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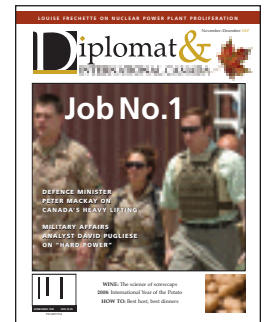
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Neil Reynolds

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Donna Jacobs

EDITOR

Jennifer Campbell

ART DIRECTOR

Paul Cavanaugh

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Daniel Drolet

George Abraham

CULTURE EDITOR

Margo Roston

COPY EDITOR

Roger Bird

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Nipa Banerjee

Stephen Beckta

Laura Neilson-Bonikowsky

Margaret Dickenson

Charles Enman

George Fetherling

Peter MacKay

Sasko Nasev

David Pugliese

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Larry Dickenson

Colin Rowe

Frank Scheme

Lois Siegel

Danilo Velasquez

Dyanne Wilson

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Jessie Reynolds

WEBMASTER

Leslee McCabe

PUBLISHER EMERITUS

Lezlee Cribb

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Diplomat & International Canada is published six times a year. Subscription rates: individual, one year \$35.70. For Canadian orders add 7 per cent GST. U.S. orders please add \$15 for postage. All other orders please add \$25.

SUBMISSIONS

Diplomat & International Canada welcomes submissions. Contact Jennifer Campbell, editor, at editor@diplomatonline.com or (613) 231-8476.

DIPLomat & INTERNATIONAL CANADA

P.O. Box 1173, Station B

Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1P 5R2

Phone: (613) 259-3038

Fax: (613) 259-5481

E-mail: info@diplomatonline.com

www.diplomatonline.com



Published by
**Sparrow House
Enterprises Inc.**

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The fight for peace

Blue berets and Lester Pearson; good Boy Scouts and honest brokers. If you were thinking about Canada on the international stage even just 20 years ago, those were apt symbols and metaphors. But things have changed. The world has changed – international terrorism, the looming end of oil, the rise of Russia, India and China have all changed the landscape. And Canada has changed too. Some Canadians are nostalgic for the blue berets and complain about the country's presence in Afghanistan, calling it no longer peacekeeping, but peace-making or peace-forcing. They might be surprised to hear that in September, Canada ranked 60th on a list of 119 countries that contribute peacekeeping forces to United Nations missions. Pakistan leads the list and Bangladesh follows. Nigeria, Ghana and Uruguay are all in the top 10. That doesn't mean the country isn't contributing in other ways, of course. Canada's deployment of 2,500 troops to the most dangerous parts of Afghanistan doesn't count in this tally because it's a NATO, not a UN, effort.

That said, it's clear Canada's role as a peacekeeping nation is shifting. In Afghanistan, its soldiers are at war. Given this, we decided to use our November issue – the month of Remembrance Day – to look at where the country is and where it's going. Our cover package begins with a piece by Defence Minister Peter MacKay, who gives us a look at his government's plans for defence. Then military affairs writer David Pugliese talks about Canada's new attitude, led chiefly by its top soldier, Rick Hillier.

He discovers the change has meant Senator Colin Kenny, who heads the Senate's committee on national security and defence, now gets thank-yous from his American colleagues for Canada's contri-



JENNIFER CAMPBELL

butions instead of jibes about Canadian slacking. In the same package, we look at the 16 current Canadian military missions. From the lone soldier in Cyprus to the thousands in Afghanistan, we tell you where Canadian troops are posted, and why. Finally, Canadian International Development Agency veteran Nipa Banerjee assesses the progress being made in Afghanistan.

There's much else in this issue. We have an interview with Louise Frechette, former deputy secretary-general of the United Nations and Kofi Annan's right-hand woman. She talks about her new preoccupation with the proliferation of nuclear power plants and gives her opinion on the war in Iraq, how the North should be governed and where Canada stands in the world.

In our Delights section, writer Margo Roston gives us a look inside the home of Brazilian Ambassador Valdemar Carneiro Leao, his wife Anna, and their five-year-old daughter Isabel. Wine columnist Stephen Beckta shares his views on corks versus screwcaps, and guess what? The lowly screwcap comes out ahead. Food writer Margaret Dickenson brings us the main course in her continuing series on how to build a proper multi-course dinner, while Laura Bonikowsky, deputy editor of the Canadian Encyclopedia and a self-confessed army brat, tells us all there is to know about John McCrae, author of *In Flanders Fields*. On the last page, always devoted to interesting travel destinations, George Fetherling brings us the story of Canada's first female published poet, Margaret Blennerhassett, and her troublemaking husband Harman in the early 19th century.

Jennifer Campbell is *Diplomat's* editor.

UP FRONT

In our cover photo, Defence Minister Peter MacKay, who was then minister of foreign affairs, arrives at Camp Nathan Smith to join the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team for the dedication of the Glyn Berry Room in May 2006. Mr. Berry was the sole diplomat among Canada's 65 casualties in Afghanistan since the mission began in 2003. The picture was taken by Sgt. Carole Morissette, and imagery technician who is part of National Defence's "Combat Camera" team. Our cover package looks at Canada's new military muscle.



CONTRIBUTORS

David Pugliese, author of "Canada's military: Limits to growth"



David Pugliese, a journalist with the Ottawa Citizen newspaper, has been writing about military affairs and the Canadian Armed Forces since 1982. He is author of two books on special forces, *Canada's Secret Commandos: The Unauthorized Story of Joint Task Force Two* and *Shadow Wars: Special Forces in the New Battle Against Terrorism*. Mr. Pugliese has reported from war and conflict zones in Croatia, Bosnia, the Sudan, Burma, Afghanistan, Pakistan's Northwest Frontier, the Philippines, Haiti and the Gaza Strip.

Nipa Banerjee, author of "Afghanistan's remarkable successes"



Nipa Banerjee earned her master's and doctoral degrees, specializing in development studies, from McMaster, Carleton and Toronto universities. After working for CUSO and IDRC, she worked 33 years in CIDA, serving both at headquarters and in the field. She spent 16 years representing CIDA in Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Afghanistan. Her most recent posting as CIDA's head of aid was in Kabul, where she spent three years (2003-2006). She joined the University of Ottawa in July and teaches international development at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. Her research interests include development in post-conflict countries, with a focus on Afghanistan, and the effectiveness of development assistance in Bangladesh.

The United Nations has declared 2008 as International Year of the Potato

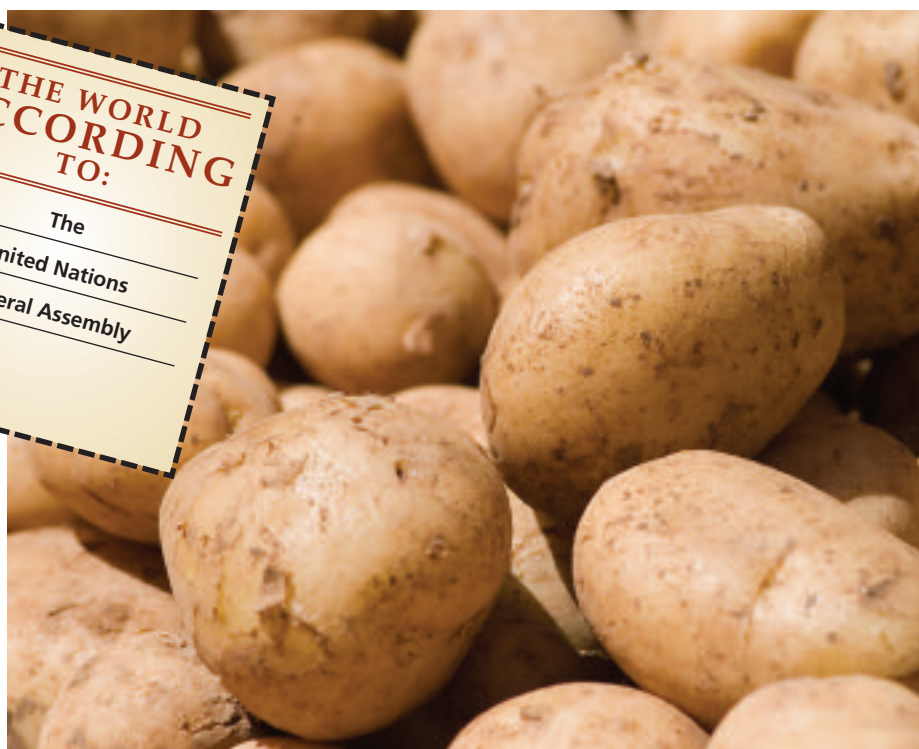
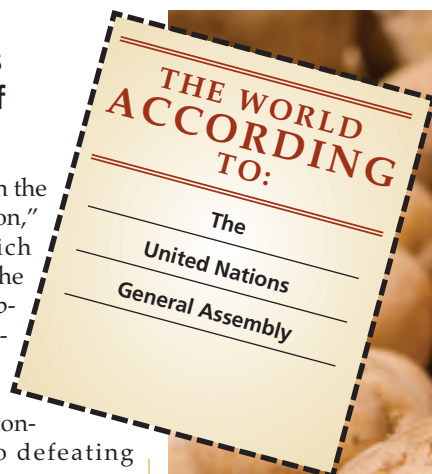
“The potato is a staple food in the diet of the world’s population,” according to the UN, which wants to focus attention on the root vegetable “to revive public awareness of the relationship that exists between poverty, food security, malnutrition and the potential contribution of the potato to defeating hunger.”

According to the Lima, Peru-based International Potato Center, almost 213 million tons of potato – “this underestimated tuber” — are grown to eat every year, making it the third most important food crop in the world.

The centre’s *World Sweet Potato Atlas* notes: “In some areas of the world, sweet potato is a critically important staple food, while in others, the crop is being developed for a wide variety of products, from animal feed to industrial starch. Central and southern Africa has become a particularly important regional focus, as sweet potato is currently being developed as a means to address a serious nutritional challenge, Vitamin A deficiency.”

And 2008 is the UN International Year of Sanitation

“It’s a seemingly mundane thing that most people in the developed world take



for granted. But at least 2.6 billion people – some 41 per cent of the global population — do not have access to latrines or any sort of basic sanitation facilities. As a result, millions suffer from a wide range of preventable illnesses, such as diarrhea, which claim thousands of lives each day, primarily young children.

“Improving access to sanitation is a good investment [because]:

- “Sanitation is vital for human health: Every 20 seconds, a child dies as a result of poor sanitation. That’s 1.5 million preventable deaths each year.
- “Sanitation generates economic ben-

efits: According to a recent World Health Organization study, every dollar spent on improving sanitation generates an average economic benefit of \$7. The economic cost of inaction is astronomical.

- “Sanitation contributes to dignity and social development: Sanitation enhances dignity, privacy and safety, especially for women and girls. It improves convenience and social status. Sanitation in schools enables children, especially girls reaching puberty, to remain in the educational system. Restricted toilet opportunities increase the chance of chronic constipation and is making women vul-

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nerable to violence if they are forced to defecate at night and in secluded areas.

- “Sanitation helps the environment: At present, each year more than 200 million tons of human waste – and vast quantities of waste water and solid waste – go uncollected and untreated around the world, fouling the environment and exposing millions of people to disease and squalor.

- “Improving sanitation is achievable! Now is the time to act.

“The technologies, approaches and skilled people are ready. Households, communities, local and national governments, civil society, and private companies all need to work together.

“Media and public opinion around the world can influence political leaders to act now. The estimated \$10 billion annual cost to halve the proportion of people without basic sanitation by 2015 (this is the sanitation UN Millennium Development Goal target) is modest and affordable.

“If sustained, the same investment could achieve basic sanitation for the entire world within one or two decades. This sum is less than one per cent of

world military spending in 2005, one-third of the estimated global spending on bottled water, or about as much as Europeans spend on ice cream each year.

“The UN Millennium Development Goal’s target: To reduce by half the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015.”

Finally, 2008 is UN International Year of Languages

“The General Assembly, recognizing that genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding, proclaimed 2008 the International Year of Languages.

“Acting without a vote, the Assembly, also recognizing that the United Nations pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally, emphasized the paramount importance of the equality of the Organization’s six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

“In that regard, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that all language services were given equal treatment and were provided with equally favourable working conditions and resources.

The Secretary-General was also requested to complete the task of publishing all important older United Nations documents on the Organization’s website in all six official languages, on a priority basis.

“Further, the Assembly emphasized the importance of making appropriate use of all the official languages in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages.

“Introducing the resolution, France’s representative said the text would ensure a “global” approach to multilingualism and would promote a reasonable vision of multilingualism at the United Nations. It would help ensure adherence to the principles of multilingualism in the Organization’s daily activities and, for the first time, would underline the importance of providing technical assistance and training in the local languages of beneficiary countries.”

Source: United Nations website

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Austria's amazing gifts

Austrian Ambassador Otto Ditz refers to his embassy's contributions to the Thirteen Strings Orchestra as "our major do-gooder." And so it is. The ambassador and his wife Maureen are carrying on a tradition of hosting the orchestra's largest annual fundraiser, something Austrian ambassadors have been doing for more than a decade.

The event is a garden party, held at the Ditz's expansive Rockcliffe home on Crescent Road, and it raises \$24,000 for the organization. The embassy donates the wine, the ambassador's garden and the desserts which Maureen Ditz prepares herself. In recent years, Thirteen Strings has also added a "fantasy draw" which includes airfare and a hotel in Vienna. The embassy has also helped secure that donation, said Sylvia Gazsi Gill, a former executive director and now a volunteer for Thirteen Strings.

"The garden party happens in the summer and the orchestra comes, and plays, and the birds sing too," Mr. Ditz said, and added that having an outdoor event without a tent can be challenging. "We've had everything – rain, heat, mosquitoes."

He remembered one year in particular where there was a series of sun showers that meant the orchestra played between them. When it rained, everyone took cover inside. "So it's been fun," he said.

In the winter, the ambassador acts as honorary patron of the Viennese Winter Ball, a lavish affair that takes place at the National Gallery of Canada and attracts



Austrian Ambassador Otto Ditz is flanked by garden party-goers Dr. Beate Stock, of the National Gallery of Canada (left), and writer Sarah Jennings.

some 400 well-heeled guests who show up in their finery to dine and waltz to the music of Thirteen Strings Orchestra. Thirteen Strings Junior Orchestra is one of two recipients of the ball's proceeds.

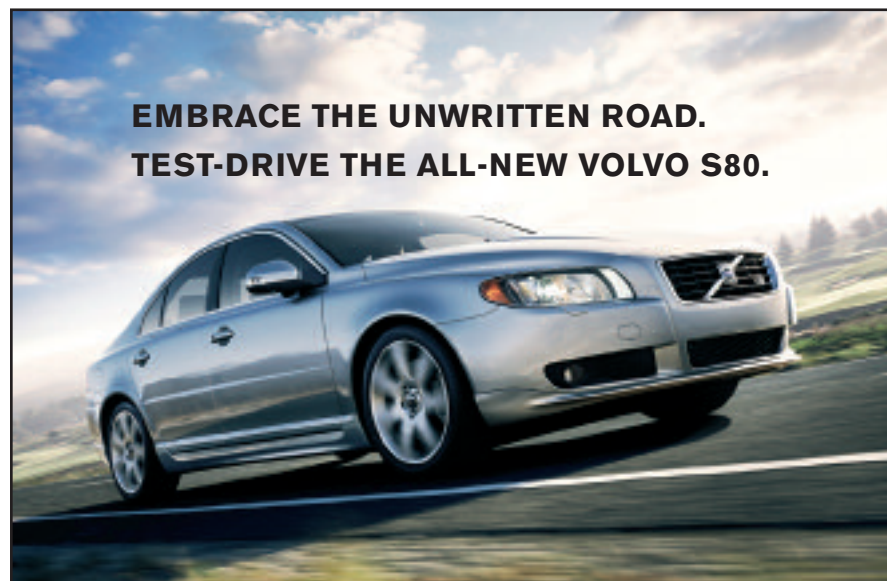
Walther Lichem, former Austrian ambassador to Canada, was instrumental in establishing the ball which is now in its 12th year.

