

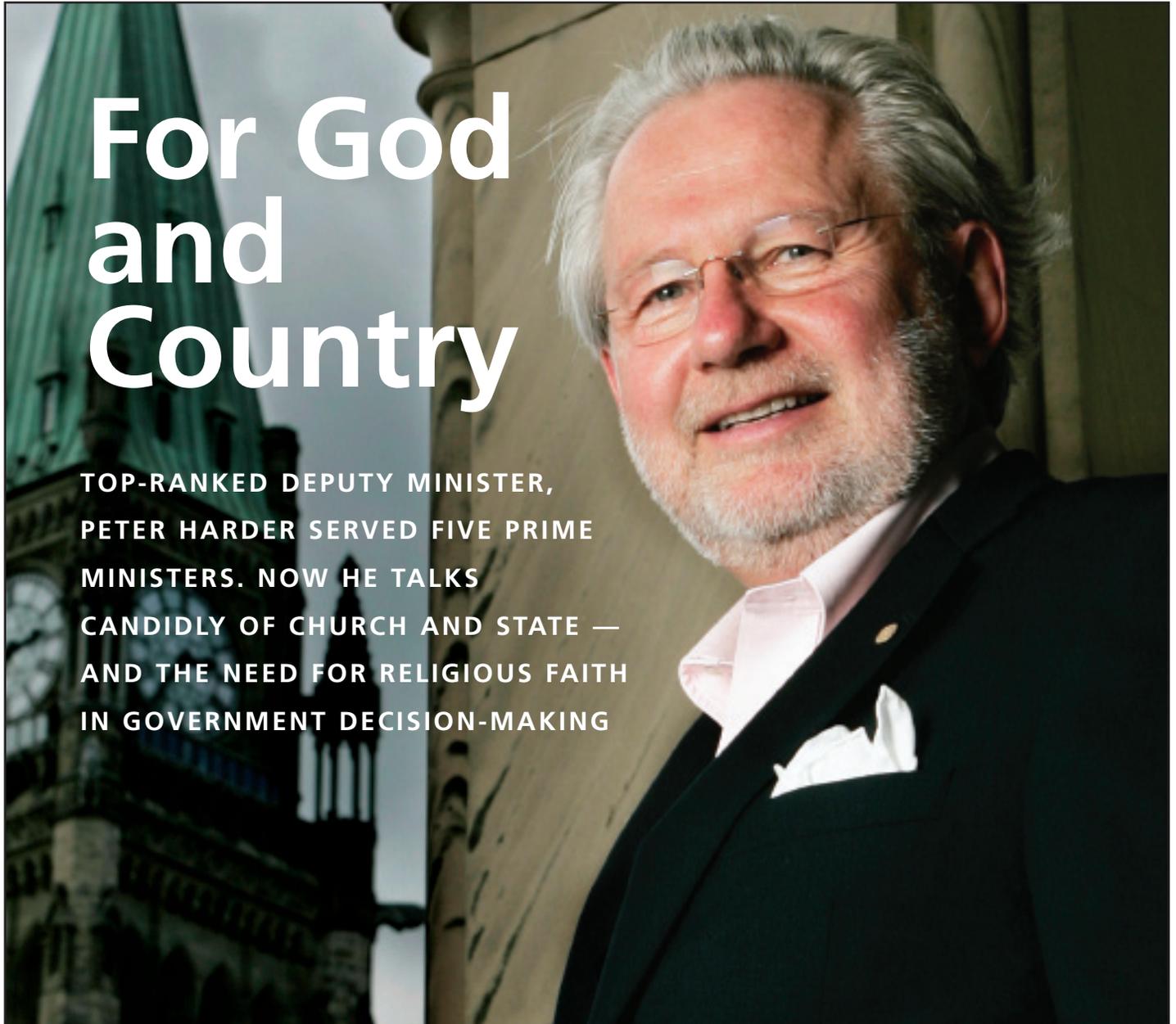
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## You've got to have faith

In his 30-year career as a public servant, Peter Harder became the longest-serving deputy minister in the federal government – in the process serving five consecutive prime ministers (from former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to Prime Minister Stephen Harper). In his final top-echelon post at Foreign Affairs, he worked on three G8 Summits. Now that he has left the public service for a new career as senior policy advisor to Fraser Milner Casgrain, the prominent national law firm, he is free to express publicly his views on public policy.

And what's now uppermost on his mind? In this issue of *Diplomat* magazine, Mr. Harder discusses the role of faith in public life. He recalls his own Mennonite heritage. He explains why religious beliefs – notwithstanding the separation of church and state – must remain an integral part of government decision-making. In this personal and provocative essay, he discusses what the West can learn from a prominent Muslim leader.

In an introductory note, *Diplomat* Publisher Neil Reynolds asks Mr. Harder to identify the most important political challenge that Canada will confront in the next few years. Thankfully, it's not separatism. Turn to page 12 to find out why Peter Harder thinks that Canada must expand its economic integration with the United States – to protect its own political sovereignty.

Religion also appears in our Verbatim section where we run a series of deeply disturbing cartoons published in the Arab and Iranian press. The cartoons come from a study conducted by the Washington-based Middle East Media Research Institute, which looks at the Middle East through the region's media. Research fellow Ofir Winter conducted the study of anti-Semitic cartoons where Jews are portrayed as “long-



JENNIFER CAMPBELL

nosed characters of ultra-orthodox appearance, as killers of Christ, as serpents or as Nazi soldiers.” We've offered a selection from various countries in the Middle East – from Bahrain to Saudi Arabia. After last year's furor over a Danish newspaper publishing a cartoon that offended Muslims the world over, these cartoons offer something to think about.

In addition, we hear from Trade Minister David Emerson on how Canada is playing catch-up in the free trade race. We also have an article that offers a solution to the brain drain Canada causes when it accepts educated immigrants from countries that must need their skills. Also up front, we have an interview with Peter Harder's successor, Foreign Affairs' Deputy Minister Len Edwards.

In our books package, George Fetherling reviews *Travels with Herodotus*, Ryszard Kapuściński's last book. Our regular columnist, George Abraham, examines three books on nuclear proliferation. Food writer Margaret Dickenson enlightens us on the mysterious “Trou Normand” course of the meal and culture editor Margo Roston takes us on a tour of the home of German Ambassador Matthias Höpfner. In our expanding travel coverage, we take a tour of Italy with Susan Wilkins, wife of U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins, and five of her friends. Turn to page 22 to find out why they call themselves “the M.O.B.” Then, Sarah Close takes us on an intimate tour of the British Museum, and lists some of its best treasures. Finally, on our back page, George Fetherling writes about the charms of Laos's capital.

Jennifer Campbell is editor of *Diplomat* magazine.

## UP FRONT

When asked to deliver a portrait of Peter Harder, who worked in the federal government's upper echelons under five prime ministers, photographer Brigitte Bouvier decided to take him to Parliament Hill. She wanted to include the Peace Tower as a symbol of the place where he wielded so much power over three decades. When we told her we were running an essay on his defence of faith in government, she shot him from the doors of the East Block looking out to the West. She thought the three Gothic arches gave a church-like feel to the photo. Our cover package on Mr. Harder's career and philosophy starts on page 12.



## CONTRIBUTORS

Susan Wilkins, author of *Under the Tuscan sun*



Susan Wilkins lived in South Carolina until 2005 when she arrived in Ottawa as wife of U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Wilkins. She picked peaches as a teenager, graduated from Limestone College and did one year of master's work at the University of South Carolina in speech pathology. For five years, she taught elementary school until her sons, James and Robert, were born in 1975 and 1976 and afterwards did extensive educational charity work. She volunteered on a Habitat for Humanity site in Greenville, S.C. and is in her second year as honorary patron for the Women Build Gala in Ottawa, to be held in November. Besides exercising, reading, gardening and playing with Lily the Maltese and Speaker the Springer spaniel, she enjoys spending time with the family and traveling.

Sarah Close, author of *Masterpiece gallery*



Sarah Close grew up in Vancouver B.C. but her family hails from the prairies of Saskatchewan. Her passion for travel began on her first trip to Europe just after her 16th birthday and she is still waiting for it to subside. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in history and anthropology from the University of Toronto in 2004 but she never let school stand in the way of travel. Sarah currently works as a production assistant at the Toronto International Art Fair. Travel aspirations include not getting sick from the food at the floating market in Bangkok and finally mastering the Paris Metro.

## All in the name of music

The Ottawa Symphony Orchestra has been receiving help from Ottawa's diplomatic community for more than a decade.

The symphony's big summer garden do is called Fête Champêtre (a French expression that means "rural feast") and always takes place at the residence of an ambassador or high commissioner. It began with a bang in 1996 at the home of the South African High Commissioner. Since then, France has hosted twice as have Spain and Japan. Coordinator Allison Dingle says they like to move it around so they're not always asking the same embassies to donate the big party. Other embassies that have hosted this event include Australia, Germany, United States and, this year, Switzerland did the honours with Ambassador Werner Baumann and his wife, Susanna, providing the venue and the wine. They also made a generous contribution toward the catering.

"Mostly one embassy hosts and then passes our name on to another to host the next time," Ms. Dingle said. "The variety has let us develop our event. And it's a significant contribution."

Embassies and high commissions offer varying degrees of help in addition to providing their residences for the party. They might provide the wine, or the food, or both but it depends on the country and its budget for such events.

"Their real generosity is in the time they spend welcoming our guests and making them feel comfortable," Ms. Dingle said.



Guests of this year's Ottawa Symphony Orchestra garden party known as the Fête Champêtre enjoyed the hospitality of Swiss Ambassador Werner Baumann and his wife, Susanna.

Embassies and high commissions have also contributed to post-concert receptions at the National Arts Centre. Usually, a reception will take place after the opening night of a series of concerts or for an especially important one. When the symphony played the British War Requiem, for example, the British High Commission provided wine and the high commissioner and spouse welcomed guests to a reception after the show. The Russian, Hungarian and Austrian embassies have extended the same courtesies and, once, the three embassies collaborated when a concert featured the music of composers

from all three countries. Germany has sponsored at least three post-concert receptions over the past decade, as has Russia. The United States was the most recent sponsor of a reception last fall.

"So we have a nice connection with the diplomatic community," Ms. Dingle said. "We benefit from their interest in our music."

Foreign envoys have also, from time to time, sponsored a concert by providing funding when the music of their country is on the program, Ms. Dingle said. The British High Commission has done this twice while the Italian and French embassies have each taken a turn.



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These cartoons are part of a project of the Washington, D.C.-based Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). It translates Arabic, Persian and Turkish media into English, German, Hebrew, Italian, French, Spanish and Japanese. It also does research and analysis of Middle Eastern trends.

"We are trying to explore the Middle East and to bridge the gap of language between the Middle East and the West," says MEMRI president Yigal Carmon. The institute, founded in 1998, has charitable status. "We are not an advocacy group.

"The project is part of an exploration of public opinion in the Arab world," says Mr. Carmon. "Cartoons are part of the media – they're not opinion, they're not news; they're one of the components of public opinion."

The website also includes some 1,600 television clips from Arab and Iranian TV ([www.memritv.org](http://www.memritv.org).)

Ofir Winter, MEMRI research fellow and the cartoon report's author, says: "Studying cartoons is an integral part of studying public opinion. It's an extra tool, in addition to translations and studies from articles in the media, talk shows on TV, and studying books and sermons in mosques.

"The cartoons are reflecting public opinion and strengthening it, correspondingly to the interests of the owner of the paper," says Mr. Winter, "or the regime that controls the paper."

**THE WORLD ACCORDING TO:**  
A disturbing collection by political cartoonists in the Middle East



**The Jews as Nazis**  
Translation: "Israel Killed [Egyptian] Prisoners of War in 1967." The figure on the right is saying: "We are not murderers, we are Nazis."  
Source: *Al-Ahali* (Egypt), March 21, 2007

**The Jews as killers of Christ**  
Translation: "Israel is celebrating the discovery of the tomb of King Herod, the Jewish king who ordered, two thousand years ago, to kill all the children because soothsayers had foretold that a child would be born who would topple him from the throne. [This child] was the Messiah who fled to Egypt with his mother, Mary. And two days ago an Israeli soldier shot and killed a Palestinian child in his mother's womb!!"



**The U.S. and Jews as Co-conspirators**  
Source: *Akhbar Al-Arab*, (United Arab Emirates) August 19 2007



**The Jews as Warmongers**  
Translation: The figures fighting in the background are labeled "Fatah and Hamas." The Jew is saying: "I'd like to know which one of them will turn out to be Cain, and which will turn out to be Abel [i.e., which will end up killing the other]."  
Source: *Akhbar Al-Yawm* (Egypt), May 21, 2007



**The Jews as Warmongers**

Translation: The sign beside the door says "Hamas-Fatah."

Source: *Al-Watan* (Qatar), March 2, 2007



**The Jews as Plunderers of Resources**

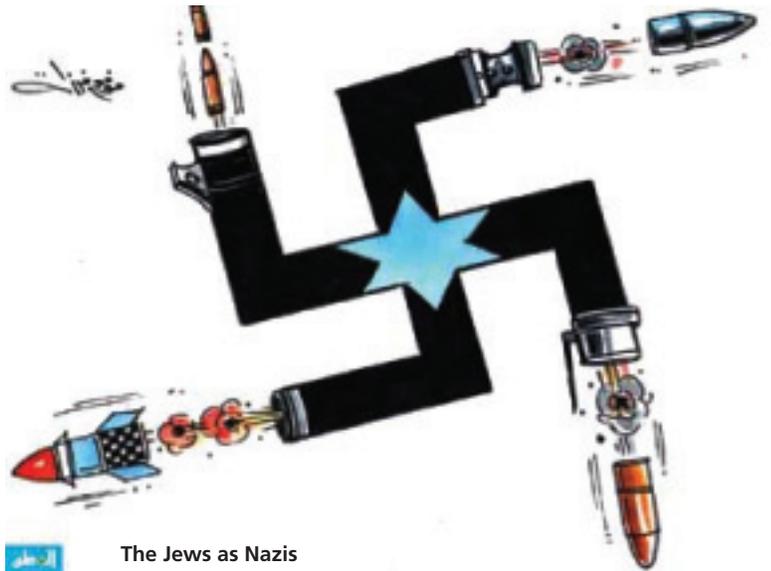
Translation: The cow's udder is labeled "Arab oil."

Source: *Kayhan* (Iran), February 17, 2007



**The Jews Taking over the World**

Source: *Al-Rai* (Jordan), March 4, 2007



**The Jews as Nazis**

Source: *Al-Watan* (Saudi Arabia) July 3, 2007



**The Jew as a Serpent**

Translation: The mice in the snake's mouth represent Fatah and Hamas. The snake is saying "imagine how they must be fighting each other in there."

Source: *Akhbar Al-Yawm* (Egypt), June 20, 2007



**The Jews as Nazis**

Translation: The Israeli is explaining to the Nazi: "We are the same."

Source: *Teshreen* (Syria), April 26, 2007

# Stability increases as Azerbaijan's energy wealth flows outward



**FIRST NAME:** Fakhraddin  
**LAST NAME:** Gurbanov  
**CITIZENSHIP:** Azerbaijani  
**PRESENTED CREDENTIALS AS AMBASSADOR:** Sept. 27, 2004  
**PREVIOUS POSTINGS:** Washington, D.C.

hood day, President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the world's second longest oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC). This \$4 billion (USD) pipeline is 1,774 kilometres long and capable of delivering up to one million barrels per day from the Caspian Sea to

Turkey's port on the Mediterranean Sea.

If you are to write the history of Azerbaijan, you might use pen and oil instead of ink. Oil brought three brothers – Alfred, Ludvig and Robert Nobel – to Baku 130 years ago and they were confident they could establish an oil enterprise. It took a while to come to fruition as it was just 10 years ago that Azerbaijan – under the leadership of the late President Heydar Aliyev – made a firm bid to become a regional leader despite the complex geopolitical environment that is its birthright.

Today, the country is growing fast. The World Bank reports the country's annual GDP growth has averaged 12 per cent over the past five years and shot up to an impressive 26 per cent in 2005.

