB lecture series in the East Block, but a number of outside assignments turned out to be equally interesting and useful.

First, there were the film showings offered by the National Film Board. Each showing at the NFB office in Ottawa was preceded by a brief talk outlining the essential features of what we were about to see. The NFB was buzzing with energy and inventiveness in those days. We saw a number of Norman McLaren’s brilliant animated films – some set to tricky jazz tunes – as they were coming out. Great hits when shown overseas.

There were many others but two stay vivid in my memory: “Morning on the Lievre” and “Circle of the Sun.” “Morning on the Lievre” is a haunting art film in which we see two paddlers in their canoe on the Lievre as the sun rises and casts a golden light across the autumn hills and cliffs above. The action is accompanied by, and illustrates, a reading of Archibald Lampman’s remarkable poem of the same name. The reader is very gifted but his intonation is distinctly British, which led my first ambassador, Arthur Andrew, to question – in typically pungent terms – whether we should present it as a *Canadian* film. (The counter argument is that British accents are as acceptable as other accents among immigrants to Canada. But Arthur Andrew had served under them, militarily, in WWII.)

Canada’s monetary and financial policies were the subject of a lively political debate in those years.

“Circle of the Sun” is very different. While “Morning on the Lievre” by its character needed a special audience, “Circle of the Sun” could be shown with profit everywhere even today. It draws a picture of the traditional life of the Kainai Nation of the Blood Indians of southern Alberta. The circle of their lives and the circle of the sun are caught in the circular ritual of the Sun Dance, performed at their annual powwow. The film is narrated by Pete Standing Alone who also evokes the struggles facing young people who have loosened their ties with tradition and tribal identity, but have not yet found their way in the outside world.

We were told that the producer Tim Daly and director Colin Lowe had gone well over budget on the film and that Daly had appealed for more time and money, which was denied. The final product, nevertheless, speaks for itself: the film broke new ground in focusing on an Indigenous community and in showing the Sun Dance, which the Kainai elders had allowed to be filmed for the first time.

These sessions were enjoyable and they inspired us to make good use of the NFB films in our embassy film libraries when serving abroad.

Two visits outside Ottawa were also instructive. One day we drove, grouped in our own cars, to Chalk River and visited the nuclear reactor. This was new technology then, and we were selling it to select markets overseas. We got good briefings and watched the control room in action.

One question I recall was why all the workers were wearing pink coveralls. Was this some sort of Litmus test for radioactivity? “Not at all,” was the response, “they used to take them home and keep them when they were white. They don’t take them home anymore.”

Finally, there was the outing to the NFB studios in Montreal and to the offices and studios of CBC/Radio Canada. All I recall of the NFB visit is that we got a momentary glimpse of Norman McLaren at work in his studio. We had formal briefings at the CBC and lunched with them in their cafeteria. Our briefers were English-speaking executives from the CBC and the discussion over lunch turned to the controversial Radio Canada producers’ strike of 1958/9; it was still making waves as a part the Quiet Revolution. Our queries and comments roused the most senior executive to mild fury: “I expect you think they were right!” We left if at that.

That was the University of the East Block as devised by the Personnel Division of that day, including the inimitable Charles McGaughey [“McGuff”] and Daniel Molgat among others. It served us pretty well in broadening our perspective on what foreign policy was all about.

A final footnote: perhaps Escott Reid’s famous memorandum on how to write clearly and succinctly should be added to the list. It was circulated to us as a guide for the deathless prose we ourselves would produce in innumerable reports and memoranda. I seem to recall that it was seen by some as a pompous gesture, and an unwelcome restraint on their verbal inventiveness. It may have done *some* good. Closer adherence to its principles might surely have helped some of us in later years? ■

Passion, Livres anciens

Par Claude Boucher

Rétrospectivement, rien ne me prédestinait à collectionner les livres anciens si ce n'est la fréquentation assidue de la bibliothèque de l'Institut canadien située dans le Vieux Québec. Bien sûr, lors de mon premier voyage à Paris à l'âge de 18 ans, j'avais entrevu ce monde derrière des vitrines prestigieuses ou encore chez quelques bouquinistes, mais comme simple spectateur impressionné, surtout timoré. Il a fallu attendre les premières amitiés avec des collègues européens pour que je puisse avoir un accès concret au monde des livres anciens. Une édition illustrée du XVIII^{ème} siècle des *Métamorphoses* d'Ovide. Le coup de foudre : l'odeur du papier, la finesse des gravures, le vieux français et par-dessus tout la fascination de tenir entre mes mains un témoin qui avait traversé les siècles avec son histoire propre en plus de porter un monument de la littérature universelle.

Ma décision était prise, j'allais me constituer une bibliothèque de livres anciens. Mes affectations en tant que diplomate à Paris et ailleurs m'en ont fourni l'occasion.

Mes intérêts initiaux ont porté sur l'histoire de Paris et sur l'iconographie religieuse, réminiscences sans doute de l'enfant de chœur zélé que j'ai été. Toutefois au fil des ans et devant la grande variété de livres disponibles, j'ai décidé d'élargir mes recherches avec l'objectif de rassembler ce qui aurait pu être la bibliothèque d'un Honnête homme de la fin du XVIII^{ème} siècle, soit au moment de la Révolution française.

La bibliophilie est une passion qui exige des revenus qui ne sont pas à la portée d'un père de famille salarié ! La fréquentation des ventes aux enchères et des foires de livres anciens



Claude Boucher avec ses livres.

m'avait cependant démontré que si une édition en parfait état était franchement inabordable, la même édition dans un état nécessitant une restauration élaborée était à la portée de ma bourse. C'est ainsi que lors de mon deuxième séjour à Paris, j'ai franchi la porte de l'atelier de monsieur André Minos, maître-reliur, rue Gît-le-cœur, depuis plus de trente ans. Aux côtés de monsieur Minos, pendant trois ans à la fréquence d'une soirée par semaine, je me suis initié au métier de la reliure et de la restauration de livres anciens. Un apprentissage traditionnel, à la dure, peu de renforcements positifs, mais une pléthore de commentaires presque désobligeants. C'était sa manière à lui de tester la détermination de ses élèves. Il m'a tout appris et m'a aussi conseillé pour l'achat du matériel de mon atelier de reliure. Je mets encore en pratique quelques secrets, comme celui d'ajouter du thé dans le dernier

bain d'encollage lors du lavage de vieux papiers. Cela leur donne une teinte ambrée qui vient atténuer la blancheur des pages lavées et leur restitue une allure ancienne. Des moments précieux parmi les meilleurs souvenirs de ces années parisiennes.

Le métier de relieur n'a pas beaucoup évolué depuis sa création. Nous utilisons pour la confection et la restauration d'un livre les mêmes outils et les mêmes techniques comme en font foi les planches de *l'Encyclopédie de Diderot* (1752) consacrées au métier de relieur. C'est toujours émouvant de retrouver le travail du relieur originel quand je dois refaire ou restaurer une reliure très endommagée. Ce travail peut à l'occasion réserver des surprises, par exemple, la découverte de parchemins anciens utilisés originellement dans la structure du livre. Les leçons de monsieur Minos m'ont ouvert tout un nouveau monde de possibilités.

Les livres abîmés, tachés ou encourent aux couvertures arrachées, la plupart du temps dédaignés, faisaient mon bonheur. C'était une affaire de famille, les enfants m'accompagnaient tôt tous les samedi ou dimanche matin pour écumer les marchés aux puces, les fameuses merguez-frites du marché de Vanves venaient récompenser leur patience. Je me rappelle aussi les jours pluvieux de vacances passés à laver un livre. La tâche de Paloma et Lorenzo consistait à vérifier dans la montagne de papier journal utilisé pour le séchage si une page précieuse n'avait pas été oubliée. Une fois, Paloma a trouvé deux pages restées collées ; la fierté d'une petite fille, la profonde reconnaissance du papa.

Mes acquisitions sont étroitement liées à ma carrière au ministère. Ma promotion de FS2 m'a permis d'acheter mon premier livre dans une vente aux enchères de Drouot, *Les recherches et antiquités de Paris de Henri Sauval*, publié en 1724, une des références utilisées par Victor Hugo pour écrire ses livres sur Paris. Celle de EX1, l'achat du *Journal d'un voyage fait dans L'Amérique septentrionale* par le Père Charlevoix parue en 1744, exemplaire qui s'est révélé après recherches être celui acquis par l'ancien maire de Montréal, Honoré Beaugrand, lors du voyage qu'il fit en France, en 1889, pour assister à l'exposition universelle. Enfin ma dernière promotion à Londres m'a aidé à me procurer un exemplaire complet, mais fort abîmé de l'édition in-folio paru à Lucque (1758) de *l'Encyclopédie* de Diderot (la première édition-pirate de l'encyclopédie).

Des heures de travail passées et à venir en perspective, mais avec un objectif des plus stimulants.

