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# THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

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## JFK remembered



OFFICIAL PORTRAIT OF JOHN F. KENNEDY BY AARON SHIKLER

45 years later



**Beryl Wajzman** Editor & Publisher

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## To rouse the world from fear

*"I hear it said that West Berlin is militarily untenable — and so was Bastogne, and so, in fact, was Stalingrad. Any danger spot is tenable if men — brave men — will make it so."*

~ President John F. Kennedy

Saturday was the 45th anniversary of the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. That tragedy haunts us still. In many ways and at all times. The writer Mary McGrory said on that day that we shall never smile again. Daniel Patrick Moynihan answered no, we may smile again, but we'll never be young again. For many it was the day hope died.

But hope, like courage, rests not on the shoulders of any one man but lives on from the testament of that man in the hearts of all. All we need is the resolve to remember, and to carry on.

It is in that remembrance that we answer the question of many scholars as to what JFK's legacy really was. His Presidency too short to see the fulfillment of many of his boldest initiatives, how is it that he captures our imaginations still? The answer rests in his words as much as his deeds. For those words, those ideas, still make us see possibilities in ourselves that we thought unimaginable.

They held out the vision of a generosity of spirit that could realize the ancient dream of the brotherhood of man. They challenged us to vigorous service and sacrifice in our daily lives. And most of all, they dared us to be brave. They lit the flame of courage within each of us that made us all understand that the indomitable spirit of freedom inevitably triumphs over the dark forces of tyranny.

Perhaps that is the greatest quality of leadership. To make people bolder, braver, better than they ever thought possible. And to give them hope...the greatest gift.

At no time since his murder has the world been in need of such hope and such courage. It is for that reason that his words resonate with us still. At no time since the Second World War have the free been so full of fear. At no time since that era, has appeasement of terror and villainy been so obsequious.

Kennedy understood these dangers well. In his 1940 best-selling book "Why England Slept" he wrote "It is an unfortunate fact that we can secure peace only by preparing for war." Today history repeats itself. Today continents rest, as Bruce Bawer has so eloquently phrased in *While Europe Slept*. New cloaks for the old tyrannies.

The greatest tribute to John F. Kennedy is that his words and vision during his "...one brief shining moment..." remain relevant as calls of conscience for us today. And if we do not answer those calls; if we do not respond to

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## LES MILLES MOTS

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LA PATRIE

LA CAMPAGNE ÉLECTORALE AU QUÉBEC

# Élections pour les nuls

Je regarde aller M. Charest, M. Dumont, Mme Marois (voire Mme David et son acolyte), et je me pâme ! Ces gens-là ont vraiment le goût du risque. En politique, la victoire ou la défaite d'un backbencher, d'un chef, d'un parti, dépendent en effet de nombreux facteurs, sur lesquels le candidat n'exerce généralement aucun contrôle. Faire de la politique, c'est vivre dangereusement. Quelles que soient les circonstances, il est quand même de grands principes que tout politicien doit respecter s'il veut mettre toutes les chances de son côté. Ceux que je viens de nommer sont à cet égard d'excellents modèles. Les conseils que je vais donner me viennent d'eux, c'est-à-dire de l'observation de leurs faits et gestes :

Promettez toujours de geler tous les tarifs : frais de scolarité, frais de garderie, tarifs d'électricité, permis de pêche, droits d'immatriculation, primes d'assurance, etc. Vous ferez ainsi plaisir à tout le monde : étudiants, parents, branchés, pêcheurs, automobilistes, révolutionnaires, réactionnaires, et j'en passe. Vous n'ignorez pas, évidemment, qu'il n'y a rien de plus néfaste à long terme pour les finances publiques qu'un « gel des tarifs ». Soit ! Mais n'en dites rien, n'avouez pas, jurez sur la tête de vos petits-enfants que de votre vivant les tarifs demeureront (con)gelés. Peut-être virerez-vous capot quand vous serez bien installé au pouvoir, mais ce sera pour le bien public.

Les arguments ne vous manqueront d'ailleurs pas pour justifier une volte-face qui sera plutôt portée à votre crédit. On dira qu'il n'y a que les imbéciles qui ne changent jamais d'idée. L'important, en effet, c'est qu'ici et maintenant le citoyen vous trouve gentil. Bien sûr, l'argent ne poussant pas dans les arbres, le contribuable paiera en taxes et impôts ce qu'il ne défraie

pas comme utilisateur du gentil service si gracieusement (con)gelé. Ne vous en faites pas, le (con)tribuable ayant la mémoire courte, vous n'avez rien à perdre, tout à gagner. Vivez dans le présent !

2) Dites que vous allez étendre la couverture sociale et améliorer les services sans imposer ni taxer davantage, sans provoquer de déficit, sans augmenter la dette publique, sans alourdir la bureaucratie. Ne vous gênez pas pour promettre la quadrature du cercle : ouvrir une nouvelle place en garderie pour tout enfant en âge de têter ou de tirer les cheveux ; jurez sans rougir que vous allez engager 4000 enseignants de plus, que vous allez accélérer la formation des médecins et des infirmières, désengorger les urgences, réduire le décrochage scolaire, colmater les nids-de-poules, multiplier les logements sociaux, abolir par décret la pauvreté, la bêtise, le coryza et l'onchophagie.

3) Accusez systématiquement vos adversaires d'être responsables des problèmes actuels. De deux choses l'une : ou bien ils exercèrent le pouvoir avant vous, auquel cas les arguments ne vous manqueront pas pour justifier vos assertions ; ou bien ils croupissent dans l'opposition depuis des lustres, voire des décennies, auquel cas vous direz plutôt qu'ils constituent une menace pour l'avenir. Vous aurez assurément raison, car il est certain que vos adversaires, s'ils vous délogent du pouvoir, seront effectivement responsables des problèmes futurs. Bien sûr, ils ne se gêneront pas pour répéter à leur tour que vous, qui les avez précédés, êtes responsable de tout ce qui ira mal après-demain. Telle est la règle du jeu. Vous reprendrez un jour le pouvoir et radoterez le même refrain.

4) Si vous n'avez plus rien à perdre, devenez suicidaire. Ainsi, quand vous proposez (excellente idée) d'abolir le programme



## Faire de la politique, c'est vivre dangereusement. Quelles que soient les circonstances, il est quand même de grands principes que tout politicien doit respecter s'il veut mettre toutes les chances de son côté.

Éthique et Culture religieuse, entourez-vous de bérêts-blancs. Empressez-vous de perdre toute crédibilité en promettant la lune. Quel risque y a-t-il ? Les électeurs on beau ne plus croire aux promesses des politiciens, ils vous accuseront de n'avoir pas de

programme si vous n'en faites pas. Si nécessaire, prenez le citoyen à rebrousse-poil : promettez du sang, de la sueur et des larmes. Commettez l'irréparable : refusez de participer à la grand-messe nationale du dimanche soir. Si l'animateur exige des excuses,

insultez-le derechef. Vos outrances vous attireront la sympathie des marginaux de la mystérieuse région de Québec. Peut-être alors un miracle se produira-t-il et raterez-vous votre suicide, ce qui constituera au fond une belle petite victoire.