On May 28, 2006, Azerbaijan's state-

Soon after, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline (called also South Caucasus Pipeline - SCP) was launched, bringing natural gas from the giant Shahdeniz field in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea to the global market. These massive pipelines came to life in spite of the skepticism of many experts who doubted the projects, built in partnership with western energy companies led by British Petroleum, would ever come to life. Azerbaijan is now working with other countries and multinational companies to implement more transregional projects including the "Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasus – Asia" program (also known as TRACECA or the Silk Road project), trans-Caspian oil and gas pipelines, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars rail-

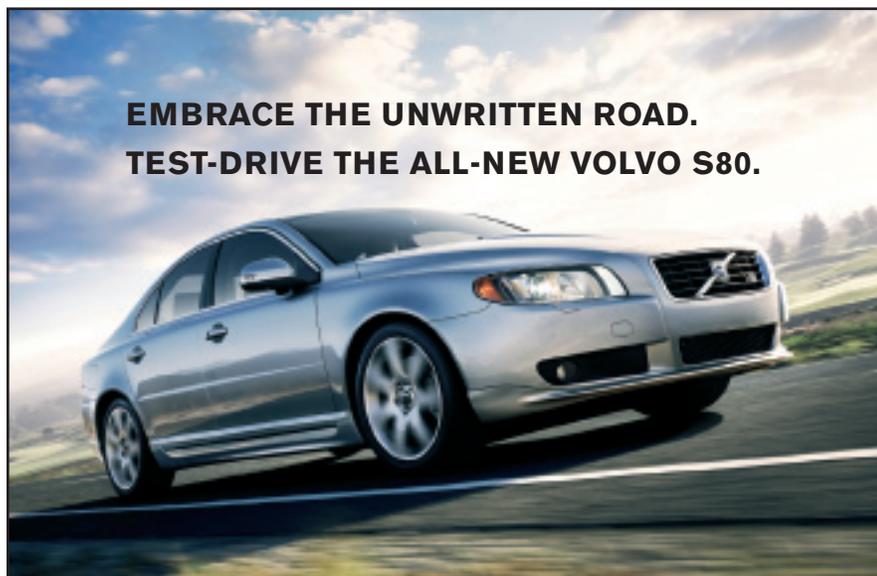
road, among others. Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, is fast becoming a favoured destination for wise investors.

These new projects also face skepticism but with time, doubts will disappear. Many nations stand to gain from these undertakings, as they do from the BTC oil pipeline which will enrich transition countries and increase trade and investment.

These transregional projects are drawing Azerbaijan and the European Union ever closer together. In November 2006, President Ilham Aliyev and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso signed a memorandum of understanding to establish an energy partnership between Azerbaijan and the EU, drawing in its estimated three trillion cubic-metre gas reserves to help Europe diversify its energy sources.

Azerbaijan aims to further integrate into Euro-Atlantic institutions, one of the goals of its recently developed national security policies, and is fast developing relationships with partners throughout the world. Its energy wealth has attracted investors from Europe, Asia and the United States, and links with Canada are growing – in June, Canada's first trade mission visited Baku. If Canada were to open a diplomatic mission, it would give further impetus to co-operation between the two countries.

Azerbaijan still faces many challenges inherited from the former Soviet system



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and associated with the transition to modernization. The government is steadily working to reform the country's legislature, bureaucracy, economic infrastructure and social fabric. With the assistance of the United Nations Development Program, International Monetary Fund

**AZERBAIJAN'S ENERGY WEALTH HAS ATTRACTED INVESTORS FROM EUROPE, ASIA AND THE UNITED STATES, AND LINKS WITH CANADA ARE GROWING – IN JUNE, CANADA'S FIRST TRADE MISSION VISITED BAKU.**

and World Bank, Azerbaijan has determined its development goals and has started social programs to improve the lives of ordinary Azerbaijanis. The government has invested heavily in schools and President Aliyev established a sizeable fund to sponsor the education of Azerbaijani students abroad.

The government also set up an oil fund to ensure wealth management remains transparent to all and that the revenues will be dedicated to improve the lives of future generations. At the same time, the government plans to foster non-oil sectors of the economy.

Another urgent priority is the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Despite a cease-fire in place since 1994, the conflict remains unresolved and the two parties are negotiating under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Minsk Group co-chaired by France, Russia and the U.S. If we resolve the conflict and the Armenians vacate the occupied territory of Azerbaijan, the entire region will benefit from other transregional projects.

Economic reforms and industrial projects in Azerbaijan could benefit the entire region, so the support of the international community, including Canada, remains important. Close ties will help diversify global energy resources, widen the transportation network and reinforce the stability of one of the world's most strategically important regions.

Fakhraddin Gurbanov was ambassador of Azerbaijan until September when he became ambassador to London.



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## Focus: No. 1, Afghanistan, No. 2, The Americas

Len Edwards became deputy minister of foreign affairs in March 2007 when Peter Harder, the subject of our cover package, left the public service. Mr. Edwards is a career diplomat who's also been deputy minister of agriculture and international trade. He sat down with

*Diplomat's* editor Jennifer Campbell to talk about his priorities, what it's like to be the dad of a famous rock star and what keeps him up at night.

**Diplomat magazine:** What's the most pressing issue on your plate? What keeps you awake at night?

**Len Edwards:** It's pretty hard to choose. There are so many things happening. I guess the most pressing issues tend to be the ones that are focused on the government's priorities so issues around Afghanistan have certainly been a preoccupation.

My second priority has been to respond to the Prime Minister's interest in making the Americas a priority for his foreign policy. He had a speech in early February in Ottawa in which he talked about reaching south of the United States into our neighbourhood of the Americas and improving our relations in that region, and doing a better job of responding to our interests in both economic security and in governance and rule of law. A lot of my time since then has been spent pulling together a task team to work on that.

I've worked very closely with my colleague, (Marie-Lucie Morin) the deputy minister of international trade, who is pursuing her priorities around the global commerce strategy so the whole department is supporting her in that particular priority.

Once you deal with those priorities of the government, whatever time is left goes to managing the department. In my first message to members of the department, I said that in addition to focusing on the government's priorities, I would be focusing on those issues. Having been gone from the department for almost three years, I felt I had to catch up on

what's been happening. The department had been split (from International Trade) before I left trade and now it's back together again. So that knitting process is still underway.

**DM:** Is the knitting process the main preoccupation as far as managing the department goes?

**LE:** The department has come back together fairly quickly.

**DM:** I gather it didn't want to separate in the first place.

**LE:** It didn't want to separate – perhaps you're right. So it came back together quickly. This is not an issue that requires particular encouragement from the deputies but still it needs some nurturing here and there because it hasn't fit back together exactly the same way it was.

**DM:** You've had postings in Vietnam, Turkey, Belgium, Japan, Korea – which was the best?

**LE:** Everybody asks me that question and I have a stock answer.

**DM:** A diplomatic answer, no doubt.

**LE:** Well, no, it's not even diplomatic, because it's the truth. Every posting was special in its own way. Vietnam was my first posting. I was single, living in a hotel. For a full year, I was up in Hanoi during the final days of the American involvement in Vietnam. It's hard to imagine, at that time, a more interesting place to be. All of them have enriched me enormously.

**DM:** What's it like to be the father of Ottawa's alt-country darling Kathleen Edwards?

**LE:** (Laughs) It's interesting to be known as somebody else's father, for a change. Children tend to be known as someone's son or daughter but I'm identified more often by my daughter, outside the department at least. Within the department, I'm identified with my son who is in the foreign service. "You're Tim's father" or

"You're Kathleen's father." She's had some success so far in her career and it's been wonderful to share in that from an observer's point of view. When I was younger, I once had some short-lived dreams of being an entertainer myself. I chose the safe way and joined the public service but she had more courage than I and decided to take the risks of the entertainment business – which are high. She's been blessed with some success.

**DM:** You play guitar yourself?

**LE:** I do a little bit, just for fun. But I don't have a lot of time to play guitar. I also do some singing. My wife is also very musical – she in the Cantata singers here in Ottawa so we have lots of music in our house, even without our daughter present. When she comes home, we have a lot more music in the house.

**DM:** What are your thoughts on Doha given the recent setbacks?

**LE:** We all hope the round, which started in Doha five years ago – and I was there as trade deputy – will result in an outcome. Unfortunately, the signs are that the major players are continuing to have difficulty closing the gaps in their positions. All we can do as Canada is continue to do whatever we can to encourage those players to resolve their differences. I haven't given up hope and I don't think we should but the most recent signs continue to be that there are some very substantial challenges. It's taken a long time and it's disheartening for those of us who believe we need a positive outcome to this round.

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# Playing catch-up in the free trade race

By David Emerson

In today's global economy, there's a direct link between a nation's quality of life and its ability to trade with – and invest in – the markets of the world. Canada is a case in point. Half of what we manufacture in Canada is exported, and one fifth of all Canadian jobs are directly linked to international trade.

That means it's essential to aggressively pursue global opportunities by breaking down trade and investment barriers around the world and building links in the web of international commerce. Trade agreements are a fundamental part of this pursuit.

While we've had some success negotiating tightly focused commercial agreements, such as air services and investment protection, Canada's last general free trade agreement was signed with Costa Rica in 2001. Meanwhile, our competitors have stepped up their efforts, signing bilateral free trade agreements with established and emerging economies. Since 2001, for example, the U.S. has negotiated free trade agreements covering 16 countries, with agreements covering eight more in progress.

This imbalance puts Canadian firms at a disadvantage. It reduces opportunities for trade. It neutralizes Canada's competitive advantages – advantages our businesses have worked hard to hone over decades, from expertise in agriculture, energy and natural resources, to our growing high-tech sector. And it gives other countries an edge that diverts opportunities away from our communities.

Canada's new government believes Canadian companies and investors and communities have what it takes to compete with the world's best. And when it comes to trade agreements that level the playing field for those companies, we're starting to make real progress.

On June 7, I announced that Canada has concluded free trade negotiations with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries of Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. It's a good match. Like Canada, the four EFTA countries are sophisticated and wealthy economies driven by technological innovation. Together, they offer huge market potential for us.

Our trade and investment links to these



countries are already well entrenched. Combined, this group is Canada's eighth-largest merchandise export destination, with \$11 billion in two-way trade in 2006.

The EFTA group is also a key investment partner for Canada, with \$22 billion in two-way investment at the end of 2005. In fact, the Swiss are the fifth-largest investor in our country, with a significant presence in biotech and pharmaceuticals. The agreement – Canada's first-ever transatlantic agreement with European partners – will build on this success.

The agreement is good news for those working in a number of Canadian sectors. It will eliminate or reduce duties for a range of goods and agricultural products. From auto parts to forestry products, to agriculture, fish and seafood, the agreement will give Canadian producers and exporters the preferential market access to EFTA countries that the EU now enjoys.

While this agreement with the EFTA nations is a great start, we need to do more, and we are. For example, Canada recently negotiated a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA) with India that will give Canadian and Indian investors the protection and stability they need to take advantage of opportunities in each others' market.

India is widely recognized as one of the fastest growing economies on the planet. Canada has much to offer as India continues its ascent. Last year, our two-way trade reached \$3.6 billion while flows of direct investment increased by 17 per cent to \$528 million. We are deeply committed

to growing these numbers. And that's why we have made India a priority market

Prime Minister Harper has just returned from a visit to Colombia, Chile, Barbados and Haiti, where he underscored Canada's commitment to greater co-operation with our hemispheric neighbours, including on the commercial front. During his trip, he announced the launch of free trade negotiations with the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM).

We also recently launched free trade negotiations with Colombia, Peru and the Dominican Republic, and we remain committed to negotiating an agreement with the Central American Four of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

As well, we're pursuing free trade agreements with South Korea and Singapore, which we hope to conclude in the near future.

We concluded negotiations on a FIPA with Jordan, and have agreed to study the feasibility of a Canada-Jordan free trade agreement.

We negotiated a science and technology co-operation agreement with China – similar to the one already in place with India – that brings Canadian and Chinese researchers together to develop and commercialize new technology for the international marketplace.

As these examples clearly show, Canada is back in the game.

Our government is determined to open more doors to global markets, and to create trade and investment opportunities that will make our country more competitive in the years ahead. Canada is becoming more engaged at the international level, and Canadians will benefit.

As our growing relationship with India, China, and other emerging economies demonstrates, the opportunities in the global economy are great.

I look forward to continue working with Canadians to capture these opportunities and to build an even stronger and more prosperous Canada in the years to come.

David L. Emerson is minister of international trade and minister for the Pacific Gateway and the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Olympics.

# Should Canada pay poor countries for skilled immigrants?

Absolutely, writes **Don Cayo**

**M**ore than a million Canadians can't find a family physician, yet thousands of immigrant doctors aren't allowed to practise here. It doesn't matter how well-trained, smart or able they are, or how good their English — the ossified provincial bureaucracies that certify physicians simply can't, or won't, deal with more than a small fraction of their number.

If you think that's a dreadful waste of talent, you're right. But it's also just half the sad story. The skills these immigrants bring with them, now atrophying from disuse, are also urgently needed back home. For example, sub-Saharan Africa has 25 per cent of the global disease burden, yet just four per cent of the world's health care workers. By contrast, North America has only 10 per cent of the burden and 37 per cent of the manpower.

Last year in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi, the world's fourth-poorest country, I met a man I thought was a doctor. It turns out he wasn't yet fully qualified, although he was the primary health care provider for 100,000 people. He manned a clinic and performed surgeries 10-12 hours a day, six days a week, and remained on call during his meagre time off.

If he ever completes his qualifications to a level that lets him practise anywhere else, how long do you think he'll stay?

Doctors may have it a little better in most developing countries, but they still leave in droves. In South Africa, for instance, 37 per cent leave for greener pastures.

**THE SKILLS THESE IMMIGRANTS BRING WITH THEM, NOW ATROPHYING FROM DISUSE, ARE ALSO URGENTLY NEEDED BACK HOME.**

In the Philippines, it's nurses who are more apt to immigrate, but there's a chronic doctor shortage nonetheless. One reason is that many physicians retrain to earn nursing credentials, which are more likely to be accepted in a developed country.

I've long argued that Canada must start treating all of its skilled immigrants — not just doctors, though they'd be a good place to start — more fairly and sensibly. It wouldn't be hard to set up a system to assess foreign qualifications and, in cases where they fall just a little short of Canadian requirements, tailor remedial courses to fill in any gaps.

But if we do that and nothing more, we'll simply facilitate a worsening brain drain from countries that can't compete economically with ours.

When Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, the former president of the Aga Khan University's nine campuses worldwide, challenged me on that point last year, I responded that, in addition to enacting policies to help immigrants get to work, we should be reimbursing their countries of origin for the money invested in their training.

Kassim-Lakha was immediately enthusiastic. It's not a shortage of keen and qualified candidates for medical educa-

tion that keeps the numbers in short supply, he said. It's the lack of money to train them.

Care would have to be taken, of course, to ensure those accepted for immigration have sound qualifications on which to build Canadian careers, and that they're keen to come — not "sold," in effect, by their government to the highest bidder.

A very different solution was proposed earlier this year by the Gates-funded non-profit, GAVI Alliance (formerly the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization). It announced plans to spend US\$500 million over three years to help poor countries lure some of their medical professionals back. Some of its strategies are as basic as simply ensuring they're paid on time.

That's certainly preferable to leaving thousands of under-employed doctors in Canada driving taxis or doing other menial work while their credentials are in limbo.

But the pay-for-training model has the potential to solve the problem for not only poor countries desperate for skilled workers, but for rich ones as well.

Indeed, there's a global shortage of about 4.3 million medical professionals, according to the World Health Organization. So bolstering medical-school budgets is one of the most effective foreign aid measures that Canada could undertake — in addition to helping us meet our own needs.

Email Don Cayo at [doncayo@telus.net](mailto:doncayo@telus.net).



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# Peter Harder's three laws for governing Canada

One of Canada's most distinguished public servants tells **Neil Reynolds** why Canada must seek greater economic integration with the U.S. and Mexico.

**W**hen Peter Harder departed the Public Service of Canada in March, as deputy minister of foreign affairs, he left as the longest-serving deputy minister in the federal government – and as a high-ranking administrator for five prime ministers. In one of his first acts as a private citizen, he called each of them, or met with them, to thank them for the privilege of high office that they had given him.