Fréquenter les livres anciens c'est aussi apprendre des tas de savoirs inutiles sur l'histoire des idées ou encore les pratiques littéraires des siècles passés. Par exemple la première édition française du *Prince de Machiavel* parue en 1553 qui a été

vivement critiqué comme prônant un exercice immoral et cynique du pouvoir dont se serait inspirée Catherine de Médicis (elle aussi italienne) et qui aurait conduit au massacre de la Saint-Barthélemy. Pendant plus d'un siècle, le livre a souffert d'un anathème et a donné lieu à plusieurs essais rejetant ce qui était en vérité une vision très schématique et erronée du livre de Machiavel. Ce n'est qu'un siècle plus tard qu'un érudit français, Amelot de la Houssaye fit publier une traduction annotée et nuancée du *Prince* qui marquera le début de la réhabilitation de l'œuvre de Machiavel. Traduction qui fait toujours référence aujourd'hui. Autre exemple, l'Abbé Prévost, proluxe auteur du XVIII^e siècle a écrit l'un des plus populaires romans de son époque *Le philosophe anglais ou histoire de Monsieur Cleveland, fils naturel de Cromwell*. Il s'était engagé à fournir à son éditeur hollandais chaque mois un tome de son roman qui devait en contenir cinq. Après trois tomes, la livraison avait pris un tel retard que l'éditeur, après plusieurs mises en demeure sans réponse, décida de confier à un illustre inconnu la rédaction des deux derniers tomes afin de satisfaire l'impatience des lecteurs qui avaient acheté le roman par souscription. Furieux, l'Abbé Prévost a menacé de faire un procès, mais s'est finalement résolu à publier ultérieurement ses deux tomes chez un éditeur parisien. Si bien que nous avons aujourd'hui deux versions de ce roman, une originale publiée à Paris et l'autre apocryphe publiée à La Haye.

Cette fois, c'est l'ambassadeur de Suède à Paris qui s'était engagé à publier un conte dont il avait confié l'illustration au renommé peintre François Boucher. Rappelé à Stockholm pour occuper un poste ministériel, il n'a pu compléter son projet. L'éditeur, déjà en possession des gravures connues pour l'illustration du livre suédois, a eu l'idée inédite de les confier à un autre auteur, Duclos, en lui demandant

d'écrire un conte s'inspirant de celles-ci. Cette œuvre, *Acajou et Zirphile*, est sans doute la première où l'illustration a précédé la rédaction !

Les 'vieux' livres cachent aussi de formidables histoires sur les travers ou les manies de leurs propriétaires passés. Ainsi mon exemplaire de l'un des plus anciens et plus fameux livres de gynécologie *Traité des maladies de femmes grosses* par François Mauriceau (1675) a été amputé des pages et illustrations du chapitre sur les parties honteuses (sic). Cette pratique de censure semble assez courante à l'époque puisque l'exemplaire de ce livre tenu par la Bibliothèque de France a subi les mêmes outrages. Cette pudibonderie touche aussi les livres religieux. Dans mon édition de *la Bible illustrée* publiée par Mortier (1705), toutes les gravures ou l'on peut entrevoir une partie nue de l'anatomie féminine (et Dieu sait combien elles peuvent être nombreuses !) ont toutes été coupées. A force de chiner aux puces, j'ai pu en retrouver quelques-unes, mais je sais que je ne pourrai les retrouver toutes tant le pudibond a fait preuve de détermination. Autre anecdote, un prêtre converti au calvinisme a publié en 1701, un pamphlet antipapiste intitulé *Les aventures de la Madone et de Saint-François d'Assise*, immédiatement mis à l'index par l'Église catholique. Encore, la fameuse planche où l'on voit la Madone donner la tétée à Saint-Dominique est manquante, comme c'est très souvent le cas. Dommage !

Les ventes aux enchères sont aujourd'hui les principales occasions pour acquérir des livres et peuvent produire des résultats inattendus. Une édition des *Pensées* de Pascal, sommairement décrite dans un catalogue américain, s'est révélée être, la révision, de la très recherchée édition dite de Port-Royal, considérée comme l'édition originale de cette œuvre majeure de Pascal. De même, la fameuse première édition posthume des œuvres complètes

de Molière, parue en 1683, célèbre pour ses 30 gravures de costumes d'époque, annoncée et incomplète par un commissaire-priseur négligent, s'est révélée bel et bien complète. Une grande joie pas très éloignée de celle de l'orpailleur qui découvre soudainement une pépite dans son tamis.

Quelques mots finalement sur les livres orphelins. La tentation est souvent grande d'acheter à l'occasion un tome isolé d'un livre rare qui en contient plusieurs dans l'espoir, bien mince il faut l'avouer, de rencontrer un jour le ou les tomes manquants. Ce qui suit n'est pas une histoire de pêche. J'ai acheté, il y a quelques années à San Francisco, le tome 2 de *l'Histoire de l'Empire*, publiée en 1684, premier essai sérieux sur l'histoire de ce qui est en grande partie l'Allemagne d'aujourd'hui. Eh bien, je viens de trouver, grâce à Internet, le tome I chez un libraire anglais: même reliure, même provenance, un miracle. Difficile de savoir quand les tomes ont été séparés, mais les voilà enfin réunis et ils termineront leur itinéraire ensemble dans le confort d'une bibliothèque universitaire.

Au fil de la croissance de ma bibliothèque s'est posée la question de sa destination ultime. Son maintien dans la famille n'était pas véritablement une option, car les 'vieux' livres de papa ne suscitent pas la même dévotion chez les nouvelles générations, ce qui est tout à fait compréhensible. J'ai aussi vu trop de ventes aux enchères de 'Bibliothèque d'un amateur' pour vouloir que la mienne subisse le même sort. Assez rapidement donc j'ai envisagé de la léguer à une institution afin d'en faire profiter d'autres bien sûr. Le choix de l'Université Laval, mon alma mater, s'est imposé d'emblée. Toutefois, comme la collection actuelle de l'Université Laval s'élève déjà à plus de 25,000 ouvrages, il n'était pas évident que mes livres représenteraient un intérêt pour l'Université. J'ai été très heureux quand l'Université, après une visite, m'a confirmé qu'elle serait heureuse d'accueillir mon don. En effet au moment du déménagement de l'Université Laval sur son campus actuel au début des années 60, la plus grande partie des livres anciens est demeurée au Petit séminaire de

Québec pour ensuite constituer le principal fonds de livres anciens du Musée de la Nouvelle France qu'abrite une aile originale des bâtiments du Petit séminaire. La collection de l'Université Laval, elle, s'est principalement enrichie des dons des différentes communautés religieuses qui ont cessé leurs activités au siècle dernier. Sa concentration est grandement religieuse et ma collection plus éclectique trouve donc une place. Une grande satisfaction. Par ce don qui s'échelonna sur plusieurs années, je suis heureux de pouvoir redonner à une communauté qui m'a beaucoup apporté en me fournissant les moyens de réaliser mes ambitions. Espérons que d'autres amoureux de vieux livres y trouveront aussi leur bonheur. Finalement, je suis aussi également redevable à la bibliothèque de l'Université Laval d'accueillir mes livres et ainsi de continuer de donner vie à l'itinéraire et la volonté qui ont présidé au rassemblement de cette collection. ■

Claude Boucher a été posté à Kinshasa, Mexico, Paris, l'OIE, Port-au-Prince et Londres.



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“Trust, but Verify”

The Verification Research Program: A Canadian Success Story 1984-2000

By *Gordon Vachon*

“Trust, but verify.” Who has not heard that expression, repeated frequently, including in Russian, by President Ronald Reagan in the late-1980s? It is usually identified with the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty on 8 December 1987; but, of course, that was not the first time that verification was seen to be critical to arms control agreements.

In the 1960s, 70s and into the 80s, any discussion of arms control and disarmament (ACD) seemed destined to flounder over verification as the irremediable obstacle to progress on multilateral ACD agreements, with national security and technology secrets seen as needful of protection from prying eyes. At the bilateral USA/USSR strategic level, national technical means and other provisions could bridge the gap; but expanding beyond that, particularly in regard to challenge inspection, the litmus test of a commitment to compliance, had proven so far to be a show-stopper.

Nonetheless, technological as well as on-site inspection constraints on verification were already being questioned in Canadian circles and had been since the late-1970s, particularly within the Department of External Affairs (DEA) in advance of the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSOD I, 1978), with prompting from Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Canadian research began to pick up speed in the early-1980s, including in cooperation with a Department of National Defence (DND) research unit. There was a further burst of energy in DEA, prompted again by PM Trudeau, leading up to UNSSOD II (1982).

Indeed, the Prime Minister’s speech to UNSSOD II reflected his deeply-held conviction that East-West tensions, driven by hawkish rhetoric and nuclear deployment and deterrence issues, needed to be addressed at the highest political levels. To this end he encouraged countries to engage on verification as being central to making progress on disarmament negotiations in the 1980s. He also pledged that Canada would substantially increase its own research on verification, utilizing expertise available inside and outside government – and he followed through on that pledge.

Even with the best of intentions, it took the Trudeau peace initiative (dated from 27 October 1983 through to the end of June 1984, when his resignation took effect) to give form to his earlier commitment made at UNSSOD II. The most tangible national developments were twofold: the creation of the arms-length, non-governmental Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security (CIIPS); and the formation of the Verification Research Unit (VRU), along with provision of DEA funding for its Verification Research Program (VERPROG), embedded in 1984 within DEA’s Arms Control and Disarmament Division. CIIPS was to engage primarily with civil society, while the VRU was to provide enhanced substantive content and continuity to the Canadian Government’s increased involvement in ACD negotiations and forums.