Today, the tradition continues with Mr. Ditz, who will host his fifth ball in February. He always enjoys the music.

"They're really a marvelous orchestra,"

Mr. Ditz said. "We've sort of adopted each other. Hopefully, it's good for them; and it's fun for us."

Ms. Gill describes the Austrian embassy as the orchestra's "long-standing patrons." But other missions have also contributed. The Australian High Commission has hosted two wine-tastings to raise money for the band, as has the South African High Commission. The Swiss ambassador also hosted a wine-tasting. "There is such a thing as Swiss wine," Ms. Gill said.



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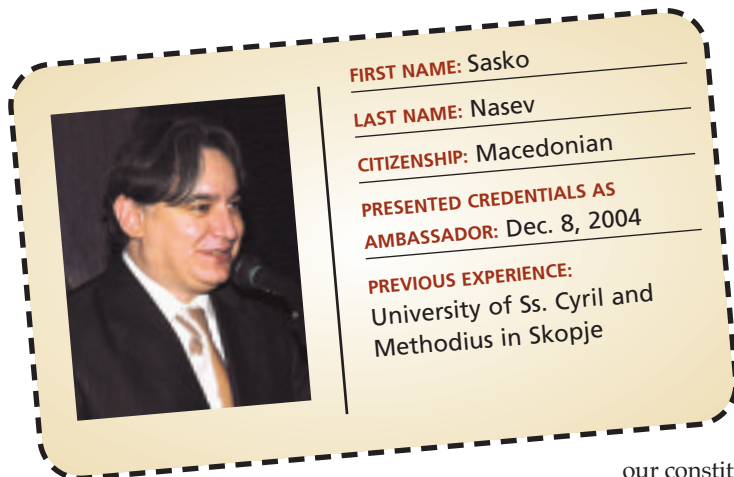
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Macedonia: Will the EU reciprocate our love?



ders under British command in Kabul and several medical doctors at the Czech hospital there. Like many EU countries, the Republic of Macedonia is also a member of the Francophonie and we are pleased that Canada, our Francophonie compatriot, decided to recognize

our constitutional name in bilateral communication.

According to the polls conducted by the European Union, more than 84 per cent of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia want to see their country become a full member of the Union. And 80 per cent want to see my home country become a full member of NATO.

Symbolically speaking, my country's flag features a yellow sun. And given that the sun is also a star, we think the star of the Republic of Macedonia would fit nicely with the 12 stars on the EU flag. To date, the EU has 27 countries with three countries in Southeastern Europe – Croatia, Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia – as EU candidate countries. The Republic of Macedonia is the newest of the three; it got in line in December 2005. But our cooperation with EU dates back to 1992 when we appointed diplomatic representative in Brussels and when the EU opened an office in our capital, Skopje.

We were the first country in the region to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement in 2001. The agreement is the legal framework of bilateral cooperation in advance of a country's EU accession. The agreement has opened a regular dialogue between Macedonia and the European Union.

The Republic of Macedonia is also involved in common European foreign and security policies. Our army and medical personnel are part of the EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together with Canadian troops and those of other EU and NATO countries, we are part of the mission in Afghanistan. We have 126 sol-

My country's goal is to meet all European requirements for a functional democracy and a market economy and to complete our membership obligations by 2010. To this end, the goal of the current government and the president is to implement the European reform agenda and start accession negotiations in 2008.

But in true love, one side is not enough. We are in love with the EU be-



cause we believe we are Europeans. We are Europe's citizens, the same as people from every country on the old continent. We are also optimists as we wait and wonder whether European Union will reciprocate our love.

The Republic of Macedonia has slightly more than two million citizens. It's tiny, about 25,500 square kilometers (about four times larger than Prince Ed-

ward Island, Canada's smallest province.) But, packed into that space is considerable ethnic diversity. On election day, voters have a choice of six languages on their ballot.

Since 1992, they have put in coalition governments, all of which have included one of the country's ethnic Albanian parties. Our citizens are very proud of the multicultural society we have, and after the biggest political parties, with assistance of EU and the U.S., signed the framework agreement in 2001, the Republic of Macedonia became one of the most functional multi-ethnic democracies in southeastern Europe.

Our dedication to European culture and sport is strong and my compatriots respect the most fundamental EU values – freedom, security and justice. Freedom of speech, human rights and the rule of law have been the basis of the new Macedonian democracy since September 8, 1991, when the state organized a referendum for separation from the former Yugoslav federation.

Almost every young man and woman knows Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*, the EU anthem. We celebrate May 9 for two reasons – it is Victory Day, marking the end of the Second World War in Europe, and it is also the Day of Europe. On that day, the office of the EU in Skopje gives an award to a prominent journalist for promoting EU values to the domestic audience.

Our citizens have empathy, not just sympathy, for the European Union. It is, after all, a way of life familiar to the hundreds of thousands of European Union citizens whose country of origin is the Republic of Macedonia.

We are linked to Europe through trade – about 63 per cent of our imports come from the EU and about 54 per cent of our exports go into EU countries. The biggest foreign investments in our economy come from Austria, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.

We are not the poorest would-be EU member but challenges do exist. We must fight corruption and we do. On the World Bank's list of corrupt countries, the Republic of Macedonia moved forward by 21 positions in just one year.

Also, negotiations and misunderstandings between the government and the op-

position from time to time are too slowly resolved. But these are the conditions of any young democracy. We have been independent only for 16 years, the same as some other Central European countries that are already members of the EU and NATO, while we are still just cousins.

My country has good credit ratings with international banks and it has the best possible cooperation with the International Monetary Fund. The economic reform process is very fast. We are ranked fourth among reforming countries, ac-

MY COUNTRY HAS GOOD CREDIT RATINGS WITH INTERNATIONAL BANKS AND IT HAS THE BEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND. THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROCESS IS VERY FAST. WE ARE RANKED FOURTH AMONG REFORMING COUNTRIES, ACCORDING TO THE LAST REPORT BY THE WORLD BANK. OUR BUSINESS TAXES ARE AMONG THE LOWEST IN EUROPE (THEY ARE NOW AT 12 PER CENT AND WILL GO DOWN BY TWO PERCENTAGE POINTS IN 2009).

According to the last report by the World Bank. Our business taxes are among the lowest in Europe (they are now at 12 per cent and will go down by two percentage points in 2009). Further, our dedication to new technologies and sustainable development is evident. Information technology and services accounted for more than 60 per cent of our GDP in the last several years. We take care of the environment.

I don't think of yesterday any more. Instead, I would like to know when the European future will come to my front yard. In Pascal Fontaine's book, *Europe in 12 Lessons*, he writes that "the enlarged European Union is part of a rapidly and radically changing world that needs to find new stability." My country could help bring that new stability closer. The EU project with the Republic of Macedonia and all countries from the Western Balkans would be complete.

The sun is a star, just like the 12 stars on the EU flag. The sun gives life to us, we who are citizens of the Europe's soil.

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Nuclear power plant proliferation: Louise Frechette's preoccupation



Louise Frechette is among Canada's most accomplished diplomats. She joined the foreign service in 1971 and received her first posting as ambassador in 1985 when she was sent to Argentina. In 1998, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan created a new position – deputy secretary-general – and Ms. Frechette was chosen from a list of eminent candidates. After a seven-year post, she returned to Canada to work as a distinguished fellow with the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI). On the October day she delivered the Bronfman lecture at the University of Ottawa, she sat down with *Diplomat's* editor, Jennifer Campbell, to talk about everything from the Middle East to the Arctic.

DIPLOMAT MAGAZINE: Can you identify what you see as the world's biggest trouble spot and offer some solutions?

LOUISE FRECHETTE: Is that all you want? (laughs) Well, I think the world's biggest trouble spots don't have easy solutions. The number one that comes to my mind is the Middle East and by now it's not just Israel and Palestine. It's also Lebanon, Syria. All of it is extremely complex and the repercussions of not finding solutions are worldwide. They're worldwide in terms of the divisions that they create amongst the players and their friends and sponsors. They create economic uncertainty because it's an area rich in oil. It is one of the reasons—but I think it's an oversimplification to say that it's the biggest reason—for the sudden emergence of international terrorism. When you put all of this together, I think if there's one trouble spot, this is it. If there were some progress on Israel-Palestine conflict, that would help. It would take real leadership in Israel and Palestine. The space

is very narrow because their concerns and their requirements are sometimes almost irreconcilable. But there have been episodes in the past where, when we have had strong leadership and positive, helpful engagement from the United States, we have appeared close – certainly a lot closer than we are today.

DM: Tell me about the nuclear energy project you're working on with CIGI.

LF: My project is based on the assumption that we are likely to see a significant increase in the number of nuclear power plants because oil will become expensive and we have to reduce greenhouse gases. My project is to examine the common rules we have given ourselves to make sure nuclear energy is exported in as safe and secure way as possible and [to assess] whether these tools are robust enough.

There is, of course, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but attached to this there are all kinds of other conventions on the transport of nuclear material, on disposal of nuclear material and safe exploitation and security. There are informal groupings like the nuclear suppliers group which are countries that have nuclear power plants and have agreed on a common set of rules about how and to whom they will export. There are all these international agreements and arrangements but how solid are they, and are they really respected?

I think, faced with the possibility of many many more nuclear power plants, it's worth looking to see if there are things that could be done to ensure that nuclear material doesn't fall into the wrong hands and to ensure that we don't have nuclear incidents like we had at Chernobyl because that didn't affect only the people at Chernobyl, it affected people around the region.

This whole nuclear issue is a big piece of unfinished business and there are big problems, for example with North Korea and with Iran. I've been thinking about it for a while. There are a lot of think-tanks looking at what to do with Iran and North Korea but there aren't so many that are looking at nuclear energy. The Non-Proliferation

Treaty says it's perfectly okay to have it. So I thought, let's look at that.

DM: What are your thoughts at this point on the war in Iraq?

LF: In terms of the American presence, I don't see an easy way out. In the foreseeable future, over the next few years, if you stay, I don't think you can really come out of it with Iraq stable. But you leave, and I'm not sure it's going to help and there will certainly be continued tension. I don't think they have a good option. I wouldn't want to be the next president of the United States, having to decide from a number of difficult and unsatisfying options. The Iraqis themselves don't appear to be coming together.

DM: What are your thoughts on how the Arctic should be governed?

LF: I'm a Canadian – so that's my answer.

DM: What's Canada role in the world?

LF: I think we see ourselves as a smallish country because we tend to compare ourselves with the United States. But the rest of the world doesn't see us as a small country, they see us as a major country that rightly sits with the G8. There's a group of maybe 10-15 countries in the world that have a critical mass, that are big players that have the skill, knowledge, resources and the capacity to try to influence the affairs of the world, and we're one of them.

I'm always surprised when I hear comments that describe our traditional role of honest broker, helper-fixer as if it were just naiveté or a dereliction of duty – that we were somehow neglecting our own interests when really, if you help to forge a compromise, the first interest you're not going to sacrifice is your own. Why this is seen as somehow detrimental to our interests has always astounded me.

One of the things that's often cited is that we ran afoul of the Americans. But I think we've been very skillful in maintaining the relationship. Every once in a while, the U.S. gets angry but the sky doesn't fall. The U.S.A. is our number one partner so we can't dismiss them but still there's plenty of room for a very active role for Canada that should be based on what kind of world we want, what we believe is best.

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Tough Love



Canada ramps up its military to make it – in the words of Defence Minister Peter MacKay – “a force for good in global affairs”

By Peter MacKay

Protecting Canadians and their interests are priorities for our government. That is why we are determined to enhance the Canadian Forces’ ability to defend our country’s sovereignty and protect Canadians both at home and abroad.

To protect our sovereignty, we have focused on extending Canada’s reach into the Arctic. To that end, we have announced the establishment of a new Arctic Training Centre, an increase in the Canadian Rangers by 900 people, and the creation a new deep water Arctic docking and refueling facility at Nanisivik, Nunavut.

These initiatives clearly demonstrate an increase in Canadian surveillance capabilities and influence in the North. However, we are also doing much more. In just over a year and a half, we have extended Canada’s influence, in a more vigilant manner, as a force for good in global affairs.

To achieve a more robust foreign policy, the Conservative government is buying four strategic lift C-17 aircraft and 17 tactical aircraft so that the Canadian Forces can quickly and independently move people, equipment and supplies in support of humanitarian or tactical missions.

Further, we committed \$2.9 billion to buy new ships for the Navy and \$4.7 billion for 16 medium- to heavy-lift helicopters. This badly needed equipment will modernize and improve the Forces’ capabilities to train with our allies, support domestic and international operations and, most importantly, provide security to the people of Canada.



Defence Minister Peter MacKay says his government has developed a “robust policy of standing up for freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law.”

It’s this kind of investment that demonstrates how we follow through on what we have promised. We are ensuring that our Canadian Forces have the tools needed to do the jobs they are asked to do on behalf of all Canadians – domestically and internationally. On the domestic front, the Forces will continue to improve surveillance of Canada’s land, air and seas. My department is working more closely with other government departments and agencies in conducting search and rescue activities, which saved the lives of 1,200 people and helped more than 20,000 last year alone.

With this government’s support, the Forces will stand ready and more capable than ever to respond to disaster relief in all parts of our country, including assistance to victims of forest fires, floods or hurricanes.

But the protection of Canadians cannot be done solely within our borders. Therefore, Canadian Forces personnel work closely with allies so that our security is better assured.

Our strongest security relationship is with our closest neighbour, the United States. Since the 1940 Ogdensburg Treaty, Canada and the United States have collaborated to protect North America from external threats.

To this end, Canada works with the U.S. on the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD), the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, the Military Co-operation Committee and many other important bilateral and multilateral activities vital to Canada’s security.

The prime example among all of these is NORAD. This alliance can detect and intercept airborne threats to North American airspace through a network of radar stations and satellites spread across and above Canada and the U.S. This allows both governments to react in a co-ordinated and efficient way to

threats against the North American continent. Under the Conservative government, the NORAD Agreement renewal of 2006 added a maritime dimension to our surveillance capabilities.

During my inaugural meeting with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates this past September, we further acknowledged our continued support for NORAD and, indeed, our two nations’ close security relations.

Beyond North America, Canada maintains close security relations with countries in Europe and the Western hemisphere, as well as Australia, New Zealand and Japan. I met with my counterparts in the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom recently to better familiarize myself with the work done by these countries to ensure global security. Of course, much of this work is done through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, of which Canada was a founding member.

NATO does important work in the Mediterranean, Kosovo, Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan. As Canadians are aware, the bulk of this country’s current military contributions to international security are part of a NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Canada answered a call from the international community, including NATO, to help ensure our global security and to stand up for the values of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Afghanistan. The scale of the challenge in Afghanistan has not been underestimated.

As Afghan President Hamid Karzai stated in his address to Parliament in 2006, “Terrorists are prepared to cross any boundaries and commit horrific acts of violence to try to derail Afghanistan from its path to success.” In helping Afghanistan, Canadians are continuing

the noble tradition of taking an active role in assisting those less fortunate than ourselves.

At present, there are 2,500 Canadian troops in Kandahar province at the invitation of the democratically elected government of Afghanistan. These brave men and women are part of a large coalition whose mission is to help establish and maintain a safe and secure environment allowing the government of Afghanistan to foster development, reconstruction and governance. Canadian contributions have focused on rebuilding Afghan infrastructure, sustaining Afghan institutions and reforming and rebuilding the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

I believe these changes are occurring. Progress is being made all over Afghanistan. Presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections have taken place and women are sitting in the Afghan parliament. Legitimate and representative government is in place. Institutions of governance – be they the Wolesi Jirga, the Supreme Court or the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission – are emerging, providing Afghans with the foundations of statehood.

Perhaps the best example of international successes in Afghanistan is the manner in which children are returning to school. In 2001, only a fraction of children, and all of them boys, were attending school. Now, more than six million children – more than one-third of them girls – are in classes. These children are also among more than 80 per cent of Afghans who have access to health services. Only five years ago, a mere nine per cent of Afghans had such access.