He met Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, who had appointed him to three successive deputy-minister positions, at his Ottawa office. It was fitting that Mr. Harder met Chrétien at the end of his public service career. He had met him at the beginning, too – indeed, before the beginning.

In 1971, as a teenager, Mr. Harder had toured Parliament Hill on a program sponsored by his Mennonite church in Vineland, near Niagara Falls. Then in his first cabinet position, as minister of Indian

Affairs, Chrétien invited Mr. Harder into his office. He introduced himself. “My name is Jean Chrétien,” he teased the young Peter Harder. “I’m a Christian, too.”

It was former Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney who first made Mr. Harder a deputy minister. When he met Mr. Chrétien to thank him for the “high offices of state” that Mr. Chrétien had given him, he thanked him also for dismissing the advice of rivals who, because of his service to the Mulroney government, denigrated him “as a Tory hack.”

His own surname aside, Mr. Chrétien’s introduction to Mr. Harder appears more eccentric now than it would have appeared a generation ago. We’re exceptionally careful these days to keep church and state separate – or to appear to do so. In fact, religious faith has always shaped public policy in Canada, either implicitly or explicitly. It was the “social gospel,” a Methodist legacy, that defined democratic socialism and shaped 20th Century liberalism. It was

an evangelical conscience that motivated prairie populism and anchored the “religious right.” People of deep religious convictions have pursued their beliefs in the Commons – and in the public service – from the start.

Further in this issue of *Diplomat* magazine, Peter Harder discusses the role of religious faith in the governing of a secular state – based upon his personal observations over his remarkable 30-year career. In this personal essay (“In defence of faith in public life,” page 15), Mr. Harder concludes that faith and public service remain inseparable.

**W**hen Mr. Mulroney gave Mr. Harder responsibility for a federal department in 1991, he assigned him a tough task. Earlier, in 1988, he had given Mr. Harder the job of fixing the country’s scandalous backlog of refugee cases. For humanitarian reasons, the Immigration Department had essentially stopped deporting people – no matter how bogus their claims as

refugees. This policy induced more people abroad to jump the queue. “If yes meant yes, and no meant yes,” Mr. Harder recalls, “then no didn’t exist.” As the founding executive-director of the Immigration and Refugee Review Board, he insisted that no meant no, that people who couldn’t qualify as legitimate refugees could not remain forever in the country.

The Immigration Department itself resisted this stance. During a showdown session between the protagonists, on a Friday afternoon in September, a knock on the door interrupted the tense discussion. A messenger told Mr. Harder there was an urgent telephone call. Mr. Harder left the room, thinking perhaps his nine-year-old son had broken an arm. Instead, it was Mr. Mulroney on the line.

“Hello, Peter,” Mr. Mulroney said. “This is the Prime Minister.” Mr. Mulroney proceeded to read the text of an Order-in-Council that named Peter Harder as deputy minister of immigration – with full authority to end the argument that he was having, at that very moment, in the room down the hall.

In the succeeding 16 years, Mr. Harder served as the most senior public servant in five government departments – Immigration, Treasury Board, Solicitor General, Industry and Foreign Affairs (combined with International Trade). At Foreign Affairs, Mr. Harder assumed responsibilities as the personal representative of the prime minister at three G8 summit meetings (Sea Island in the U.S., 2004; Gleneagles in Scotland, 2005; St. Petersburg in Russia, 2006).

During these years, Mr. Harder served as well on the board of the Business Development Bank, the National Research Council and the Canadian Tourism Commission. He served on the advisory council of the Canadian Space Agency and as co-chair of the Canada-China Strategic Working Group. In 2000, Governor General Adrienne Clarkson awarded Mr. Harder the Prime Minister’s Outstanding Achievement Award for leadership in the public service.

When he quit the public service, Mr. Harder joined Fraser Milner Casgrain, one of Canada’s most prominent law firms, as senior policy advisor in Ottawa. The conference room he uses to meet guests, on the 14th floor of a downtown office tower, looks out expansively over Parliament Hill and the environs where he once wielded great authority. So, now

that he’s free to speak publicly about the most pressing issues of the day, what does Peter Harder think?

For one thing, he says that Canada must press forward with greater economic integration with the United States – which he says, ironically, is the only way for Canada to preserve its national sovereignty.

To appreciate Mr. Harder’s assessment on the integration of the American, Mexican and Canadian economies, it helps to know Peter Harder’s First Law: *Economic space is greater than political space*. Succinctly put, Mr. Harder’s First Law means that neither Canada nor any other country can stop the economic transformation now taking place around the globe – the simultaneous economic rise, among many other countries, of China, India, Brazil and Russia. Nor can any of them opt out of it.

“Canada has every interest in stronger integration with the United States,” he says, “and even a stronger [interest] than the historical evidence would suggest.

“In our lifetime, we will see the rise of the emerging economies – which is a great thing – that will alter the economic and geopolitical landscape of the world.

“Surely it is in Canada’s interest to have a more integrated North America in the face of a China which has already overtaken Germany as the third-largest economy in the world. China will equal the U.S. economy by 2015, with each of these countries having 18 percent of global GDP. China will exceed the U.S. economy [significantly] by 2025, with 25 percent of global GDP.

“These are the trendlines. They are already there.

“I’m not saying that the U.S. will be a declining power. The world will be one in which wealth is increasing, in which the pie is bigger. [But] Canada’s percentage of global GDP will decline. And it will be beneficial for us to be part of the economic space of a more integrated North America.

“Wouldn’t it be better for Canada to be inside the perimeter of the North American economy than outside it? Think of this in the context of a terrorist attack.

“Yet, for a long time, we haven’t been able even to talk about the concept of a North American perimeter because it would look as though we were selling out our sovereignty. Ironically, by not moving toward a perimeter, we will be selling out our sovereignty because sov-

ereignty means making the decisions necessary for the long-term economic interests of the country.” This observation reflects Peter Harder’s Second Law: *The country that best understands globalization wins*.

The nations that will succeed in the future, Mr. Harder says, will be the ones that best understand globalization. Does Canada understand it? Most Canadians do: “The Canadian public is ahead of the politicians.

“The public understands basic economics,” Mr. Harder says. “Try telling an auto worker in southwestern Ontario what the closing of the border would mean. The discussion would not be theoretical.” Yet a terrorist attack on the U.S. could close the border, in both directions, at any time.

A more integrated continent will thus require, among other things, a common perimeter. The “harder” we make the exterior border, Mr. Harder says, the “softer” we can make the internal border – which explains why he advocates a “hard shell” around North America. Integration itself means “building some institutional capacity that is bi-national, and perhaps tri-national.” This is too much, for the moment, for Canada’s political leadership to handle.

Mr. Harder insists that economic integration does not lead to political integration and says that the internal border will always remain “to define our political space.”

Canadians should not look at the United States only through “a political lens,” Mr. Harder says. (“Iraq is a difficult lens.”) Canada’s relationship with the U.S. transcends “any particular president, any particular issue.”

Canadians are intimately connected with the United States through family relationships, social relationships and economic relationships, through history and values and interests. Politics can keep us apart – and Mr. Harder is the first to concede that political differences alone can, and do, get in the way of greater economic integration.

“I do not believe that political integration is desirable,” he says. “I do not believe that economic integration necessarily leads to political integration.” Nevertheless: “Geography has uniquely placed us beside G1.”

Call it Peter Harder’s Third Law: *We are our geography*.

Neil Reynolds is publisher of *Diplomat*.



## Peter Harder's Creed

# In defence of faith in public life

Former senior bureaucrat says freedom of religion can't be permitted to compel freedom from religion. "Government is not a church," says Peter Harder, "but the public servants with whom I have worked don't park their faith at the door."

**N**icolas Sarkozy, the French president, admitted in the presidential election in April that he was a "practising Christian." In the same week, Boris Yeltsin became the first Russian head of state to be buried with Russian Orthodox rites in 133 years. In the same week, in the first presidential debate among Democratic Party candidates, John Edwards hesitated for 12 seconds when he was asked to name his moral

mentor. (Mr. Edwards finally offered two politically acceptable responses, Jesus Christ and his own wife Elizabeth.) Mr. Edwards' campaign was subsequently judged to have stalled – 12 seconds of reflection being deemed too equivocal. In the same week yet again, Turkey's Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul caused a political crisis when the country's Islamist government declared him its presidential candidate – because opposition parties in

parliament and the military elite considered him too Islamist.

Whether we acknowledge it or not, virtually every newscast and media report is in some form a variation of "faith and public life." Elections around the globe, revolutionary movements, decisions by governments, actions of civil society, even the marketplace – all speak to this interaction. When I spoke with my son and told him that I would be speak-

ing out on the proper role for religious belief in government, he said: “Dad, just tell them religion and politics don’t mix.”

I suspect his view is broadly shared, particularly when so much evil has been motivated, justified and in some cases even glorified in the name of religious faith. Zealotry is an equal opportunity curse to all religions. It chases faith out of public life. In my view, this needs to change, especially in a post-9/11 world.

Bill Moyers, one of my favorite self-defined “Christian realists,” writes: “Having lost faith in all else, zealots have nothing left but a holy cause to please a warrior God. They win if we become holy warriors, too; if we kill the innocent as they do; strike first at those who had not struck us; allow our leaders to use the fear of terrorism to make us afraid of the truth; cease to think and reason together, allowing others to tell what’s in God’s mind. Yes, we are vulnerable to terrorists, but only a shaken faith in ourselves can do us in.” Faith in public life, faith in life, is the necessary bulwark of political community.

I want to make three points: First, I will press the case for remembering our history. Second, I will argue that tension between individual and collective ethics is necessary and, in that context, I will offer some reflections on the politicians and the public-policy challenges of our time. Third, I will advocate a greater sense of what the prominent Muslim leader Aga Khan has called “public integrity.”

Perhaps my reflections require some biography to provide a personal context. By background, personality and profession, I am self-editing and therefore find public confession somewhat intimidating. I had lunch a while back with [CBC broadcaster] Eric Friesen. We share much in our backgrounds. When I told him of this assignment, he admonished me to make myself vulnerable. So here goes, Eric.

As I began to prepare, I was overwhelmed by personal reflections and a deep sense of humility. I owe much to my Mennonite roots. They are the community that formed me, the home which nurtured my thinking—the values of community, caring, honesty and integrity, family and work that have been essential to my career as they are to any authentic life.

As we shift between the spiritual and secular worlds, between community and formal organizations, between professional and religious values, we come to

understand more fully how each nurtures the other. I have learned that I must walk both ways across the bridge.

The Mennonites are an offshoot of the Anabaptists, a radical Protestant group that emerged in the 1550s, early in the Reformation. They took their name from Menno Simons, a 16th Century Dutch priest who had converted from Roman Catholicism. The key tenets of the Men-

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INCLUDING MY PARENTS AND  
GRANDPARENTS, TO THE  
MENNONITE “EXODUS” OF  
THE 1920S, LEAVING RUSSIA  
IN THE SUMMER OF 1924,  
CROSSING THE ATLANTIC BY  
SHIP, ARRIVING IN QUEBEC  
CITY AND THEN BY BOXCAR  
TO WATERLOO.**

nonite faith are an emphasis on an individual’s personal relationship to God, adult baptism, a rejection of state or official religion, a refusal to swear oaths, non-resistance in the face of aggression and a refusal of military service.

Harsh persecution in the Netherlands led many Mennonites to seek refuge in Europe and North America. My ancestors migrated first to Poland and, under Catherine the Great, to Russia. The subsequent 150 years or so in Russia are often described as a golden age in Mennonite history.

Needless to say, the revolution of 1917 changed all that. Terror, mass killings and pillaging of their communities led some 20,000, including my parents and grandparents, to the Mennonite “Exodus” of the 1920s, leaving Russia in the summer of 1924, crossing the Atlantic by ship, ar-

riving in Quebec City and then by boxcar to Waterloo.

Here is an excerpt from my grandfather’s diary entry, translated from German, written as he first saw the shores of Canada:

“At long last my years of hoping and dreaming are about to be fulfilled. A few more hours of sailing and we will touch Canadian soil in Quebec. Today is my birthday. I am 45 years of age, and I call out with the words of the Psalmist, ‘And I will walk in liberty, for I seek Thy precepts.’ (Psalms 119:45). On the day of my birth, my mother placed me into a cradle in Kleefeld, province of Taurien, Russia. Today the waves of fate gently rock me unto the shores of [North] America. Where will I find a home for myself and my large family? Where shall we find a home for our daily pursuits? How many days will there be for me in this strange land? With mixed feelings and emotions, and yet with a deep conviction that I have done the right thing, I cry out with the words, ‘My God, my hope is in Thee.’”

My grandfather was both a minister and teacher in Russia, my father a lay minister and businessman, first in southern Manitoba, then in Vineland, Ontario.

My mother and her family had arrived in Waterloo County a month earlier. Her father was 60 years of age. A large landowner in Russia, he became a farmer in Canada, settling in Essex County. While my mother attended public school for a couple of years, at 16 she began working at the H.J. Heinz factory. Her longing for education was expressed in memorizing poetry and teaching Sunday school, both virtually life-long pursuits. Twelve years later, at 29, she started grade nine, went on to the University of Toronto Normal School and became a teacher.

My parents were both active in church and community. Their faith was their life. I first visited Ottawa when my father, as moderator of the Ontario Mennonite conference, participated in the opening of the Ottawa Mennonite Church. My mother had leadership roles in provincial, national and international women’s conferences. Both were active in the Mennonite Central Committee, introducing what has become the Ten Thousand Villages network of craft stores across Canada and the U.S., establishing second-hand thrift stores and in visiting African and South American church projects. They lived fully integrated lives of faith and action.

My upbringing was a broad assort-

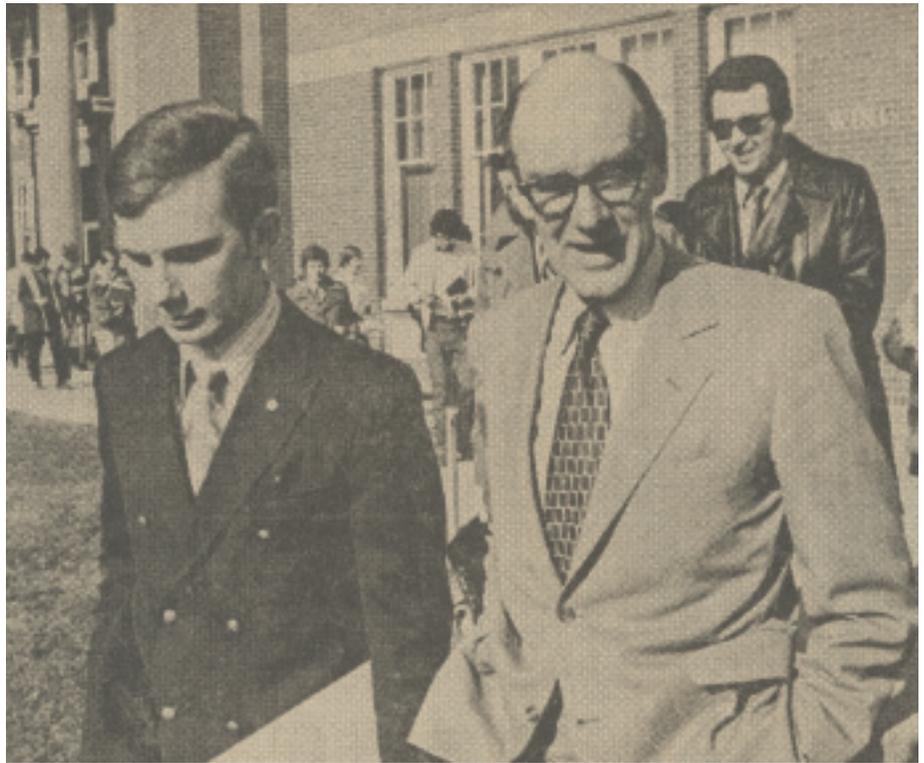
ment of traditional Mennonite theology, a few dollops of evangelicalism (how many can remember Ernest C. Manning, minister and premier, greeting radio listeners from Edmonton, Alberta, to the tune of “In the Sweet Bye and Bye”?) and large doses of social gospel activism. I resisted the evangelical piety and resented the smug self-righteousness of some of my co-religionists.