It could be said that all this effort began from one simple premise: since verification was often being portrayed as the impediment to

progress (without any real proof, it needs be added, though there was plenty of related political obstruction in various forums), then it needed to be targeted for detailed examination. The Canadian view was that detailed analysis with specialist input might then show the way to break through the impasse. The DEA engagement not only provided the logical institutional home for this new governmental priority (subsequently enthusiastically embraced by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney’s Government and his Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA) Joe Clark as well as his activist senior staff), it also provided the legitimacy for DEA to approach other Government departments directly for support. Equally important, DEA’s commitment included the financial resources to reach out to many universities and to private industry for scientific input and the benefit of their technological expertise. At the same time, the internal bureaucratic lines were essentially cut to a minimum, albeit with helpful oversight and ready assistance from Public Works.

It bears repeating that the ‘magic ingredient’ came from embedding the non-rotational core VRU personnel in the Arms Control and Disarmament Division at External Affairs, so that specialist and diplomatic expertise fused as a single operating entity when and where their involvement inevitably overlapped. There was no arms-length communication gap: the Unit and political officers read the same telegram traffic (later emails), worked on the same initiatives, and

substituted for or supported one another seamlessly as circumstances warranted. Some foreign service/ political officers worked within the VRU for varying periods, and subsequently went on to develop their own distinguished diplomatic careers.

The style of leadership within the VRU was collegial and diffused: officers had their separate areas of expertise and responsibility in advancing projects, and were expected to get on with their work. Operating as a separate section within the Arms Control and Disarmament Division, the VRU held a form of weekly 'updating' meeting, often standing about in the common area. At the Divisional level, it took the different form of a daily (morning only) coffee break from 10:00 to 10:30 – provided and presided over by the experienced disciplinary Divisional Secretary, Pat Cocker – when everyone without exception was expected to appear (whether liking coffee or not, though they could bring their own tea). Here, updates were more casual and anecdotal, since everyone read the same reporting messages, if they had time. Cross-pollination of ideas and assistance was fluid. As one well knows, negotiations in the ACD domain invariably lasted years, and initiatives often took months of preparation. At the Divisional level, the management style could also be described as fluid: draft instructions would flow upward to the Director for comment as necessary, then move onwards to the Bureau's Director-General when required. The same process applied in the preparation of the Unit's annual summation and project proposal booklet looking ahead to the coming year. It was a very personalized style of Divisional and Unit leadership, within a management framework that ensured the necessary, but not oppressive, oversight. At the 'pit face', Pat Cocker and the Unit's patient and efficient secretary, Dorise Nina, ensured that all paperwork got to where it needed to go, on time – and it all worked.

At the substantive level, to deepen the technical content of Divisional international interactions, through the VERPROG it was possible to cut through red tape and engage with technical and scientific experts from DND, Health Canada, Science and Technology, Energy Mines and Resources, to mention some of the most active; and from universities across the country when Government experts were heavily engaged elsewhere and not readily available. Many scholars engaged in contracts in the pursuit of ACD, and expanded their own horizons by being brought to participate directly in the negotiating forums and international meetings. Everyone benefited. Every project had a deliverable, results were generally published in-house, shared with relevant negotiating bodies and international partners, and distributed to university libraries throughout Canada and abroad.

The VERPROG also provided opportunities for some Canadian students involved in ACD studies to participate each year in VRU-run conferences in Canada, giving papers and meeting with distinguished international specialists. The conference papers, often compiled by York University, were also distributed widely to universities. Some of the more active university partners included staff and talented students from universities in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, York, Toronto, Kingston, Waterloo, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax, for example.

Over its lifetime, the VRU/ VERPROG provided input to all ACD negotiations, as well as other bodies wherever verification was an issue (e.g. in no particular order or chronology: CWC, CTBT, BTWC Verification Protocol, CFE, Open Skies, CCW, CCSBMDE, ASEAN, MEPP, and others; to which may be added Track Two efforts on the Middle East and on Korea, and non-proliferation bodies such as the Australia Group, MTCR and the

Wassenaar Arrangement). The fusion of VRU and Divisional political officers was particularly evident in New York (First Committee, Disarmament Commission, and special committees) and Geneva (CD, CWC negotiations, BTWC Protocol efforts) and Vienna (CFE). The Open Skies Treaty was another area where Canada played a key role, exchanging trial overflights with Hungary to provide 'proof of concept' and rigour. Indeed, Canada and Hungary became the depositaries of the treaty in recognition of their special contributions to the Open Skies process.

VERPROG was heavily involved in the CWC negotiations, drawing on expertise from DND and the University of Saskatchewan; and in the efforts to develop and consider verification measures to enhance the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) -- including in both cases running practice trial on-site inspection exercises with international participation. It would also be fair to say that support from senior levels of Government and DEA also helped in promoting the refurbishment of the Yellowknife Seismic Array, very much with a future CTBT in mind. Indeed, a conference to consider GSETT-2 (Group of Scientific Experts Second Technical Test) was held with VRU support in Yellowknife, an event timed to celebrate the renewal of the Array. (A Canadian Government scientist was the coordinator of GSETT-2.) Distinguished Canadian scientists involved in those technical tests also went on to work at the fledgling CTBTO/Provisional Technical Secretariat (now an 'older fledgling', but doing good real-time work while awaiting the day when the United States, China and a number of other key countries sign and/or ratify the Treaty).

To all of these bodies, substantive Canadian submissions were made and supported by Canadian experts,

whether from within DEA or other Government departments; from industry; or from universities. For example, Canada hosted Geneva's Conference on Disarmament Ambassadors in Montreal, with input from McGill University and SPAR Aerospace, in promoting an Outer Space Treaty. Although 'whole of government' was a term becoming fashionable in the rest of Ottawa, VRU members used to say it was involved in a 'whole of society' approach.

For those who value statistics: a study conducted in 1999 for DFAIT by Dr. Ernest Gilman (formerly a Director of Strategic Analysis at DND) informs us that "Since its origins, the programme has initiated over three hundred and fifty research projects, published more than two hundred studies for internal use as well as for public consumption in support of NACD [non-proliferation arms control and disarmament] policy."

It would also not be an exaggeration to suggest that all of this interaction with universities and industry contributed to the Ambassador for Disarmament's annual Consultative Group meeting with civil society representatives. Of course, there was the usual encouragement for Canada to do more, but there was also considerable evidence to demonstrate Canada's commitment to ACD on all fronts: nuclear, chemical, biological, radiological, outer space, conventional, small arms, geographic (Track 2), as well as on confidence-building measures (CBMs) including in the Middle East, Latin America and Asia.

Over the VRU's lifetime, there was not a serious discussion going on regarding multilateral ACD or non-proliferation arrangements or CBMs without Canadian expertise present at the table, and Canadian proposals going forward. The studies to support those positions were generally performed by Canadians, though sometimes in cooperation

with other countries (e.g. practice trial on-site inspections in Montreal and at Canadian Forces Base Lahr, and others run by the Netherlands and the UK). When work on projects included eminent non-Canadians – and there were a few such projects – it was always with an equally capable Canadian participant.

It might be added that recognition of Canadian engagement and verification expertise came reasonably quickly from another source, when Ron Cleminson – the founding Head of the Unit -- was invited and appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General to become a Commissioner on the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM), just seven years after VERPROG arrived on the scene; and then on the subsequent United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC).

To sum up: Stemming from the Trudeau peace initiative, the Verification Research Program throughout its existence 1984-2000 contributed substantive Canadian input to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament deliberations, negotiations and agreements, while also helping to foster greater informed awareness, growth and participation of Canadian civil society in many such affairs.

Postscript: Gordon Vachon, the author of this piece, joined Ron Cleminson in 1984 and, with the arrival of Alan Crawford that same year, they constituted the VRU's non-rotational nucleus, augmented temporarily by numerous other talented people along the way. Gordon succeeded Ron Cleminson in 1994 as Head of the VRU, also becoming Deputy-Director of the Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division. He became Canada's Alternate Permanent Representative to the OPCW in 1998, retiring from DFAIT in 2001,

thereby following Ron and Alan who had retired earlier.

Alas, changing Departmental priorities, budgetary issues, personnel changes and ACD deadlock all played their part in bringing this sixteen-year segment of DEA's history to an end. It was a good run, but not quite the end of this story: Ron received recognition for his leadership and contributions via his award of the Order of Canada and multiple honorary doctorates; Alan could take pride in the hundreds of VERPROG publications circulating in Canada and among national delegations worldwide; and Gordon continued their work on the staff of the OPCW and, subsequently, as a consultant to the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO. ■

ERRATA :

Dans notre édition de décembre 2021, les éditeurs ont raccourci l'excellent article de Gabriel Lessard - « 1973. Vietnam. L'aventure CICS/ICCS (Commission internationale de Contrôle et Surveillance) » mettant plutôt l'accent sur l'expérience du collègue Lessard à la Commission. Les noms d'acteurs clés, dont l'Ambassadeur Michel Gauvin et de l'agent d'affectation, Marc Perron, furent omis. Parmi les autres omissions figuraient plusieurs lignes sur le défi que représentaient les concours d'entrée aux Affaires extérieures et celles relatant les efforts héroïques des parents de Gabriel qui ont voyagé en plein hiver de Bergeronnes, près de Tadoussac, jusqu'à Ottawa, malgré une tempête de neige, afin de récupérer sa voiture avant son départ pour le Vietnam. Nous regrettons que ces omissions aient pu créer une certaine confusion quant à la compréhension du texte de Gabriel.