## THE VOLUNTEER

*The riveting story of a Canadian who served as a senior officer in Israel's legendary Mossad.*

For seven-and-a-half years, Ross worked as an undercover agent — a classic spy. In *The Volunteer*, he describes his role in missions to foil attempts by Syria, Libya, and Iran to acquire advanced weapons technology. He tells of his part in the capture of three senior al Qaeda operatives who masterminded the 1998 attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; a joint Mossad-FBI operation that uncovered a senior Hezbollah terrorist based in the United States; and a mission to South Africa in which he intercepted Iranian agents seeking to expand their country's military arsenal; and two-and-a-half years as Mossad's Counterterrorism Liaison Officer to the CIA and FBI.

Many of the operations Ross describes have never before been revealed to the public.

McClelland.com





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### QUEBEC'S COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

# “It’s a matter of dignity”

When Quebec’s 38th legislature was dissolved on Nov. 5, the work by the national assembly’s standing committee on social affairs came to a halt.

It’s a shame, because their efforts were both necessary and bold. From Sept. 29 to Nov. 4, MNAs from all three political parties stepped out of their comfort zones and traveled to Quebec City, Gatineau, Trois-Rivières and Montreal to delve into the complex problem of homelessness in the province. Their efforts brought some clarity to the question and uncovered some surprising facts.

“It was really one of the most

interesting experiences I’ve had because it was a whole side of Montreal, and Quebec society that I’ve never seen,” said committee president Geoffrey Kelley, Liberal MNA for the suburban Montreal riding of Jacques-Cartier.

“I live out in the suburbs and it’s just a part of the world that I don’t know first hand.”

The committee not only listened to the testimony of 99 separate groups ranging from homeless shelters like Accueil Bonneau, health organizations like Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal, lobby groups like l’Association pour la défense des droits et l’inclusion des

personnes qui consomment des drogues du Québec, to the Quebec Bar Association and even the homeless themselves.

“We had about 15 to 20 people who were homeless or had been homeless testifying before the committee, which took a lot of courage. I was very impressed they would take time to come and tell their story,” Kelley said. An impressive 142 documents - including handwritten ones from the homeless - were also deposited. Committee members even spent a night on Ontario Street East with L’Anonyme, an organization that does front-line health work in the

Interestingly, homelessness may be something Canadian civil society is ready to take on. The newly elected Vision Vancouver ran on a platform to eradicate homelessness in that city and swept the municipal elections. Their goal? End street homelessness by 2015 with initiatives like a moratorium on converting single-room occupancy hotels, measures to conserve low-cost housing, and promises to hire a mental-health advocate.

Homelessness has been a growing concern in Vancouver since the 1980s with one estimate suggesting the number of homeless on Vancouver streets had almost doubled to over 2,200 between 2002 and 2005.

city’s rougher districts and who shocked the commission with statistics on the skyrocketing rates of Hepatitis C and HIV among drug users and street people.

“Many compelling arguments were made for a safe injection site,” noted Kelley.

“We didn’t draw a conclusion on that (but) it’s something that should continue to be explored.” Through their work, a clearer picture began to emerge on how the province is failing its most vulnerable citizens.

“It was really quite the intensive month,” said Kelley, “and I was struck by how complex the problem is. You realize how many different facets there are.”

Factors that contribute to homelessness include poverty, mental health problems, and substance abuse.

A 1996 Santé Québec study found that some 12,000 people in Montreal had no fixed address at one time or another in the year and 12 years later, front-line workers are concerned about increasing violence on the streets and the growing numbers of women and children who are finding themselves without shelter. “How, at the age of 13 or 14, have things gone so wrong in your life that you end up there?” asked Kelley. The PQ’s Martin Lemay has represented the downtown riding of Sainte-Marie-Saint-Jacques since 2006, and prior to that he served as mayor of Ville-Marie.

“It’s a daily reality in my riding,” he said. “We see (homelessness) increase year-to-year and there’s no concrete solution.”

Nonetheless, sitting on the commission served as a reality check.

“It was at once rich and destabilizing,” he said. “It confirmed that this was a profound problem.” He was struck by the lack of leader-

ship on the matter and by how severely the system perpetuated the problem.

“Sometimes, our own public services send people into the streets,” Lemay said. “Just having youth services and community organizations sign agreements to work together could make a difference. But the most surprising was that for the Quebec government, this problem didn’t exist. It was a wake-up call.”

Still, there are some quick fixes that could appease situation. These include:

- Easing the transition between prison and youth services and community organizations,
- Having government health and social service centres create special teams that do outreach work, and
- Ensuring consistent funding to key community organizations.

“It’s not \$300 million,” said Lemay. “These things can be done quickly.”

Both men noted the municipal government also failed in this dossier.

“Montreal is 10 years behind,” Lemay said while Kelley noted there was a lot of finger pointing and some efforts to tackle the matter, but few concrete solutions being put forward.

While the future of the commission remains uncertain, both men find comfort that the work they’ve done can’t be erased, and are encouraged that the Liberals, the Parti Québécois and the Action démocratique du Québec have made tackling homelessness a priority.

“There’s no one now who can deny it exists and that it’s a problem. No one,” Lemay said. “The Quebec government needs to take responsibility, it’s a matter of human dignity.”

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# Trivializing Hate

## QUEBEC'S HALLMARKS OF INTOLERANCE

This week Rouba Elmerhebi Fahd, mother of the United Talmud Torah fire bomber, received a sentence of only twelve months probation after having been found guilty in September of being an accessory after the fact in the firebombing. The trial judge qualified the attack on the Jewish school as a terrorist act.

I am by no means a believer in punitive punishment. Much evidence exists that incarceration does little toward rehabilitation. Tough sentences may not even be much in the way of deterrent. But the severity of sentences on terrorist acts do go very much to the character and courage of a society in how it confronts terror.

For Mrs. Fahd to not even receive a sentence of community service, and received what amounts to a suspended sentence for complicity in a terrorist act, is an abomination. Just two weeks ago convicted race crime perpetrator Azim Ibragimov was given a sentence that amounted to several months for each of his acts. Ibragimov committed three criminal acts motivated by hatred of Jews, including a firebombing of another Jewish school. The sentence given to Rouba Elmerhebi Fahd makes Ibragimov's term look serious. The judge in the Elmerhebi Fahd case stated that he could understand the actions of a mother seeking to get her son out of the country and "protect" him. I would submit that hers were not the actions of a mother. They were the actions of a co-conspirator

### THE IBRAGIMOV FILE

The Ibragimov sentence raises the same stark concerns. What is striking in reading the judgment in the sentencing of 25 year old Azim Ibragimov are the judge's words. Judge Gilles Cadieux quite rightly characterized Ibragimov's actions as "racist" and "terrorist acts". What leaves one disheartened is the light sentence. Yes, we know that headlines have been declaring that the sentence "sends a message" and that it is "exemplary". But when you consider the evidence, you have to ask yourself "what kind of a message?"