It was at university – the Mennonite Conrad Grebel College at the University of Waterloo – that I first read the great modern theologians and scholars. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was hanged by the Nazis. Walter Brueggemann, the prolific American authority on the Old Testament. Arthur Gish, the controversial American New Left religious thinker and Reinhold Niebuhr, the radical American pastor and ethicist. They stirred in me an appetite for public life and informed my faith. It was there, in Waterloo, that Professor Frank Epp first taught me the power of government and its sometime ability to get it wrong. He pointed to Ottawa’s Order-in-Council, proclaimed after World War 1, which prohibited the immigration to Canada of Mennonites (my parents and grandparents among them). The order reads:

“A widespread feeling exists throughout Canada, and more particularly in Western Canada, that steps should be taken to prohibit the landing in Canada of immigrants deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after entry.”

They were wrong, and, when I eventually became Deputy Minister of Immigration, Frank Epp’s lesson served me well.

When I went to work as a parliamentary intern, more than 30 years ago, I already had a few clear ideas about the necessity – and the necessary limits – of politics. The strongest intellectual influence on me was Reinhold Niebuhr, the great American theologian who identified, more clearly than any other writer of the last hundred years, the lessons to be learned from the appalling slaughters of the 20th Century. His central thesis can be stated succinctly: human beings cannot find their ultimate fulfillment in the political realm, and yet there can be no real salvation apart from a life of political



High school student Peter Harder walks with Robert Stanfield, leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in the late-1960s and early-1970s, after Stanfield delivered a speech at Beamsville High. The young Harder regarded Stanfield as a hero – as people said at the time, “the best prime minister Canada never had.”



Peter Harder, then deputy minister of foreign affairs, strolls across the grounds of the Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire, Scotland, with Prime Minister Paul Martin at the 2005 “Gleneagles Summit” of the G8 countries.

commitment. Mr. Niebuhr's thesis is essentially that a sharp distinction must be drawn between the moral and social behaviour of individuals and of social groups – and that this distinction justifies and necessitates political policies which a purely individualistic ethic, in Mr. Niebuhr's words, "must always find embarrassing."

As a student, I wrote down this particular quotation from Mr. Niebuhr: "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary." These words returned to my mind when, as deputy foreign minister, I signed the memorial book at the great Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem. Thirty-three years after first reading these words, they still sit on my desk.

Democratic politics is a rough game but it is played by surprisingly decent people. I say "surprisingly" because it is so easy to superimpose our own cynicism about politics onto the people who work at politics full-time. Our Members of Parliament – be they ministers or backbenchers – are, by and large, not cynical. They believe in what they are doing and they believe it is worth doing well. Part of doing it well is making the daily compromises and deals that are the stuff of political life; cynics call this "selling out" but it is actually the heart and soul of democracy.

Our MPs are surprisingly representative of Canada. Despite all the stereotyping, the reality is far more reassuring. Our MPs are like us, and getting more like us every day as more women enter politics and Canadian pluralism increasingly reflects itself in public life.

Our MPs work hard – long hours punctuated by lengthy trips home for the weekend where they run from mall openings to baptisms to bar mitzvahs, meeting the folks and, perhaps once again surprisingly for the cynics, listening to the folks as well, and then bringing those voices back to the national debate.

We tend to think of democracy in electoral terms – the right to vote for the person who represents us. That is part of it but maybe only the easiest part. If we look around the world, we see that how a person leaves office – whether peacefully or under coercion – is often more important than how he first came into office.

When I reflect on Canadian democracy, it is hard not to be moved by the immensity of the achievement. I'm reminded of a contest that Peter Gzowski once ran. He



Dining with the G8.

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OF IMMIGRANTS, BUT  
NOW WE SEE MANY ON  
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PRACTICES TO THAT THEY  
SEE AS FOREIGN AND  
REGRESSIVE –  
PRACTICES THAT IMPOSE  
RESTRICTIONS ON WOMEN,  
FOR EXAMPLE, OR WHICH  
FUNDAMENTALLY DISTURB  
THE TRADITIONAL RELATION-  
SHIP BETWEEN THE STATE  
AND RELIGION.**

said, "Finish this sentence: "as Canadian as..." You know the task: "as American as apple pie" or "as French as the Eiffel Tower." Mr. Gzowski's winning entry read: "as Canadian as possible under the circumstances."

Beyond political theatrics, beyond the hard work of democracy, there are other attributes – call them second-order attributes – that are woven into the fabric of our democracy. Attributes such as restraint, or more accurately, self-restraint.

Attributes such as the democratic spirit of inquiry and curiosity, of taking positions and standing your ground. Attributes such as patience, persistence and passion, not to mention tolerance and tenacity.

Add it all up, and we are talking about what the philosophers would call civic virtue. It is an important idea, the understanding that democratic governance is far more than a matter of technique. A vibrant and healthy political community needs the active participation of its citizens, and that participation must be grounded in civic virtues that contribute to the maintenance of an active public sphere. It may not be faith-based, but it does build political community. By that, I mean more than simply an assembly of people living within a common geographic space. Community implies a number of things in common and, when we talk about a political community, we mean a critical mass of political values and beliefs that are held in common.

This is not a new issue. Almost 2,500 years ago, Aristotle classified his different regimes according to the central values they possessed, particularly their ideas about justice. A community, any community, must hold certain things in common. As a general proposition, the more tightly-knit a community, the easier it will be for that community to agree on issues that affect all its members. This is quite distinct from personal faith.

How far can we dilute this sense of commonly-held things before the very idea of community begins to fall apart? What about a group of people where very little is held in common? Is that a real community, or just some kind of loose association?

This has become one of the most critical issues in the world. In Europe, the debate is out in the open, and it is often nasty. We are used to the extreme right's hatred of immigrants, but now we see many on the left, in Europe, calling for an end to "multiculturalism" and practices that they see as foreign and regressive – practices that impose restrictions on women, for example, or which fundamentally disturb the traditional relationship between the state and religion. Both the left and the right, in their very different ways, are now raising issues about political community: How much change can the community accept without completely undermining the community?

This issue dominates much of our foreign policy today. When we talk of failed and fragile states, we are really talking

about places where the political community has either broken down or, in some cases, was never really there in the first place. When we talk of peace-building, we are really talking about how to build political communities that work, that share certain core values and that can deliver essential services to their members.

In some countries, the fractures occur along racial or ethnic or religious or economic lines; in other cases, it is a fatal collision between the forces of modernity and tradition. In all cases, there are not enough things held in common to overcome the divisions that separate, and the result is chaos and catastrophe.

How do we even begin to put things back together? How does an advanced industrial democracy talk to poor, radically different countries like Afghanistan, Haiti or Sudan? And yet these are the most urgent demands on our foreign policy.

I am not going to suggest a single, clear answer. But more than any other country, Canada has gone down the multicultural path with eyes wide open. We have overcome a number of difficulties, and will undoubtedly face many more in the future. We have made mistakes, and there have been false starts and wrong steps.

But I also think we have probably done better than any other country to continually remake ourselves, to expand our notions of what it means to be a good Canadian, to meet demands for inclusion and resist calls for exclusion. More than any other country, we have taken up the challenge of shaping our political community to the emerging realities of the future.

The single biggest political challenge of the 21st Century will be the effort to knit together political communities out of diverse populations that draw on very different traditions and hold very different beliefs. Look around the world, and reflect on how unusual it is that Jews vote for Sikhs to represent their interests, that Muslims vote for Jews, that Christians vote for Buddhists. And yet there are still parts of the developed world where it is almost unthinkable for a Protestant to vote for a Catholic.

Perhaps it is in this sense that my son's observation that religion and politics do not mix, or that Mr. Niebuhr's distinction between moral and social behaviour of individuals and social and political groups, tells us something important.

So this brings me to my final point, the need for greater public integrity. And

## FROM CZARIST RUSSIA, A REALLY CLOSE CONNECTION

Widowed and living alone, each in her 90s, the two women shared a bond – born into a Mennonite community in Czarist Russia, they had fled the Soviet revolution as children, with their families, for refuge in Canada. The one had grown up in Saskatchewan, the other in Ontario. Now, a lifetime later, they found themselves living in neighbouring towns in Ontario, occasionally chatting together on the telephone.

One of the women was the mother of Gordon Thiessen, governor of the Bank of Canada from 1994 through 2001. The other was the aunt of Peter Harder, successively the deputy minister of five departments of the federal government from 1991 through 2007. Peter Harder picks up the story:

One day, Gordon Thiessen called his mother, who told him that she had just finished talking with her childhood friend.

"How's Gordie?" her friend had inquired.

"Well, Gordie's with the government, you know," his mother had answered.

"And I have a nephew who's with the government, too," the friend had said. "I wonder if they know each other?"

From his mother's chat, Mr. Thiessen thus learned for the first time that his father and Peter Harder's father had lived as close neighbours in Russia, that Peter Harder's



The Harder family in revolutionary Russia, 1923.

uncle – the husband of the widow – had been his father's best friend.

Back in Ottawa, Mr. Thiessen called Mr. Harder to tell him the story. The two men shared dinner together the same night.

But then Peter Harder's mother had been a Thiessen herself. Born Maria Petrova Tiessen in November, 1913, she was old enough to remember the bandits, anarchists and soldiers who pillaged and raped the Mennonite communities in southern Ukraine after the Russian Revolution in 1917.

She told the story of one winter raid.

"Mom would tell the story of a raid when her father was forced to stand against the wall to be shot," Peter Harder recalled in a memorial he wrote for his mother. "Mom's oldest sister, Aunt Betty, then about 10, jumped at the soldier and said that he shouldn't shoot her father. She had some money, one or two rubles from Christmas. The would-be killer picked her up, kissed her and left.

"The family fell to their knees and gave prayers of thanks."

Life became extraordinarily difficult during these years for all of the Mennonite communities in Russia. Eventually, more than 20,000 Mennonites, one-sixth of the Russian Mennonite population, emigrated to Canada, a country that promised religious freedom – where the doors remained open to them until slammed shut in the Great Depression.

Peter Harder's grandfather, with members of the Tiessen and Harder families, got out in 1924 – and made it safely to Manitoba. Gordon Thiessen's grandfather got out the same year – and made it safely to Saskatchewan. Seven decades later, in Ottawa, Gordon Thiessen and Peter Harder celebrated a serendipitous re-connection of family, friends and faith.

By Neil Reynolds



With Peter Harder nearby, Prime Minister Paul Martin chats with rock star and celebrity fund-raiser Bono at the G8 Summit in Scotland in 2005, one of three G8 Summits that Mr. Harder helped to stage.



Peter Harder with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

here, frankly, I've learned a tremendous amount from His Highness, the Aga Khan, Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, and someone I've had the privilege of knowing for more than 18 years.

In his convocation address at Columbia University last year, His Highness spoke to this issue with his customary eloquence. He observed that expanding the number of people who share social power is only half the battle. The critical question is how such power is used. How can we inspire people to reach beyond rampant materialism, self-indulgent individualism and unprincipled relativism?

The Aga Khan goes on to suggest that one answer is to focus on personal prerogatives and individual rights. He observes that people's desire for a better life – for a better life for their children – is personal and private. This desire, he suggests, must become a public value. His Highness argues that this change in thinking will be difficult to nurture without a strong religious underpinning. In the Islamic tradition, after all, the conduct of one's worldly life is inseparably intertwined with the concerns of one's spiritual life. You cannot talk about integrity without also talking about faith. Let me quote:

"For Islam, the importance of this intersection is an item of faith, such a profound melding of worldly concerns and spiritual ideals that one cannot imagine one without the other. The two belong together. They constitute 'a way of life.'

"From that perspective, I would put high among our priorities, both within and outside the Islamic world, the need to renew our spiritual traditions. To be sure, religious freedom is a critical value in a pluralistic society. But if freedom of religion deteriorates into freedom from religion – then I fear we will soon be lost on a bleak and barren landscape with no compass or roadmap, no sense of ultimate direction.

"I fully understand the West's historic commitment to separating the secular from the religious. But for many non-Westerners, including most Muslims, the realms of faith and of worldly affairs cannot be antithetical. If 'modernism' lacks a spiritual dimension, it will look like materialism. And if the modernizing influence of the West is insistently and exclusively a secularising influence, then much of the Islamic world will be somewhat distanced from it."

A deeply-rooted sense of public integrity means more than integrity in gov-

ernment, important as that must be. Ethical lapses in medicine and education, malfeasance in business and banking, dishonesty among journalists, scientists, engineers, or scholars—all of these weaknesses can undermine the most promising democracies.

A central element in any religious outlook, says the Aga Khan, is a sense of human limitations – a posture of profound humility before the Divine: “In that sensibility lies our best protection against divisive dogmatism and our best hope for creative pluralism.”

For me, the Imam of the Ismaili community has pretty well summed up my Mennonite/United Church understanding of faith and public life.

But let me share three examples.

First, take refugee and immigration policy. I was both the founding executive director of the Immigration and Refugee Board and subsequently deputy minister of immigration in various departmental structures from 1987-1995. The Supreme Court had just ruled that the previous refugee determination process was constitutionally flawed and had determined that there was a large backlog of claimants. It was exhilarating to put in place the new system and to see this backlog disappear. But it was also challenging when refugee advocates and church groups would advocate against the removal from the country of failed claimants. My role was to bring credibility and integrity to the determination process. If “yes” meant stay and “no” meant stay, we would soon have no system and no public support for refugee protection.

The issues around immigration enforcement, by definition, involve real people. Mr. Niebuhr’s dichotomy was alive in my soul.

Second, as secretary of the Treasury Board for five years, I was involved in the implementation of program review. These were tough times for the public service, but also the best of times. I believed then, and believe now, that unless governments live within their means, we risk the collapse of public support for needed government programs and interventions. There followed a whole series of cut-backs, pay freezes, pension reforms and privatizations – all measures which many people in the social action committees of the United Church were decrying.

As a deputy minister, I was, of course, professionally bound to carry out the will of the elected government of the day. But



Peter Harder and Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the fifth prime minister he served as a deputy minister.

**CHURCHES SHOULD, OF COURSE, ADVOCATE THEIR CAUSES. BUT I SOMETIMES FEEL THAT THE ADVOCACY CAN OCCUR WITHOUT A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEXT OF A PROBLEM, THAT IT MERELY DIMINISHES THE PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTUALLY DOING SOMETHING TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM AT HAND. ONE OF MY MENTORS, HIMSELF AN ACTIVE ANGLICAN, ONCE TOLD ME: “BEWARE OF THE MEANNESS OF CHURCH ACTIVISTS.”**

I will confess to you that I also believed it was the right thing to do.

Third, as deputy minister of Industry and later Foreign Affairs, I was privileged in being able to help shape Canada’s approach to globalization. I believe in free trade. I believe that economic space is greater than political space. High productivity, competitiveness, innovation, open markets – all these are necessary and are good public policy.

In this period, I was able to chair the G8 Digital Opportunity Task Force and work on global solutions to the “digital divide” between haves and have-nots. And as the Prime Minister’s personal rep-

resentative to the G8 over the past three years, I have been involved in the major issues of development assistance, infectious disease, climate change, energy, regional conflicts (Darfur, the Middle East, Haiti and Afghanistan), and in the post-9/11 world, the challenge of counter-terrorism.

These are all issues of heated discussion among concerned citizens and church activists, and rightly so. I want to assure you that for me, and for many of my colleagues in the government of Canada (and in governments and international organizations around the world), dealing with these issues is an expression of their values, of their faith.

Government is by definition not an NGO, not a church. But the public servants with whom I’ve worked don’t park their values or their faith at the door. They strive for the civic virtue of Aristotle. Within the appropriate accountability structures of our democracy, they animate their actions with their beliefs, with their faith.

Churches should, of course, advocate their causes. But I sometimes feel that the advocacy can occur without a full understanding of the context of a problem, that it merely diminishes the people who are actually doing something to address the problem at hand. One of my mentors, himself an active Anglican, once told me: “Beware of the meanness of church activists.”

Over the past 29 years, I have had the pleasure (mostly) of working for three leaders of the opposition and one Deputy Prime Minister. As Deputy Minister, I have served five Prime Ministers and twelve ministers in five departments. More importantly, I have worked beside thousands of public servants seeking to build a better Canada, a more just world and, if not the Kingdom of God, at least a bit of the new Jerusalem.