Le comité éditorial de Forum

Le Canada et les juifs syriens

By François LaRochelle

Le décès au printemps dernier du dernier grand rabbin de Syrie Avraham Hamra à Holon, en Israël, m'a personnellement touché. C'était un homme exceptionnel et particulièrement attachant.

Lorsque j'étais en poste à l'Ambassade du Canada à Damas, au début des années '90, j'ai eu l'honneur de le côtoyer dans le cadre de mon travail diplomatique. Malgré le contexte très difficile de l'époque pour sa communauté qui était discriminée, et interdite de quitter le pays, il était toujours souriant, chaleureux et attentionné.

Le grand rabbin Hamra devait à la fois servir sa communauté tout en jouant les équilibristes avec le régime dictatorial d'Hafez Al Assad. Une tâche complexe. Il y avait encore près de 4000 juifs, surtout à Damas mais aussi à Alep et Qamisli dans le nord-est du pays.

Plusieurs organisations juives ont été actives pour aider financièrement les juifs syriens au cours des années, soulever des cas de détentions et de torture et finalement obtenir qu'ils puissent quitter.

C'est Mme Judy Feld Carr de Toronto qui fut l'instigatrice et la maitre-d'oeuvre de cette campagne du côté canadien. Elle y a consacré plus de 25 ans de sa vie. C'était une cause qu'elle défendait sans relâche. Déterminée et volontaire elle a réussi à convaincre le gouvernement canadien de s'impliquer de manière concrète. Elle a d'ailleurs été décorée de l'Ordre du Canada et de la médaille présidentielle israélienne pour son action.

On ignore généralement le rôle que les diplomates canadiens ont joué pour faciliter le départ des juifs de Syrie.

De 1991 à 1993, j'ai fait la liaison avec le grand rabbin et d'autres contacts pour m'enquérir de la situation de la communauté, de la situation de ceux qui étaient emprisonnés et souvent torturés pour avoir tenté de quitter la Syrie. Ou simplement dire au revoir à certains qui partaient.

Les rencontres secrètes avec mes interlocuteurs se tenaient généralement la nuit. Je recueillais de l'information pour Ottawa et passais des messages de la part de Mme Feld Carr.

C'était parfois très émouvant. Ce n'était pas toujours facile pour certains de tout abandonner derrière eux pour un avenir inconnu à l'étranger. Beaucoup de juifs plus âgés ne parlaient que l'arabe avec des rudiments d'hébreu ou de français. J'en ai vu pleurer.

Je risquais d'être arrêté et éventuellement expulsé du pays. Que je sache nous étions la seule ambassade qui prenait de tels risques.

Quand je me rendais dans le quartier juif du vieux Damas j'étais suivi dans ses ruelles mal éclairées, par des agents de la mukhabarat, les services de sécurité syriens. On pouvait les reconnaître facilement. Ils portaient tous des blousons de cuir noir et des chaussettes blanches. Avec une barbe de trois jours et des faces de tueur.

Mes conversations téléphoniques étaient écoutées. J'avais développé un langage codé avec mon vis-à-vis aux Affaires étrangères à Ottawa, notre regretté collègue Denis Grégoire de Blois qui s'occupait des relations avec la Syrie à la direction du Moyen-Orient.

Les services secrets syriens n'étaient pas très subtils. Ainsi quand je quittais le domicile du grand rabbin, un coup de sifflet se faisait entendre. C'était pour signaler que la filature pouvait reprendre. Une autre fois alors que je parlais en français au téléphone avec Denis Grégoire, l'agent syrien qui nous écoutait était intervenu au milieu de notre conversation pour nous demander de parler en anglais pour comprendre ce que nous nous disions !

Le service d'immigration canadien a facilité l'obtention de visas pour des juifs syriens.

Denis Grégoire retournant au Canada après une mission en Syrie, a réussi à ex-filtrer un inestimable livre religieux,

caché dans son porte- documents.

Au plan officiel, notre Ambassadeur, Martin Collacott, effectuait régulièrement des démarches auprès des autorités syriennes sur le sort de la communauté juive de Syrie.

Elles se heurtaient à un mur d'intransigeance mais ses efforts ainsi que ceux des représentants d'autres pays ont finalement fait reculer le régime dans des cas de détention et pour obtenir le droit de départ.

En 1995, après que la plupart des juifs syriens eurent quitté le pays, une émouvante cérémonie en l'honneur de ceux qui avaient contribué à cette heureuse conclusion se déroula à la Synagogue Beth Tzedec de Toronto. J'ai toujours ma plaque du "Judy Feld Carr Award for Humanitarian Service".

La veille, à l'occasion d'un dîner du Shabat, l'ambassadeur Israélien de l'époque, Itzhak Shelef, avait lu un message du Premier ministre Rabbin pour remercier Mme Feld Carr et souligner le rôle des diplomates canadiens. Le grand rabbin Hamra et son épouse y assistaient. Ainsi que Denis Grégoire et moi-même.

Cette période de ma carrière m'aura beaucoup marqué.

Car ce que la petite équipe de diplomates canadiens a accompli, il y a une trentaine d'années maintenant, est assez unique. Cela méritait d'être signalé, je crois. D'autant plus que les témoins de cette époque ne sont plus très nombreux. Cet épisode symbolise la traditionnelle politique canadienne de défense des droits de la personne.

Quand on pense à ce qui serait arrivé aux juifs de Syrie pendant la récente guerre civile menée par Bachar Al Assad, s'ils y étaient encore, je me dis que nous avons probablement sauvé bien des vies et évité beaucoup de souffrances. ■

François LaRochelle a été en poste à deux reprises au Caire, ainsi qu'à Damas, Vienne et Bruxelles. À la retraite, il est Fellow à l'Institut d'études internationales de Montréal (UQÀM).

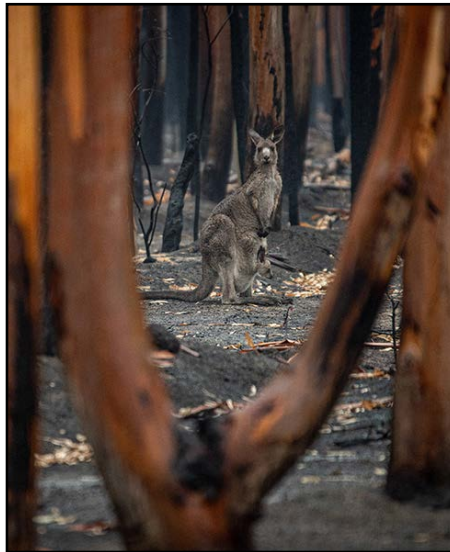
Les diplomates australiens à la retraite montent aux créneaux de la lutte aux changements climatiques

By Jean Riopel

Un objectif de Forum est de faire connaître à ses lecteurs des initiatives intéressantes de diplomates à la retraite ailleurs dans le monde. Nous vous présentons ici celle d'un groupe de retraités des Affaires étrangères de l'Australie qui s'est donné pour mission de convaincre leur gouvernement de prendre des mesures concrètes et urgentes pour répondre à ses obligations internationales dans la lutte aux changements climatiques.

Ces Diplomats for Climate Action Now (Diplomates pour une action immédiate sur le climat) rallient une centaine de retraités, dont 38 anciens ambassadeurs. Ils se sont mis d'accord dans les mois précédents la COP 26 de Glasgow sur les termes et les objectifs d'une déclaration commune intitulée A Climate Focused Policy for Australia (Une Politique étrangère pour l'Australie axée sur le climat). Grâce à un généreux donateur qui a demandé de rester anonyme, ils ont pu publier leur déclaration le 8 décembre 2021 en page complète de publicité payante dans un quotidien de Sydney, The Australian.

Dans cette déclaration, les ex-diplomates décrivent les changements climatiques comme une menace existentielle mondiale qui pèse sur l'humanité et une menace immédiate pour la sécurité nationale de l'Australie. " Si nous n'agissons pas, écrivent-ils, nos exportations seront compromises quand les autres pays commenceront à imposer des taxes sur le carbone aux frontières ou refuseront d'importer des produits à forte teneur de carbone... Cela réduira notre influence dans



A kangaroo and her joey who survived the forest fires in Mallacoota, Australia.

les forums internationaux et sapera notre capacité à atteindre nos objectifs internationaux lorsque nos alliés, nos partenaires, nos concurrents nous pénaliseront pour ne pas peser de tout notre poids sur les changements climatiques ”.

Les ex-diplomates proposent une série d'initiatives que le gouvernement australien devrait adopter sans tarder pour remplir ses obligations en vertu de l'Accord de Paris sur les changements climatiques dont il est un des signataires. Pour le court terme, ils accordent une très haute priorité à la nécessité d'interdire les nouveaux projets de production de combustibles fossiles, de production d'électricité avec du charbon et l'ouverture de nouvelles mines de charbon. Ils visent à faire cesser la production de charbon au plus tard en 2035. Les diplomates à la retraite ne s'en tiennent pas qu'aux hydrocarbures et s'attaquent aussi

à d'autres enjeux majeurs comme la déforestation et préconisent des mesures radicales de transition vers une économie verte visant un bilan de zéro émission nette de GES en 2050, une recalibration des objectifs internationaux de l'Australie sur les questions environnementales et l'adoption d'une stratégie d'exportation basée sur les énergies vertes et renouvelables.