Azim Ibragimov pleaded guilty earlier this year to firebombing the Skver-Toldos Orthodox Jewish Boys School in Outremont in 2006, and attempting to attack the Snowdon YM-YWHA the following year. The actions were not those of a schoolboy. Ibragimov, 25 now,

was a grown man when he committed these attempted murders.

His four-year sentence, with credit for time served, means that he will be imprisoned for only 10 months. Ten months for race-motivated crimes that could have resulted in dozens killed. We understand that sentencing parameters involve issues of suasion and rehabilitation, but how will 10 months really demotivate anyone else and rehabilitate Ibragimov?

Ibragimov has shown almost no remorse for what he did. And if he had demonstrated remorse reasonable minds could be forgiven for questioning it. His actions were not isolated. They were part of a consistent pattern of race hate. It wasn't as if he committed one act and then atoned for it as if it were a youthful indiscretion.

After the school firebombing, Ibragimov pre-meditatedly planned a yet bigger one. The only reason that he failed to inflict carnage at the Y was that his home-made explosive device failed to go off.

Ibragimov was also an all-purpose hater. He didn't just attempt murder and commit mayhem by physical violence, he also used the power of the pen. Ibragimov also pleaded guilty to uttering threats in the form of letters that claimed the crimes were committed in the name of Islamic Jihad, a terrorist group (so named by the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament) that vows to destroy Israel and set up an Islamic Palestinian state. The letters also hinted there were more incidents to come.

So three acts of race hate get an effective average of three months each. "Racist" and "terrorist" acts get an average of three months each. Almost the same as multiple drunk-driving convictions resulting in bodily harm. Is that the equivalency our society is trying to demonstrate?

Even the staunchest opponent of incarceration as a means of punishment and rehabilitation should blink twice at this one. A concerted, pre-meditated series of race-motivated crimes perpetrated by an adult gets 10 months! Not even close to what is required. The sentence trivializes the crimes and sends nothing but the most feckless message.

### THE RAEURN QUESTION

But race crimes are not always perpetrated by civilians. Sometimes they

are done by the authorities. And visible minorities are perhaps more victimized than "invisible" religious minorities. In November 2004 Dollard des Ormeaux resident Gemma Raeburn and two friends, Peter Charles and Frederick Peters, were moving items from her garage into her home. Following a call from a neighbor, six armed Montreal police officers showed up accusing the three of robbing the house. The only crime they had committed was that they were black.

The neighbor who had called the police was a 17 year old who said that people with "black things" on their faces were committing a robbery. What happened after the police arrived turned farce to tragedy. When Raeburn asked one of the officers if they would have pulled their guns on white people, the officer responded that "...bullets don't see color...". When Peters told one of the other officers that police in his native Grenada did not behave in a similar fashion the officer snapped back "If you don't like it here, why don't you go back to your country?"

Raeburn and her friends brought complaints to the Police Ethics Committee. The Committee suspended the two officers. The officers took their case to Quebec Court and their appeal was successful. The Court ordered the suspension of the first officer wiped off his record and the second had the suspension converted into a reprimand. Gemma Raeburn's reaction said it all. "If we can't even recognize racism, how are we ever going to cure it?"

### THE BISHOP ASSAULT

The story of Courtney Bishop is also instructive in the problems with authority reacting with prejudiced. Mr. Bishop, a citizen of colour, is a Concordia student and a member of its rugby team. Recently he and some twenty of his friends and teammates tried to enter the Sir Winston Churchill Pub on Crescent Street. All were dressed casually. All except Mr. Bishop were white.

All of Mr. Bishop's friends were allowed entry. The doorman refused Mr. Bishop on the basis that he was wearing baggy jeans. Mr. Bishop argued that some of his friends had the same attire. The doorman would not be moved. Heated words were exchanged and Mr. Bishop's friends left the pub and proceeded down Crescent street with

their friend Courtney.

Mr. Bishop told the media he felt the doorman's refusal of entry was racially motivated. As abhorrent as that is if true, what happened next is worse.

A few moments after they left the door of the pub, Courtney and his friends were encircled by police who approached him with guns drawn and asked him to lay on the ground. Apparently the police were responding to a call from the pub because the doorman claimed that he heard Courtney say that he had a gun. No gun was found of course and no charges laid. Courtney is not upset at the police, but he is considering legal action against the pub for discrimination.

What should troubles us in this incident in addition to the racial undertones, is the explanation of the police for their actions. When asked to explain why the unusual demonstration of force against Courtney, police spokesman Laurent Gingras told reporters that "We will take no chances with the public's security." Herein lies the problem.

Police officers are always concerned as to why their image is not better with the public. Part of the answer lies in this incident. The "public's security" is not just a matter of protection against physical harm. It is also a matter of the upholding of individual rights. The automatic assumption on the part of the police at the scene should not have been that just because a caller says something it must be true. Are our police going to be used and manipulated by random callers to be hammers against someone whom we find irritating? Of course not.

The officers should have approached Mr. Bishop, in force of numbers, and confronted him with the accusation. But when they heard his story, they should also have accompanied Mr. Bishop up the street to the pub and confronted the doorman with both the falsity of his accusation and questioned him on Courtney's charge of racial bias. Not only would that have restored Courtney's dignity, but it would have sent a strong message – from the police themselves – that they understood the broader community responsibilities in their mandate to keep the peace.

### THE QUEBEC MALAISE

Some reactions from institutions dealing with these problems have been puzzling. B'nai B'rith Canada stated that

the Ibragimov sentence "underscores the need for long-term sustained efforts to combat hatred." Well, perhaps one way to really start is to make punishment fit the crime. We understand that sentencing guidelines are heavily governed by precedent. But sometimes judges need the courage to make new precedent. Judge Cadieux talked the talk. His sentencing did not walk the walk.

Gemma Raeburn's challenging question was made to police authority. "If we can't even recognize racism, how are we ever going to cure it?" It certainly should be asked of police after the Bishop assault. But her challenge may also be put to judicial authority after the Ibragimov and Elmerhebi Fahd sentences as well. After all the talk of Quebec "values" this past year, reasonable people may ask whether those "values" apply to protecting all citizens equally from hate. Or has Quebec become too politically cowardly and too ready to pander to the most retrograde elements in our society?

The answer is by no means clear. What is clear is that there is a malaise in Quebec. From the judiciary to the streets. Ironically, the Elmerhebi Fahd sentence came down on the same day that the provincial police arrested four people in the investigation of several anti-Semitic attacks in the Laurentians this past summer. If they are charged and convicted, it will be instructive to see what their sentences will be. Is Quebec ready to stand for something, or will it fall for anything? Will it draw a line in the sand on what two judges have called "terror"? The answers to these questions are also by no means clear. We should all be saddened by that.