I want to end by reminding us all of the wonderful poetry of the new creed. We are not alone. We live in God’s world. We believe in God. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

*As a top-ranked deputy minister, V. Peter Harder served five prime ministers. He now works as a senior policy advisor at Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP.*

*This is an edited version of a public address given by V. Peter Harder at Ottawa’s Southminster United Church.*



Susan Wilkins and her M.O.B. squad hit Italia this summer. From left: Jeannie Bouton, Judy Mardre, Becky Bouton, Susan Wilkins, Wyline Holder and Harriet Johnson.

## Under the Tuscan sun

Susan Wilkins, wife of U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins, goes to Italy on a dream vacation with the M.O.B. squad

By Susan Wilkins

The plan was hatched when the M.O.B. paid me a visit from South Carolina last spring (M.O.B. as in “Mothers of the Boys,” as we refer to ourselves.) Six women, all good friends, bound by the lifelong friendships of our 30-year-old sons. Some are now parents themselves. When you’ve spent hours sitting together at soccer, baseball, basketball, tennis and football games, you get to know one another pretty well.

The “plan” was a dream trip to Italy. And our sons were as excited about this trip as we were.

**May 10** – Our dream became reality as Harriet Johnson, Becky Bouton, Jeannie Bouton, Judy Mardre, Wyline Holder and I arrived in Rome. After all the reading, studying and planning, we couldn’t believe we were actually there.

On the advice of our sons, who had all spent the summer after their university

graduation traveling Europe together, we decided to splurge on hiring a tour company, Sunny Tuscany (info.sunnytuscany.com). It turned out to be one of our better decisions. The guides from Sunny Tuscany are personable and professional – not to mention very good-looking.

**May 11** – Our second day in Rome found us touring the beautiful villa and seven-acre estate of the U.S. Ambassador to Italy, Ambassador Ronald Spogli and his wife, Georgia. The grounds were enviable, filled with roses, bougainvillea and – surprise – trellises of confederate jasmine (a South Carolina staple). On the veranda, Ambassador Spogli, an Italian-American, has installed his own brick pizza oven. The interior of the residence was lovely and ornate with amazing antique metal and crystal chandeliers.

Next, we went to St. Peter’s Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, and took the Scavi

tour, where we saw the underpinnings of the Basilica. The artifacts are fascinating, but don’t try this tour if you’re claustrophobic. At the suggestion of Mrs. Spogli, we had dinner at Pierluigi on Piazza de Ricci. It was a terrific recommendation. We had the best waiter, Georgio, who entertained us with his praise for Southern women and served us the most delicious antipasti and pasta dishes. A drink on the rooftop of the Eden Hotel ended our full day. This last location is a must – the view is spectacular.

**May 12** – Our guide, Max, picked us up at our hotel and we were off to Tuscany. On the recommendation of good friends, we rented two adjoining villas, Fattoria La Gigliola, in Montespertoli. The ride up into the Tuscan hills was breathtaking, and once again, we were glad we had taken our sons’ advice to have a driver. Everywhere we looked, we saw rolling

green hills, sheep and cows grazing, and castles and mountaintop villages. Maneuvering skillfully around the narrow, curvy roads, Max landed us safely at La Gigliola where we were greeted royally by Alessandro, the rental agent, and Anna, the owner of this 600-acre estate.

**May 13** – We toasted one another for Mother’s Day – our day to visit the capital of Tuscany, Florence, or Firenze. We met our guide, Sylvie, and walked straight to the Boboli Gardens which were lush and manicured, mostly green vegetation with the exception of two knot gardens which were in bloom with peonies and roses. Our entire visit there seemed to be infused with the fragrance of Joy perfume. The Pitti Palace, which was the residence of the Medici family, one of the most powerful families in Italy’s history, is also on the acreage of the Boboli Gardens. The Pitti was too opulent and too grand to even begin to describe. From here, we went to the Uffizi Gallery, where we marveled at the works of the Renaissance painters, Botticelli, Michelangelo and Raphael.

After a full day of culture and beauty, we treated ourselves to gelato for our ride back to our villa. At every turn, our breath was taken away by the scenery. Our guide Ricardo said “only God’s hand could have painted the Tuscan landscape.” We agreed.

We had heard and read so much about Cinque Terre (Five Lands), that we decided to get an early start on Tuesday for the three-hour drive from Montespertoli.

**May 15** – Cinque Terre is such a unique area, steep cliffs, 20-foot waves, with each of the five villages built on what seemed to be the side of a mountain. This is where you can find some great seafood, which is exactly what we did for lunch. We hiked two of the five trails (each trail gets progressively harder) and then rode with Ricardo in the van to tour the rest of the villages. One can also see the villages by train or boat.

On our way back from Cinque Terre, Ricardo took us to an American cemetery where more than 30,000 U.S. soldiers who fought in Italy during WWII were laid to rest. It was an emotional visit for six Baby Boomers whose fathers all fought in the European Theatre.

**May 16** – This was a great day in Florence. Sylvie, our experienced guide, took us to the Academia Museum to view the original statue of David (1501-1504), recently restored. Leading up to the spacious Tribune are other works of

Michelangelo, namely *Pieta di Palestrina*, *St. Matthew*, and *Prisoners*. What a thrill to see up close what I had only seen in pictures.

From there, we moved on to the Church of Santa Croce, the city’s largest, with a neo-gothic façade added in the 19th Century. Here we saw the funeral monument of Michelangelo (1564). The

church is filled with beautiful frescoes and several chapels. Outside and above Santa Croce is a workshop where leather goods are hand sewn and sold to the public – unique purses, wallets, belts, etc.

**May 17** – Thursday was one our favourite days. We arrived at the villa, actually an 800-year-old farmhouse, which the owner, Julietta, had restored. Ab-



The view as the ladies approached the first seaside village of the Cinque Terre in Liguria province on Italy’s northwest coast.



The 800-year-old villa near Florence where the owner gave the ladies hands-on cooking lessons for a four-course lunch.



**SUSAN WILKINS' TIPS ON TRAVELING WITH FRIENDS**

1. Be flexible and go with the flow.
2. Have a good sense of humour.
3. Go with people you really, really like.
4. Don't be ashamed to wear your running shoes. I searched for and brought nice-looking walking shoes. In the end, running shoes were the best. Don't care if they think you're a tourist.
5. Know that your trip is going to cost a lot more than you thought.

solutely charming. We truly felt like Diane Lane in *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Upon arriving, Julietta presented us with aprons and introduced us to the chef, Stephanie, who gave us hands-on lessons on making fresh pasta, pork loin, stir-fry matchstick vegetables and custard cake. We sat around Julietta's large table and thoroughly enjoyed the fruits of our labour.

Next, even though we were waddling by this point, we visited a balsamic vinegar factory where we taste-tested 20- to 50-year-old vinegar, so much thicker and sweeter than store-bought. And, as if we

really needed to drink more wine, we traveled on to Greve where we tasted and bought Barolo – a rich, bold and hardy red. Our caloric count this day probably exceeded what is recommended for one week's food consumption.

When we returned to our villa, a wine and pasta party was being hosted by the owners. The M.O.B. was seated with a lovely German couple. At two other tables, there was 10 or 12 Serbians who began to sing folk songs in their native language. Not to be outdone, we harmonized on "Nothing Could be Finer than to be in Carolina." At the end of the

evening, our new friends told us we had restored their faith in America. Maybe being open and friendly could change the world.

May 18th was a glorious Tuscan spring day and I decided I could really get into this life. Our first stop was at an exquisitely-restored 15th Century villa owned by a well-known jewelry designer, Orlando Orlandini. We spent two whole hours looking at the designs Orlando and his female artisans create. We tried on everything and oohed and aahed over each piece. I succumbed to the encouragement of my friends and bought a necklace which will have to count for my next anniversary, Christmas, birthday, and Mother's Day gifts. (For the record, David wasn't too upset.) After this major purchase, we moved on to Florence for more shopping in the market area. I admit I became a more subdued spender at this point. The market is a bustling, lively spot where really good bargains can be found including beautiful leather purses, jackets, gloves, nice linens and Murano glass. This is *the* spot to buy gifts to take home to family and friends.

Then, Ricardo took us to the most wonderful spot. High on a hilltop, overlooking all of Florence is the Church of San Miniato. We went inside and listened to the afternoon vespers, returned to once again take in the magnificence of Florence, and bid a teary farewell to our excellent guide. We spent our last night at a terrace restaurant next door to our villa where we raised our Chianti glasses to toast our friendship, an unbelievable trip and to the sun as it set behind the Tuscan hills.

Susan Wilkins is married to U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins.

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## Are you sure that's Canadian wine in your glass?

**Y**ou're walking through the LCBO and feeling keen on this country so you head right for the Canadian section. You pick out your favourites but when crack them, you think "Hey, this doesn't taste the same as usual." You check the label. It's the same wine you've been buying for years.

What's changed? Well, you could say the wine's nationality has – it might not be Canadian. But how is this possible when you're sure you bought it from the Canadian section of the liquor store? Well, did you look carefully? Was it in the Canadian or the "Cellared in Canada" section? One sure-fire way to tell if that wine is truly Canadian is the little VQA emblem on the capsule on the top of the bottle. If it's there, it's home grown. If it's not, it's most likely made from "imported and domestic grapes and cellared in Canada."

Most people think only the bulk wine producers who put out cheap, generic product would do such a thing. After all, haven't the rest of the small, "quality" producers spent years extolling the virtues of Canadian wines to Canadian drinkers and insisting Canada has real "terroir" or taste of the land that is special and unique? This used to be the case. But now, many of the most respected names in Canadian wines such as Hillebrand, Inniskillin, Jackson-Triggs, Cave Spring, Henry of Pelham and Pelee Island are importing and bottling imported grapes and juice under their own labels as well.

The catalysts for this move were two small to very small years of production in



STEPHEN BECKTA

PHOTO: PAUL COUVRETTE

2003 and 2005 in Ontario. Severe winters and spring frosts damaged many vines and vineyards resulting, in some cases, in yields that were only a quarter their usual size. So, in order to help the

wineries, the Ontario government and the LCBO have allowed wines that have a minimum of 10 per cent Canadian juice to qualify as "Made in Canada" in those years (in other years, it's a minimum of 30% Ontario juice required to be called Canadian). In very small print, much smaller than the typical back-label size, they mention that imported grapes may be used in the wine.

Why, after fighting so hard to establish the quality of their wines in consumers' eyes, would they risk losing the confidence of these fans by substituting imported wines during hard years? They had no choice, argued some producers. They couldn't risk losing their shelf space at the LCBO, the largest alcohol distributor in the world. I don't buy it. The LCBO is owned by the Ontario government and takes an extra layer of taxes when we buy Ontario wines. It also has a mandate to promote Ontario product.

Some Ontario producers who succumbed to the government's offer said they only sell their VQA wines (which guarantees the wine is 100 per cent Canadian) to restaurants. Why? Is it because restaurants would know better? Probably.

They wouldn't risk losing their best customers – restaurants – by selling them "Canadian" wines made with imported grapes.

To my knowledge, no other quality wine-producing region in the world does this. Often, Chablis producers will be hit hard by hail for years in a row, not ever seeming to get a reasonable harvest. Do you see them importing California Chardonnay and calling it "Made in France"? Not likely. No one would stand for it.

My wife, who knows her way around a wine list, recently came home with some wines for everyday drinking. When I asked her why she bought some German Riesling, she said she didn't. The bottle in question was from a winery I have brought home many times before. I pointed out the lack of VQA labeling on the capsule. Even she was fooled by this and no wonder – it's not easy to identify the imports from the real Canadian wines. It looks to me as though the producers, along with the LCBO and provincial government, have pulled the wool over our eyes.

I suggest avoiding any non-VQA wine "Made in Canada" and supporting the wineries that endure the hard times and sell out quickly in the lean years by sticking to their principles. They didn't get into the wine-growing business only to later start importing grapes and juice to stick their label on.

Cheers!

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

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## Trou Normand with a twist

**A**t elaborate or formal dinners, a sorbet is often served before the main course. However, historically, part way through a copious meal, a “shot” of high-proof alcohol, usually Calvados, was served to stimulate the appetite. Calvados is a dry apple brandy which is double-distilled before being aged in Limousin oak barrels for at least a year and even up to 40. The finest Calvados comes from the “Pays d’Auge appellation contrôlée,” a designation that appears on the label.

With Calvados native to Normandy, France, the term “Trou Normand” has

IN OUR HOME, I DELIBERATELY  
USE A TROU NORMAND TO MY  
OWN ADVANTAGE AS WELL.  
WHILE GUESTS ARE ENJOYING  
THEIR REFRESHING LITTLE  
“TASTE” AND A PETIT PAUSE IN  
THE MENU, I EXCUSE MYSELF  
FROM THE TABLE AND GET A  
HEAD START ON ASSEMBLING  
THE MAIN COURSE.

evolved. Served at dinner (rarely at lunch), a Trou Normand is designed to cleanse the palate and prepare the diner for the array of dishes yet to come. Technically, today a Trou Normand is alcohol served “straight” or poured over ice or a sorbet. But that is not always the case at our table.

When I present a Trou Normand, the playful side of my character surfaces. Because quantities are small, it’s fun to establish a balance by amplifying the ceremony. I may serve the traditional shot of Calvados but glasses arrive with dried apple wafer lids. My signature Trou Normand sorbet is nothing more than commercial key lime sorbet, doctored with chopped rosemary leaves and cinnamon extract. Then, there are my cinnamon-



MARGARET  
DICKENSON

scented pomegranate seeds. When pomegranates are at the end of their season in December, I purchase excessive quantities, squirreling them away in the bottom of the refrigerator. From December through June, our guests enjoy my innovative Trou Normand creation (see hoarding tip at the end of the recipe). It’s so easy and simple, anyone can make it. It’s simply pomegranate seeds bathed with Goldschlager

liqueur. Of course, children must be included in the Trou Normand ceremony. They get juice or an alcohol-free version, but with the same presentation.

In our home, I deliberately use a Trou Normand to my own advantage as well. While guests are enjoying their refreshing little “taste” and a petit pause in the menu, I excuse myself from the table and get a head start on assembling the main course. Also, I believe that a formal dinner must include at least four courses. A Trou Normand is the easiest and most rewarding way to extend a three-course menu into a four-course feast. A Trou



LARRY DICKENSON

Normand not only adds another entirely different dimension to a meal, but it is chic. It knocks the dinner up a notch or two.

When planning your next dinner party, think about serving a Trou Normand – perhaps the traditional shot of Calvados, a sorbet, or why not a personal creation? Bon Appétit.

Margaret Dickenson is author of the internationally acclaimed book *Margaret's Table – Easy Cooking and Inspiring Entertaining* ([www.margaretsenseofoccasion.com](http://www.margaretsenseofoccasion.com)).

**CINNAMON-SCENTED POMEGRANATE SEEDS**

Makes 1 cup or 250 mL (8 servings)

1 cup (250 mL) fresh pomegranate seeds\*  
3 tbsp (45 mL) cinnamon-flavoured liqueur\*\* (e.g., Goldschlager)

Garnish (optional)  
8 thin cinnamon sticks (length: 3 1/2 inches or 9 cm)

1. At least several hours (but preferably a day or two) before serving, mix pomegranate seeds and liqueur together.
2. Store refrigerated in an airtight plastic container, stirring occasionally to ensure even flavouring of seeds.
3. Serve chilled pomegranate seed mixture in liqueur glasses, dividing seeds and liquid evenly between glasses (e.g., 2 tbsp or 30 mL per serving). Poke a slender cinnamon stick into each glass as a garnish.

\* You'll need 1 1/2 to 2 fresh whole pomegranates. Cut the fruit in half and carefully remove the seeds. Discard the skin and absolutely all bits of white pulp. (Note: I choose leathery skin fruit of the darkest burgundy colour possible.)

\*\* For a non-alcoholic option, use a basic sugar syrup (recipe below) and a pinch of ground cinnamon (to taste).

Make-ahead tip (Steps 1 to 3): The pomegranate seeds may be prepared and soaked up to 3 or 4 days in advance.