By any measure, this is a clear demonstration of progress. We can all be proud that Canada is one of the biggest contributors to Afghan progress. We are among the top donors of development and reconstruction assistance there. We have set aside more than \$1 billion for aid through the year 2011 to enable Afghans to rebuild their country.

Afghanistan is a good example of how our government has adopted a robust policy of standing up for freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law. This government is committed to doing our share of the work to help the international community and contribute to global stability.

Peter MacKay is Canada’s minister of national defence.



COMBAT CAMERA

Canada's military: Limits to Growth

Our return to "hard power" is already paying dividends at home and abroad – but how long can we sustain it?

By David Pugliese

In December 2006, a column of Canadian Army Leopard tanks rumbled through an Afghan village and took up firing positions at a forward operating base in the disputed Panjwai district.

Insurgents didn't waste time in reacting to the arrival of the armour. They fired two rockets towards the base and one of the tanks responded by opening up with its 105mm gun.

In a country that has known decades

of war, the sound of such cannon fire was not out of place. The Russians had used tanks in the same area when it fought insurgents in the 1980s. Wrecked Taliban tanks still litter the region, left over from battles with U.S. forces and their Afghan allies in late 2001 and early 2002.

But for the Leopard crew, it was the first time in half a century that Canadian tanks had fired their guns in combat.

The insurgents in the Panjwai were on

the receiving end of one of the most tangible examples of Canada's new attitude towards defence, and a historic change in direction.

It's an attitude which dictates a more pro-active, and some argue aggressive, approach to military missions. That approach was embraced for a short time by prime minister Paul Martin, who wanted Canada to have renewed prominence on the international stage. The succeeding

Conservative government incorporated it into its “Canada First” defence policy.

But the driving force behind it was and is Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier, who set the country’s military on the path to more combat-oriented operations while at the same time trying to transform the Canadian Forces into an organization capable of responding quickly to missions in the world’s hot spots.

The new attitude in defence is characterized by tough talk, whether it’s Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s announcement that Canada won’t cut and run from Afghanistan or Gen. Hillier telling journalists that troops there are going to take on “scumbags” and terrorists.

As a result, Canadian soldiers in Kandahar are engaged in combat on a level not seen since the Korean War. With that has come casualties; since the summer of 2005 when the Kandahar mission started, 64 soldiers and one diplomat have died and more than 300 military personnel have been injured, most in combat-related incidents.

“Soft power,” the mantra of the Liberal government and its foreign affairs minister Lloyd Axworthy in the 1990s, is now a distant memory in Ottawa. The peace-keeping missions so loved by the public are a thing of the past, partially because there are fewer such operations, but, as well, because senior officers in the Canadian Forces have shifted focus away from them.

At the heart of all this is Gen. Hillier’s view of how international operations should be run. In the past, the Canadian military took on many foreign missions all at once, with troop commitments ranging from a few dozen to a couple of thousand. But the general argues that the country never got its due in international circles for such contributions and never had a say in major decisions affecting regions the military was operating in.

The future should therefore see the Canadian Forces instead concentrating large numbers of troops in a few key regions. That would, in turn, give Canadian politicians more clout in such areas. “We’re trying to give Canada a seat at the table, an opportunity to influence a region, a country, an event in accordance with our interests and with our values because of our contribution,” Gen. Hillier has said on several occasions in interviews and public speeches.

Prime ministers Martin and Harper both supported the general in his vision and both agreed to commit the dollars



COMBAT CAMERA

CANADA’S MILITARY, TOTALLY COMMITTED TO THE AFGHAN WAR, IS ABSENT FROM MOST OTHER MISSIONS AROUND THE WORLD. OF THE 80,000 SOLDIERS CURRENTLY SERVING UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS FLAG, ONLY 54 ARE CANADIAN, POINTS OUT WALTER DORN, AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE.

necessary for a major re-equipment and recruiting program necessary for it to work.

Last summer, the Harper government announced \$18 billion for arms and support equipment, with programs under way to buy new long-range heavy-lift planes, tactical transport aircraft, trucks, supply ships and transport helicopters. And the top brass, which several years ago turned its back on tanks and was in the process of destroying its remaining stocks of them, is now overseeing a \$1.2 billion program to buy and support 120 modern Leopard 2 tanks.

This past summer, Mr. Harper brought this defence approach into the domestic arena, outlining a tough-sounding Arctic policy dominated by military power. Worried that other nations were eyeing the natural resources in the North, the prime minister committed \$3.1 billion to build new Arctic patrol ships.

“Canada has a choice when it comes to

defending our sovereignty over the Arctic,” Mr. Harper said in announcing the new ships. “We either use it or lose it. And make no mistake, this government intends to use it.”

Less than a month later, Mr. Harper followed up with the announcement that his government had approved the creation of an Arctic warfare training centre as well as a deepwater seaport on the northern end of Baffin Island.

But the mission to Afghanistan, first started under the Liberals and extended under a Conservative government, is the shining example of Canada’s new robust attitude. Although aid and diplomacy are factors in the Kandahar mission, and a government public relations campaign is trying to highlight that contribution, the military aspect still dominates the country’s contribution to Afghanistan.

And according to military officers and government officials, that mission has given Canada new clout on the world stage. NATO generals meeting in Victoria in September praised Canada’s contribution to the south Asian nation, saying it was extremely important in bringing stability to the Kandahar region and supporting President Hamid Karzai’s struggling government.

Michael Wilson, Canada’s ambassador in Washington, argues that the mission has already paid dividends, noting that American lawmakers often mention the Canadian contribution and sacrifice in Afghanistan.

Liberal Senator Colin Kenny, chairman of the Senate’s committee on national security and defence, says he has also noticed a change of attitude south of the border. Previously, U.S. officials would gently prod the senator and his colleagues on the need for Canada to contribute more. But in recent Washington meetings Mr. Kenny and his colleagues were instead repeatedly thanked by their American counterparts for the Canadian Forces ongoing commitment to Afghanistan.

But there is a downside to the harder military policy, critics say. Canada’s military, totally committed to the Afghan war, is absent from most other missions around the world. Of the 80,000 soldiers currently serving under the United Nations flag, only 54 are Canadian, points out Walter Dorn, an associate professor at Royal Military College. The top contributor of troops for most of the history of the

UN, Canada now ranks 60th, he says, adding that while the Afghan mission operates under a UN mandate, it is not considered a UN mission.

“Canada is doing pretty shamefully on contributing to the UN,” said Dr. Dorn. “Our contribution is minuscule.”

The Canadian military has also been largely absent in mustering any tangible support for the African Union mission in Darfur, forcing Gen. Hillier to acknowledge that as long as the Afghan war continues, the military won’t be contributing anything substantial to other world crises.

International affairs analyst Gerald Caplan agrees that Canada’s direction in foreign policy, particularly on Afghanistan and the Arctic, appears dominated by the military. “I don’t know what other direction the government has articulated in the last two years,” said Dr. Caplan, who has advised UN agencies and is a specialist in the study of genocide.

“It’s a shame. It seems to me that our least important contribution is a military one and the most important is a potential political one, a diplomatic one.”

There are also questions about how much real influence Canada has gained internationally from its Afghanistan role. Canada has not been able to convince other NATO nations to send more troops to Afghanistan or persuade others to allow their soldiers to actually fight.

Dr. Dorn argues that though the Afghan mission has given Canada more respect at NATO, it has resulted in less influence at the UN and other international areas. He notes that Canada pulled its troops from the Golan Heights last year, leaving just seven observers as the nation’s main military presence in the volatile Middle East.

Some officers have also privately worried that Gen. Hillier’s view of defence might be too ambitious for a middle power like Canada, which may not have the political and public will over the long term to spend the money or absorb the potentially high casualties, needed to support it.

Already cracks are appearing in some areas.

In a January report to Gen. Hillier, three retired senior officers warned that the Canada Command, formed in 2006 to help at home in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster, was not getting the attention it should because the Forces leadership was focused almost entirely on Afghanistan.



Chief of Defence Staff Rick Hillier wants to set the country’s military on the path to accepting more combat-oriented operations while, at the same time, trying to transform the Canadian Forces into a nimble organization that can respond quickly to international crises.

At the same time, the threesome reported that personnel assigned to the Canadian Expeditionary Force Command – the organization in charge of the Afghanistan mission – were burning out from overwork to the extent that the command was unsustainable in the long run.

The study, prepared at Gen. Hillier’s request as a review of his plan to transform the Canadian military into a more responsive force, suggested the armed forces were being overloaded. The Afghanistan mission, combined with a military hastily recruiting many new troops and quickly buying major equipment, is too much.

Further, will there be enough troops in future to follow through with Gen. Hillier’s plans? Officers say recruiting targets are being met, Canadians seem eager to serve their country. But that’s new recruits. What isn’t talked about is the concern in National Defence Headquarters that many experienced older military per-

sonnel, particularly non-commissioned officers, are becoming eligible for early retirement.

In a 2006 report, Defence Department analysts warned that the Canadian Forces will soon be feeling the effects of an exodus of skilled personnel as the oldest of the baby-boom generation reaches retirement age. High attrition can be expected starting this year and continuing through 2020, according to the report.

Gen. Hillier has acknowledged the problem but he suggests it may not be as great as his staff fear. According to the general, he has heard from a growing number of soldiers with 15 to 25 years service and they are indicating they are willing to stay in the ranks.

But the situation might not be that upbeat. In March, the military sent out 2,000 letters, mainly to former non-commissioned officers, captains and majors, asking them to rejoin. In the letter, Lt.-Gen. Walter Natynczyk, the vice chief of the



COMBAT CAMERA

Stephen Harper's promise to add \$5.3 billion to the defence budget over the next several years should mean there's enough money to buy the new equipment promised, but analysts wonder if it will also support costs of additional troops and a beefed-up presence in the Arctic.

defence staff, explained the extent of the shortage of skilled personnel. He pointed out that the military is simultaneously trying to expand, support overseas operations and ensure there are enough troops at home to respond to a domestic crisis.

Of the 2,000 letter recipients, only 200 indicated they might be interested in coming back into the ranks.

The biggest question, however, is whether there will be enough money to finance a Canadian Forces capable of carrying out Gen. Hillier's vision. The government says there is, and points to steady increases, including this year's boost in the defence budget, as proof. Defence Minister Peter MacKay noted in a speech in September that increasing military spending continues to remain one of the Conservative government's priorities.

But some analysts, as well as the Senate's committee on national security and defence, warn there is not enough money.

Retired vice admiral Ron Buck acknowledged the government has so far been meeting its promise to add \$5.3 bil-

lion to the defence budget over the next several years. That, combined with the Conservative's ongoing defence budget plan, should ensure enough money for the new equipment announced by Mr. Harper in the summer of 2006.

But Mr. Buck questioned whether the current fiscal plan could handle an increase in the regular military to 75,000 by the end of the decade, and a significant boost to the military's Arctic presence.

"The big question mark is what happens to the (defence) budget after 2010," said Mr. Buck, who was also the former vice chief of the defence staff. He noted that defence budgets beyond 2010 will depend on the outcome of the next federal election as well as the fiscal health of the nation.

The military has already mapped out what money it believes it needs for the future. In a financial report produced for then defence minister Gordon O'Connor earlier this year, military planners recommended boosting the budget from the current \$17.7 billion to \$36.6 billion in

2025, or about 1.3 per cent of the country's projected gross domestic product. That much cash would buy even more equipment, particularly replacements for the navy's aging frigates and destroyers around 2015.

The report also noted that Canada would then be financially closer to its allies, such as Holland and Portugal, which spend about 1.7 per cent of GDP on defence. The increased funding would also strengthen defence ties with the U.S., Britain and Australia, the report argued.

Lt.-Gen. Natynczyk, the vice-chief of the defence staff, has made presentations to Treasury Board and other agencies over the past several months in an attempt to convince federal bureaucrats to support the \$36-billion budget option.

Senator Kenny says that option is not enough if the military wants to fund future re-equipment programs and play a greater role in international and domestic missions. Instead, his Senate committee has recommended the government increase the military's annual budget to between \$25 billion and \$35 billion by 2012.

But Senator Kenny says the Harper government appears reluctant to move soon to increase the defence budget beyond \$20 billion a year. "Even if the military got its \$36 billion by 2025, it's still not enough," Mr. Kenny said. "They have too much planned and not enough money to pay for it."

Military analyst Eric Lerhe agrees that the Canadian Forces' cash needs are far beyond what the government appears willing to spend. He estimates that an annual defence budget of at least \$30 billion a year is needed to finance the modernization and re-equipment programs the military needs. "I don't think the government wants to go beyond \$20 billion a year, so that is at the heart of the problem," said Mr. Lerhe, a retired commodore and analyst with the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute.

Gen. Hillier has acknowledged that his plans to transform the Canadian military may have overreached somewhat. The Afghanistan war, ongoing recruitment, billions of dollars in new equipment, and getting ready for providing security at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver has overloaded commanders.

"Given the impact of all of them together, I have to help our commanders to rationalize what they're doing, to balance what they're doing," noted Gen. Hillier. "I've had to take a bit of an appetite suppressant."

That suppressant includes putting off his plan to create an amphibious task group – a type of shipborne 9-1-1 force capable of intervening in world hotspots – at least until after the Olympics. That task group would have required an amphibious assault ship outfitted with helicopters and up to 700 troops.

Gen. Hillier has also ordered that a slowdown in the expansion of the military's special forces, which tend to draw some of the most highly trained soldiers. Again, the problem is that personnel are in short supply and needed not only for Afghanistan but for the upcoming Olympic security mission.

"I can't keep demanding everything from my commanders and expect them to be successful on operations and train more people that are coming in and help recruit more people and (do the) re-equipment programs," Gen. Hillier acknowledged.

As well, buying some equipment has been delayed because of the need to funnel money towards the Afghan war. A \$1.2 billion program to buy new search-and-rescue aircraft, which just three years ago was a priority, has been sidelined. Air Force officers remain hopeful, but no clear date has been set on when new aircraft might be bought to replace the 40-year-old planes now in use for search and rescue.

Others have questioned whether the emphasis on projecting military power, instead of concentrating on diplomatic and other efforts, is the right way to tackle some of the issues Canada faces, particularly in the Arctic.

International law professor Michael Byers of the University of British Columbia argues that the Canadian military is not the proper organization to enforce sovereignty and the rule of law in the North. He contends that is the job of civilian agencies such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Coast Guard. Dr. Byers points out that the navy's proposed Arctic patrol ships announced by Mr. Harper will be severely limited since they are designed to operate only in light ice conditions. In addition, the ships aren't expected to be outfitted with sensors to track foreign submarines, raising questions about just how useful the vessels will be in detecting intruders.

Dr. Byers says the Canadian government should instead begin constructing a fleet of heavy icebreakers, similar to those operated by the U.S. and Russia. Such a fleet would be under the control of the



Senator Colin Kenny, chairman of the Senate's national security and defence committee

"WE'RE NOT GOING TO SOLVE ANY ARCTIC ISSUES BY USING MILITARY FORCE," SENATOR KENNY SAID. "WE COULD PUT THE ENTIRE CANADIAN FORCES UP THERE AND WE STILL COULDN'T STOP THE RUSSIANS, THE FRENCH, THE CHINESE OR THE AMERICANS FROM GOING THROUGH THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE. AND EVEN IF WE TRIED, ARE WE GOING TO GO TO WAR WITH THE U.S. OR RUSSIA OVER THE ARCTIC?"

Coast Guard. "The principle threat in the Arctic is not a military one," said Dr. Byers. "It is about the need to enforce domestic law, anywhere, anytime."

Senator Kenny, a strong supporter of the Canadian Forces, agrees. "We're not going to solve any Arctic issues by using military force," he said. "We could put the entire Canadian Forces up there and we still couldn't stop the Russians, the French, the Chinese or the Americans from going through the Northwest Pas-

sage. And even if we tried, are we going to go to war with the U.S. or Russia over the Arctic?"