L'Australie est au 4ème rang des plus grands producteurs de charbon au monde et est le 2ème exportateur mondial. Son gouvernement de coalition dirigé par le libéral Scott Morrison est divisé sur les objectifs climatiques en raison de l'importance pour l'économie du pays de l'exploitation du charbon et des hydrocarbures, dont la majeure partie est exportée surtout en Chine. Le gouvernement affirme qu'il est hors de question de réduire l'exportation de charbon et compte sur de nouvelles technologies pour atteindre la carboneutralité.

Bravo à nos ex-collègues australiens pour leur ambitieuse initiative qui attaque de front l'hésitation de leur gouvernement fédéral en matière de lutte aux changements climatiques! Le défi est de taille. Aurions-nous la volonté d'en faire tout autant au Canada? Pour mieux connaître les tenants et les aboutissants de cette initiative australienne et en suivre les développements, on peut visiter le site internet de l'organisation (en anglais: www.diplomatsforclimate.org). ■

Retraité depuis 2011, Jean Riopel a surtout fait carrière dans le secteur des relations avec les États-Unis.

Haiti: Is There A Way Out?

By John Graham



Photo: Robin Canfield, Unsplash

Coastal Hillside - Haiti

Haiti has troubled and bewitched me. Its stygian complexity, bottomless poverty, unchanging corruption, gorgeous graphic arts, drums at night, and insoluble challenges became a chord which ran through my diplomatic and international careers. My first visit was in 1960 to a country in the grip of Papa Doc Duvalier and his Tonton Macoutes (secret police). The last was in 2010 when I visited shortly after a catastrophic earthquake, leading a small team on behalf of Jimmy Carter's 'Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter'.

The country has been in the news with a sequence of disasters: an earthquake in the Southwest corner, followed by a tropical storm, by

the assassination of the president, the increasingly blatant eruption of criminal gangs and the recent kidnapping of sixteen Americans and one Canadian whose release to avoid execution is priced at one million US dollars each – incidentally promoting Haiti to 'World Kidnapping Capital'. The disasters, both human and natural, are not exceptional: they have become the norm in this, the poorest and most tragic country of our hemisphere.

By any standard, Haiti is a failed state – top or bottom of every hemispheric index of social and health conditions - whichever denotes worst. It has the second highest record for coup d'états in the hemisphere. Poverty,

malnutrition and violence breed a grim family of horrors in any setting - not least for children, and Haiti is no exception: exploitation, stunted growth, mental illness, insecurity, violence, including sexual abuse, inadequate or non-existent access to clean water, education and health care.

Has it always been like this? Surviving records indicate that conditions for the indigenous Taino people had been relatively peaceful until the arrival of Columbus and Spanish colonizers. The Taino were enslaved and soon wiped out by harsh working conditions and disease, whereupon they were replaced by sturdier slaves imported from Africa. Commercially, the new work force was a stunning success. For the French colonizers who seized the Western half of the Island of Hispaniola in 1697, Haiti became a bonanza. By the 1750's with the returns on timber, sugar, cotton, cacao and indigo the value of Haitian exports exceeded that of the combined exports of the thirteen British colonies on the eastern seaboard of North America. Haiti had become "the Pearl of the Antilles".

Exploitation of the slaves was the undoing of the French, the end of the bonanza, and a resounding humiliation for Napoleon. Slaves not only worked the fields, but were educated to take on administrative functions within the colony. Literate slaves with leadership skills led a revolt, which after five years of vicious carnage, abetted by tropical disease, crushed the French army and led to independence.

This was the first successful, major slave revolt since Spartacus 1900 years before. Haitians have little to cheer about these days, but can look with pride at the courage and skill of their predecessors' achievement of nationhood over a once invincible European power. By supplying much needed munitions, Haiti played a key role in Bolivar's defeat of Spain in Venezuela.

How could things go so wrong? Twelve years of war had devastated a prosperous infrastructure. Sugar and all the industries along with the country's docks, mills and warehouses had been destroyed. Primary forests disappeared as the timber was taken for the French navy with the result that every tropical storm washes more diminishing soil into the sea. The price of victory was ruinous. To gain recognition Haiti was forced to pay crippling reparations to the French – payments that continued until 1947! Still in the slavery business, the Americans were not enthusiastic about the world's first free black republic at their doorstep. Thomas Jefferson, a slave owner himself, imposed a commercial boycott on Haiti and diplomatic recognition by the United States was delayed 60 years. These were major impediments to development from which the country has never recovered – and Voodoo, a colourful but fatalistic theology, has not helped. The country deserves a better hand than it has been dealt.

In the course of my visit eleven years ago, I talked to political leaders and senior officers of MINUSTAH, the large UN team that was charged with imposing a foreign administered system of governance and order in a chaotic, gang invested vacuum and with preparing for a 'free' election. Order was the task of a UN military unit under a Brazilian general and police unit under a RCMP superintendant. Election results were widely contested and I wrote at the time that it was "highly probable that all major parties engaged in some degree of fraud." When a winner was finally declared it was Martelly, a charismatic rap singer backed by followers with the proven capacity to close down the country. Port-au-Prince must be the most "barricade-able" city on Earth. With few exceptions the streets are narrow and strewn with rubble. Add a tire, light it, and if handy, throw in the carcass of an old car - and presto, you have stopped all traffic save a few enterprising motorcycles. This same, soon-to-be president, was also known to drop his trousers at the end of a

concert and moon the audience.

I tell the story of MINUSTAH because at the time it seemed to offer a route out of chaos even as it appropriated a portion of national sovereignty. Tragically, its promise was never realized. Nepalese UN soldiers infected the country with cholera. Thousands died and a potential 'way out' was undermined.

Absorbing with difficulty the challenges faced by the UN and Haiti's friends, including Canada, I interviewed the astute, well-connected correspondent of *Le Monde* who had spent 30 years in the region, mostly in Haiti. Asked if there was a way out, he replied "pas de sortie". Eleven years on and so far he is proven right. ■

John Graham, a Canadian diplomat for many years, was the first head of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy in the Organisation of American States (OAS), as well as an international mediator in the Dominican Republic, Chair of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas, and writer and editorial cartoonist for the Manor Park Chronicle.



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Macro photography

By Victor Rakmil

Macro and close-up photography is a window on amazing things; it can tweak the imagination of your audience and document a reality that would otherwise be hard to see. Getting close in photography can mean working with microscopes (photomicrography), to using the lenses you already have to get much closer to your subject.

Most camera manufacturers make macro or micro lenses. Usually the lenses have a ratio of 1:1, that is the subject fills the screen; 5:1 means a fifth of the subject fills the frame. As for focal length: 60, 90, 100 and 105 mm are the most common; the more mm, the farther away from your subject at 1:1. 105 mm works well for insects (and portraits). With a modest expenditure getting closer might not involve a new lens, or a large investment. A few examples below:

While I would not recommend it, reversing a lens you already own on your camera with an adapter will get you dramatically closer. Adapters cost \$5 to \$20. However, your camera will be fully manual and much more complicated to use.

Close-up filters, good ones, can cost enough to make buying a lens viable.

Extension tubes are another good option; many models allow for you to use all the features of your camera and they will cost under \$100.

Extension tubes let you focus closer by moving your existing lens away from the body of the camera. A set of tubes normally comes in the form of three pieces: 12, 20 and 36 mm. You can use them separately or all together and they cost \$65-100. You can also use them, as I do, with a macro lens for best effect. Using these get you closer and are the best fit for most photographers. They limit you

to close-up photography - you would have to remove the tube (s) to take a photo of a bird.

Canon has the MP-E 65 mm lens, which you can probably still find, that does five times life (1:1 to 5:1) . It's a manual lens as is the Laowa 25mm 2.5-5 (a Lens I own). After 5:1 life, the technology becomes more scientific, more expensive, more complicated and much harder to get enough light and sharp photographs.

The cheapest solution is using the gear you have. If you are interested in large insects and getting closer to flowers, the place to start is with your birding lens. I often use my 200-500 mm lens for butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies, the larger insects and flowers. The trick is how you crop and how to enlarge the crop without losing detail (very easy in Photoshop and Lightroom). Wide angle lenses,

and some primes are capable of focusing very, very close, almost 1:1.

Cropped sensor cameras have deeper depth of field at any F-stop than a full frame camera. What you give up in resolution you make up for in depth of field.

Insects make great subjects and I never thought I would go face to face with spiders, but some, like jumping spiders, are beautiful as are some trechoppers and butterflies. Entomology is fascinating just like lichenology, and lichen and mushrooms shot close up make great photos. Day to day objects can look interesting close up too. Toilet paper at 5:1 looks positively Jackson Pollack-like! Finding things to shoot is easier than it sounds.

The trick to finding insects is that most only come out at around 15c. At lower temperatures they may be lethargic or asleep and easier to shoot. Walking slowly in any natural environment and looking closely at the bushes by the side of the path is where I find most insects. Some will fly away and you can track them with



© Victor Rakmil 2014

your eye and then photograph them when they land (grasshoppers); others return to the place they flew away from (dragonflies).