Hoarding tip: Pomegranates are usually available from October to December in North America. However, I generally purchase a half dozen or more at the end of the season, wrap them individually in paper towels and store them in the fruit drawer of the refrigerator. Although their leathery skins may shrink, I have juicy pomegranates

for as long as six more months.

**Basic Sugar Syrup**

Makes 3 cups or 750 mL thin syrup

2 cups (500 mL) granulated sugar  
2 cups (500 mL) water

1. Place sugar and water in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat; stir constantly until sugar dissolves.
2. Bring syrup to a boil; reduce heat and allow mixture to boil for a few minutes. Remove from heat.
3. When cool, pour syrup into sterilized, well-sealed glass jars and store refrigerated for up to a few weeks or frozen for months.

**APPLE BRANDY TROU NORMAND WITH DRIED APPLE WAFER**

Makes 4 servings

1/2 cup (125 mL) apple brandy  
4 dried apple wafers (recipe follows)

1. Pour apple brandy into four tall thin shot glasses.
2. If desired, lay a single dried apple wafer horizontally across rim of each glass to represent a lid.
3. Set each glass on a liner and serve.

**DRIED APPLE WAFERS**

Makes about a dozen apple wafers

2 tbsp (30 mL) lemon juice  
1 tbsp (15 mL) water  
1 small whole apple (weight: 3 oz or 85 g), red skinned (e.g., Empire, McIntosh)

1. Twist stem off apple.
2. Slice apple crosswise into paper thin, even, translucent slices using a sharp straight-edged knife (or mandolin).
3. Combine lemon juice and water in a small bowl; dip apple slices. Allow apple slices to rest for a few minutes between paper towels before arranging slices in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
4. Place in a 225 °F (110 °C) preheated oven for 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack (or place directly on oven rack) and reduce temperature to "warm" (e.g., 150 °F or 65 °C). Turning occasionally, bake apple wafers until dry (another 30 minutes or longer). Note of caution: Avoid over-baking as the apple wafers will darken quickly.
5. Transfer to a wire cooling rack and allow to cool.
6. If not using promptly, arrange in a wax paper-lined airtight container and store in a cool dry place for up to several months.



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# The roots of the nuclear dilemma

George Abraham

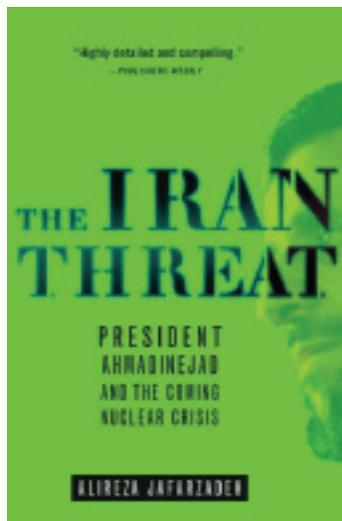
**T**he prospect of nuclear terrorism has brought new urgency to a debate that began almost from the moment that Little Boy rained down fire, destruction and radioactivity on the hapless residents of Hiroshima. But the questions remain timeless: Are nuclear weapons more effective as deterrents than as offensive weapons? How can we stop peaceful nuclear programs from becoming bomb factories? And, in one current, pointed instance, why could we accept bomb technology in the hands of the Shah of Iran three decades ago, but not in the hands of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad today?

Brian Buckley, a retired Canadian foreign service officer, sets up these dilemmas via the proverbial challenge “to pluck the rose while avoiding the thorn.” Ever since the atom was tamed to produce the rose of energy “too cheap to meter,” nations have grappled with the temptation to possess the thorn of nuclear weapons. Some nations such as Canada hardly skipped a beat in deciding against producing bombs, but others have spent billions perfecting the art of triggering as little as 25 kilograms of highly enriched uranium or eight kilograms of plutonium to send tremours across the world. Terrorists have yet to get their hands on this fissile material, but it’s not for want of trying.

Our book selections examine two contrasting responses to the nuclear question – Iran’s and Canada’s – and a timely review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by an acknowledged weapons expert.

*The Iran Threat: President Ahmadinejad and the Coming Nuclear Crisis*, by Alireza Jafarzadeh, Palgrave Macmillan (2007), 284 pages

This Iranian exile living in the U.S. has done the world a favour by writing a comprehensive account of Iran’s nuclear journey and situating it within that country’s political context. As the whistleblower for much of the information that triggered the ongoing intrusive inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Jafarzadeh leaves no doubt about Iran’s intentions. He cites convincing evidence to show that much



of Iran’s nuclear industry is now run by the military, that a lot of its installations have been moved underground and that the program has been accelerated in recent years.

However, he also reports that Iran’s nuclear program goes back to the days of the Shah, who was one of the U.S.’s early “Atoms for Peace” recipients and who approved a plan for 22 nuclear reactors in 1974 after also being one of the first to sign the NPT. Interestingly, the Americans also helped the Shah’s regime to begin a laser-enrichment program for uranium in 1975. It is this historical aspect that gives some credence to Tehran’s claim that its nuclear program has continued on the trajectory begun during the Shah’s reign.

Yet, the author calls his native country the “most rogue nuclear state imaginable.” While Iran and North Korea have both manipulated and partially evaded the IAEA, the author singles out the Shi’ite Islamic nation because of its known support of terrorists and its ambitions as a regional power. While these interpretations are valid, it is hard to fathom why Mr. Jafarzadeh would use his thesis as justification for “regime change” in Tehran, especially after the experience in Iraq and the dubious role played by whistleblowers with their own political agendas.



*Canada’s Early Nuclear Policy: Fate, Chance, and Character*, by Brian Buckley, McGill-Queen’s University Press (2000), 172 pages

In a must-read classic among nuclear historians, this former diplomat describes Canada emerging from the Second World War as a victor with major contributions to the Allied cause. It stood to gain in stature if it decided to build a nuclear bomb. However, that was not to be, although the government of Prime Minister Mackenzie King was aware of American plans to bomb Japan with a “certain very secret weapon” and had set up a joint Anglo-Canadian effort to help the Manhattan project.

Eventually, the bombs that were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki were almost entirely the result of American ingenuity, although that did not stop the British from taking a measure of credit. Mr. Buckley does a commendable job trying to piece together the political stresses unleashed in Canada following the Allied victory, but is hard-pressed to come up with a definitive statement of Canadian nuclear abstinence. Calling it the “mystery of the dog that didn’t bark,” the author finally speculates that war fatigue led Canadians to favour “peacetime pursuits” and social safety measures, rather than follow the lure of the bomb.



*Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons*, by Joseph Cirincione, Columbia University Press (2007), 206 pages

Mr. Cirincione is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington and a lecturer at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. His retrospective study is largely a celebration of the Non-Proliferation Treaty –

**CIRINCIONE CAUTIONS AGAINST CUTTING DEALS WITH INDIVIDUAL RENEGADES SUCH AS IRAN AND NORTH KOREA AND IS SKEPTICAL OF "REGIME CHANGE" AS A PRACTICAL SOLUTION.**

"widely considered one of the most successful security pacts in history" – citing its near-universal membership and its normative influence over nations that have given up the bomb while continuing with civilian power reactors. Russia, the former Soviet states and Pakistan remain on the author's watch-list as potential exporters of fissionable bomb material, although, he says, there are about 40 nations that have highly enriched uranium guarded with about as much rigour as library books.

He cautions against cutting deals with individual renegades such as Iran and North Korea and is skeptical of "regime change" as a practical solution. However, leaving these nations alone is also not a viable choice because each new nuclear power sets off a "nuclear reaction chain" across its region. The weapons expert also sees a close co-relation between national insecurity and using the bomb as a military option. "[T]he states of proliferation concern are in an arc of crisis that flows from the Middle East through South Asia up to Northeast Asia."

The author quotes IAEA director-general and Nobel laureate Mohamed ElBaradei as saying that nuclear weapons are an "historic accident" and that they should have "no role in our security." That prospect, however, is unrealistic even for a self-confessed optimist like Mr. Cirincione. The NPT has not prevented any nation from pursuing nuclear weapons, and as illustrated by Iran's example, has arguably provided convenient cover for regimes who will stop at nothing to acquire them.

George Abraham is *Diplomat's* contributing editor.

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# A Hunter S. Thompson for grown-ups

Ryszard Kapuściński's padded last book is best read as travel writing

By George Fetherling

**R**yszard Kapuściński, who died in January this year, liked to say that during his career he had witnessed 27 coups and been sentenced to death four times. He was one of Poland's most famous writers and one of the world's best-known foreign correspondents. Among certain readers – outward-looking liberals who somehow retain a soft spot for American cant phrases – he became a cult figure, though at first glance his list of books would hardly be expected to provoke such success.

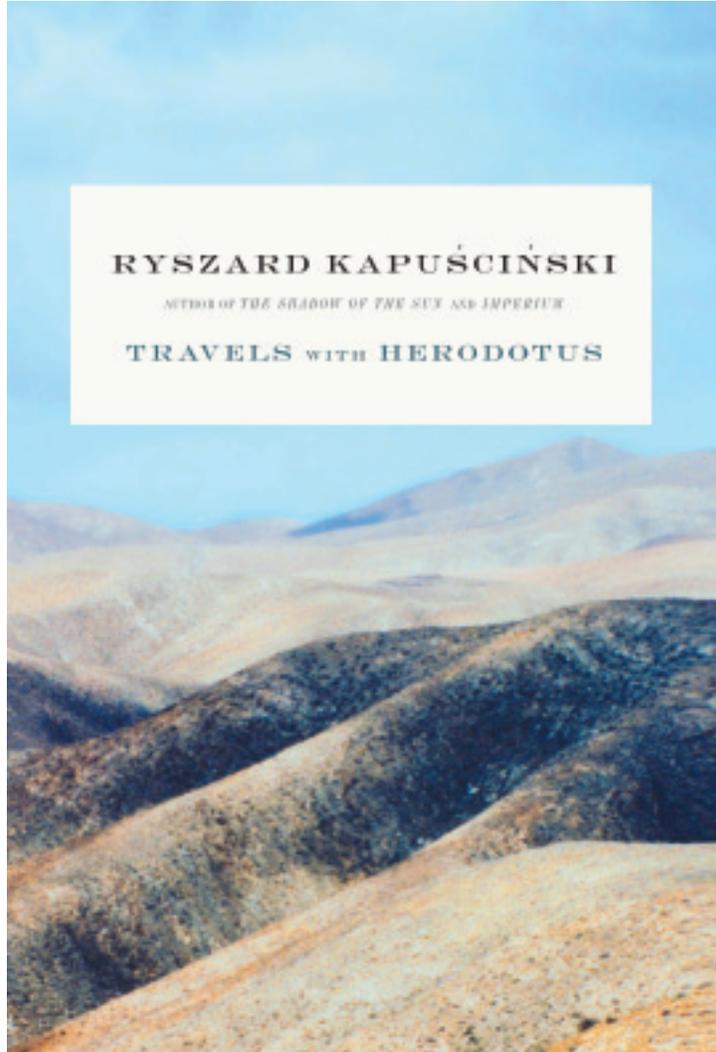
*The Emperor* (1978) was an oral history (the genre elicits no respect) about the

**“THAT IS WHY HERODOTUS IS  
A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE OF  
FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY  
AND A FOE OF DESPOTISM,  
AUTHORITARIANISM AND TYRANNY  
– HE BELIEVES THAT ONLY UNDER  
THE FORMER CIRCUMSTANCES  
DOES MAN HAVE A CHANCE TO  
ACT WITH DIGNITY, TO BE HIMSELF,  
TO BE HUMAN.”**

Ethiopian dictator Haile Selassie. *Shah of Shahs* (1982) described the Iranian revolution of the late 1970s. He wrote most often about Africa, both Saharan and sub-Saharan: *The Soccer War*, *The Shadow of the Sun*, *Another Day of Life*.

He was forever insinuating himself as a witness into post-colonial squabbling. To place him between chronological bookends for purposes of contextualisation, he was somewhat like Rebecca West and somewhat like Robert D. Kaplan, though not so intellectual and literary as the former nor so measured and thoughtful as the latter. One might almost see him as a cosmopolitan Hunter S. Thompson for grown-ups. His critics, of course, frequently argued that he was not claustrophobically hemmed in by accuracy, but of course that wasn't the point.

His last book, *Travels with Herodotus* (Knopf Canada), put into English by Klara Glowczewska, his usual translator,



is receiving an inordinate amount of attention, reflecting his high status among stay-at-home journalists. It is a book that comes with an interesting gimmick – er, framing device – borrowed from travel narrative. We have become accustomed to travel books whose authors, instead of writing mostly about going to their destination or living there a while in order to learn about it, do one of two quite different things.

The author may undertake some high-concept journey chosen for its arduousness. One recent example is *First Pass under Heaven: A 4,000-Kilometre Walk along*

*the Great Wall of China* (Penguin Canada). Or, less strenuously, *Victoria's Empire* (McArthur & Co.) in which the British comedian Victoria Wood girdles parts of the globe that were formerly British territory – rather selectively (Newfoundland is the only part of Canada she touches, for example). Or else the author may follow in the footsteps of some famous dead person. This is the type of travel writing at which Sir Christopher Ondaatje excels, as in his books on places associated with Sir Richard Burton and Leonard Woolf. Knowing how travel narrative becomes more popular as travel itself becomes in-

creasingly impossible, Mr. Kapuściński has picked up the scent of Herodotus, the Greek historian of the 5th Century BCE.

The way he tells it, when he got his first reporting job in Warsaw in 1956, his editor presented him with *The Histories* of Herodotus newly published in a Polish edition. There was little freedom of movement under the Communists, though Mr. Kapuściński held out a young person's hope of a foreign assignment – possibly to Czechoslovakia – given that Stalin was well and truly dead. To his astonishment, he was sent to India instead. On that trip and all subsequent ones, he says, he carried the book with him, not as a guide to his destinations (for Herodotus knew little beyond the Mediterranean) but rather as a guide to the human spirit as it relates to politics. To me at least, this doesn't quite ring true, but as they say in show biz, if you buy the premise you buy the punch line.

His discontinuous comments on Herodotus certainly approach eloquence at times: "There is no anger in him, no animus," he writes. "He tries to understand everything, find out why someone behaves in one way and not another. He does not blame the human being, but blames the system; it is not the individual who is by nature evil, depraved, villainous – it is the social arrangement in which he happens to live that is evil.

"That is why Herodotus is a passionate advocate of freedom and democracy and a foe of despotism, authoritarianism and tyranny – he believes that only under the former circumstances does man have a chance to act with dignity, to be himself, to be human. Look, Herodotus seems to be saying, a small handful of Greeks felt free and for that freedom were willing to sacrifice everything." The last sentence refers to the wars between the Greeks and

the Persians beginning in 547 BCE, which Mr. Kapuściński calls the first clash between east and west and finds highly significant on that score.

*Travels with Herodotus* is actually the author's memoirs (selective memoirs – he omits the recently revealed fact that he was a police informer in the 1970s). Since being an impressionistic globe-trotting journalist is a sprawling and repetitive way of existing in the world, the story needed some device to impose order, and Herodotus was the ticket. The decision also allowed Mr. Kapuściński to quote his hero at length in some places and explain him in others. In this way, he padded what would have been a short book into one of marketable length. In any case, it's best read as travel writing.

George Fetherling's latest novel is *Tales of Two Cities: A Novella Plus Stories*.



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# True North, strong and free

James H. Marsh

It is largely due to Joseph-Elzéar Bernier that the Canadian flag now flies over the Arctic Archipelago. Captain Bernier was Canada's greatest seaman.

Born into a seafaring family at L'Islet, Que., in 1852, young Joseph went to sea with his father at age two. He was master of the brigantine *St. Joseph* at 17, the world's youngest skipper. By 1895, he had crossed the Atlantic more than 100

**"THIS MEMORIAL IS  
ERECTED TODAY TO  
COMMEMORATE THE  
TAKING POSSESSION FOR  
THE DOMINION OF  
CANADA OF THE WHOLE  
ARCTIC ARCHIPELAGO."**

times. But it was the Arctic that captured his imagination.