Senator Kenny sees Arctic issues as being decided in part through diplomacy, as well as through the work of other government agencies and departments such as the Coast Guard and the RCMP.

And while boosting the Canadian military's presence in the Arctic is seen as important, most of the country's experts on the North say that furthering civilian and economic growth in the region is the key to asserting sovereignty.

National Inuit leader Mary Simon and Joe Handley, the premier of Canada's Northwest Territories, have both argued that economically sound and growing communities in the North will send a signal to other nations that Canada is serious about its presence in the Arctic.

Michael Turner, the former deputy commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard, has also recently questioned the Harper government's decision to build new navy ships for the Arctic when the Coast Guard is trying just to keep its aging patrol vessels afloat.

Mr. Turner maintains that the successful enforcement of a nation's sovereignty is based on what he calls the "80-20" rule. The ability of a country's armed forces to prevent another nation from claiming territory or waters accounts for only 20 per cent of enforcing sovereignty. The other 80 per cent is the ability to demonstrate the effective management and administration of a country's territories and offshore waters. And the way to do that is through civilian agencies or police forces, he contends.

Dr. Dorn, the Royal Military College professor, predicts the "hard power" stance that currently dominates the thinking of the Canadian Forces and government will change. He notes that much of it is based on Gen. Hillier's views, and when he leaves there might be a change in attitude. At the same time, changes in the international scene may force the military to alter its operational focus from Afghanistan and its emphasis on combat.

"The pendulum will swing back to softer approaches," Dr. Dorn predicted. "Hard power won't be eliminated. But we can't be a single-mission military focused on Afghanistan for the rest of eternity."

David Pugliese writes about defence matters for *The Ottawa Citizen* and is the author of *Shadow Wars: Special Forces in the New Battle Against Terrorism*.



From soldier to diplomat

Norris Pettis' military career took him to countries around the world. He got an MBA while serving in seven of them. Now he's Canada's consul general in Dallas. Charles Enman reports.

Diplomacy is surely part of politics, and if war, as 19th Century military strategist Karl von Clausewitz once said, is "the continuation of politics by other means," then there's something fitting when a career spans the life both of the soldier and of the diplomat.

Norris Pettis is a diplomat now, currently ensconced in Dallas as Canada's consul general serving Texas and four adjacent states. But going to Dallas was the 25th move of a life that has taken him, mostly as a soldier, to Croatia, the Arabian peninsula, and the Canadian far north—among many other places.

"I'm the son of a career military officer, so I'm an army brat, proof that the military grows its own," Mr. Pettis, who is 55, said in a recent interview.

He was 19 and enrolled in an arts program at the University of Western Ontario when he realized that money was in short supply.

"I did the cash flow analysis and saw that I'd better march myself down to the

ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) to see if there were any vacancies.

"With a military father, the idea of joining the armed forces was in no way intimidating, but I don't think I had any notion of making it a full career. But I guess a career is what I'd had by the time I left, 35 years later."

And that transition, in his mid-50s, to diplomatic work, was still in service to the government.

"It seems to be a family thing. My grandfather was a soldier, my father and his brothers all served in the Second World War, and my younger son serves in the military.

"The money certainly wasn't the lure – we just seemed to have that sense of service."

The first 20 years of his career was a gradual upward trajectory to his appointment, at 37, as the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment, a mechanized infantry battalion of over 600 people.

"Becoming an infantry officer had been my whole focus – and I achieved that with that appointment."

It was a plateau he sat on only briefly. In 1991, he became an educational director at the Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College in Kingston, where he taught advanced tactics and doctrine for three years. From that time forward, new appointments came in quick succession.

In 1994, as a newly named colonel, he was sent to Croatia as chief of staff at the Croatia Command Headquarters. He had two responsibilities – to build a headquarters for UN forces in Croatia, and to serve as deputy commander for all Canadian forces in the former Yugoslavia, which were concentrated in Bosnia and Croatia.

"The fighting between factions was still going strong," he recalls. "There was tremendous conflict and tremendous hatred, something Canadians don't easily understand."

But being Canadian was an advantage for Canadian forces, he says.

"We're not at all like the Belgian troops in Rwanda, for example, who carried heavy historical baggage. We had a kind of clean slate and could develop our own reputation."

From 1995 to 1997, he was back in Canada, advising on operations and training policy for the army.

This kind of home respite ended when he was appointed defence attaché on the Arabian Peninsula. Based in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, he analyzed security issues for the seven countries on the peninsula – besides Saudi Arabia, there was Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

"On the surface, they might appear identical, but each is unique, with different approaches to issues," Mr. Pettis says.

Security on the peninsula was not his only focus. He also represented the Canadian government with regard to defence agreements, and occasionally helped Canadian companies in trade matters.

The geopolitical awareness of the Arabs casts strong light on the British, the French, and the Americans. Canadians, in their dimmer light, "have to work harder to make ourselves noticed and to develop relationships," Mr. Pettis says.

Though busy with his duties, he somehow found time to pursue a personal ambition – to complete a graduate degree, "which, after all, is starting to become a basic qualification for the executive world, whether you're in government or the private sector."

Obviously, from the Arabian peninsula, it would have to be a course he could take by correspondence over the Internet. His brother had done an MBA program from Athabasca University's Centre for Innovative Management in St. Albert, Alberta. Athabasca specializes in distance and online education.

Mr. Pettis did the due diligence, found the course appealing, and enrolled.

"I can tell you it was a long, hard slog, but if I could tie into a phone line – and I remember an evening of crawling under tables in Yemen to find one – I could pass the work back and forth and carry on."

Arrangements were simple enough in Riyadh, but two weeks of the month he was on the road, and might have to jury rig an Internet connection, any given evening, in a hotel in Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain or Kuwait.

All of this became infinitely more complicated in the aftermath of 9/11, when Canada was getting ready to deploy to Afghanistan. Mr. Pettis was getting phone calls virtually 24/7 from his superiors in Ottawa and was arranging permission for Canadian troops to deploy to several countries on the peninsula.

"Things were frantic – for four months, my cell phone rang day and night, and I was bouncing between Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE.

"It was extremely challenging, but I still squeezed in my studies."

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Three years of intense study were all worth it, he says. The MBA he now holds represents a lifelong commitment to personal development. Moreover, it may well have spelled the difference between success and failure in his efforts to become a consul general.

"I'll never know about that. They didn't tell me that a master's was required to be come a consul – but I have to note that most people in such positions have at least a master's degree."

In 2002, he returned to Canada and began a two-year stint as commander of Canada's northern military region, comprising the Yukon, the Northwest Territory and Nunavut. The distance from Riyadh to his headquarters in Whitehorse, he says, was as great meteorologically as geographically: "I went from 50 above to 50 below."

Mr. Pettis closed out his military career with a final two years in Ottawa, where he was director of protocol and foreign liaison, responsible for managing defence attachés in 20 offices around the world.

In 2006, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade appointed him consul general in Dallas. He began in

September of last year and will continue in the post till 2010.

Though hardly his most exotic foreign posting, Texas and the adjoining four states – Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma – are of real import for Canadian interests, with a total population greater than Canada's.

Considering Texas alone, the two-way trade with Canada, very evenly divided, was \$20 billion (USD) in 2005. In Texas, this economic activity supports more than half a million jobs, Mr. Pettis says.

As an export partner, only Mexico is more important to Texas than Canada. The 886 Canadian-owned companies in Texas employ 30,954 people.

"People would be surprised at the size of the Canadian footprint in this region."

Part of his job is to educate Americans about bilateral issues of importance to Canada – softwood lumber, the restricting influence of passport requirements on travel, potential restrictions on importations of beef.

He also seeks to inform American businessmen of investment opportunities in Canada. But one of his biggest challenges is to educate Canadian businessmen about opportunities in the Texas region.

"Texas may be a long way from Canada, but it has one of the fastest-growing populations and economies in the United States. And with a culture that's similar to our own, in some ways coming in is easier than in other parts of the world."

He hasn't lost that quest for personal development that led him to seek an MBA. Recently, Mr. Pettis has begun taking Spanish lessons. Spanish could prove useful in his current position, and the acquisition of another language would mark continued growth of the kind he cherishes. "You're either growing or you're shrinking," he says.

Mr. Pettis doesn't know what he'll do when the time comes to make that 26th move, after his appointment runs out in August 2010.

He and his wife could happily move back to Canada, where they have two sons – the older, an Ottawa police officer, the younger, in the military.

But he'd be entirely open to another diplomatic posting.

"Canada in the world has always been my focus. And even if it sounds corny, the ideal of public service has always been in my fabric."

Charles Enman is an Ottawa writer.

Afghanistan's remarkable successes

Double-digit GDP growth. Big advances in health care. Education for millions of children. Although huge problems remain, an international development expert argues that the war-torn country is doing better than anyone thought possible

By Nipa Banerjee

The combined accomplishments of the Afghanistan government and the international community, including Canada, are greater than acknowledged in the news media. But to lock in the country's early post-Taliban successes means planning for state institutions to provide ordinary Afghans basic physical security, access to justice, jobs, health and education. Such basics would earn legitimacy for the government, prevent conflict and eventually build stability for the fragile state.

First, let's catalogue Afghanistan's success stories. It is little known that compared to other South Asian countries, the pace of change and development in Afghanistan has been remarkable. Afghanistan's transition to the post-Taliban period was marked with violence whereas the rest of South Asia had a somewhat non-violent transition to independence. Yet, it is difficult to visualize Bangladesh, India, Pakistan or Nepal achieving within five years of their independence the benchmarks of success attained in five years by Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period.

All four of these countries inherited a trained civil service, well-developed education systems, and an administrative and political elite that provided the leaders with a strong human resource base to undertake the difficult nation-building tasks. But these countries still haven't reached some of the successes attained by Afghanistan that entered the post-Taliban period with almost no trained personnel to help build the nation.

While Afghanistan, with a little help from its international friends, stabilized its currency, the Bangladesh taka, and the Indian, Nepalese and Pakistani rupees are hardly a gold standard. Nor is the double-digit GDP growth attained by Afghanistan common in South Asia. Pakistan's social indicators reflect declining trends. Poverty is rampant in India. Girls'



Six million Afghan children are now in school and a third of them are girls.

basic education is lagging behind in all of South Asia except Sri Lanka. And it's a rough neighbourhood: Sri Lanka has not resolved its decades-old civil conflict and political stability is under threat in Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

On top of stabilizing its currency and growing its economy, Afghanistan has reached its tax collection targets. This augurs well. A stabilized currency means future Afghan traders can play in the global market. GDP growth (yes, even excluding opium dividends) provides the resources to reduce rural poverty and provide basic health and education for vulnerable citizens.

Findings of a survey undertaken by Johns Hopkins University reveal a 25 per cent improvement in health care in almost every Afghan province. Maternal and infant mortality has been reduced, within a short period, in a country where the rate of these afflictions was once the highest in the world, according to the UN Human Development Report of 2004.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development brought in community development and micro-credit

banking on the back of a participatory process involving thousands of the rural poor. There was a resulting investment in small village infrastructure. One example was tube wells for safe water which drastically reduced the death rate from childhood diarrhea. One-room community schools, built with community labour, provide safe havens for girls' primary education. None of these community-owned schools has been burnt by the Taliban, not one – the communities protect them. Micro-credit helps women set up small businesses, earn money and enhance their dignity in family and society.

What can education do for women? One of my local staff at the Canadian embassy in Kabul, Tamim Asey, and his brother Farid, now studying at the University of Waterloo, speak of their family's pride in their sister, Maryam, who was allowed to complete her education in the post-Taliban period and emerged as a journalist – a women's rights reporter with Ariana TV in Kabul. She won a prestigious journalism award for exceptional

Continued on page 25

Canada's military contribution: An around-the-world profile

We have close to 2,900 troops deployed on 16 missions, ranging from a single soldier in Operation Snowgoose to 2,500 in Operation Athena.

By Charles Enman

Canada currently has close to 2,900 military personnel on operational missions overseas, ranging from Afghanistan, where the largest Canadian forces are deployed, to Bosnia, to parts of Africa, and, in our own hemisphere, to Haiti.

The Canadian Forces have a history of overseas deployments, having completed 72 international operations over the last six decades. Sixteen are currently running.

Operation Athena, in Afghanistan, with its 2,500 personnel, is the largest deployment. A battle group, composed largely of soldiers from the Royal 22nd Regiment (the Van Doos) from CFB Valcartier, is in Kandahar, scene of some of the most intense encounters with Taliban insurgents. Personnel from other units are also in Kandahar, supplying medical and command support and other services. In Kabul, the capital, other personnel are working at the headquarters of the NATO-led mission and at the Canadian embassy.

Maj. Richard Moffet, the deputy commanding officer of the battle group in Kandahar, says morale is higher than reports in the media might suggest.

"The local populace understands that we respect their culture, their children and their women and like all human beings, they return respect for respect."

There may be some confusions due to very different cultural assumptions, Maj. Moffet adds: "Modernity has not arrived, and the more remote areas seem like part of another world – maybe like the Quebec of 70 years ago, when the police were corrupt and women couldn't vote."

He adds that the soldiers understand that there are no quick solutions in Afghanistan – that a full resolution of Afghan problems could take 15 or more years.

There are two smaller Canadian missions in Afghanistan. Operation Archer, a



Operation Crocodile: Village children from an island in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) greet Major Louis Xenos. Maj. Xenos is part of a nine-person Canadian forces contribution to a United Nations mission to bring peace and security to the DRC.

contribution to the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom, sees roughly 30 Canadian personnel helping with efforts to train the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police and other efforts to build security infrastructure. In Operation Argus, 22 Canadian personnel, as part of a strategic advisory team, are embedded in Afghan ministries and agencies. Working under Afghan leadership, they bring training and strategic planning skills to bear on civil problems.

Canada is one of some 35 countries contributing 30,000 troops to Afghanistan. Most of them are not fighting on the front lines, however.

Operation Foundation sees seven Canadian personnel deployed to U.S. CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, a

Florida, and to the subordinate CENTCOM headquarters in Bahrain. CENTCOM maintains U.S. security interests in 25 nations from East Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia. Roughly 65 nations, including Canada, work with CENTCOM as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, the American-led coalition against terrorism.

The Canadians in Operation Foundation keep the Tampa CENTCOM headquarters aware of intelligence reports, requests for forces, and the activities of other coalition members.

Canada has four operational missions in Israel or on the country's border.