As soon as you focus around 1:1, light is at a premium and the depth of field is significantly reduced, in some cases to millimetres or less. So using artificial light (a flash) and some diffusion for that light is a must. There are specialized flash units for macro, they sound great but are better for forensics. A simple solution is using a dedicated flash and something like Amazon's "Universal Folding Photography Flash Lens Diffuser Reflector" \$13.95. Flash Photography is not as complicated as it sounds - especially manual flash. As a rule of thumb, F14 in manual flash at 1/8th power is a good starting point. But Flash Photography is worth its own column. (Note: the pop-up flash on your camera does not have enough power to be useful.)

There are techniques like focus stacking, with focusing rails (manual



and automatic with special software) but it's a rabbit hole, one I am enjoying but it is very expensive. I have not tried photomicrography (look up Nikon Small World to see what that looks like). Going beyond 1:5 is where you need expensive tools to get a reasonable shot. To give an example, if a car drives by on the

street the resulting shake could ruin a photo at magnifications of greater than 5:1. (See the photo of the bluenose on a dime)

Given how interesting getting closer is, whatever method you choose it's worth trying it in the field with insects and flowers and at home with common items. ■

Announcements / Annonces

CONGRATULATIONS TO MS. DEBORAH CHATSIS

On December 29, 2021, Governor General Mary Simon appointed our former colleague Deborah Chatsis to the Order of Canada: "For her leadership as the first woman of a First Nation to serve as ambassador for Canada, and for her advocacy of human rights around the globe." Ms. Chatsis entered the foreign service in 1989, and served in Beijing, Bogota, Miami, Geneva, New York and then as Ambassador to Vietnam and Guatemala. In 2015, she received an honorary degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She is a member of the Ahtahkakoop First Nation. Forum extends sincere congratulations to Ms. Chatsis and wishes her every success with her current projects.

FÉLICITATIONS À MME DEBORAH CHATSIS

Le 29 décembre 2021, la gouverneure générale, Mary Simon, a décerné à notre ancienne collègue Deborah Chatsis l'Ordre du Canada : « Pour son leadership en tant que première femme d'une Première Nation à servir comme ambassadrice du Canada et pour sa défense des droits de la personne dans le monde. » Mme Chatsis est entrée au service extérieur en 1989 et a servi à Beijing, Bogota, Miami, Genève, New York, puis en tant qu'ambassadrice au Vietnam et au Guatemala. En 2015, elle a reçu un diplôme honorifique de l'Université de la Saskatchewan. Elle est membre de la Première Nation Ahtahkakoop. Forum adresse ses sincères félicitations à Mme Chatsis et lui souhaite beaucoup de succès dans ses projets en cours.

Rafael Jacob, L'Amérique au bord du gouffre

Par Robert Laffont, 327 pages



Par Eric Pelletier

Ce ne sont pas les auteurs de livres, essais, ou articles qui manquent ces jours-ci se prononçant sur la situation politique des États-Unis. Les années chaotiques de la présidence de Donald Trump l'expliquent en partie. Plusieurs auteurs se montrent plutôt pessimistes face au climat délétère actuel. Les événements du 6 janvier 2021 confortent probablement cette tendance.

C'est dans cette mouvance que s'inscrit le dernier livre de Rafael Jacob. M. Jacob est détenteur d'un doctorat en science politique de l'Université Temple de Philadelphie. Il est chercheur associé à la Chaire Raoul-Dandurand et enseigne dans trois universités. Il commente l'actualité américaine fréquemment sur *RDI* et autres plates-formes médiatiques.

L'Amérique au bord du gouffre suit de près la publication de son premier livre *Révolution Trump*. Rafael

Jacob y démontre toute sa rigueur d'universitaire en s'appuyant sur de nombreuses sources, plusieurs tableaux et des témoignages.

Si vous suivez attentivement l'actualité américaine, ce livre ne vous apprendra pas grand-chose de nouveau sinon vous fournir du contexte historique et une riche bibliographie.

Ce livre se lit comme la chronique rocambolesque de l'interminable campagne présidentielle américaine de 2020; des primaires, en passant par les gestes et frasques de M. Trump, jusqu'à l'assermentation du Président Biden.

Dans la première partie de son livre, il s'attarde au contexte politico-historique de l'élection de 2020 à travers quatre crises.

D'abord, il se penche sur la pire crise sanitaire à survenir depuis le début du 20^e siècle. Ensuite, Rafael Jacob s'attarde à la crise économique qui en résulta, l'une des plus graves de notre époque. Puis, il traite de la plus importante crise sociale à secouer les États-Unis depuis les années soixante. Enfin, M. Jacob examine les facteurs sous-jacents de la crise démocratique secouant le pays, exacerbée par les faits et gestes de Donald Trump, puis des dérives à la liberté d'expression aggravées par des réseaux comme Fox ou des médias sociaux qui refusent de trier le vrai du faux.

Dans la seconde partie du livre, rédigée à en dix chapitres, Rafael Jacob revoit en profondeur la campagne de 2020. Il aborde cette partie par les primaires démocrates, ses 17 candidats, ses nombreux soubresauts et éventuellement la neutralisation de Bernie Sanders. Puis, il s'attarde à la curieuse « non campagne » de la fin des primaires en pause, pandémie oblige, de la mi-mars jusqu'à l'ouverture de la convention démocrate à la mi-août. Ensuite, Rafael Jacob consacre un chapitre à Kamala Harris, sous l'épithète « étoile filante », ses antécédents, incluant ses liens avec

Montréal et enfin, les coulisses de sa sélection comme vice-présidente de Joe Biden.

Il enchaîne sur les contrastes saisissants entre les conventions démocrates et républicaines.

Puis, il traite de la « bombe » de l'été 2020, soit le décès de la juge, Ruth Ginsberg, un pilier de l'aile libérale de la Cour suprême, à moins de deux mois de l'élection du 3 novembre. En rupture avec ce qu'il soutenait à la fin de la présidence de Barak Obama, cette fois-ci, le leader de la majorité républicaine au Sénat, Mitch McConnell, expédie promptement la désignation de la juge conservatrice, Amy Barrett.

Les trois chapitres suivants se concentrent sur les débats. Le premier qualifié de « disgrâce sur scène » se résume bien à l'échange : « Veux-tu bien la fermer » lancé par un Joe Biden exaspéré au Président Trump qui ne cessait de le chahuter lors du débat. Le deuxième a été annulé, M. Trump ayant été infecté par la COVID. Enfin, au débat du 22 octobre, le Président Trump est à la traîne dans les sondages. 40 millions d'Américains ont voté par anticipation. C'est « ...alors que tout semble donc largement joué, que l'on a droit au moment s'apparentant le plus à une campagne présidentielle traditionnelle... » qui permet à M. Trump de marquer des points. Les visions divergences du pays des candidats sont aussi reflétées dans leurs campagnes respectives. Alors que Trump a multiplié les rassemblements et déplacements, Biden a préféré « s'asseoir sur son avance, gardant les projecteurs braqués sur Trump limitant par surcroît les gaffes potentielles... » comme le dit Rafael Jacob.

Les derniers chapitres relatent le jour du vote et ses lendemains carrément incongrus. Le scrutin du 3 novembre 2021 est caractérisé par la participation record des électeurs, un dépouillement inédit laborieux et la désignation des grands électeurs

du collège électoral. Ce n'est que le 7 novembre, que CNN se risque à prédire la victoire de Joe Biden. S'il a remporté le vote populaire, Joe Biden arrive quand même « à la maison blanche avec la plus faible majorité possible à la chambre (des représentants) pour un nouveau président depuis Benjamin Harrison, en 1888, et avec la plus faible majorité possible au sénat... ». Pour sa part, le candidat Trump a peut-être failli dans sa quête de réélection, mais il a quand même recueilli plus de votes qu'en 2016. En outre, le parti républicain commande toujours la majorité des assemblées législatives des états, détail pour le moins important puisque ces entités contrôlent le découpage des districts électoraux et gèrent le déroulement du scrutin fédéral.

Le dernier chapitre revient abondamment sur l'après 3 novembre, les fabulations de M. Trump sur les fraudes électorales, la multiplication des recours juridiques et des manœuvres douteuses, la laborieuse transition du pouvoir, le tout culminant par « l'insurrection (mot employé par Rafael Jacob) » du 6 janvier 2020 en pleine certification du vote des grands électeurs par les deux chambres du Congrès.

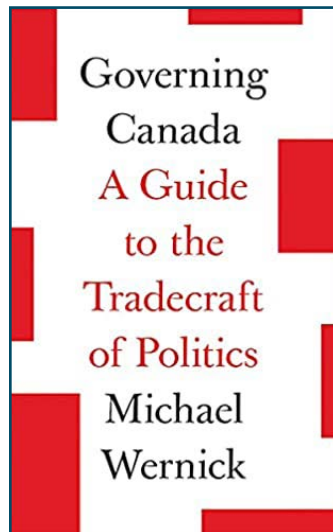
Amèrement, dans son épilogue, et non sans surprise, Rafael Jacob conclut « qu'avec ou sans Trump, à la maison blanche, les maux demeurent profonds, et les menaces à la démocratie, plus vives que jamais ».

Il est sans doute prématuré de parler de la fin prochaine de la démocratie aux États-Unis; mais, Donald Trump avec sa mainmise actuelle sur le parti républicain et sa vigueur dans les sondages, a de quoi à inquiéter. Est-ce le sujet d'un prochain livre de Rafael Jacob? ■

Eric Pelletier a été posté à Londres, Los Angeles, Atlanta et à Paris auprès de l'OIF. À Ottawa, il a œuvré surtout dans le secteur des États-Unis et à l'organisation de plusieurs sommets internationaux.