Ownership of the Arctic Islands was undetermined in the early 20th century. In July 1880, the British government had transferred its Arctic possessions to Canada, including "all Islands adjacent to any such Territories," discovered or not – a feeble claim, since Britain had only a dubious right to give Canada islands undiscovered,

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ered, discovered by foreigners, or inhabited by the Inuit. Meanwhile, Americans Adolphus Greely and Robert Peary were active around Ellesmere Island. Between 1898 and 1902, Otto Sverdrup claimed Axel Heiberg, Ellef Ringnes and Amund Ringnes islands for Norway.

Capt. Bernier tried unsuccessfully to persuade a reluctant Canadian government to support an expedition to secure sovereignty in the Arctic. In 1903, a dispute over the Alaskan/Canadian boundary, in which a long strip of land along the British Columbia coast was awarded to the U.S., raised sensitivities in Ottawa.

Finally, the prime minister, Wilfrid Laurier, agreed to fund a polar expedition. Capt. Bernier purchased a ship, renamed it *Arctic* and meticulously prepared for his journey. Finally, after a last-minute diversion to a minor policing expedition to Hudson Bay, on July 28, 1908, the *Arctic* slipped from its wharf in Quebec City.

In many of the world's most remote locations, Capt. Bernier and his crew anchored *Arctic* as close to shore as possible and made their way ashore in a longboat. They found a high point on a hill or rise, and, under a cairn of stone, buried a metal box containing a proclamation claiming the land for Canada. Finally, they erected a pole and raised the Union Jack.

By summer's end, Capt. Bernier had claimed most of the remaining Arctic is-

lands, except Banks and Victoria. From his base on Melville Island in April 1909, he sent Jules Morin and 16 others across the treacherous ice to Banks Island. Tortured by extreme cold, snow blindness and starvation, and blocked by impassable ice and blizzards, Mr. Morin returned to tell Capt. Bernier that he had left an affirmation on Banks Island but not on Victoria. Reluctantly, Capt. Bernier sent him back; his mandate was to claim every island.

As his crowning touch, on July 1, 1909 Capt. Bernier and the entire ship's company trooped up to Parry's Rock, on Melville Island. The chief engineer carried a bronze plaque he had spent the winter engraving. Capt. Bernier read from it solemnly: "This memorial is erected today to commemorate the taking possession for the Dominion of Canada of the whole Arctic Archipelago." Canada claimed the entire territory from Yukon to Baffinland, all the way to the North Pole.

But flags and plaques were not enough. The Canadian government established North West Mounted Police posts at Herschel Island, Craig Harbour, Pangnirtung and Dundas Harbour. In 1931, Norway formally abandoned its claim. The U.S. has not. In 1969, it sent the tanker *Manhattan* through northern waters without seeking permission and, in 1985, the *Polar Sea*. While Canadians sing that they stand on guard for the "true North, strong and free," they have yet to show real commitment to doing so.

James H. Marsh is editor-in-chief of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

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# Contemporary Berlin in Rockcliffe

German ambassador's residence an interior decorating gem

By Margo Roston



DIYANNE WILSON

The main floor of the residence of German Ambassador Matthias Höpfner and his wife, Christina, includes this formal salon area which combines the home's traditional origins and contemporary German decor.

**D**ecorating his residence was one of the first jobs for German Ambassador Matthias Martin Höpfner when he arrived in Ottawa just over a year ago with his wife, Christina, and their daughter.

And what a job he did.

The grand red brick Rockcliffe mansion now combines its traditional origins with an eye-catching contemporary German interior and one of the largest and most beautiful gardens in what locals still call the "village."

"I've seen a few residences and I would certainly say this is one of the nicest," says the proud diplomat. "The lot is so lovely. I think we are quite fortunate."

According to Martha Edmond's book, *Rockcliffe Park: a History of the Village*, the house was built in 1923 under the guidance of Aurelia Hughson, the daughter of lumber baron Ward C. Hughson, and her husband Montague Powell. In those days, its back windows looked out on

cows grazing in open fields that stretched as far as Elmwood School.

The couple was among the first of the lumber families to venture into Rockcliffe, commissioning the Georgian Revival house from Albert Hazelgrove, "a student of the Maxwell Brothers, considered the leading architects of Montreal society." Ward Hughson, a native of Albany, N.Y., made his mark by teaming up in 1895 with John Gilmour, Jr.

"Gilmour and Hughson became one of the most important of the area's lumber companies with mill yards and vast timber limits in Ontario and Quebec."

Aurelia Hughson, who had studied at a gardening institute, enhanced her garden's appeal with rock gardens flanked by herbaceous borders, while her husband, a co-founder of the Rideau Tennis Club, added a clay court to the grounds. Montague Powell, a lawyer and one of the first members of village council, died 10 years later.

The German government bought the

house in 1955 for \$80,000, and although the tennis courts are gone and many alterations have been made (there's now a new wing on the back, a patio, and a porte-cochère over the front door), the garden is still a place of beauty and impressive size, stretching through to Thorold Road.

Alterations, "a major investment" in Mr. Höpfner's words, took place between 1958 and 1961.

The main floor is the formal area with a large salon, a study, a sitting room overlooking the patio and garden, an entrance hall, dining room and a professional kitchen. The family's private quarters are on the second and third floors.

"When we arrived in July 2006, the house was filled with old furniture," Mr. Höpfner says. "Part of my job was to pick some new furniture and discuss it with the decorator. We chose producers from Germany with the exception of the chandelier, which is from Holland. This



DYANNE WILSON



DYANNE WILSON



Clockwise from top: The dining room, where the foreign ministers from East and West Germany met to discuss reunification in 1990; the patio, a perfect setting for garden parties; and Mr. and Mrs. Höpfner.

was the only piece the foreign office was not so sure about," he says.

The chandelier, a modern confection of metal and crystal way outside the norm for diplomatic residences, ultimately stayed.

"The Dutch ambassador has one too," Mr. Höpfner points out.

What he and the decorator achieved is a delightful, bright and airy interior, a juxtaposition of traditional English architecture with the contemporary look of 21st-Century Berlin.

The main floor formal rooms are each painted a slightly different shade of beige to match the curtains. The salon furniture is dressed in grey and white, a colour scheme that carries through outside where grey-and-white-striped chairs of German design, and a table, decorate the large patio, often used for garden parties.

But the house is more than beautiful – it's also politically significant thanks to the role it played in German reunifica-

tion. In February 1990, on the margins of the Open Skies Conference in Ottawa, the foreign ministers of both Germanies, as well as France, Britain, the Soviet Union and the U.S. were sitting at its dining room table when they agreed to start the historic "Two Plus Four" talks which ultimately led to the fulfillment of Germany's dream of reunification after 40 years of division. "So there is something historic about this house," he says.

The house is looked after by a part-time manager, and a professional tends the beautifully landscaped garden. A chef, who knows the kitchen well, comes in when he is needed.

"When the furniture arrived, we set it up ourselves and made a few changes from the drawings," he says. "It worked out very nicely."

Anyone lucky enough to visit will agree.

Margo Roston is an Ottawa writer.



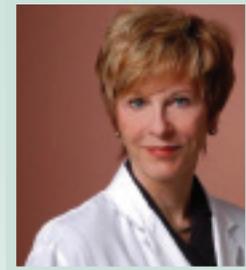
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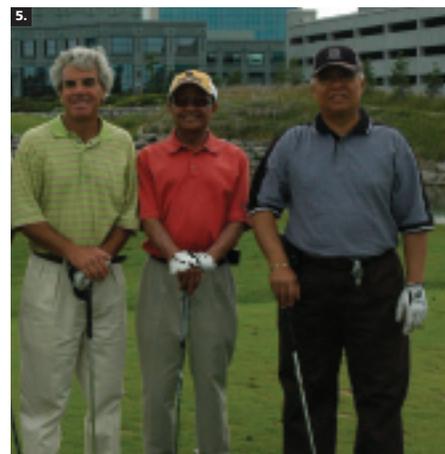
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**THIS PAGE** 1. Bhupinder S. Liddar, Canada's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the UN Human Settlements Program in Nairobi, Kenya, was in Ottawa with his friend Meghie Brar for a visit July 7. (Photo: Jennifer Campbell) • 2. U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins and his wife Susan greeted guests at their Independence Day party July 4. The party, which was upbeat in spite of the rain, attracted some 3,500 guests. (Photo: Jennifer Campbell) • 3. A concert called the Sounds of Spain, took place after a lecture on re-inventing Spain through music at the University of Ottawa July 5. Shown left to right: Eugenio Matos, a guest violinist and counsellor of the Dominican Republic embassy; Canadian pianist Jacqueline Woods; Spanish Ambassador Mariano Alonso-Burón, Esmeralda Enrique, director of the Esmeralda Enrique Spanish Dance Company of Toronto, and Spanish pianist and singer José Hernández. (Photo: Oriana Romero) • 4. Mexican Ambassador Emilio Rafael Jose Goicoechea paid a courtesy call on Mayor Larry O'Brien this summer. New heads of mission traditionally visit the mayor early in their posting. (Photo: City of Ottawa)



**THIS PAGE** 1. A ceremony marking the 57th anniversary of start of the Korean War took place at the National War Memorial June 24. South Korean Ambassador Soo-dong Kim lays a wreath. • 2. Former Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor (left), and Mr. Kim at the event. (Photos: Korean embassy) • 3. Australian Ambassador Bill Fisher paid a courtesy call on Mayor Larry O'Brien this summer. (Photo: City of Ottawa) • 4. To mark Uruguay's Independence Day, Ambassador Alvaro Moerzinger (right) and his wife Ana hosted a concert and reception July 18 at Library and Archives Canada. (Photo: Frank Scheme) • 5. The Ottawa Art Gallery hosted a golf tournament July 23 and diplomats took part. From left: Ken Loeb, Yemeni Ambassador Abdulla Nasher and Indonesian Ambassador Djoko Hardono. (Photo: Joanne Rycaj Guillemette) • 6. Seen at the Uruguayan Independence Day reception are (from left): Lina Eugenia Ajoy, minister counsellor and consul general of Costa Rica; Costa Rican Ambassador Emilia Maria Alvarez Navarro; Bolivian minister-counsellor Luis Maria Kalaff; and Bolivian counsellor Virginia De la Quintana Ruiz of Bolivia. (Photo: Frank Scheme) • 7. India celebrated 60 years of independence Aug. 15. Shown: High Commissioner Rajamani Narayan is flanked by his wife, Regina (left), and former external affairs minister Flora MacDonald. (Photo: Frank Scheme)



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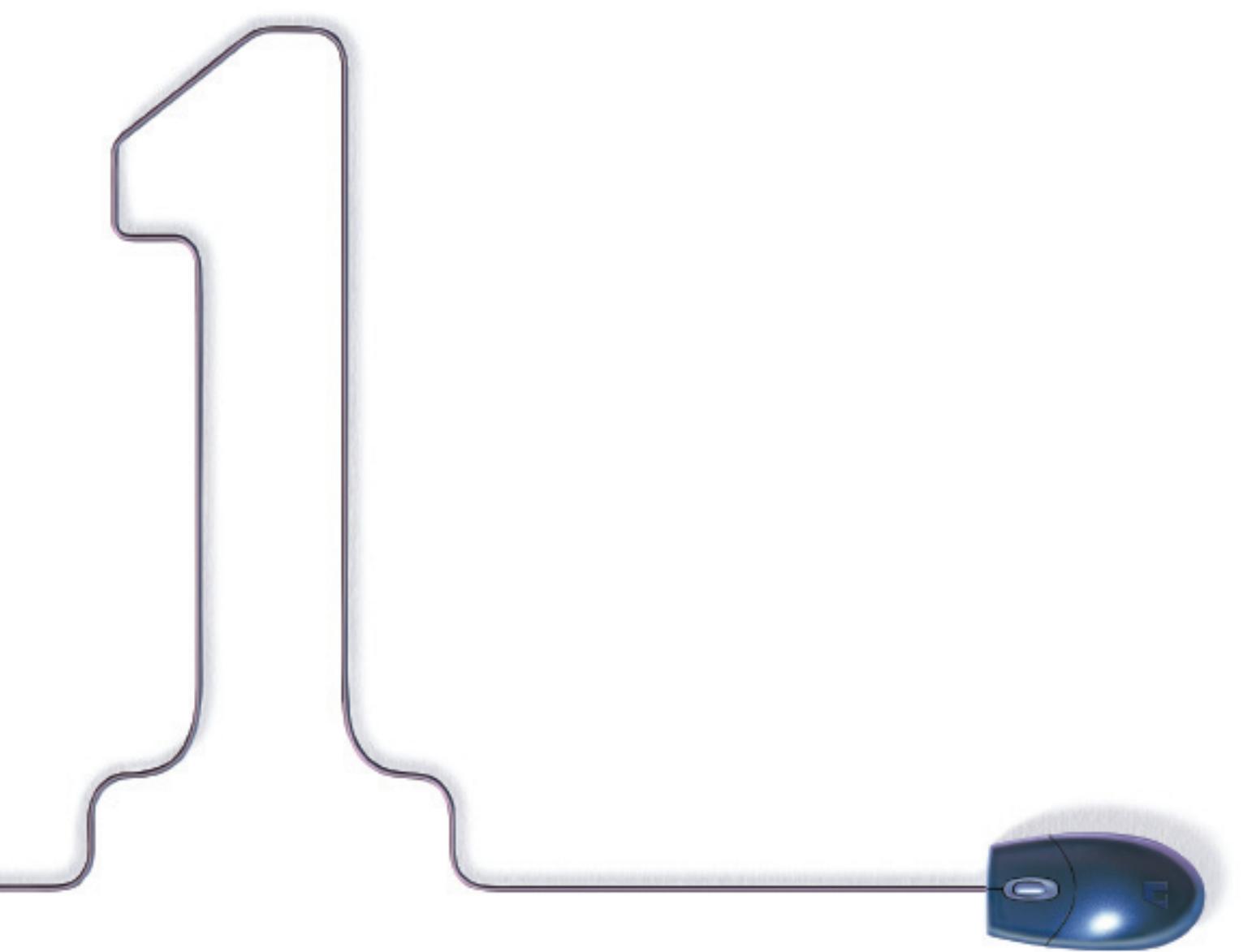


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1. Italian Ambassador Gabriele Sardo and his wife Enrica hosted a fundraiser for Opera Lyra July 11 at their residence. Shown: NAC President Peter Herrndorf and Joanne Paterson, wife of Opera Lyra artistic director Ty Paterson. • 2. The Sardos at their elegant garden party. (Photos: Frank Scheme) • 3. Colombian Ambassador Jaime Giron Duarte hosted an Independence Day reception at Brewer Park July 22. From left: Mr. Duarte is joined by Alexandra Galindos; Rafael Arismendy Jimenez, consul at Colombian embassy; and Betty Arciniegas. (Photo: Danilo Velasquez) • 4. World-renowned Indian classical dancer Geeta Chandran, a relative of Indian High Commissioner Rajamani Narayan, and a young admirer, at her performance at the Museum of Civilization July 24. (Photo: Frank Scheme)



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ISTOCK

## Masterpiece gallery

By Sarah Close

**M**etropolitan London is a staggering city of roughly 13 million people. It's at once dirty, smelly, crowded and utterly irresistible, especially for people who love art. On the premise that the nation's art already belongs to the people, admission to museums and galleries is free. So be sure to hit the Tate Modern and the British Museum, too. Our trip today, though, is to the National Gallery, located in historic Trafalgar Square, right next to Canada

House (Tube stop: Charring Cross or Leicester Square). Once you're in Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery is hard to miss.

The original location for the National Gallery, in 1824, was the home of a wealthy landowner in Pall Mall but the site was widely deemed inadequate for such an enormous collection. In 1838, it moved to Trafalgar Square, at the crossroads of London, easily reached by foot by the peasantry of East London or by

carriage by the more affluent folk of West London.

I suggest entering the gallery on the Salisbury side. It is less busy. If you want to experience the full architectural effect, though, enter through the main portico entrances and work your way over to the Salisbury wing. This wing holds the oldest pieces in the gallery's inventory. A lovely medieval collection includes pivotal pieces in the history of art by Duccio and Masaccio.