In the Sinai Peninsula, 28 Canadian personnel, as part of Operation Calumet,

Continued on page 24

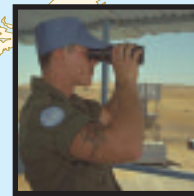
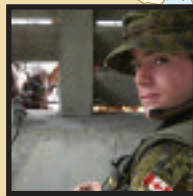
Canada's Deployments at a Glance



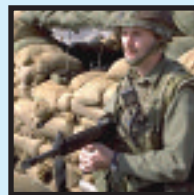
OPERATION SEXTANT
Current deployment: 235
Location: The ship sails traditionally in the North Atlantic
 This is Canada's contribution to the Maritime task force, a squadron of ships from NATO-member nations.
 Date: January 2006

OPERATION BRONZE
Current deployment: 8
Location: Bosnia
 Canadians serve in staff positions at NATO headquarters where they encourage defence reform in Bosnia.
 Date: September 2004

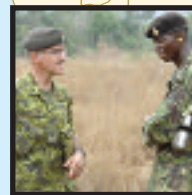
OPERATION HAMLET
Current deployment: 4
Location: Haiti
 Canadians serve with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Port-au-Prince. They support law enforcement on the impoverished island.
 Date: May 2004



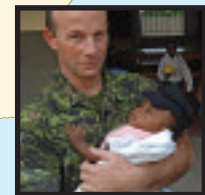
OPERATION SNOWGOOSE
Current deployment: 1
Location: Cyprus
 The officer is part of a UN peacekeeping group that monitors the ceasefire between Greek and Turkish Cypriots on the divided island.
 Date: March 1964



OPERATION FOUNDATION
Current deployment: 8
Location: Florida and Bahrain
 Canadians are at U.S. CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, Florida and in Bahrain. CENTCOM maintains U.S. security interests in 25 nations.
 Date: August 2003



OPERATION SCULPTURE
Current deployment: 8
Location: Sierra Leone
 This is Canada's military contribution to a British-led effort to help Sierra Leone build an army, accountable to democratically-elected leaders.
 Date: November 2000



OPERATION CROCODILE
Current deployment: 9
Location: Democratic Republic of the Congo
 Canadians serve as staff officers in the UN mission here; six at UN headquarters in Kinshasa, three in Kisangani.
 Date: September 1999



OPERATION PROTEUS
Current deployment: 4
Location: Israel
 Officers coordinate Israeli and Palestinian security forces as and when Israel disengages from Gaza and the West Bank.
 Date: June 2005

OPERATION GLADIUS
Current deployment: 2
Location: Israel
 Senior Canadian officers help the UN Disengagement Observer Force maintain peace on the Golan Heights.
 Date: March 2006



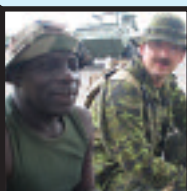
OPERATION JADE
Current deployment: 4
Location: Israel
 Canadians serve in the UN Truce Supervision Organization, established after the 1948 creation of Israel, to keep peace in the Middle East.
 Date: June 1954



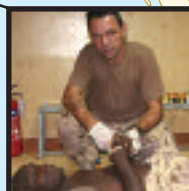
OPERATION ATHENA
Current deployment: 2,500
Location: Afghanistan
 A battle group, made up of soldiers from the Royal 22nd Regiment is in Kandahar, where Taliban insurgents are most active. In Kabul, other personnel work at the NATO-led mission's headquarters and Canada's embassy.
 Date: May 2003

OPERATION ARGUS
Current deployment: 22
Location: Afghanistan
 Canadians work on civil problems in Afghan ministries and agencies under Afghan leadership.
 Date: August 2005

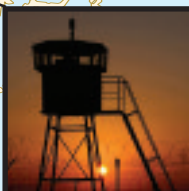
OPERATION ARCHER
Current deployment: 30
Location: Afghanistan
 Canadians help train members of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police and help build security infrastructure as part of the American Operation Enduring Freedom.
 Date: July 2004



OPERATION AUGURAL
Current deployment: 11
Location: Sudan
 This deployment supports the African Union Mission in Darfur, maintaining peace between forces of the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army.
 Date: September 2004



OPERATION SAFARI
Current deployment: 33
Location: Sudan
 Part of the UN Mission in Sudan, 25 troops serve as military observers in southern Sudan and eight more serve at the UN headquarters in Khartoum and in El Obeid.
 Date: March 2005



OPERATION CALUMET
Current deployment: 28
Location: Sinai Peninsula
 Canadians make sure peace between Israel and Egypt, achieved in the 1979 Camp David Accords, is maintained.
 Date: September 1985

Continued from page 21

help ensure that the peace between Israel and Egypt, achieved in the 1979 Camp David Accords, is maintained. Calumet is part of the Multinational Force and Observers, a peacekeeping force funded by the United States, Israel and Egypt that brings together the forces of 11 different nations.

Cpl. Bill Davage, who tracks the positions of aircraft within a given area, says the foreign soldiers are welcomed by Sinai residents.

Canadian soldiers may find the heat of summer, which has reached as high as 51 degrees in recent months, a bit difficult to cope with, especially on more humid days.

"But basically, I think we enjoy being here. We feel proud to be keeping the peace."

The three other missions include Operation Gladius, in which two senior Canadian officers help the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force maintain peace on the Golan Heights; Operation Jade, Canada's longest-running overseas commitment, in which seven personnel serve in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, established after the 1948 creation of Israel to keep peace in the Middle East; and Operation Proteus, in which four military staff officers support efforts to coordinate Israeli and Palestinian security forces as and when Israel disengages from Gaza and the West Bank.

Besides the four Israel-centred missions, there are two other missions classified as Middle East operations, one in Cyprus and the other part of a NATO Maritime task force.

Operation Sextant is Canada's contribution to the Maritime task force. Some 235 officers and sailors, on HMCS Toronto, a Halifax-class patrol frigate, are currently participating in exercises with a squadron of ships from NATO-member nations to ensure readiness should the fleet be tasked to engage in operations. Some of the exercises have been in the Mediterranean, but some ships from the task force, including HMCS Toronto, have circumnavigated Africa, far from NATO's traditional area of operations in the eastern Atlantic.

Lieutenant Commander Angus Topshee, speaking by phone from just off the coast of Somalia, said the crew is excited to be on this cruise, which he said marks the first time a Canadian navy ship has circumnavigated Africa.

The crew has been very vigilant, especially in the waters off the Horn of Africa, where pirates have been known to operate freely.

"But ships are comfortable," he said. "We know we're doing much better than a guy in a foxhole in Afghanistan."

Canada's mission to Cyprus, Operation Snowgoose, is modest, comprising a single staff officer. His efforts are part of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, a peacekeeping group that monitors the ceasefire between Greek and Turkish Cypriots on the divided island.

Canada has four operational missions in Africa.

Operation Augural supports the African Union Mission in Darfur, which seeks to maintain peace between forces of the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army. Augural has 11 personnel – five operating from Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, four in Darfur, and two in greater Sudan. Among other tasks, the personnel mentor African officers in peacekeeping operations, support logistics, and train African soldiers in the use of the 105 armoured vehicles which Canada has loaned to the African Union forces.

Deputy Commander Nicholas Smith, in Addis Ababa, describes the situation in Darfur as "extremely complex, though we do have a feeling of making some progress."

The climate in Addis Ababa is congenial for a Canadian, he says, but the personnel in Darfur face "desert-like conditions, with 40-degree heat, sandstorms and, in the rainy season, some difficult driving on the roads."

In Operation Safari, part of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), 25 personnel serve as military observers in southern Sudan and eight more serve at the UN headquarters in Khartoum and in El Obeid.

UNMIS supports the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement reached in January 2005, besides offering humanitarian assistance and supporting human rights.

In the Congo, nine Canadian personnel, as part of Operation Crocodile, serve as staff officers in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Six serve at the UN headquarters in Kinshasa, and three at the headquarters in Kisangani.

In July 1999, the Congolese government and five regional states signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to end hos-

tilities between all belligerent forces. MONUC acts as a liaison between the parties.

Lieut.-Col. Peter Brown says that the Congolese welcome the UN forces. "They understand that they have to rebuild their country – in natural resources, one of Africa's richest – from zero, and they're happy to take whatever support they can get. And if they succeed, they will be an example to all of Africa."

A Canadian can hardly comprehend the devastation of many years of war.

"When you drive down the main street of Kinshasa, you feel you're in a demolition derby," he says. "Things are building up, but it will be slow."

Eleven personnel serve in Operation Sculpture, Canada's military contribution to a British-led effort to help Sierra Leone build an effective army, accountable to democratically-elected leaders. The British-led effort was set up following the July 1999 peace agreement between all parties in the country's civil war.

Eight personnel serve in Operation Bronze, which fills staff positions at North Atlantic Treaty Headquarters in Sarajevo (NHQSa). NHQSa was established by NATO to encourage defence reform in Bosnia, including creation of a single army with multi-ethnic brigades and unified training and logistic commands.

In this hemisphere, four Canadian staff officers, as part of Operation Hamlet, are currently serving with the 7,000-strong United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Working at MINUSTAH headquarters in Port-au-Prince, the officers promote the mission's mandate to support law enforcement on the poverty-stricken island.

Col. Norman Lalonde, third in command of the overall mission, says progress is being made.

"Security is fragile but stable," he says. "You can say there's now room for UN organizations and civilian organizations to do their work."

Haiti remains extremely poor and the infrastructure woefully weak. Electricity, Mr. Lalonde says, may only flow for two or three hours every other day.

The mission is also offering humanitarian assistance in such ways as building schools and playgrounds, and repairing water tanks.

"Small stuff," he describes it, "but important to the local population."

Charles Enman is an Ottawa writer

Continued from page 20

journalism on women's rights, given by the Afghan minister of women's affairs, Masooda Jalal. This year, she was named the best female news reporter by Ehsanullah Bayat, president of Afghan Radio and Television.

Replacing imported Madrassas (religious schools) with homegrown Madrasas reflects growing strength in the education system. These schools offer a mix of religious and secular instruction with preferences given to girls. Six million Afghan children are in school now and a third of them are girls.

To help create the conditions for post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building, the defence ministry led the way by demobilizing combatants. This initially silenced many of the guns and helped ensure that citizens would not be under constant threat of firearms.

Four million returned refugees and displaced people inside the country were sustainably settled. Such settlement dissuaded many refugees from joining the fractious groups that would destabilize the society.

Reforms initiated by Afghan govern-

ment ministers, combined with foreign aid, helped the Afghan government deliver basic development services. Children go to school, mothers serve at health clinics and many busy and bustling city streets are now cleared of the threats of firearms. This allows Afghans to enjoy basic personal freedoms they never had under the Taliban.

But some mistakes by the international community should be taken into account in planning the next steps. While people-friendly reconstruction came out of some of the reformed Afghan ministries, others with no reform efforts stagnated and fostered corruption. Donors lacked the foresight to demand reforms that would generate genuine peace dividends for common Afghans. Elections, attained with an investment of more than \$130 million (including a substantial Canadian contribution), failed to protect civil rights in the absence of honest, well-trained police and a free and fair justice system.

The international community (Canada included) ignored the lack of state institutions capable of implementing a monopoly of power and a unitary legal order.

People worry that countries which contribute troops and the accompanying

mindset favour short-term and visible fixes, especially in southern provinces. They are ignoring the need for state building and institution strengthening. The international community needs to link these crucial efforts to the headline-grabbing counter-insurgency conflict.

Meanwhile, the insurgency thrives. In the words of Mullah Zaeef (former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan) "the Taliban, is not one, they are not two, they are not a hundred, they are not a thousand, they are not tens of thousands, they are millions in the country, with many layers and different elements" who cannot all be killed. Reconciliation with the non-extremist element and support in driving out the extremists might be the only way for curbing this insurgency. Governance and nation-building can serve as critical instruments to foster Afghan solidarity, earning people's loyalty to the government and persuading the people to lock out the Taliban.

Nipa Banerjee recently joined the University of Ottawa after 33 years with CIDA. Her most recent posting (2003-2006) was in Kabul as head of Canada's aid program in Afghanistan.

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And now, the main event

After having focused on hors d'oeuvres, appetizers, soups, salads and Trou Normands in my series on the menu, it's time to consider the main course. This is the hub around which a menu is planned. A host or hostess first decides on the choice of main course because it is the principal part of the menu and deserves careful consideration.

When entertaining, be aware of any food restrictions guests may have before making final decisions on a menu. They will appreciate this attention to detail, and will be impressed by the obvious commitment to accommodate and please them. I recently hosted a charity dinner for eight, and all but one guest had a dietary limitation. They ranged from no fish or seafood to strictly Halal foods.

Beef, lamb, veal, chicken and fish are among the favourite choices for the main course. Throughout the menu-planning process, I try to be strategic. Marinades, rubs, drizzles, sauces and toppings are critical in my repertoire of main-course recipes. I also like to design recipes which are stuffed, crusted, glazed, stacked, seared and barbecued or grilled. When preparing the main course, I pay close attention to both the principal elements (the meat, poultry, fish) and the accompaniments (vegetables, rice, pasta). No matter how fabulous flavours, combinations and presentations are, all will suffer if these primary items aren't cooked to perfection.

I regard an exciting main-course plate as proof of exquisite team work. Everything must come together to contribute not only to the overall critical balance of flavours and textures but to the visual enticement as well. Today, as never before, even a good cook needs to be part-artist to create an impressive main-course plate. How, where and in what quantity elements are placed on a plate, can have a remarkable effect on the final product.

Even the choice of plate has a role to play. Unfortunately, too many of us have dinner plates that are far too small to respect the present-day culinary philosophy which insists food on a plate should not be crowded. And have you experienced the joy of dining from bistro



MARGARET
DICKENSON

bowls? Some recipes look and taste better in them.

When purchasing dishes, one is often tempted by beautiful complex patterns. But here's a note of caution. Before you buy, ask yourself, "What

would food look like on that plate?" Usually a monochromatic or subtly decorated choice is best. Bento boxes, which don't always have to contain Japanese or Asian food, are also fun.

Most frequently, the main course is served to guests (individually) at the table, from trays or on individually arranged plates which have been prepared in the kitchen and set in front of each person. The latter is my preferred method because it gives me control over the quantity of food that must be purchased and prepared, portion sizes, and the artistry of the final presentation. Serving from dishes at the table, or doing it buffet-style, requires much more food (so food costs rise), and the host loses control over the composition and the visual ap-

pearance of guests' plates. To keep the food warm, heat the plates and serve extra sauce separately (and piping hot) at the table.

To avoid unnecessary frustration, provide serrated-edged knives when the food served requires more serious cutting. Salt and pepper shakers are always placed on our table. Everyone's palate is different; guests should feel comfortable making modest modifications.

In closing, from time to time, people ask me if chicken is chic enough to serve as a main course for elegant dinners. My answer? It depends on the recipe. What follows is a keeper recipe for chicken. The chicken is exquisite in flavour and visually stunning with its layered filling of spinach, portobello mushrooms, cheese and oven-dried tomatoes. It is a splendid main course choice for any occasion.

Margaret Dickenson is author of the international award-winning cookbook *Margaret's Table - Easy Cooking & Inspiring Entertaining* and is creator and host of *Margaret's Entertaining Minutes* on Rogers TV. See www.margaretsenseofoccasion.com for more.



LARRY DICKENSON

PORTOBELLO DELUXE STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS

Makes four servings

1 very large portobello mushroom cap (3 oz or 85 g), sliced (thickness: 1/3 inch or 0.8 cm)
3 to 4 tbsp (45 to 60 mL) herb garlic butter or butter

To taste, salt and crushed black peppercorns
1 cup (250 mL) (well packed) fresh spinach leaves (stems removed)

4 single chicken breasts, boneless with skin (each: 6 oz or 175 g)

1 1/2 tsp (8 mL) dried crushed tarragon

4 oz (115 g) oven dried tomatoes*

1 1/2 oz (45 g) mozzarella cheese, sliced

1/3 cup (80 mL) flour, lightly spiced **

2 tbsp (30 mL) vegetable oil

1 1/4 cups (300 ml) roasted red pepper cream sauce (recipe follows)

Garnish (Optional)

16 spears of freshly cooked asparagus

1. Sauté mushroom slices briefly in herb garlic butter in a large preheated skillet over medium-high heat. Season with salt and crushed black peppercorns; transfer to a platter.

2. Place spinach leaves on a large microwave-proof plate. Microwave at high heat, turning leaves a couple of times, until spinach is slightly wilted (less than one minute). Season with salt and pepper.

3. Slit chicken breasts horizontally to form a pocket. (Avoid piercing the top or bottom to prevent contents, particularly cheese, from escaping during cooking process.)

4. Sprinkle interior of pocket with salt, crushed black peppercorns and tarragon. On one interior surface of pocket (skin-side), arrange 1/4 of oven-dried tomatoes, top with 1/4 of cheese, mushrooms and spinach.

5. Close breasts around filling and secure edges together with strong wooden toothpicks or fine metal skewers.

6. Dust stuffed breasts carefully with lightly spiced flour. Place breasts (skin side down) in hot oil in a preheated large skillet or grill pan over medium to medium-high heat; brown all surfaces.*** Reduce heat to medium-low or lower; cover pan loosely and cook until chicken is tender and done. (Total cooking time: about 20 to 24 minutes. Juices run clear when chicken is pierced with a fork and meat thermometer registers 170 °F or 77 °C.)

7. Remove picks/skewers while chicken is warm (count them to ensure all have been removed).

8. Cut each stuffed chicken breast diagonally in half and serve with Roasted

Red Pepper Cream Sauce. Garnish with cooked asparagus spears.