I won't go through a repetition of the litany of racial incidents and attitudes in Quebec. From the firebombing of a Jewish school, to the intolerance exhibited during the accommodation hearings, to the Police Brotherhood's move to stop a coroner-ordered inquiry into Mohammed Bennis' death, they are all too fresh in our minds. The firebombings and the Raeburn and Bishop cases are more than sufficient evidence. What I would like to consider here is why it seems so easy to demonize and marginalize minorities – "les autres" – in this Province. So easy that even courts can be caught up in the



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# Le discours du PQ : mensonges et idées dépassées

L'idéologie du Parti Québécois est basée sur une série de mensonges et d'idées dépassées. Si ce parti a déjà été jeune et dynamique, voire utile au Québec, ce n'est plus le cas depuis longtemps. Par des manœuvres habiles et en martelant sans cesse la même rhétorique, le PQ a réussi à faire croire à plusieurs qu'il serait le seul parti à pouvoir défendre les intérêts des Québécois, comme s'il détenait l'exclusivité des valeurs québécoises, et comme si, par surcroît, il détenait le monopole de la définition de notre identité collective. Mais ce parti menace aujourd'hui les intérêts généraux des Québécois. Sa conception de l'identité et de la citoyenneté, de même que son absence de lucidité, risquent en effet de retarder le développement économique, social et culturel du Québec de demain.

Tout d'abord, il est significatif que Pauline Marois ait commencé à parler du « Nous » durant le débat entourant la commission Bouchard-Taylor. En fait, c'est à cette occasion qu'on a pu voir le vrai visage des péquistes, dont la conception identitaire se base sur des critères géographiques et religieux. Cette conception, bien classique, est plutôt dépassée. De nos jours, bon nombre de Québécois, dont beaucoup de jeunes, se définissent plutôt par leurs valeurs et leur mode vie personnels. « L'identité » ne s'arrête plus à la rivière des Outaouais et ne concerne plus la religion. Elle est devenue quelque chose de transcendant et elle est parfois variable ou compartimentée. Le discours identitaire malsain du PQ limite la mobilité de la main d'œuvre et vise à ce que le Québec se replie constamment sur lui-même plutôt que de s'épanouir. Sans compter qu'il provoque chez certains indépendantistes une véritable paranoïa à l'égard du reste du Canada.

C'est ainsi qu'a été créé un mode de pensée régi par une seule

logique, dans laquelle le « Nous » s'oppose aux « Autres ». Ainsi, c'est « Les Québécois » contre « Le ROC », ou encore « Les Vrais Québécois » (c'est-à-dire : « Les indépendantistes ») contre les « Fédéralistes », ceux-ci étant soupçonnés de « trahison » ou d'être de « vils vendus ». Ce mépris des indépendantistes envers ceux qui pensent différemment qu'eux est souvent tel que, par ce genre d'intimidation verbale, ils briment sans gêne la liberté de parole de ceux ne partageant pas leur idéologie.

Ensuite, il y a chez les péquistes une absence chronique de lucidité. En fait, bien des mentors du parti sont « lucides », mais ils ne l'avouent pas. C'est qu'ils préfèrent s'accaparer le pouvoir sur des bases fallacieuses. Deux principaux éléments ressortent de leur attitude : la sauvegarde de la langue française et la place du Québec dans le monde.

À propos de la langue, il reste à démontrer qu'un Québec indépendant serait plus en mesure de défendre la langue française. En fait, il y a fort à parier que cela rendrait celle-ci plus vulnérable. Il existe (Oh surprise !) des francophones dans les autres provinces canadiennes. Sans le poids démographique, politique et culturel du Québec, ces communautés se verraient gravement menacées de perdre leur langue, et cela non pas par des ordres venant d'anglophones malfaisants, mais plutôt par dépit. En effet, la préservation de l'usage du français en contexte minoritaire constitue une tâche qui s'avère beaucoup plus ardue qu'au Québec. Malgré les prétentions des indépendantistes, le français n'est pas en péril au Québec, qui possède déjà des outils puissants pour contrôler et stopper l'anglicisation. Le problème ne vient pas de l'extérieur, mais de l'intérieur : il se situe essentiellement dans les écoles primaires et secondaires, lesquelles sont entièrement contrôlées par Québec, mais où on

n'enseigne plus le français de façon rigoureuse.

En ce qui a trait à l'idée d'avoir « voix au chapitre », la situation est devenue presque comique. S'il fallait qu'on accepte les prétentions de Pierre Curzi ou de Pauline Marois, on pourrait croire qu'un Québec indépendant aurait pu empêcher l'invasion de l'Iraq, éliminé la famine en Afrique et réglé le conflit Israélo-Palestinien. La réalité est tout autre. La Belgique peut bien émettre des mandats internationaux contre qui elle voudra... le monde n'en a que faire. La communauté internationale accorde peu d'importance aux positions politiques des États de second plan. Il est incontestable de le Québec a plus de poids sur la scène internationale grâce à son influence à l'intérieur du gouvernement canadien. Un Québec indépendant attirerait certes quelques sympathies et ses ressources seraient convoitées, mais son influence politique serait à peu près nulle. La marge de manœuvre dont disposerait le Québec face au géant américain n'en serait pas élargie, et elle pourrait même être réduite. Aussi, malgré ce que les ténors indépendantistes tentent de nous faire croire, il n'est pas envisageable de se tourner tout azimut vers l'Europe, ni d'exporter de l'électricité en Chine.

Il est donc plausible que l'establishment péquiste mente, afin de convaincre les Québécois du bien fondé de sa position. Un mensonge par ci, un mensonge par là : au fil du temps, on finit par y croire. On finit par croire que « Nous » sommes seuls au monde, et que nous sommes les éternelles victimes du « Rest of Canada ». On finit presque par croire que le Cirque du Soleil établira un gouvernement mondial pacifique et bienveillant.

Cependant, personne ne croira qu'une Pauline Marois, après plus de 27 ans en politique et frôlant la soixantaine, représenterait un quelconque changement.

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- George F. Lengvari, Sr.



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# SAQ coming down on east-end topless landmark

At 8:30 in the morning, the fast-food restaurant on Hochelaga Street was just as busy as any other fast-food joint in the city — perhaps busier. While Les Princesses served fast-food breakfast meals just like any other of its kind in the city, the well-known restaurant also had a liquor license. For almost 10 years, Gaetan Thomas, its owner, said the restaurant was doing good business before Quebec liquor board authorities recently decided to revoke his liquor license. Now he will probably have to close the business.

“I’m going to have to send the girls home,” said Thomas. “Beer sales used to make up nearly 50 percent of the business and without the beer, there’s not much business.”

Thomas lost his license because, after at least 9 visits by liquor board officials who were working ‘undercover’, he was told one of his waitresses broke the law because she served one of the officers a beer without a meal.

“When?” asked Thomas. “What officer? Which waitress? Two weeks later, all I got was a telephone call telling me I was going to lose my license.”

The businessman especially resents how the liquor board’s authorities refused to identify themselves to the girls. At one point, he was fined almost \$4,000 (ticket and court costs) because the authorities accused him of serving beer with the restaurant’s .99 cent ‘Spaghetti Special’ on a plate they considered to be too small for the spaghetti.

“They said the plate wasn’t big enough for a ‘special’ so I had to buy bigger plates if I wanted to sell beer with the spaghetti”, he said.

Many believe the restaurant’s problems are due to the fact the waitresses in Les Princesses wear nothing but a pair of shoes and a thong while taking your order. Over the past decade, Thomas admits the girls bring a lot of people, “...but there’s nothing going on here.” He also said the police only showed up once in ten years “...and that’s because some guys held up the restaurant at gunpoint.”