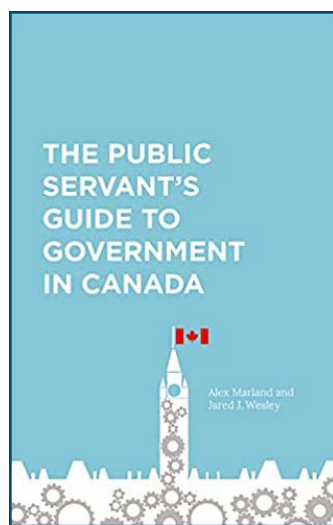
Governing Canada, A Guide to the Tradecraft of Politics

Par Michael Wernick, On Point Press, Vancouver, 2021, 209 pages



The Public Servant's Guide to Government in Canada

Par Alex Marland et Jared J. Wesley, On Point Press, University of Toronto Press, 2019, 108 pages



Par **Gérald Cossette**

Tous les livres ont des faiblesses. Soit l'auteur s'adresse mal au lectorat potentiel, soit le suspense est prévisible dès la page vingt. Soit... Soit... Soit...

N'est-ce pas Mouffe (Claudine Monfette) qui chantait par la voix de Robert Charlebois que les critiques sont « des ratés sympathiques ». Nous sommes tous à un moment ou l'autre des « ratés sympathiques ». Tout de même, ce livre s'adresse à nous. Wernick le dit dès le début de son ouvrage : 'It is possible that this volume be picked up and annotated by some future minister or prime minister... My ambition is broader. I want to take anyone who is interested in Canadian politics ... to convey the broader scope of what prime ministers and ministers actually do most of the time'.

Le problème, c'est que l'auteur ne dialogue pas avec son lecteur. Ce dernier doit croire Wernick sur parole, sur son expérience personnelle. Il n'y a pas d'analyse de la situation ou d'une situation particulière (ex. la démission de Raybould-Wilson à propos de SNC) qui permette d'être ou ne pas être d'accord avec l'auteur. Si ce volume possède un 'élément rédempteur' — a 'redeeming feature' comme s'amusait à le dire le ministre Beard de la collection artistique du ministère au 9e étage de l'édifice Pearson — c'est de nous faire comprendre dans une style direct et franc que nos politiciennes, iennes sont aussi des êtres humains : 'My goal is to convey the importance of the human dimension. I have come to the view that the best preparation for government is not the study of law or economics but the study of psychology.'

Wernick en six chapitres, de longueur inégale, va directement au cœur de certains comportements. Que son bouquin ait été écrit immédiatement après sa retraite au poste de greffier du Conseil privé nous porte à croire que ses avis s'adressent à ceux qui sont encore au pouvoir. Ce n'est pas un livre qui pose des questions. C'est une boîte à outils, un 'How to' qui fournit des réponses à l'appareil politique. Son chapitre le plus long est le troisième qui s'adresse au premier ministre. Doit-on se surprendre d'ailleurs qu'il soit titré : 'Advice to a Prime Minister'.

L'auteur met, avec justesse, beaucoup d'accent dans son livre sur la gestion du temps et des personnes, que ce soit le/la premier.e ministre, un.e ministre ou un.e sous-ministre. Ce que Peter F. Drucker, le gourou moderne de la gestion, appelle 'time-waster', c'est-à-dire cette façon de penser et de faire en 15 minutes. Si quelqu'un se veut être productif, il ou elle doit y consacrer le temps nécessaire. C'est encore plus important dans les relations humaines. Certaines des leçons de Wernick sont plus faciles à accepter que d'autres.

L'auteur se fait parfois l'apologiste des instances politiques. Lorsqu'il parle de la difficulté de gouverner avec toutes ces lois, la Constitution, la Charte des droits et libertés et les lois habilitantes des différents ministères, etc. N'est-il pas vrai que ce cadre est le résultat d'années de parlementarisme alors que le/la premier.ère ministre et les ministres y jouaient un rôle prépondérant? Wernick ne se pose pas la question.

Dans le dernier chapitre intitulé : 'Looking to the future', Wernick parle de l'impasse constitutionnelle. Bien que son analyse des institutions et de la dynamique pancanadienne soit juste, il n'accorde qu'une seule page à la question et rien à la mouvance interne au Québec. Il préfère tergiverser sur la question autochtone ayant pendant plusieurs années été sous-ministre aux Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien (ancien nom). C'est aussi la saveur du temps.

Le ton et le lectorat potentiel de son bouquin contrastent avec celui de Marland et Wesley. Sans prétention, les auteurs ont rédigé un ouvrage qui s'adresse à n'importe qui, qui veut entrer dans la fonction publique canadienne. Les premiers chapitres expliquent clairement la structure et la hiérarchie du gouvernement, alors que les chapitres finaux questionnent le lecteur sur ses intentions de devenir fonctionnaire fédéral. Les chapitres mitoyens portent plus sur les opérations gouvernementales et le

besoin, de la part des fonctionnaires, de faire preuve de ce qu'ils appellent : 'Political Acumen'. Pour Marland et Wesley, cette habileté est l'intersection des diagrammes de Venne comprenant l'éthique de la fonction publique, la connaissance de qui a le pouvoir, une bonne connaissance de la situation (situational awareness) et les habiletés dites molles (soft skills).

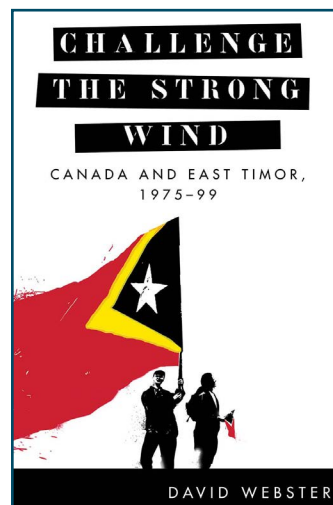
Cet ouvrage, qui comporte un glossaire des termes les plus souvent utilisés (ex. Privy Council Office), vaut la peine d'être lu par quiconque veut joindre les rangs de la bureaucratie fédérale. Les auteurs ont également une expérience pratique ayant tous les deux été fonctionnaires provinciaux avant leur carrière d'universitaires.

S'il y a un côté négatif à leur livre, c'est de devoir être mis à jour puisque l'année de publication remonte déjà à 2019. ■

Gérald Cossette était sous-ministre délégué aux Affaires étrangères lors de son dernier passage à l'édifice Pearson de 2009 à 2012.

Challenge The Strong Wind: Canada and East Timor, 1975-99

By David Webster, Vancouver:
UBC Press, 2020



By Simon Williams

This book is meticulously researched, tracing the changing views of the Government of Canada over 23 years, as East Timor moved irrevocably towards independence. It highlights the central role of civil society in bringing about the moral rightness of this position and the international recognition and acceptance of the desire of the people of East Timor; the formerly Portuguese colonial territory of the eastern half of Timor island, now recognized as Timor Leste. The initial view of the international community, including Canada, was to accept as irrevocable the assumption of sovereignty over East Timor by Indonesia in 1975, as it assumed control of the Dutch colonial territories in Indonesia. But the persistent efforts of members of the Catholic Church, various non-government organizations (especially those in Canada), and the people of East Timor were ultimately successful. By 1990 Indonesia accepted that the continued Timorese push for independence, against which the governments of Indonesia had rigorously resisted, had become damaging to Indonesia's international interests and was no longer sustainable.

The initial position of Canada and most other countries was that Indonesian hegemony over East Timor was a fait accompli which should be accepted by the international community. Webster noted the firm view of a growing number of interested and concerned Canadians that the Government of Canada should deliver on its position of the primacy of human rights and the right of self-determination, to support the people of East Timor. Many in Government were of the view that East Timor could never be a self-sufficient country and that its people would be in a better position as part of Indonesia, with full regard to their human rights and personal well-being. However, a vocal number of Canadians, some of whom had

visited East Timor and had witnessed the situation on the ground, strongly resisted this view. Webster notes the activism of NGOs and of church organizations in advancing the cause of independence for East Timor.

As the Government of Canada held to its position that Indonesian annexation of East Timor was irreversible, it was generally supported in this view by Canadian business interests that did not want to jeopardize their increasingly important commercial activities. Considerable pressure was placed on ministers to ensure that the issue of human rights would not outweigh commercial activities. In this area the trade minister Michael Wilson and Foreign Affairs minister Barbara McDougall held contrary and conflicting views. But, as Webster notes, the voice of civil society was increasingly heard in Government, which, while not wishing to damage relations with Indonesia, was under increasing pressure to recognize the right of the people of East Timor to

self-determination. This was given fresh impetus by the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili in 1976, when the Indonesian military, claiming troops had been attacked, opened fire on a peaceful demonstration, killing 250 innocent East Timorese.

Renewed activism by civil society groups in Canada and overseas led increasingly to Canadian and international acknowledgement that Indonesia's take-over of East Timor was far from irrevocable. Indeed, Canadian and international opinion swung solidly behind East Timor. An overwhelming vote for independence in 1999 led inexorably to full independence in 2002, following the formal hand-over of power by an international transitional authority which insured a peaceful succession to sovereign East Timor authorities.