* To make oven-dried tomatoes, cut 1/2 lb (225 g) of whole tomatoes (e.g., plum) horizontally in half; arrange on a baking sheet (cut side up), drizzle with 1 1/2 tsp (8 mL) of olive oil, season with salt and crushed black peppercorns. Bake in a 225 °F (110 °C) oven until the tomatoes are reduced to about half of their original size (about 2 1/2 to 3 hours). Cool and store refrigerated.

** To make the lightly spiced flour, combine 1/3 cup (80 mL) of flour, 1/2 tsp (3 mL) of curry powder, 1/3 tsp (2 mL) of both salt and crushed dried tarragon leaves, and a pinch of crushed black peppercorns, garlic powder, ground nutmeg and powdered mustard.

*** Note: Alternatively, at this time, transfer the chicken to a parchment-lined baking tray and place it in a preheated oven (350 °F or 180 °C) until done.

ROASTED RED PEPPER CREAM SAUCE

Makes 1 1/2 cups or 375 mL

4 large whole red bell peppers (total weight: 1 lb or 450 g)

2 tsp (10 mL) olive oil

1 tbsp (15 mL) crushed chicken bouillon cubes (or powder)

1 tsp (5 mL) finely chopped fresh garlic

1/2 cup (125 mL) heavy cream (35% fat)

1/4 tsp (1 mL) (Indonesian) hot chili paste (optional)

1. Rub whole red bell peppers with olive oil and arrange on a parchment paper-lined baking tray.

2. Place in a preheated 400 °F (200 °C) oven; turn every 5 minutes, until skins blister and are lightly charred.

3. Remove roasted peppers from oven; place in a pot and cover securely; allow peppers to cool.

4. Remove and discard stem areas, skins, seeds and membranes.

5. Place red pepper flesh (and any juice) into a blender jar; purée well.

6. Place red pepper purée in a loosely covered small saucepan over medium-low heat. (Beware of splattering.) Add crushed bouillon cubes, garlic, cream and if desired, hot chili paste; bring to a boil. Reduce heat immediately. Stirring frequently, allow sauce to simmer for a few minutes until thick.

7. Serve sauce hot or warm.



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Brazilian colour in the heart of Ottawa

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DYANNE WILSON

The home of Brazilian Ambassador Valdemar Carneiro Leao and his wife, Anna, is a Sandy Hill gem built in 1909. Today, it's brimming with Brazilian flare.

Visiting with Brazilian Ambassador Valdemar Carneiro Leao and his wife, Anna, in their Wilbrod Street residence is like taking a mini-tour of their homeland.

Colourful paintings and prints dot the walls, many of them scenes of Brazil, some of them the work of contemporary Brazilian artists. There is a scene of colonial buildings in the state of Bahia. There's a seascape of Ipanema, and another of the heights of Sugarloaf Mountain, both in Rio de Janeiro. A hillside in Teresópolis and a view of Recife in 1936 are also part of a collection which adds to the charm of one of Ottawa's more impressive homes. Some of these works are owned by the Brazilian government, others belong to the ambassador and his wife.

"We brought many of our own things," says the 61-year-old diplomat. Their fur-

niture and paintings fit in perfectly into the historic house, colourful accents on the already brightly painted walls.

The house, a standout in the area, was built in 1909 and owned by John Skirving Ewart, a Toronto-born lawyer and author who moved to Ottawa in 1904. In his later years, he was best known as an advocate for Canadian independence.

The Tudor-Revival house, a favourite style at the turn of the last century, is built in brick veneer and features a pitched roof with an offset gable. Its site on a double lot gives it a commanding presence in the neighbourhood. Cut-stone window surrounds and a two-storey bay window with a battlement cap, add to its architectural weight. The house is rivalled on the street only by the nearby residence of the Australian ambassador.

The house is such a showpiece, almost a thousand people dropped by during

Doors Open Ottawa 2007 in June, much to the ambassador's surprise.

"We printed 200 brochures about the house and there were so many people we had to copy them in black and white as quickly as we could during the day," he says.

The main floor is used as the formal reception area, with an elaborate paneled entranceway and an enormous fireplace in the foyer. There are at least eight fireplaces, but none works, says the ambassador. "It would cost about \$100,000 to fix them," he says regretfully.

The wooden stairway and banister lead to a gallery with a large leaded-glass window that allows sunlight to filter down to the main hall.

In keeping with the colourful spirit of their homeland, the residence is a series of brightly painted rooms; the main reception rooms are bright yellow and dec-



DYANNE WILSON

Brazilian art adorns the colourful walls of the Leao's home.



DYANNE WILSON

Mr. and Mrs. Leao



The reception rooms are many at the residence.

orated with furniture covered in lively flowered chintz, the wooden floors dressed up with oriental carpets.

A charming winter garden, painted in a shade of salmon, is where the ambassador often holds small luncheons. Next to it is a small sunroom with red tile floor.

The family actually lives on the second floor, says Mrs. Leao, with their five-year-old daughter, Isabel. Staff includes a live-in nanny, a helper to look after the reception area and the basement, and an Argentinean-Canadian cook who has worked in the residence for many years.

The *joie de vivre* of Brazil translates into lively parties. The paneled dining room is a hub for entertaining, with a table that can seat at least 20. Small tables in the official reception rooms handle larger dinners where there are often 80 guests. And about 700 are invited for Brazil's national day celebration each year on Sept. 7, when a huge tent dominates one of the two side gardens.

The couple almost always includes a

Brazilian dish for guests. A favourite is muqueca, a Bahia-style shrimp stew with palm oil and coconut milk and sometimes cassava.

One of the pleasures of life in the residence is its location next door to the embassy's office at 450 Wilbrod. It's just a quick walk to work for Ambassador Leao, a rare treat in most ambassadorial postings. The house containing the offices burned down in the 1970s but was restored and is back in business.

The family has taken advantage of their time in Ottawa. Mrs. Leao, a lawyer, took a script-writing course at Algonquin College and little Isabel has learned how to sing *O Canada* at Fernbank School, where she is in Grade 1.

But she'll soon have another song to add to her international repertoire. The family will be leaving their Sandy Hill home and moving on to a new posting in Colombia "when the snow flies."

Margo Roston is an Ottawa writer.



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Reflections on John McCrae

By Laura Neilson Bonikowsky

Remembrance Day plays a significant role in my childhood memories; I was an army brat. We learned about Canadian surgeon, soldier, and poet John McCrae, memorized his poem, *In Flanders Fields*, and recited it at school assemblies. On some bases, we were marched to the cenotaph to see our fathers on parade. Red felt poppies bloomed on our parkas and were fixed precisely on soldiers' hatbands. Dad's postings were most often to bases where November meant cold and snow. As we stood shivering and watching, I thought about soldiers in war, what war meant to families, and about my grandfathers, one buried at sea, leaving behind a wife and five children, and the other who returned from several years' absence to children who barely remembered him.

What did it all mean? I reflected on textbook descriptions of trenches—the muck, the blood, the drifting clouds of gas. Reciting John McCrae's poem, I couldn't connect grainy images of war to "larks, still bravely singing" and rows of poppies.

But I came to see those poppies, new life amid rugged crosses marking makeshift graves, as little symbols of determination to live on despite war's destruction. Surely they were inspirations to Lt. Col. McCrae. It was the day after his friend, Alexis Helmer, was killed that he was moved to speak for fallen soldiers, employing a common poetic device of the time: the voice of the dead. As a child, I

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McCrae must have felt frustration and despair at not being able to save all the soldiers who came in a seemingly endless stream from the front lines.

Lt. Col. McCrae knew about war; he had served in the South African War. De-



spite the bloody horror of battle, he believed that injustice must be fought. When Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914, Canada was automatically at war. Within three weeks, 45,000 Canadians, including John McCrae, had enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary

Force. Before he left, he wrote to a friend: "It is a terrible state of affairs, and I am going because I think every bachelor, especially if he has experience of war, ought to go. I am really rather afraid, but more afraid to stay at home with my conscience."

Force. Before he left, he wrote to a friend: "It is a terrible state of affairs, and I am going because I think every bachelor, especially if he has experience of war, ought to go. I am really rather afraid, but more afraid to stay at home with my conscience."

John McCrae's poem challenges the living to continue the fight, to ensure that lives were not lost in vain:

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch, be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields*

The dramatic third stanza was exploited to further Canada's war effort—to recruit, raise money, comfort widows, attack pacifists and profiteers—and in the campaign to draw the U.S. into the war. Although poetry may seem an unlikely tool to promote war, the conflation of Lt. Col. McCrae's skills and beliefs lends that application an appropriate authority.

In Flanders Fields was published in *Punch* in December 1915, and quickly became an enduring monument to lives lost to war. John McCrae died of pneumonia on January 28, 1918, and was buried with full military honours in Wimereux Cemetery, north of Boulogne, near Flanders' fields.

Laura Neilson Bonikowsky is the associate editor of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

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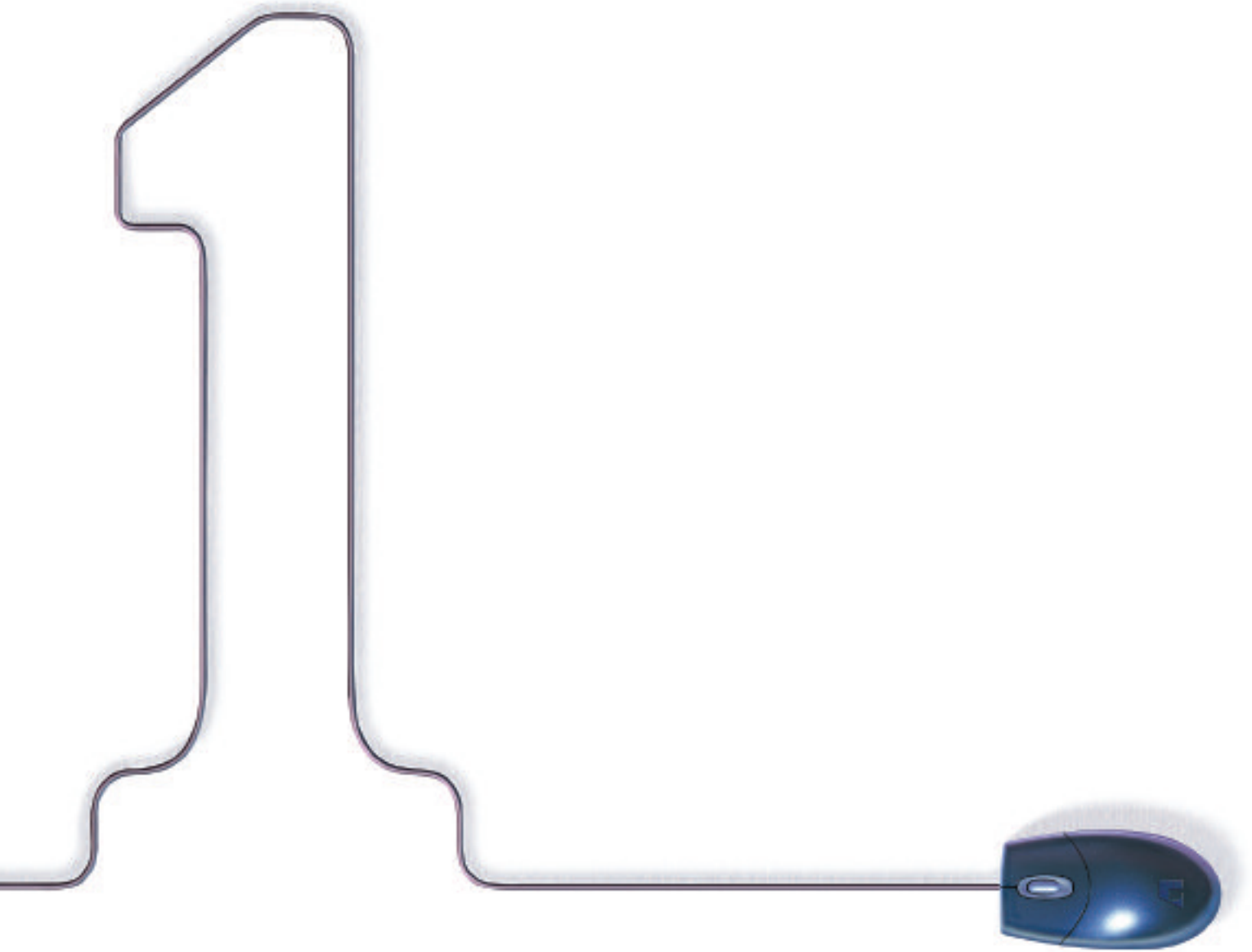
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The screwcap's vindication

It used to be easy to tell a good wine from a bad one just by looking at the bottle. The bad (or cheap) wine had a screwcap that evoked all of the romance of cracking open a can of Coke. "Good" (or expensive) wines required the skill and elegance to use a corkscrew, sniff a cork and pronounce a wine acceptable. Times certainly have changed. Now you can buy a \$5 bottle of plonk with a real cork or shell out hundreds of dollars for a trophy wine topped with a metal capsule that opens just like a Budweiser.

CORK TAINT OCCURS IN ROUGHLY 10 PER CENT OF ALL WINES WITH NATURAL CORK CLOSURES SO IF YOU'VE HAD MORE THAN 10 BOTTLES IN YOUR LIFE, YOU'VE PROBABLY TASTED IT.

So what started all of this role-reversal? It is a little compound called 2,4,6-trichloroanisole, or TCA, which is the result of fungi that occur naturally in the cork tree (where all natural corks come from). What this can do, to varying degrees, is make a wine smell moldy, musty and very similar to wet cardboard. It's just not pleasant at all, although some drinkers are more sensitive to it than others. Cork taint occurs in roughly 10 per cent of all wines with natural cork closures so if you've had more than 10 bottles in your



STEPHEN BECKTA

PHOTO: PAUL COUVRETTE

life, you've probably tasted it. Unfortunately for many producers, you might have just thought they made bad wine and avoided their offerings in the future.

No wonder wineries began looking for ways to avoid this nasty impression.

The first thing some did was try to replace the potentially faulty corks with a synthetic cork, so you still had the same rituals as with real corks and the wines still seemed "premium." These closures had their own issues, however. Many wineries that have used synthetic corks for more than five years find they sometimes impart a synthetic taste. The plastic versions can also be really difficult to remove from the bottle if they are not exactly the right size.

So wine producers started looking for other options and the Stelvin closure was born. This is not a run-of-the-mill screwcap. It typically costs twice the price of an average cork, and has none of the odours associated with either type of cork. They've been using the Stelvin closures for 30 years in Switzerland and 10 years in New Zealand and Australia. They haven't found the liner imparts any synthetic tastes.

So what are the downsides? The first is consumer acceptance. Although most wines coming out of New Zealand, and many from Australia, California and Canada, along with a smattering from the

old world, now use Stelvin, there is still a bit of a stigma in certain circles that no wine with a screwcap could possibly be good. But there are plenty of beautiful wines I would have loved to have seen saved from corkiness by being bottled under a Stelvin capsule.

The other concern with Stelvin is something called reduction. Where both natural corks and oak barrels allow small amounts of oxygen into a wine, leaving them completely open to air will result in an "oxidized" wine that resembles vinegar. However, depriving a wine completely of air can produce the opposite of oxidation, reduction. This is a broad term to describe all the bad things that can happen in what scientists call anaerobic conditions. These conditions involve sulfur chemistry and can lead to aromas of burned rubber, cabbage and rotten eggs. In the first study of its kind in England, these aromas were found, in at least minute quantities, in roughly 2 per cent of wines under Stelvin.

Still, the lack of pomp and circumstance around opening a bottle of expensive wine, along with the small risk of "reduction" with a Stelvin closure, is a small price to pay to make sure your wine is what the winemaker put in the bottle. And besides, it will save a whole generation of sommeliers like me from carpal tunnel syndrome.

Cheers!

Stephen Beckta is owner and sommelier of Beckta dining & wine.