Thomas knew he was in trouble after the liquor board (Régie des Alcools, des courses et des jeux) accused him of putting on an “erotic spectacle” which he said was completely ridiculous.

“Anybody can see these girls aren’t strippers,” he said. “They’re just waitresses with nothing on.”

So far, other comparable restaurants

said they’re having no problems with the province’s liquor board. On the corner of Rosemount Blvd. and Des Érables in the Petite Patrie district, restaurant owner Jacinthe Vigneault was frying up eggs and bacon as fast as she could while two girls, both topless, were waiting for their orders. As clients ate their breakfast, some read their Journal and others lingered over their second cup of coffee while a grainy porn flick was playing on the TV near the window.

“I don’t have any troubles with the régie,” said Vigneault. “But then nobody gets a beer without getting something to eat.”

While Thomas may or may not get his license back, he still has a valid argument to bring to the régie. Whatever they might think the girls were doing in Les Princesses, it definitely wasn’t an “erotic spectacle”.



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# Opération Mr. Big™ *(Made in Canada)*

## ...OU COMMENT CONTRAINDRE L'INNOCENT À S'AVOUEUR COUPABLE

Même si certains médias (dont le journaliste Brian Hutchinson dans le National Post du 18 décembre 2004) en ont parfois fait état, peu de gens au pays savent que la Gendarmerie Royale du Canada (GRC) applique depuis plusieurs années des tactiques policières qui relèvent purement de la fabrication de preuves et dont plusieurs parmi nos concitoyens ont été les innocentes victimes.

La GRC s'est en effet spécialisée dans un type bien douteux d'opération, dont le seul et unique but consiste, lorsque les preuves matérielles et/ou circonstancielles s'avèrent absentes ou déficientes, à forcer sous la menace des suspects à « avouer » avoir commis un crime violent. Le fait que la personne ciblée soit réellement coupable ou non n'importe nullement aux yeux des agents de la GRC concernés :

dès qu'ils obtiennent, enregistrée sur une bande vidéo à l'insu de leur cible, les « aveux » qui consistent en le seul et unique but de ce type d'opération, ils ont obtenu leur « coupable ». La bande vidéo est présentée devant un jury, et celui-ci, persuadé par une preuve aussi convaincante en apparence, déclare l'accusé coupable. Case closed.

Cette méthode, plaisamment baptisée par la GRC « Opération Mr. Big », s'avère d'ailleurs très efficace : la plupart du temps, les jurys émettent un verdict de culpabilité après avoir visionné une vidéo du prétendu passage aux « aveux » des accusés. Mais, dans l'esprit de celui qui passe ainsi aux « aveux », ce n'est pas à des policiers reconnus comme tels qu'il « avoue », mais plutôt à des agents doubles de la GRC jouant le rôle de caïds du crime organisé et qui, après avoir contraint l'individu ciblé à

commettre des actes criminels, lui font comprendre que s'il ne se montre pas « coopératif » en leur confiant qu'il est l'auteur du crime dont il est soupçonné, ils prendront « soin » de lui à la manière dont la pègre s'occupe des cas peu fiables. Il s'agit d'un genre de sous-entendu qui est assez explicite pour être dépourvu de toute ambiguïté. Grâce à l'opération « Mr. Big », des innocents ont été injustement condamnés. Par exemple, Kyle Unger et Timothy Houlahan qui, en 1993 au Manitoba, ont été condamnés à la prison à vie suite à une sordide affaire de viol et meurtre, et cela après avoir passé aux « aveux » devant des agents de la GRC qu'ils croyaient être des trafiquants de drogue. Mais en 2004, une analyse d'ADN a démontré hors de tout doute qu'ils étaient innocents. Pour Kyle Unger, ce fut une très bonne nouvelle.

Mais concernant Timothy Houlahan, il y avait un gros problème : il s'est suicidé en 1994. Le cas de ces deux jeunes hommes est loin d'être unique. Cette même « Opération Mr. Big » de la GRC a également rendu possible la condamnation à la prison à vie, aux États-Unis, de Sebastian Burns et Atif Rafay, deux jeunes Canadiens injustement accusés d'avoir tué les parents et la sœur d'Atif (les Rafay étaient d'origine pakistano-canadienne et résidaient dans la région de Seattle depuis deux ans). Burns et Rafay étaient eux aussi passés aux « aveux » devant de prétendus caïds personifiés par des agents de la GRC, lesquels agissaient pour le compte de la police américaine. L'ensemble de la preuve matérielle et circonstancielle disculpait pourtant entièrement les deux jeunes hommes, mais lors du procès tenu à

Seattle en 2004, la présentation d'une vidéo des « aveux » avait su convaincre les jurés de les déclarer coupables.

De fait, Atif Rafay et Sebastian Burns, qui avaient seulement 19 ans au moment où ils étaient soumis à ces méthodes profondément révoltantes de la GRC, étaient passés aux « aveux » dans des circonstances telles que n'importe qui, même votre grand-mère la plus tendre, aurait avoué avoir commis les crimes les plus abominables. Un site web présente d'ailleurs tous les détails de l'opération « Mr. Big » utilisée contre Burns et Rafay, dont l'orchestration est bien typique des autres causes où « Mr. Big » a été employé : [www.rafaiburnsappeal.com/](http://www.rafaiburnsappeal.com/). Mais soyez prévenus : si vous décidez de visiter ce site (qui est bilingue), vous avez intérêt à vous trouver bien assis sur votre chaise, car ce qui y est dévoilé est tout simplement renversant et démontre clairement que MM. Burns et Rafay craignaient réellement pour leur vie s'ils ne « confessaient » pas avoir commis ce crime aux pseudo-gangsters de haut calibre qui n'étaient nuls autres que deux agents de la GRC.

De plus, un documentaire fort éclairant a été dédié à ces mêmes tactiques de la GRC. Sorti sur les grands écrans il y a quelques mois, Mr. Big, The Movie ([www.mrbigthemovie.com](http://www.mrbigthemovie.com)) présente de manière saisissante tous les faits relatifs non seulement à la cause Burns et Rafay, mais aussi aux causes de nombreuses autres victimes innocentes de ces méthodes dignes de la Gestapo mais appliquées par la police fédérale du Canada, un pays qui, pourtant, aime bien se faire valoir sur la scène internationale pour sa fameuse Charte des droits et libertés.

Un autre fait est également à souligner dans l'affaire Burns-Rafay. Les deux agents de la GRC, Al Haslett et Gary Shinkaruk, qui ont joué les criminels endurcis pour contraindre Sebastien Burns et Atif Rafay à avouer avoir perpétré des meurtres qu'ils n'ont pas commis,



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## GLOBAL VILLAGE

# L'avocat du « Diable »

Après Maher Arar, c'est au tour de trois autres musulmans... canadiens, Ahmad el-Maati, Muayyed Nureddin et Abdullah Almalki de réclamer des dommages et intérêts au gouvernement du Canada pour des crimes commis contre leurs personnes par des pays dont ils sont originaires, tel la Syrie et l'Égypte. Ce qui est regrettable, c'est que le contribuable canadien se voit désormais obligé de payer la facture à la place des dictatures du Proche et du Moyen-Orient, tout cela à cause d'un précédent créé par l'affaire Arar!