The Salisbury wing also houses several paintings by the 15th Century Flemish master Jan van Eyck. He is noteworthy for his mastery of oil paints, using countless layers, one on top of the other, to create shimmering jewels and luxurious fabrics. In his time, oil paints were used only in Northern Europe and the Italians were stuck with the imprecision of tempera paints. Oil paints lend themselves to intensely detailed work – a necessity for the northern artists with a passion for painting miniature scenes on thimbles.

Take a close look at van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434. This is a portrait of a couple recently married. In the 13th Century, this type of painting could serve as a marriage contract. Here you can see some of these typical Northern characteristics. If you take a close look in the mirror behind the couple, you can see the artist himself with his easel, in the reflection. In the medallions around the outside of the mirror you can make out a series of scenes from the life of Christ. Symbolism was a fashionable trend throughout 13th Century for the artists of Northern Europe. Symbols of fidelity and fertility can be seen throughout this piece – the dog for fidelity, the fruit for fertility, shoes for fidelity, the bed for fertility.

After checking out the art of the North, continue through the Salisbury wing to see what Italy was doing at the same time. This wing contains mostly altarpieces but be sure to examine more closely Sandro Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*, 1485. Botticelli was the darling of the Medicis in Florence in the late 15th Century and decorated palaces all over Italy. The artist had his own style, which differed from other leading artists of the time. His figures are never firmly standing on the ground nor are they anatomically precise; but he brings an intense romance to his work which is why he is adored to this day.

The best examples of Botticelli's work are at the Uffizi in Florence. Pieces such as *Primavera* and *Birth of the Venus* are pop culture icons; *Venus and Mars*, though, is characteristically Botticelli. Here we see Mars, who has fallen asleep, leaving his lover, Venus with a distinctly unsatisfied look on her face. Venus is a perfect example of Botticelli's tall, red-headed women. Around the central figures some fat cherubs are playing with Mars' armour – adding humour and a sense of mischief to an already suggestive work. This particular piece was intended to be used as a headboard, as decorative



The Virgin of the Rocks by Leonardo da Vinci

THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS BY LEONARDO DA VINCI IS ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE PIECES IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S COLLECTION, CALCULATED EITHER IN HISTORICAL OR FINANCIAL TERMS. IN DA VINCI'S LONG LIFE, HE PAINTED RELATIVELY FEW WORKS OR AT LEAST FEW WHICH HAVE SURVIVED. THIS PIECE, PAINTED IN 1480, IS ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT.

furniture in the lavish fashion that was common during the Renaissance.

Continue through the Salisbury wing into the main gallery building. You will enter a wing that holds paintings from 1500 – 1600. Here you will find some of the National Gallery's most prized pieces – works by Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian, da Vinci, Tintoretto and Parmigianino. If you feel engaged, get yourself an audio guide which, at the National Gallery, is excellent. And you get the bonus of the charming English accents.

*The Virgin of the Rocks* by Leonardo da Vinci is one of the most valuable pieces in the National Gallery's collection, calculated either in historical or financial terms. In da Vinci's long life, he painted relatively few works or at least few which have survived. This piece, painted in 1480, is especially significant. It demonstrates the technique developed by da Vinci called *sfumato*. This is a softening or blurring of the outline surrounding the figures, dulling the usually sharp definition between figure and background. If you look closely at the figures among the rocks, you will discern this technique. Also demonstrated here is the artist's use of *chiaroscuro*, a sharp contrast between light and dark spaces within the canvas. Typical of da Vinci, the figures are set in a dramatic scene with an almost mythical landscape in the background. Landscapes of this type can also be seen in many of da Vinci's portraits, including *Mona Lisa*.

*The Virgin of the Rocks* is actually the second version of this work. The first can be found in the Louvre and is a popular stop on the Louvre's Da Vinci Code (the Dan Brown book) tour. The artist was commissioned by the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception in Milan to paint it; why a second was needed remains a mystery. Some say that da Vinci had an argument over money with the Confraternity and that he sold off the first to spite them. Others say the Confraternity was unhappy with the amount of work da Vinci's assistants were doing and thought he should paint the entire thing himself. I prefer the suggestion that the King of France saw the work, was overcome by its beauty and whisked it off to his palace.

Another interesting fact about this piece is that, a couple of years ago, the National Gallery discovered an underdrawing of an entirely different piece beneath *The Virgin of the Rocks*. Using infrared reflectography, a technique that allows you to see beneath the paint, the



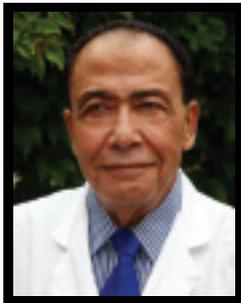
Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434

National Gallery revealed that da Vinci's first idea was to depict the Virgin in adoration of the Christ Child. Why he chose to abandon this idea and re-work it is not known. It is common for galleries to scan old and important art; in this case, there was more to this work than the naked eye could ever see.

Proceed through the Italian Renaissance wing where, among the 1,600 or 1,700 paintings, you will find the master statesman, scholar, and painter that was Peter Paul Rubens. Rubens came from Northern Europe when it was ruled by the Spanish Hapsburgs —specifically from Antwerp in what is now Belgium. Rubens was one of the first northern painters to travel to Italy to study the Classical Masters. Take one look at Ruben's work and you will swear that he is a High Renaissance Italian painter. Look a little closer and you will see he has incorporated Italian traditions with his own.

Rubens painted all manner of subjects but is celebrated for his grand and passionate mythological works. In the National Gallery, there are many fine examples. One of them, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, 1611, will go on display at the Art Gallery of Ontario upon the completion of its new building. Purchased at Sotheby's auction in 2002 for \$77 million (USD) by Kenneth Thomson, it is the most expensive "old master" ever sold.

I recommend taking in the pandemonium of *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, 1635-40. Classically the term rape was used to mean abduction. The story behind the work is legendary. Rome, a military stronghold, lacked women. Sabine, a neighbouring town, had women. The King, Romulus, invited the people of



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Sabine to Rome for friendly gladiator games. When the Sabine men were suitably occupied, the Roman soldiers abducted the Sabine women. This is the moment that Rubens has chosen to capture.

Rubens tends to be over-the-top when it comes to frenzied passion but that is why we love him. His figures twist and scream while still maintaining a sense of supple sensuality. He uses colour and movement to create the required sense of panic. Note that Rubens sets this mythological scene in front of Classical Roman architecture – but the figures all wear contemporary 17th Century Flemish dress.

The National Gallery does have works by Britain's own artists – Constable, Turner and Gainsborough – but remember the Tate Britain is devoted exclusively to artists from the United Kingdom. It has an entire wing dedicated to Turner, with examples of his work throughout his career.

London is one of the most exciting cities in the world. It is also one of the most expensive, especially when it comes to food. I have never felt more ripped off by meal prices anywhere in the world than I have in London. The British are no-

toriously bad cooks. Unless you're dining at four-star restaurants (such as Hakkasan or Asia de Cuba), you are not going to get much for your money.

But everyone has to eat. Fortunately, when you have had your fill of culture, you can dine defensively, relatively speaking, at one of London's many lunch places (such as Pret A Manger and Marks & Spencer), which specialize in small take-out meals. The closest to the National Gallery is right across the street from the National Portrait Gallery at the top end of the square.

If you prefer to dine inside, and have 20 pounds (Canadian \$45), try the chain called Ping Pong. (The closest one to Trafalgar Square is at Oxford Street.) It is a trendy, dim sum experience, quite busy but lineups move quickly.

For something more upscale, walk into St. James Park (towards Buckingham Palace) to the Inn The Park restaurant, which has a sit-down, full-service patio (as well as a place to buy food to go). It is a lovely little oasis in the sprawling city.

Sarah Close is an avid traveler with an honours degree in fine art history.



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## New Heads of Mission

**Ahferom Berhane Ghebremedhin**  
Ambassador of Eritrea



After studying at Haile Sellassie I University, Mr. Ghebremedhin started his career as a high school teacher. He then spent 16 years with the Eritrea Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF). In 1991, after Eritrea successfully fought for independence from Ethiopia, he became a manager at the interior and defence ministries. He then worked as a manager in the economic department of the Peoples' Front for Democracy and Justice, the EPLF's successor. In 2001, he joined the ministry of foreign affairs as director-general of the foreign minister's office. He spent the last five years as a liaison with the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission.

Mr. Ghebremedhin, 60, speaks Tigringa, English and Amharic. He is married with a daughter and two sons.

**Nikolaos Matsis**  
Ambassador of Greece



For Mr. Matsis, the appointment as ambassador to Canada marks his third post-

ing to this country. The 60-year-old diplomat, who studied law at the University of Athens, worked at Greek consulate general in Toronto in 1980 and in Montreal, as permanent representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization for three years starting in 2001.

Mr. Matsis' varied postings have taken him to Turkey, Brazil, Australia, and Ukraine. Although he served as consul-general in both Australia (Melbourne and Victoria) and Ukraine (Mariupol), this is his first posting as ambassador.

Mr. Matsis is married to Katherine Matsis and they have a son and a daughter.

**Mārgers Krams**  
Ambassador of Latvia



Mr. Krams, who has a PhD from the Latvian University of Agriculture, comes to Canada from the World Trade Organization where he's worked for six of the past seven years. He was a senior economist first, then returned to Latvia as under-secretary of state for the ministry of agriculture for just less than a year before becoming a counsellor and head of Latvia's permanent representation to the World Trade Organization. He has also served as parliamentary secretary to the ministry of agriculture and as advisor to the prime minister.

Mr. Krams speaks Latvian, English, Russian and French. He is married and has three children.

**Brendon Browne**  
High Commissioner for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States

Mr. Browne's posting to Ottawa represents his first as head of mission and it's a return to Canada for him. He studied



in Windsor, Ont., and completed a bachelor degree in international relations from the University of Windsor in 1980 and a master's the following year. He started his career as a teacher then moved on to government where he worked as assistant secretary of such departments as foreign affairs, tourism, and education. He was also head of culture department for the government of St. Vincent.

Mr. Browne, 54, is married and has three children.

**Peter Kallaghe**  
High Commissioner for Tanzania



Mr. Kallaghe is a career diplomat who joined the foreign service in 1983 after completing a master's and post-graduate diploma in international relations.

Mr. Kallaghe was posted to Rwanda from 1991 to 1995 and Zambia from 1995 to 1997. That year, he was appointed assistant to the president of Tanzania and, four years later, was promoted to deputy private secretary then ambassador in the president's office where he coordinated meetings with foreign dignitaries and accompanied the president to international meetings. Last year, he became the president's director of communications.

He is married to Joyce D. Kallaghe. They have two daughters and two sons.

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Attaché

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**Eric Justus Van Der Wal**  
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**Lianjie Xu**  
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**Belay Gebreselassie Kidane**  
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Finland  
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**Tapio Virri**  
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**Lise Marie Emilie Talbot Barre**  
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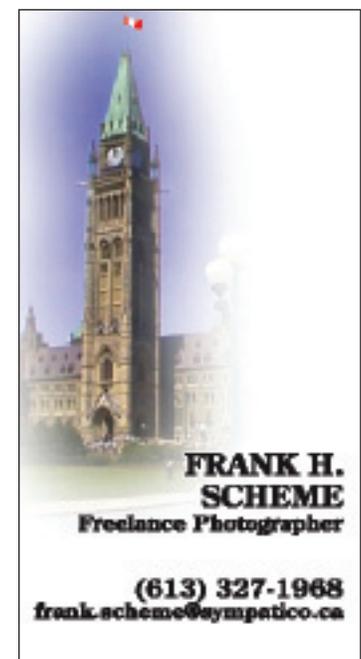
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one bit of morbid charm aside, the room was true to its roots in the era, lasting into the late 1980s, when design and construction projects in Laos where under-

NO, THE SHOP WAS CHOCK-A-BLOCK WITH BROKEN PICTURE FRAMES AND PURPORTED SILVER FLATWARE MADE OF ALUMINUM. WHEN WE ENTERED, THE TWO APPARENT CO-PROPRIETORS WERE IN THE BACK WATCHING TELEVISION CARTOONS, ONE ON THE SOFA, THE OTHER ON THE FLOOR, BUT THE LATTER BESTIRRED HIMSELF TO WELCOME US.

taken routinely by experts from the Soviet Union. The Soviet way of doing things is also preserved in the system of vouchers, chits and receipts employed at every opportunity, such as in what should be the simple matter of getting breakfast in the auditorium-like dining hall (“Performance from 0600 hrs”). Riverfront roosters had ensured that we were there in plenty of time.

While waiting for our connection to the north, we found a tiny antiques and handicrafts shop called Indochine, a term now becoming current again, shucking off decades of negative connotation. No doubt, we thought, we’ll find the detritus of colonialism there and thus enjoy a tactile relationship with the empire for a few moments. No, the shop was chock-a-block with broken picture frames and purported silver flatware made of alu-



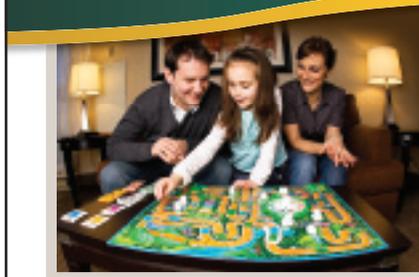
minum. When we entered, the two apparent co-proprietors were in the back watching television cartoons, one on the sofa, the other on the floor, but the latter bestirred himself to welcome us. He was Vietnamese, ethnically if not by nationality. His eyes were mournful. He was in his 20s and had some English whereas his much older partner (they’re cousins, we discovered) spoke a little Russian.

This is the practical lesson we learned in the city and took with us far upriver

beginning the next day. In Laos, the young people know English, their parents know Russian, their grandparents know French. “Listen,” I said to my friend, “when it looks like we’re getting into trouble—and we will—I’ll find a kid and you look round for a grandmother.” I pass along this travel tip. It worked every time.

George Fetherling is a Vancouver poet, novelist and cultural commentator.

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# When in doubt in Laos, find a kid, or a grandmother

By George Fetherling

Vientiane, the capital of Laos, is a fading one-time French colonial outpost on a spot where a bend in the Mekong makes room for a large tear-shaped island directly opposite the centre-ville, which only runs far enough back from the riverbank to allow a few commercial streets. The new bridge to Thailand is a short distance away. Thai-style wats and other temples, minor and major, are everywhere. Otherwise, barring the usual joint-venture hotels and such, the architecture is either Chinese-style shop-houses, many of them quite elderly, or French buildings left over from the old days. The latter include the Presidential Palace, formerly called the Royal Palace, and large French villas, expropriated at Independence but left to ruin because no money was available to maintain them—or even find a use for them. They stand in overgrown lawns, their windows shuttered or punched out.

The most bizarre architectural remembrance of the French century is the Patuxai or Victory Gate, a copy of the Arc de Triomphe but with enormous Buddhist spires on top. It stands at the end of the local equivalent of the Champs Elysées, which is badly in need of repaving beneath a thick crust of reddish dirt.

My traveling companion and I got a room in a Russian-built hotel with a view of the river's south channel with the Thai



shoreline in the distance. This was in July when the dry season was still playing itself out, though the monsoon rains of late afternoon and early evening brought temporary relief from the humidity while softening the rugged clay soil for tilling. So the water still being low, the bank was planted in corn, which was about chest-

high despite not being well hoed. We saw no commercial or passenger traffic whatever on the river.

We strolled the length of the town, river on our left, commercial strip—with the inevitable massage parlour, mini-mart and open-air Chinese restaurant—on the right. More subtly so than the Patuxai, the buildings reveal the long war between opposing traditions that never quite reconciled but only declared a truce. There are ornate French grilles on windows that have never looked out on France of course but only on what their builders must have seen as the steady encroachment of native ideas. My friend, who has spent time in West Africa, said that the streetscape would fit perfectly into the Côte d'Ivoire. But the faces of course are Asian, except for the French faces, which are the same on either continent.

The hotel room had a strange old piece of wooden furniture about four feet high. The top third of it was a glass-fronted box with a decorative handle for opening the glazed door. It suggested a cabinet of curiosities or perhaps a place to exhibit a wreath made from the hair of a deceased loved one, or some other proof of lachrymose 19th Century sensibilities. In fact, it turned out to be the primitive forerunner of the mini-bar. This

*(continued on page 51)*



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