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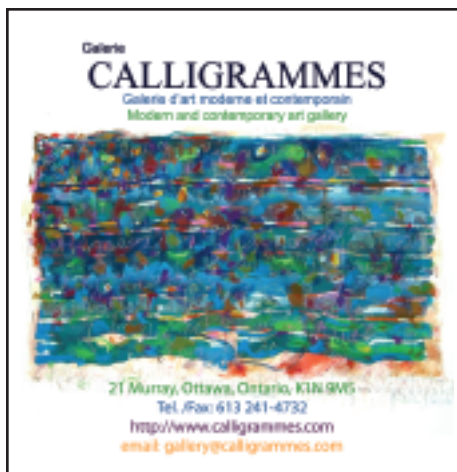
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THIS PAGE 1. Indonesian Ambassador Djoko Hardono and his wife Ulfah Hanif Hardono hosted a reception in celebration of their country's 197th independence day Sept. 6. These girls are students of traditional Indonesian Hindu and Islamic Kingdom wayang orang unmasked dance. • 2. Mr. Hardono with a dancer. (Photos: Frank Scheme) • 3. A group of three Canadian high school students went to the Norwegian Arctic in September where they researched weather patterns and examined retreating glaciers as part of a project supported by the British Council. Shown the day before they left: British Council Canada climate change program manager Rebecca Zalatan, second from right, with students, left to right, Amélie Tremblay-Martin, from St. Lambert, Que.; Shona Couturier, of St. Hubert, Que.; and Doriana Sammurtok, of Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut. (Photo: Colin Rowe) • 4. French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau and his wife Odile hosted an event to mark the kick-off to Ottawa Dance Lab's new season that started with the work of French choreographer Lionel Hoche. The Dance Lab launched its new endowment fund that evening in front of a group of 150 supporters. It received its first donation from Manitoba philanthropist Gail Asper earlier this year. Shown: Odile Jouanneau (centre) gets expressive with two dancers. (Photo: Dyanne Wilson)



THIS PAGE 1. The University of Ottawa and Croatia's Split University signed a cooperation agreement October 18 in Ottawa. First row from left: Ivan Pavic, rector of Split University and Gilles Patry, president of the University of Ottawa. Top row from left: Croatian Ambassador Vesela Mrden Korac; Stipan Jankovic, dean of Split University; Peter Turgwell, director of the centre for global health. (Photo: Mélanie Provencher) • 2. Diplomats took in the National Arts Centre gala Sept. 29. Shown: British High Commissioner Anthony Cary and his wife Clare. (Photo: Dyanne Wilson) • 3. Gov.-Gen. Michaëlle Jean receives credentials from Greek Ambassador Nikolaos Matsis (Photo: Rideau Hall) • 4. Egyptian Ambassador Mahmoud El-Saeed hosted a dinner Sept. 11 for his country's minister of manpower. From left: Mr. El-Saeed, Minister Aisha Abdel-Hady, and MP Deepak Obhrai, parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs. • 5. Carleton University signed an agreement in October with the National Board of Universities and Colleges of Peru. Shown: Carleton president Samy Mahmoud (right) and Peruvian Ambassador Guillermo Russo. (Photo: Yvonne Clevers) • 6. Rafael Arismendy Jimenez, consul of Colombia, and Jose Luis Parra (far right) join Krizia Zamora in representing Colombia at the Latino American Parade celebrations Sept. 9. (Photo: Danilo Velasquez)



OUTSKIRTS

New Heads of Mission

Edda Mukabagwiza
Ambassador of Rwanda



Ms. Mukabagwiza, who has a bachelor degree and a master's of law from the National University of Rwanda, was Rwanda's minister of justice for three years before being appointed ambassador to Canada. Prior to that, she was general secretary at the ministry of justice.

Between 1999 and 2000, she worked as executive secretary of HAGURUKA, a non-governmental organization that provides legal assistance to women, offers training on women's rights and conducts research into such issues as marital and inheritance law. Prior to that, she worked as a lawyer for the ministry of agriculture and the ministry of justice for three years.

Ms. Mukabagwiza, 39, is married and has three children.

Luis Eladio Arias Nuñez
Ambassador of Dominican Republic

Dr. Nuñez comes to his job as ambassador from the field of academia. He has a master's degree in international relations

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and a doctorate degree in law from the University of Santo Domingo. He also has a doctorate in legal services from the University of Warsaw.

He has taught social sciences at four different universities and, between 2003 and 2006, he was president of the central electoral board. For five years prior to that, he was a titular judge with the board. Between 1984 and 1990, he was dean of the legal sciences faculty at the University of Santo Domingo, and for two years prior, he was vice-dean.

Dr. Nuñez speaks Spanish, Russian, Polish, French and English.

Dr. Dušan T. Bataković
Ambassador of Serbia



Dr. Bataković, 50, was born in Belgrade. He has a master's in history from the University of Belgrade and a doctorate in history from the University of Paris-Sorbonne.

He has been a research fellow of various institutions and, since 1998, has taught history at Belgrade University. For the past two years, he was director of the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

He served as president of the Council

for Democratic Changes in Serbia and actively campaigned against the regime of former president Slobodan Milosevic. From 2001 to 2005, Dr. Bataković served as ambassador to Greece and, in July 2005, he became advisor to Serbian President Boris Tadić. Most recently, he was a member of the Belgrade negotiating team at the UN-sponsored talks on the future of the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija in Vienna.

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CHINA

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Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5H3
TEL 789-3434 FAX 789-1911
www.chinaembassycanada.org

COLOMBIA

His Ex. Jaime Giron Duarte
Embassy of the Republic of Colombia
360 Albert Street, Suite 1002
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X7
TEL 230-3760 FAX 230-4416
embajada@embajadacolombia.ca
www.embajadacolombia.ca

CONGO (ZAIRE)

Ms. Louise Nzanga Ramazani
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
18 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J3
TEL 230-6391 FAX 230-1945

COSTA RICA

Her Ex. Emilia Maria Alvarez
Navarro
Embassy of the Republic of Costa Rica
325 Dalhousie Street, Suite 407
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7G2
TEL 562-2855 FAX 562-2582
embricra@travel-net.com
www.costaricaembassy.com

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Her Ex. Dienebou Kaba
Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
9 Marlborough Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8E6
TEL 236-9919 FAX 563-8287
acica@ambaci-ottawa.org
www.ambaci-ottawa.org



Contact Oegema, Nicholson's Diplomat Sale representative for detailed information.

Jennifer Oegema, B.B.A., C.A.I.B

1451 Woodroffe Ave Ottawa, ON K2G 1W1
Tel: 613-224-1455 Fax: 613-224-4181
joegema@ona.ca

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Her Ex. Vesela Mrden Korac
Embassy of the Republic of Croatia
229 Chapel Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7Y6
TEL. 562-7820 FAX 562-7821
Croatia.emb@mvppei.hr
www.croatiaemb.net

CUBA

His Ex. Ernesto Antonio Senti
Embassy of the Republic of Cuba
388 Main Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 1E3
TEL. 563-0141 FAX 563-0068
cuba@embacuba.ca
www.embacuba.ca

CZECH REPUBLIC

His Ex. Pavel Vosalik
Embassy of the Czech Republic
251 Cooper Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0G2
TEL. 562-3875 FAX 562-3878
ottawa@embassy.mzv.cz

DENMARK

His Ex. Poul Erik Dam Kristensen
Royal Danish Embassy
47 Clarence Street, Suite 450
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9K1
TEL. 562-1811 FAX 562-1812
ottamb@um.dk
www.ambottawa.um.dk

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

His Ex. Luis Eladio Arias Nunez
Ambassador
Embassy of the Dominican Republic
130 Albert Street, Suite 418
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 569-9893 FAX 569-8673
www.dreembassy.org

ECUADOR

His Ex. Fernando Ribadeneira
Fernández-Salvador
Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador
50 O'Connor Street, Suite 316
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L2
TEL. 563-4286 FAX 235-5776

EGYPT

His Ex. Mahmoud F. El-Saeed
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
454 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6R3
TEL. 234-4931 FAX 234-4398
egyptemb@sympatico.ca
www.mfa.gov.eg

EL SALVADOR

His Ex. Mauricio Rosales Rivera
Embassy of the Republic of El Salvador
209 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1Z8
TEL. 238-2939 FAX 238-6940
embajada@elsalvador-ca.org

ERITREA

His Ex. Ahferom Berhane
Embassy of the State of Eritrea
75 Albert Street, Suite 610
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E7
TEL. 234-3989 FAX 234-6213

ESTONIA

Rasmus Lumi
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Republic of Estonia
260 Dalhousie Street, Suite 210
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7E4
TEL. 789-4222 FAX 789-9555
embassy.ottawa@mfa.ee
www.estemb.ca

ETHIOPIA

His Ex. Getachew Hailemariam
Embassy of the Federal Democratic
Republic of Ethiopia
151 Slater Street, Suite 210
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5P2
TEL. 235-6637 FAX 235-4638
infoethi@magi.com
www.ethiopia.ottawa.on.ca

EUROPEAN UNION

His. Ex. Dorian Prince
Delegation of the European
Commission to Canada
45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1900
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A4
TEL. 238-6464 FAX 238-5191
delegation-canada@ec.europa.eu
www.delcan.ec.europa.eu

F.Y.R. OF MACEDONIA

His Ex. Sasko Nasev
Embassy of the Former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia
130 Albert Street, Suite 1006
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 234-3882 FAX 233-1852

FINLAND

His Ex. Pasi Mikael Patokallio
Embassy of the Republic of Finland
55 Metcalfe Street, Suite 850
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L5
TEL. 288-2233 FAX 288-2244
embassy@finland.ca

FRANCE

His Ex. Daniel Jouanneau
Embassy of France
42 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 2C9
TEL. 789-1795 FAX 562-3704
www.ambafrance-ca.org

GABON

His Ex. Joseph Obiang Ndoutoume
Embassy of the Gabonese Republic
4 Range Road, P.O. Box 368
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J5
TEL. 232-5301 FAX 232-6916
ambgabon@sprint.ca

GERMANY

His Ex. Matthias Martin Höpfner
Embassy of the Federal Republic of
Germany
1 Waverley Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0T8
TEL. 232-1101 FAX 594-9330
germanembassyottawa@on.aibn.com

GHANA

Her Ex. Margaret Ivy Amoakohene
High Commission for the Republic
of Ghana
1 Clemow Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 2A9
TEL. 236-0871 FAX 236-0874
ghanacom@ghc-ca.com
www.ghc-ca.com

GREECE

His. Ex. Nikolaos Matsis
Embassy of the Hellenic Republic
80 MacLaren Street, Suite 76
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0K6
TEL. 238-6271 FAX 238-5676
embassy@greekembassy.ca
www.greekembassy.ca

GUATEMALA

His Ex. Manuel Estuardo Roldán
Embassy of the Republic of
Guatemala
130 Albert Street, Suite 1010
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 233-7237 FAX 233-0135
embassy1@embaguate-canada.com
www.embaguate-canada.com

GUINEA

Mrs. Hawa Diakité
Counsellor & Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Republic of Guinea
483 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N1
TEL. 789-8444 FAX 789-7560
ambassadedeguinee@bellnet.ca

GUYANA

His Ex. Rajnarine Singh
High Commission for the Republic
of Guyana
151 Slater Street, Suite 309
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
TEL. 235-7249 FAX 235-1447

HAITI

Ms. Marie Nathalie Menos-Gissel
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Republic of Haiti
130 Albert Street, Suite 1409
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5P2
TEL. 238-1628 FAX 238-2986
bohio@sympatico.ca

HOLY SEE

His Ex. The Most Rev. Luigi Ventura
Apostolic Nunciature
724 Manor Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 0E3
TEL. 746-4914 FAX 746-4786

HONDURAS

Her Ex. Beatriz Valle
Embassy of the Republic of
Honduras
151 Slater Street, Suite 805
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
TEL. 233-8900 FAX 232-0193

HUNGARY

His Ex. Pál Vastagh
Embassy of the Republic of
Hungary
299 Waverley Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0V9
TEL. 230-2717 FAX 230-7560
www.docuweb.ca/Hungary

ICELAND

His Ex. Markus Örn Antonsson
Embassy of Iceland
360 Albert Street, Suite 710
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X7
TEL. 482-1944 FAX 482-1945
icemb.ottawa@utn.stjr.is

INDIA

His Ex. Rajamani Lakshmi Narayan
High Commission for the Republic
of India
10 Springfield Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1C9
TEL. 744-3751 FAX 744-0913
hicomind@hciottawa.ca
www.hciottawa.ca

INDONESIA

His Ex. Djoko Hardono
Embassy of the Republic of
Indonesia
55 Parkdale Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 1E5
TEL. 724-1100 FAX 724-1105

info@indonesia-ottawa.org
www.indonesia-ottawa.org

IRAN

Seyed Mahdi Mohebi
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Islamic
Republic of Iran
245 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2K2
TEL. 235-4726 FAX 232-5712
iranemb@salamiran.org
www.salamiran.org

IRAQ

His Ex. Howar M. Ziad
Embassy of the Republic of Iraq
215 McLeod Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0Z8
TEL. 236-9177 FAX 236-9641
media@iraqembassy.ca
www.iraqembassy.ca

IRELAND

His Ex. Declan Kelly
Embassy of Ireland
130 Albert Street, Suite 1105
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 233-6281 FAX 233-5835
embassyofireland@rogers.com

ISRAEL

His Ex. Alan Baker
Embassy of Israel
50 O'Connor Street, Suite 1005
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L2
TEL. 567-6450 FAX 567-9878
info@ottawa.mfa.gov.il
www.embassyofisrael.ca

ITALY

His Ex. Gabriele Sardo
Embassy of the Italian Republic
275 Slater Street, 21st Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9
TEL. 232-2401 FAX 233-1484
ambital@italyincanada.com
www.italyincanada.com

JAMAICA

Her Ex. Evadne Coye
Jamaican High Commission
275 Slater Street, Suite 800
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9
TEL. 233-9311 FAX 233-0611
hc@jhcottawa.ca

JAPAN

His Ex. Tsuneko Nishida
Embassy of Japan
255 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9E6
TEL. 241-8541 FAX 241-2232
infocul@embjapan.ca
www.ca.emb-japan.go.jp

JORDAN

His Ex. Nabil Ali Barto
Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom
of Jordan
100 Bronson Avenue, Suite 701
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6G8
TEL. 238-8090 FAX 232-3341

KENYA

Her Ex. Judith Mbula Bahemuka
High Commission for the Republic
of Kenya
415 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6R4
TEL. 563-1773 FAX 233-6599
kenyahighcommission@rogers.com
www.kenyahighcommission.ca

KOREA, REPUBLIC

His Ex. Soo-dong Kim
Embassy of the Republic of Korea
150 Boteler Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5A6
TEL. 244-5010 FAX 244-5034
www.emb-korea.ottawa.on.ca

KUWAIT

His Ex. Musaed Rashed Al-Haroun
Embassy of the State of Kuwait
333 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 1J9
TEL. 780-9999 FAX 780-9905

LATVIA

His Ex. Margers Krams
Embassy of the Republic of Latvia
350 Sparks Street, Suite 1200
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G8
TEL. 238-6014 FAX 238-7044
embassy.canada@mfa.gov.lv
www.ottawa.mfa.gov.lv

LEBANON

Mr. Massoud Maalouf
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of Lebanon
640 Lyon Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 3Z5
TEL. 236-5825 FAX 232-1609
info@lebanonembassy.ca
www.lebanonembassy.ca

LESOTHO

Her Ex. Mots'eo Senyane
High Commission for the Kingdom
of Lesotho
130 Albert Street, Suite 1820
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G4
Canada
TEL: 234-0770 FAX: 234-5665

LIBYA

His Ex. Ahmed Ali Jarrud
Embassy of the Great Socialist
People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
81 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1000
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6K7
TEL. 230-0919 FAX 230-0683
info@libya-canada.org

LITHUANIA

Her Ex. Sigutė Jakstonytė
Embassy of the Republic of
Lithuania
130 Albert Street, Suite 204
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 567-5458 FAX 567-5315