En effet, la décision du gouvernement canadien de payer des dommages et intérêts à Maher Arar pour avoir été « torturé » par les services de renseignements syriens, à cause de « fausses informations » adressées par la GRC et par le SCRS aux autorités américaines, n'a fait qu'ouvrir une boîte de pandore pour ce genre de situation. Le problème ne réside pas dans la volonté du gouvernement d'apporter une certaine aide à ces « victimes », mais surtout dans la façon dont le système aborde lesdits problèmes.

## CE QU'IL FAUT SAVOIR

D'ailleurs, aussi polémique que ce qui suit sera, la vérité reste toujours vague, compte tenue des informations qui circulent dans le milieu arabe à Montréal. Je m'explique : Selon des observateurs de la scène politique arabe, et non des moindres, qui habitent la France et qui sont de fins critiques du gouvernement syrien, M. Arar serait membre des Frères musulmans. Or, ces derniers sont bannis par les autorités syriennes contrôlées par une minorité alaouite (secte issue du chiisme) à laquelle appartient l'actuel président syrien, Bachar Assad. Le père de ce dernier avait détruit deux villes en 1982, Hama et Homs, par l'aviation syrienne et causé plusieurs dizaines de milliers de morts, ceci pour mettre fin aux actions et aux tentatives de putsch que les Frères musulmans (sunnites) fomentaient contre lui et son régime dirigé par une main de fer alaouite. Depuis l'invasion de l'Irak par les Américains, mais surtout depuis l'évacuation humiliante des troupes d'occupation syriennes du Liban

sous le poids de la colère populaire libanaise, de même que dans le cadre d'un jeu de passe-passe pour gagner les faveurs américaines ou pour monnayer quelques stratégies régionales, le régime Assad (fils) multiplie les efforts de déstabilisation de la rue arabe, notamment l'irakienne. Sa méthode la plus rusée consiste à encourager les combattants sunnites des Frères musulmans et ceux d'Al-Qaïda à partir se battre en Irak contre les alliés (notamment les Américains), plutôt que de diriger leurs attaques contre le régime des Assad. Car il faut comprendre que la majorité en Syrie est sunnite et non alaouite. La dernière ne représente que 5% de la population syrienne ; pourtant, ce sont les sbires d'Assad qui, depuis plus de 40 ans, dirigent le pays d'une main de fer !

Le résultat d'un tel machiavélisme est, bien entendu, l'affrontement politique avec Washington. Or, depuis que l'Irak occupe de plus en plus de place sur la scène régionale, Damas multiplie les tractations pour regagner sa place de joueur principal dans la région, notamment suite à la dislocation du régime-frère baassiste de Saddam Hussein.

## COMMENT S'Y PRENDRE?

La méthode la plus intéressante que Damas a trouvée consiste avant tout à continuer de jouer les uns contre les autres et de se positionner comme intermédiaire ou comme pourvoyeur de solutions. C'est dans cette optique qu'il faut analyser l'affaire Arar. En effet, selon les observateurs du monde arabe en question, Arar fait partie des Frères musulmans. Or, ce sont ces mêmes Frères musulmans qui envoient leurs Jihadistes se faire exploser en Irak contre les Américains et leurs alliés irakiens et occidentaux. De plus, il semblerait que des proches d'Arar cherchent à vendre la mèche selon laquelle il se serait réellement déplacé en Afghanistan pour des raisons louches. Le problème, c'est que ces derniers refuseraient de parler tant qu'une bonne somme d'argent ne leur aurait été versée !

En d'autres termes, et sans vouloir accuser M. Arar de quoi que ce soit, le geste du gouvernement fédéral de payer une personne pour des erreurs commises par un autre pays a ouvert

## Le résultat d'un tel machiavélisme est, bien entendu, l'affrontement politique avec Washington.

la porte à d'autres demandes similaires. Car la GRC et le SCRS n'avaient pas de fausses informations en tant que tel, puisque les Frères musulmans sont bel et bien

un groupement de fanatiques musulmans et recrutent des Jihadistes pour se battre contre l'Occident. Si l'on part du principe que l'information qui leur a été

transmise et selon laquelle M. Arar appartenait aux Frères musulmans, donc, et conformément à la Convention de sécurité signée entre

Suite à la page 13

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## David T. Jones

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# More Lessons for Republicans

Journalists are inclined to depict every political bend in the road as a major turning point. Historians know better. And so it is after the 2008 election in which President-elect Obama is being globally greeted with hosannas and depicted as the bearer of solutions to all ills foreign and domestic.

But those commending President-elect Obama should not lose sight of the reality that 2008 was the probable victory year for "any Democrat." Thus, we could just as easily be mulling over the prospects for President-elect Clinton, Edwards, Richardson, Dodd, Biden, etc or any of the other worthies who sought the Democratic presidential nomination—had their campaigns been more compelling to primary voters.

The Democrats did not "snatch defeat from the jaws of victory," but neither is 2008 the end of the Republican Party—certainly not akin to the drubbing suffered by the Progressive Conservatives in 1993. Nevertheless, this defeat is not simply one in which "time and tide" weighed against the Republicans. It was a well-deserved beating, reflecting massive popular dissatisfaction with everything (and not the least the Bush/Republican administra-

tion). It was only surprising that polls were relatively close through the end of September until economic concerns became economic collapse.

Nevertheless, just as a defeated military learns more from defeat than a victorious army learns from victory, the Republicans have some lessons to absorb. Some are obvious: expand the candidate pool to include more women/visible minorities; and clean up the financial and personal irregularities that have enmeshed a sordid assortment of Republican legislators (being removed from the trough will help fiscal probity). But several other lessons come to mind:

— Better Fund Raising. For decades Republicans out-raised Democrats through small donations from middle class voters with discretionary income, but not this year. Democrats exploited Internet fundraising pioneered by Howard Dean in 2004 and, combined with voters sensing a Democratic winner, produced floods of dollars for advertising blitzes in swing states at campaign end. Republicans are feckless to complain about the McCain-Feingold fundraising restrictions—the Democrats made them work, and the Republicans need to upgrade their

technology/techniques.

— Bipartisanship Is a Canard. The role of the Opposition is to oppose; society deserves a choice rather than an echo. Every administration opens with scripted commitment to bipartisanship—the epitome of the sobriquet that "hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue." That commitment lasts until the first moment that the Opposition says "no." This is a partisan era with societies facing hard, expensive choices at virtually every turn. If Republicans want to be bipartisan, they should change their party affiliation.

— Oppose "Wars of Choice." It is not isolationism but prudence to back away from avoidable wars. Unless the United States is directly under assault, such as from the 9/11 al-Qaeda forces based in Afghanistan, or a treaty ally is invaded, the first reaction should be "never again" when the issue of U.S. combat missions abroad is contemplated.