In his book, David Webster has drawn on a great deal of intelligence from government sources, church organizations and NGOs to trace the determined, and indeed relentless, efforts of the East Timorese and

their supporters in Canada and elsewhere to achieve international recognition of the independent nation of East Timor or, as it's currently known, Timor Leste. He points to the importance of civil society in exerting public pressure on the Government of Canada through its advocacy work over a quarter of a century, which essentially forced the Government to switch its position from accepting Indonesian hegemony over East Timor as irreversible and self-determination as a "lost cause" to one of supporting independence for the nascent nation. As Robert Bothwell and John English, editors of the Canadian Political History series at UBC Press, note in their foreword, "Idealism can stalemate realism. That is what this important book shows. There are few better books that show how policy was made." ■

Simon Williams was stationed in Jakarta from 1982 to 1985. He subsequently accompanied a Canadian parliamentary delegation to East Timor in 1988.

Canada's Role on the Indochina Truce Supervisory Commissions, 1954-1973

By Nick Etheridge

A project is being mounted through the Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives at the University of Victoria to look at Canada's role on the various Indochina truce supervisory commissions. The central idea is to gather the recollections of some 15-20 Canadian diplomatic staff about their time in the region, which we will put on line as an accessible source for scholars writing about Canada's role on the commissions and/or the development of Canada's interests in the Asia Pacific region in the early days.

Our interest is in written contributions (up to 2500 words), but if the

contributor would prefer an online interview, we would prepare a transcript. A similar venture was achieved by Arthur Blanchette, then Head of Historical Division in GAC, in a book of recollections by Commissions veterans published in 2002. Our project will update and complement the Blanchette book. By putting our work online we hope to reach a wider audience than was possible 20 years ago.

We have a list of contributors, but are keen to identify as many as possible. Though the majority of those posted to Indochina

were young male diplomats, we are particularly interested in the recollections of Canadian women, including, secretaries and spouses who might have been in Indochina in those years, and also in all those who served in the earlier years of the various commissions. By 1974 some 40% of Canada's foreign service had served on one of the commissions in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. .

If any readers want to step forward as possible contributors, I invite them to email me directly at nicketh@telus.net. I will be delighted to provide more information on this project. ■

Preparing for Rising Interest Rates

By Robert Todd

Over the past decade, we have learned to live with low interest rates. Our chartered banks tout savings accounts offering 0.050% per annum, and they have the temerity to call this ‘high interest savings’ — even for an account with a million dollar balance! Guaranteed Investment Certificates do not do much better: one bank offers a non-cashable \$15,000 GIC locked in for 18 months yielding 1.05% (or up to 1.35% for 3 years). The search for decent investment returns is challenging.

Now, we must learn how to accommodate rising rates, because the Governor of the Bank of Canada recently promised that rates would rise. This question forces us to widen the search for investments that will protect the value of our assets, as well as provide respectable returns. If you are not quite the Indiana Jones of personal investing, and want to preserve assets as interest rates rise, then you may need to adjust your investment strategy to ‘the new normal’!

In the past, GICs, Treasury bills, bonds, bond funds and other interest rate based investments were considered essential for capital preservation with some income. As higher interest rates for newly issued investments attract more attention in the market, the yield on investment for older bonds drops since their market value must reflect the increasing interest rate. To make up for a lower coupon (interest) payment, the market price of the bond drops accordingly. This does not protect the value of the underlying asset.

Reviewing carefully with the advice of a trusted Financial Advisor, accepting slightly greater risk, one should look seriously at investments that include a portion of equity,

or that include a mixture of ‘high yield’ or ‘non-investment grade’ (so-called ‘junk’) bonds. Over recent years, funds containing such mixed investment types (bonds, preferred shares, and blue-chip dividend paying common shares) have done well under both objectives: preserving assets and improving return on investment.

In the past, preferred shares had been more secure investments, given their position in the ladder of reimbursement between bond holders and common share-holders. However, Canadian preferred shares have not performed to expectation in recent periods of rapid rate declines, making them less attractive as an asset class.

There are newer vehicles in the market which provide capital protection, but offer an unspecified rate of return. A Principal Protected Note, or similarly, an ‘Index-Linked GIC’, is not a mutual fund type investment, but rather a retail banking product. Upon arrival at term, the value of this asset is based on the value of an underlying basket of stocks.

Another newer product is the Floating Rate Note, which can be available to investors through a mutual fund or an ETF that invests in a consolidated pool of corporate loans. The underlying loans have been made to firms that may or may not be ‘investment grade’. Non-investment grade includes loans to firms mostly rated B/BB, with some at BBB or CCC. Lower rated corporate loans have performed well, in part because of their higher coupon rates. Traditionally, loans have outperformed bonds in periods of flat or rising interest rates.

The mixture and the spread of consolidated floating rate loan obligations, whether all investment grade or mixed and lower grades, provides for better risk management, and the loan’s ‘Senior or Secured’ position in the corporate capital structure provides improved status as a worthwhile investment vehicle.

Finally, some mutual fund managers offer a ‘covered call option strategy’. This type of fund can provide two sources of cash flow in one instrument. It is based on the purchase of dividend paying stocks, and then selling (or ‘writing’) ‘calls’ (future sale contract at fixed price by a determined date) on those stocks (or ‘covered’). This strategy can offer better returns, especially in an upward moving market, but limits the upside return available from rising share value. The improved yield is derived from a premium paid from the sale of the options, and also a dividend yield from the ownership of the underlying shares. This is a complex process for an individual investor which is not suitable for ‘buy and forget’ investors. On the other hand, as a strategy for an experienced portfolio manager of a fund of appropriate portfolio of high yield dividend stocks, this offers increased tax efficient income.

Whatever your risk tolerance, it is useful to speak with a Financial Advisor soon, as the changing winds of the economy, and rising interest rates from the Bank of Canada may change the situation affecting your investments. ■

Robert Todd was a Director of Tradex from 2002 until 2017. He remains a member of the Tradex Independent Review Committee.

Volunteers

Our association is looking for volunteers from all streams and occupational groups in the foreign service for a number of future projects. We are currently at work looking at the possibilities of donating personal papers to Canadian archives. We will need help in looking at these collections, organizing them and ensuring safe shipment to new locations. Further information will be forthcoming in a future edition of FORUM.

We are also looking for volunteers to scour the foreign service community for new articles and ideas for future issues of FORUM, as well as for advertising in FORUM, to make it larger and better. If you have ideas for future projects or want to volunteer, let us know, at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Membership Renewals and New Members

We are still on the hunt for new members. Please join now as an annual or life

Bénévoles

Notre association est à la recherche de bénévoles de toutes les filières et de tous les groupes professionnels du service extérieur pour un certain nombre de projets futurs. Nous étudions actuellement les possibilités de faire don de documents personnels aux archives canadiennes. Nous aurons besoin d'aide pour évaluer ces collections, les organiser et pour les expédier de façon sécuritaire vers leurs nouvelles destinations. Des précisions additionnelles seront fournies dans une prochaine édition de FORUM.

Nous sommes également à la recherche de bénévoles pour stimuler, parmi la communauté du service extérieur, de nouveaux articles et idées pour nos futurs numéros, ainsi que d'identifier des nouvelles sources publicitaires afin d'accroître le rayonnement et d'améliorer le FORUM. Si vous avez des idées pour de futurs projets ou si vous souhaitez faire du bénévolat, faites-le nous savoir, à edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Renouvellements d'adhésion et nouveaux membres

Nous sommes toujours à la recherche de nouveaux membres. Veuillez vous inscrire

member. Annual membership is \$25. Life membership – involving no bother about future renewals – is \$200. Payment can be made electronically by sending a payment to finance.forum99@gmail.com, or by sending a cheque to the following address:

CFSAF/FASEC

c/o 127 Keefer Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1T6

We are also beginning the process of sending out membership renewals to those of you who joined us last year. You could help by paying your annual \$25 fee now. See above for the two options for payment. If you joined last year as an annual member, and you want to switch to a life membership, you can use that \$25 fee as a credit this year towards your life-time membership. Send us \$175 by cheque or electronic transfer (see first paragraph).

Thanks to those of you who became founding members of our organization in 2021. No need for additional annual payments and the administrative headaches that come with them!

dès maintenant en tant que membre annuel ou à vie. L'adhésion annuelle est de 25 \$. L'adhésion à vie – sans se soucier des renouvellements futurs – est de 200 \$. Le paiement peut être effectué par voie électronique en envoyant un paiement à finance.forum99@gmail.com, ou en envoyant un chèque à l'adresse suivante :

CFSAF/FASEC

a/s 127, rue Keefer
Ottawa (Ontario) K1M 1T6

Nous entamons également le processus d'envoi de renouvellements d'adhésion à ceux d'entre vous qui se sont joints à nous l'année dernière. Vous pourriez nous appuyer en payant vos frais annuels de 25 \$ maintenant. Voir ci-dessus pour les deux options de paiement. Si vous vous êtes inscrit l'année dernière en tant que membre annuel et que vous souhaitez passer à un abonnement à vie, vous pouvez utiliser ces frais de 25 \$ comme crédit cette année pour votre adhésion à vie. Envoyez-nous 175 \$ par chèque ou virement électronique (voir premier paragraphe).

Merci à ceux d'entre vous qui sont devenus membres fondateurs de notre organisation en 2021. Plus besoin de paiements annuels supplémentaires et des maux de tête administratifs qui les accompagnent!

FORUM

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