MADAGASCAR

His. Ex. Simon Constant Horace
Embassy of the Republic of
Madagascar
65 Macnabb Place, Rockcliffe Park
Ottawa, ON K1L 8J5
TEL: 567-0505 FAX 567-2882
ambamadcanada@bellnet.ca
www.madagascar-embassy.ca

MALAYSIA

His Ex. Dennis Ignatius
High Commission for Malaysia
60 Boteler Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8Y7
TEL. 241-5182 FAX 241-5214
malottawa@kln.gov.my

MALI

His Ex. Mamadou Bandiougou
Diawara
Embassy of the Republic of Mali
50 Goulburn Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8C8

TEL. 232-1501 FAX 232-7429
ambassadedumali@rogers.com
www.ambamalanada.org

MAURITANIA

His Ex. Mahfoud Ben Deddach
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of
Mauritania
121 Sherwood Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 3V1
TEL. 237-3283 FAX 237-3287

MEXICO

His Ex. Emilio Rafael Jose
Goicoechea
Embassy of the United Mexican
States
45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1000
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A4
TEL. 233-8988 FAX 235-9123
info@embamexcan.com
www.embamexcan.com

MONGOLIA

His Ex. Gotov Dugerjav
Embassy of Mongolia
151 Slater Street, Suite 503
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
TEL. 569-3830 FAX 569-3916
mail@mongolembassy.org

MOROCCO

His Ex. Mohamed Tangi
Embassy of the Kingdom of
Morocco
38 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J4
TEL. 236-7391 FAX 236-6164

MYANMAR

Mr. Maung Maung
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Union of Myanmar
85 Range Road, Suite 902
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J6
TEL. 232-9990 FAX 232-6999
meottawa@rogers.com

NETHERLANDS

His Ex. Karel de Beer
Embassy of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands
350 Albert Street, Suite 2020
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 1A4
TEL. 237-5030 FAX 237-6471
Ott-cdp@minbuza.nl

NEW ZEALAND

Her Ex. Kate Lackey
New Zealand High Commission
99 Bank Street, Suite 727
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6G3
TEL. 238-5991 FAX 238-5707
info@nzhcottawa.org
www.nzembassy.com/home.cfm?c=38

NIGER

Her Ex. Nana Aicha Fomakoye
Embassy of the Republic of the
Niger
38 Blackburn Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8A3
TEL. 232-4291 FAX 230-9808

NIGERIA

Mrs. Ifeoma Jacinte Akabogu-
Chinwuba
Acting High Commissioner
High Commission for the Federal
Republic of Nigeria
295 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1R9
Tel. 236-0521 Fax 236-0529

NORWAY

His Ex. Tor Berntin Naess
Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway
90 Sparks Street, Suite 532
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B4
TEL. 238-6571 FAX 238-2765
emb.ottawa@mfa.no
www.emb-norway.ca

O/OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

His Ex. Brendon Browne
High Commission for the Countries
of the Organization of Eastern
Caribbean States
130 Albert Street, Suite 700
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 236-8952 FAX 236-3042
echcc@travel-net.com
www.oecs.org/ottawa/index.html

PAKISTAN

His. Ex. Musa Javed Chohan
High Commission for the Islamic
Republic of Pakistan
10 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J3
TEL. 238-7881 FAX 238-7296
parepottawa@rogers.com

PALESTINE

Mr. Amin Abou-Hassira
Head of the General Delegation
45 Country Club Dr.,
Ottawa, Ontario
K1V 9W1
TEL: 736-0053
FAX: 736-0535
palestinegd@rogers.com

PANAMA

Her Ex. Romy Vásquez de González
Embassy of the Republic of Panama
130 Albert Street, Suite 300
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 236-7177 FAX 236-5775
embassyofpanama@gmail.com

PARAGUAY

His Ex. Juan E. Aguirre Martinez
Embassy of the Republic of
Paraguay
151 Slater Street, Suite 501
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
TEL. 567-1283 FAX 567-1679
consularsection@embassyof-
paraguay.ca

PERU

His Ex. Guillermo Russo
Embassy of the Republic of Peru
130 Albert Street, Suite 1901
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 238-1777 FAX 232-3062
emperuca@bellnet.ca

PHILIPPINES

His Ex. Jose S. Brillantes
Embassy of the Republic of the
Philippines
130 Albert Street, Suite 606
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 233-1121 FAX 233-4165
embassyofphilippines@rogers.com

POLAND

His Ex. Piotr Ogrodzinski
Embassy of the Republic of Poland
443 Daly Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6H3
TEL. 789-0468 FAX 789-1218
Ottawa@polishembassy.ca

PORTUGAL

His Ex. Joao Pedro Silveira Carvalho
Embassy of Portugal
645 Island Park Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 0B8
TEL. 729-0883 FAX 729-4236
embportugal@embportugal/ottawa.org

ROMANIA

Her Ex. Elena Stefoi
Embassy of Romania
655 Rideau Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6A3
TEL. 789-3709 FAX 789-4365
Romania@romanian-embassy.com
http://ottawa.mae.ro

RUSSIA

His Ex. Georgiy Mamedov
Embassy of the Russian Federation
285 Charlotte Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8L5
TEL. 235-4341 FAX 236-6342
rusemb@rogers.com
www.rusembcanada.mid.ru

RWANDA

Her Ex. Edda Mukabagwiza
Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda
153 Gilmour Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0N8
Tel. 569-5424 Fax 569-5421
generalinfo@ambarwaottawa.ca
www.ambarwaottawa.ca

SAUDI ARABIA

His Ex. Abdulaziz Bin Hussein Al-
Sowayegh
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
201 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 1K6
TEL 237-4100 FAX 237-0567

SENEGAL

His Excellency Issakha Mbacke
Embassy of the Republic of Senegal
57 Marlborough Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8E8
TEL. 238-6392 FAX 238-2695
ambassn@sympatico.ca

SERBIA

His Ex. Dušan Bataković
Embassy of the Republic of Serbia
17 Blackburn Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8A2
TEL. 233-6289 FAX 233-7850
diplomat@embscg.ca
www.embscg.ca

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

His Ex. Stanislav Opiela
Embassy of the Slovak Republic
50 Rideau Terrace
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 2A1
TEL. 749-4442 FAX 749-4989
ottawa@slovakembassy.ca
www.ottawa.mfa.sk

SLOVENIA

Ex. Tomaz Kunstelj
Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia
150 Metcalfe Street, Suite 2101
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1P1
TEL. 565-5781 FAX 565-5783
vot@mzz-dkp.gov.si

SOUTH AFRICA

His Ex. Abraham Sokhaya Nkomo
High Commission for the Republic
of South Africa
15 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1M8
TEL. 744-0330 FAX 741-1639

rsafrica@southafrica-canada.ca
www.southafrica-canada.ca

SPAIN

His Ex. Mariano Alonso-Burón
Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain
74 Stanley Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1P4
TEL. 747-2252 FAX 744-1224
embespa@mail.mae.es
www.embaspain.ca

SRI LANKA

His Ex. W.J.S. Karunaratne
High Commission for the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
333 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1204
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1C1
TEL. 233-8449 FAX 238-8448
www.srilankahcottawa.org

SUDAN

Her Ex. Dr. Faiza Hassan Taha
Armousa
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan
354 Stewart Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6K8
TEL. 235-4000 FAX 235-6880

SWEDEN

Her Ex. Ingrid Maria Iremark
Embassy of Sweden
377 Dalhousie Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9N8
TEL. 244-8200 FAX 241-2277
Sweden.ottawa@foreign.ministry.se
www.swedishembassy.ca

SWITZERLAND

His Ex. Werner Baumann
Embassy of Switzerland
5 Marlborough Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8E6
TEL. 235-1837 FAX 563-1394
vertretung@ott.rep.admin.ch

SYRIA

His Ex. Jamil Haidar Sakr
Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic
151 Slater Street, Suite 1000
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
TEL. 569-5556 FAX 569-3800
www.syrianembassy.ca

TAIPEI Economic & Cultural office

David Tawei Lee, Representative
45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1960
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A4
TEL. 231-5080 FAX 231-7112
publicaffairs@on.aibn.com

TANZANIA

His Ex. Peter Kallaghe
High Commission for the United Republic of Tanzania
50 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J4
TEL. 232-1509 FAX 232-5184
tzottawa@synapse.ca
www.tanzaniahighcommission.ca

THAILAND

His Ex. Snanchart Devahastin
The Royal Thai Embassy
180 Island Park Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 0A2
TEL. 722-4444 FAX 722-6624
thaiott@magma.ca

TOGO

His Ex. Bawoumondome Amelete
Embassy of the Togolese Republic
12 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J3
TEL. 238-5916 FAX 235-6425

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Mr. Anthony David Edghill
Acting High Commissioner
High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
200 First Avenue, Third Level
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 2G6
TEL. 232-2418 FAX 232-4349
ottawa@ttmissions.com

TUNISIA

His Ex. Abdessalem Hetira
Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia
515 O'Connor Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 3P8
TEL. 237-0330 FAX 237-7939
atottawa@comnet.ca

TURKEY

His Ex. Aydemir Erman
Embassy of the Republic of Turkey
197 Wurtemberg Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8L9
TEL. 789-4044 FAX 789-3442
turkishottawa@mfa.gov.tr

UGANDA

His Ex. George Marino Abola
High Commission for the Republic of Uganda
231 Cobourg Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J2
TEL. 789-7797 FAX 789-8909
uhc@ugandahighcommission.com
www.ugandahighcommission.ca

UKRAINE

His Ex. Ihor Ostash
Embassy of Ukraine
310 Somerset Street, West,
Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0J9
Tel. 230-2961 Fax 230-2400
www.ukremb.ca

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

His Ex. Hassan Al-Suwaidi
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1800
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A4
TEL. 565-7272 FAX 565-8007
safara@uae-embassy.com
www.uae-embassy.com

UNITED KINGDOM

His Ex. Anthony Cary
British High Commission
80 Elgin Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5K7
TEL. 237-1530 FAX 237-7980
www.britainincanada.org

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

His Ex. David Wilkins
Embassy of the United States of America
490 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1G8
TEL. 238-5335 FAX 688-3080
www.usembassycanada.gov

URUGUAY

His Ex. Alváro M. Moerzinger
Embassy of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay
130 Albert Street, Suite 1905
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
TEL. 234-2727 FAX 233-4670

VENEZUELA

Jose Antonio Manlio Rodriguez de la Sierra Llerandi
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

32 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J4
TEL. 235-5151 FAX 235-3205
www.misionvenezuela.org

VIETNAM

His Excellency Duc Hung Nguyen
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
470 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6M8
TEL. 236-0772 FAX 236-2704

YEMEN

His Ex. Dr. Abdulla Abdulwali Nasher
Embassy of the Republic of Yemen
54 Chamberlain Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 1V9
TEL. 729-6627 FAX 729-8915
www.yemenincanada.ca

ZAMBIA

His Ex. David Clifford Saviye
High Commission for the Republic of Zambia
151 Slater St., Suite 205
Ottawa, Ontario
K1B 5H3
TEL: 232-4400 FAX: 232-4410

ZIMBABWE

Her Ex. Florence Zano Chideya
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe
332 Somerset Street West
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0J9
TEL. 237-4388 FAX 563-8269

Diplomat Magazine Contacts

Jennifer Campbell
Editor
(613) 231-8476
editor@diplomatonline.com

Neil Reynolds
Publisher

Donna Jacobs
Associate Publisher

Phone: (613) 259-3038
Fax: (613) 259-5481

Website:
www.diplomatonline.com



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and culture. She liked to play the pianoforte, go riding in long gloves and a cape, and write verse. They fell for Mr. Burr's charm, and made arrangements to have him visit again soon, which he did.

What happened next is still debated in historical circles. What's clear is that Mr. Jefferson had his old nemesis arrested for treason, claiming that Mr. Burr intended to take over some piece of U.S. territory by force, in an expedition mounted from Blennerhassett Island. Poor Mr. Blennerhassett was arrested as well, and troops destroyed his fine white house with the two crescent-shaped wings, though Margaret Blennerhassett was able to escape downriver with some of the furniture. The two men were tried by the chief justice of the federal Supreme Court, who happened to be Mr. Jefferson's brother-in-law. Nonetheless, they were found innocent. Mr. Burr went into European exile. The Blennerhassetts were ruined, and took to wandering.

When you come ashore on the island, a narrow trail takes you through thick woods to a sudden clearing—and there it is, a perfect reconstruction of the manor. So many of the river travellers the Blennerhassetts entertained left detailed descriptions of the interior and grounds that West Virginia, in whose waters it lies, was able to make this excellent recreation in the 1970s atop the original foundation. As many Blennerhassett possessions as possible were brought together there from wherever the four winds had scattered them.

In the early morning, smoke is coming from the kitchen and two horses, still hitched to a wagon, are neighing for their breakfast. The soil is damp and rich and the past seems very close because the urban world is far away.

So what I am doing here?

A dozen years after the trial, the Blennerhassetts went to Montreal where Harman practised law, unsuccessfully, and Margaret found comfort in her writing. She was the first woman in Canada to publish a book of verse and has been called "the mother of English-Canadian poetry." Her collection *The Widow of the Rock, And Other Poems* (1824) includes "The Deserted Isle" in which she asks out loud, "O! why, dear Isle, are thou not still my own? Thy charms could then for all my griefs atone."

George Fetherling's most recent book is *Tales of Two Cities: A Novella Plus Stories*.



Harman Blennerhassett was arrested for treason because of his association with one-time vice-president Aaron Burr. The Blennerhassetts eventually fetched up in Montreal where he became a lawyer.



Poet Margaret Blennerhassett



President Thomas Jefferson

Library of Congress

Editor's note: Now magnificently restored, the Blennerhassett mansion is part of Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park in West Virginia, which is open daily in the spring and summer months. Directions: Go to the riverboat landing in Parkersburg and take a sternwheeler to the park, a ride of only 20 minutes. Allow three hours or more for your visit.

Canada's connections to historic scandals on the Ohio River

By George Fetherling

In Greek mythology the souls of the dead were taken by ferry across a river (originally the Acheron, in later versions, the Styx) on whose other side lay Hades. The ferry operator, Charon, expected to be paid. This morning, I'm reminded of this because I'm one of four passengers on a small ferryboat that seems to be gliding through the water without any source of power. Visibility is low, and every so often there is a short blast from its bass-baritone foghorn. It's all a bit spooky. When travelling outside the country I'm always alert to sites with some connection to Canadian history. This time I'm on the Ohio River, going to Blennerhassett Island. Thereby hangs a yarn.

Before the U.S. constitution started to undergo reforms, the presidential candidate who received the most votes in Congress became the chief executive and the person with the next greatest number became vice-president. In 1800, there was a tie. In the end, Thomas Jefferson became president and Senator Aaron Burr his VP. The two were equally smart but of different parties, and they despised each other. The relationship finally exploded in 1804 when, in a personal matter, Aaron Burr killed Alexander Hamilton, the former secretary of the treasury, in a duel. Mr. Jefferson was furious at Mr. Burr and his subsequent flight to other jurisdictions. The disgraced defendant went west to start over, as people did then.



GEORGE FETHERLING

The home of Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett has been recreated and is now a tourist draw because Mr. Blennerhassett was implicated in fugitive Aaron Burr's scheme to take over a piece of U.S. territory. Canadians may be interested because Mrs. Blennerhassett became the first woman in Canada to publish a book of verse.

Travelling down the Ohio to reach New Orleans and then maybe Texas or Mexico, Mr. Burr stopped at the large figure-eight-shaped island part way between what are now southern West Virginia and Ohio but were then wilderness. There, an aristocratic Anglo-Irish exile, Harman Blennerhassett, had built a Georgian mansion that still seems incon-

gruous in such a place. A lawyer by training but an avid amateur scientist and all-round child of the Enlightenment, Mr. Blennerhassett had come there to escape scorn for having married his niece, the former Margaret Agnew. She was even higher up the social scale than he was. Both were far-famed for their hospitality

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