Presumably we will argue until the last historian of this era dies whether Iraq was the worst failure of U.S. intelligence since Pearl Harbor or a nefarious plot by oil company executives and vengeance seeking neocons. But the bloody conclusion is that regardless of a potential best case Iraq outcome in the form of



eliminating a vicious dictator and enhancing Iraqi human rights, the effort stained the Bush 43 presidency even more than the semen on Monica's little blue dress did for the Clinton presidency. Hundreds of billions—perhaps a trillion—dollars and over 4,000 U.S. lives must give pause to any future Republican support for boots-on-the-ground foreign ventures.

Thus it is time for others to step up—if there are steps to be climbed. It was absurd for Europeans to call upon U.S. assistance in addressing the slow motion disintegration of Yugoslavia into its shard states in

the early 1990s. If ever there was a local housekeeping exercise, it was the management of this process. Likewise, the seemingly endless tribal/boundary/rebel/failed state conflicts in Africa. Whether one calls them Somalia, Darfur, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Congo, Rwanda or the like, these are conflicts that need local management—or action by former colonial powers. The calls for U.S. intervention are excuses to avoid hard local decisions—with the added benefit of having the U.S. to blame for "interference."

Lessons for Democrats will follow.

## LAPRÈS: OPÉRATION MR. BIG, SUITE DE LA PAGE 8

sont même allés jusqu'à se permettre de fouiller dans les cellules des deux accusés à la prison de Seattle, et cela tandis que le procès était encore en marche. Ainsi, ces deux témoins vedettes de la poursuite ont pu, durant le procès même, avoir accès au courrier et aux documents personnels des accusés, y compris ceux, censés être confidentiels, provenant des avocats de la défense. Évidemment, les deux types de la GRC furent alors fort surpris de voir leur manœuvre sortir au grand jour grâce à un concours de circonstances purement hasardeux, mais ceci démontre à quel point, chez certains à la GRC, tout semble permis, même la tricherie, sinon l'illégalité la plus flagrante.

Devant de tels faits, on peut se demander sérieusement si la justice est bien servie au Canada lorsque la police fédérale s'autorise à de telles méthodes qui se révèlent gravement coercitives et faites pour forcer des « aveux » à tout prix, et qui en plus bafouent effrontément les valeurs dont le Canada se targue souvent en matière de droits humains et de probité et transparence de la justice. Le moins qu'on puisse dire, c'est qu'il y a quelque chose de vraiment pourri au royaume de la GRC, et qu'un ménage vigoureux et complet s'impose, du moins si l'on tient à ce qu'au Canada la justice fasse tout ce qu'elle peut pour éviter de faire condamner des innocents.

Mais jusqu'à présent (et malgré le

fait que, comme on peut le constater sur le site web dédié à l'affaire Burns-Rafay, certains médias, dont le National Post, se soient intéressés au dossier), le cri public ne s'est guère fait entendre pour dénoncer l'application de ces tactiques qui se sont pourtant révélées profondément injustes et qui ont détruit la vie de tellement d'innocents et de leurs proches, ni pour exiger du gouvernement fédéral qu'il en interdise formellement l'usage. Le fait aussi que la GRC ait du sang sur les mains, comme dans le cas (qui n'est pas unique) de l'affaire Unger-Houlahan au Manitoba, ne semble pas non plus déranger grand monde. Pourtant les faits sont là, éloquentes et criants, à la portée de

chacun.

Il est à espérer que ce silence devienne rapidement chose du passé, car tant et aussi longtemps que la police fédérale pourra se permettre, en toute impunité et dans le secret le plus absolu, de défigurer ainsi notre système de justice, n'importe qui au Canada (comme s'en est d'ailleurs vanté le sergent Al Haslett durant la tenue du procès Burns-Rafay), peut se retrouver ainsi piégé et devenir la victime d'un véritable déni de justice.

En attendant, deux de nos compatriotes, Sebastien Burns et Atif Rafay, emprisonnés depuis plus de 13 ans déjà, croupissent dans deux prisons de l'État de

Washington, dans l'attente que d'interminables procédures d'appel puissent enfin faire la preuve de leur innocence.

En guise de conclusion à ce premier de deux articles consacrés à l'affaire Burns-Rafay, il peut valoir la peine de méditer le sens de cette maxime de d'Holbach, ce grand philosophe des Lumières dont les œuvres sont, encore aujourd'hui, susceptibles d'éclairer la conscience de ceux et celles pour qui la raison et la justice restent des valeurs fondamentales :

« Tout homme qui n'est point alarmé d'une injustice faite au plus obscur de ses concitoyens est un imbécile qui ne mérite lui-même que les fers. »

## Beryl Wajzman

Editor &amp; Publisher



## JFK: TO ROUSE THE WORLD FROM FEAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

conscience; then years from now people will ask how it came to be that the family of the free was so willingly complicit in its own self-abnegation.

For on this sad anniversary, we witness too many leaders demonstrating ignominious surrender to political correctness. We see too much of voices of conscience hiding from threats or being intimidated in their expression. We see too marked a submission to those who would subvert individual liberty and subjugate liberal pluralism.

We seem to be surrounded with the message that if one wants to survive one must sublimate one's beliefs and one's courage. That indeed there is nothing worth believing in and certainly nothing worth fighting for. In short, that our culture should not stand for something and be prepared to fall for anything. The British writer Melanie Phillips, the author of *Londonistan*, has called it "a dialogue of the demented." It is



the mindset of the victimized and the demonized.

Despite the optimism surrounding a newly elected President, there could be no more poignant day to remind us all that submission to this bodyguard of lies is not a strategy against the existential threat of theocratic tyranny. A threat that has been driven as a stake into the hearts of almost every western

capital over the past seven years.

During Kennedy's Presidency Europe faced a threat of similar magnitude, though of different origin. Kennedy went to Berlin to address that threat and to send a message to the enemies of freedom. On a glorious June day in 1963, some five months before his murder, he delivered his famous "Ich bin ein Berliner" address in

Rudolph Wilde Platz facing the then recently constructed Berlin Wall. There could be no more fitting tribute to Kennedy's legacy, and few more important lessons for our own national will, than reading his timeless words today. Among those words on that brilliant day were the following. "Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free." It is a message for the ages, and particularly for our time.

Kennedy proclaimed "Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was 'civis Romanus sum'. Today, in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is 'Ich bin ein Berliner.' Freedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect, but we have never had to put a wall up to keep our people in, to prevent them from leaving us.

"Let me ask you to lift your eyes beyond the dangers of today, to the hopes of tomorrow, beyond the freedom merely of this city of Berlin, or your country of Germany,

to the advance of freedom everywhere, beyond the wall to the day of peace with justice, beyond yourselves and ourselves to all mankind.

"Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free. All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and, therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words 'Ich bin ein Berliner.'"

Today, a different "ism" has replaced the Communist threat. It emanates from many capitols. It too enslaves millions through different walls. But its most noxious by-product on the free world has been fear. The legacy of John Fitzgerald Kennedy is the antidote to that fear.

JFK marshaled the nobler angels of our spirit. He put himself on the firing line of freedom. And through his words and deeds roused a stagnant world from its lethargy of fear. Let us remember. And let us begin anew.

## QUEBEC'S HALLMARKS OF INTOLERANCE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

sad, twisted mindset of trivialization.

An answer was provided by comments on the provincial campaign trail this past week. Pauline Marois proposed toughening Bill 101 by applying it to currently exempted small businesses and hiring more inspectors. Jean Charest wants Ottawa to turn over all cultural and communications matters to Quebec and proposed protecting "Quebec-made" cultural products through preferential and discriminatory taxes.

I am not suggesting that Marois and Charest are in anyway racist. Yet perhaps in some manner they have failed in an even greater responsibility of trust. A racist sometimes simply does not know better. But our politicians in Quebec know very well how to play the pandering card. The same old fear-

mongering that has been going on for forty years - and before that in the Duplessis era - grabs votes. It grabs votes in the narrowest way possible. By appealing to the lowest common denominator of our society. Proposals such as these re-enforce the message - and a not too subliminal message at that - that it is acceptable to marginalize the "other". That there are two classes of citizens and that there will be no level playing field. This is a propagation of the teachings of contempt. And from the time these teachings leave the mouths of politicians to the time they filter down and are disseminated in the media and enter the minds of all - from judges to juveniles - the damage is done. It is time for Quebec to do better.

It is time for leaders of Quebec civil society to appeal to the better angels of

our nature. We have examples from an unparalleled progressive political patrimony to draw on. Lawyers and legislators, judges and jurists, pundits and politicians should end the perpetuation of insecurity and interposition. Let them draw lessons from Papineau who led the fight that emancipated all minorities twenty years before England; from Lafontaine who structured the first responsible government in the British Empire; from Laurier who proclaimed that it was the proudest boast of his public life to have been denounced by Roman priests and condemned by Protestant parsons and from Trudeau who institutionalized the supremacy of the individual over the whims of the state.

All leaders have a responsibility to make us better, more inclusive, more

tolerant. Let no one be fooled. The poison that led to officers drawing guns on three middle-aged black citizens, and judges demonstrating benign neglect in sentencing of hate crime perpetrators, was not produced in a vacuum. It was concocted in the corridors of power where we so often search for justice and not merely law. There is one sad lesson all honest Quebecers must recognize. That lesson is that any society where public policy is proposed and propagated on the basis of personal prejudices giving privilege and preference to one group over another based on parochial particularities - be they of race, color, creed, faith or tongue - will inevitably produce hallmarks of intolerance.

It is time to acknowledge that "sang et langue" doesn't cut it anymore. It

never really did. It was always the big lie. Civil society should recognize that there are more votes to be gained from the heirs of Quebec's patrimoine politique progressiste nonpareil than from the heirs of la grande noirceur.



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## THE DEFICIT STRIPTease

# Who's afraid of the big bad debt?

What a difference two weeks makes; our federal government has moved from calling a budget deficit in fiscal 2009-2010 “irresponsible” to “likely”. Mr. Harper and Mr. Flaherty divulged ever more pessimistic prognostications for our economic future in order to soften up the public for what is likely going to happen whether we plan for it or not: a couple of years of federal deficits. Now that the last lacy lingerie of fiscal conservatism has been tossed to the stage floor, we can undertake the legitimate debate on how large a federal deficit should be planned for and what it should be spent on.

Canada need not commit to deficits proportionate to what is being contemplated in the US because our situation is not nearly as dire. Canada went into this period of turmoil in better fiscal and economic shape than our southern competitor. Our federal government was in surplus, our unemployment rate was at 30-year lows and our banking system was the strongest in the developed world. While the US federal government may run a deficit of more than \$1 trillion in 2009-2010, a proportionate figure in Canada would be \$100 million, which is completely unnecessary. Even the left-leaning Canadian Centre for Policy Options is calling for a deficit of “only” \$30 billion, to be spent on infrastructure projects and expanded support for individuals. Even this figure is much more than what is really required to avoid allowing a 2 or 3 calendar-quarter recession from turning into a longer period of economic decline.

The Liberals under Jean Chretien and Paul Martin paid down \$80 billion in federal debt, and the Tories in their short tenure paid down another \$40 billion. With the debt shrinking and the economy growing, Canada now has the lowest federal government debt in the G7. Chart 1

shows that fiscal 2008-2009 is already close to deficit; but the real story is the large surpluses that have been achieved over the past few years even with the significant tax relief and increased spending doled out by the Conservatives. Canada could certainly afford a couple of years of \$10-15 billion dollar deficits in each year without jeopardizing our fiscal strength and there is no risk of crowding out private capital requirements in the debt market. Chart two from the Parliamentary Budget Office demonstrates that next year's deficit could be between \$4 and \$14 billion just based on current spending projections without taking into account any additional initiatives for support programs or infrastructure spending. These are very un-scary projections from an impartial source that is responsible to all parliamentarians, not just the government. It is highly likely that the government will do much more, once the political capital for going into deficit is going to be spent in any case. The question becomes – who is going to get the money?

## THE BEGGAR'S BURLESQUE

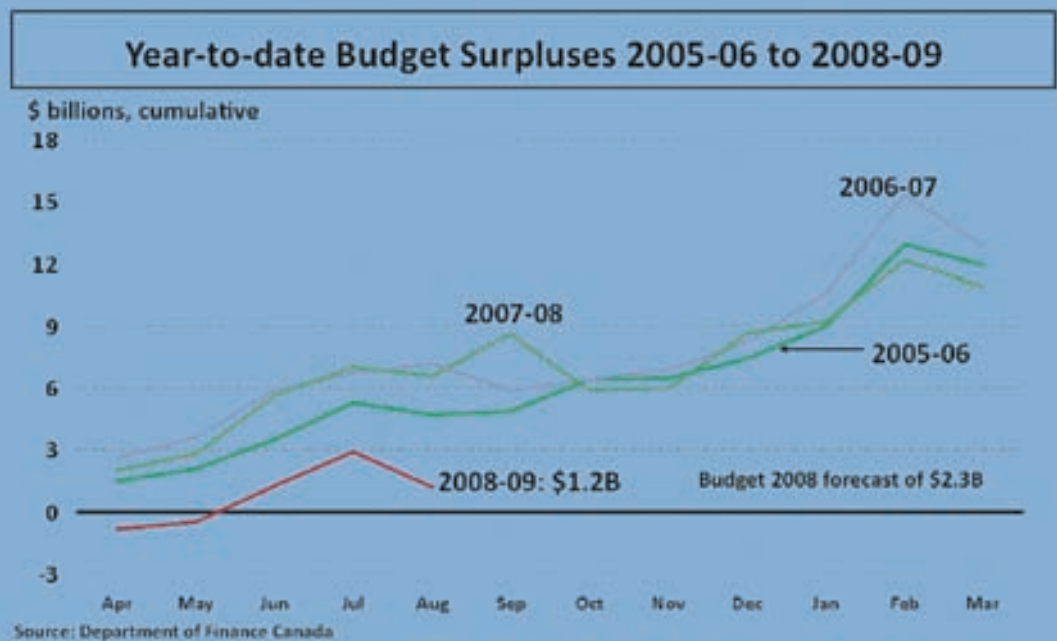
The usual cast of characters is now traipsing before the federal government with hats in hand. First up was the auto industry, in parallel with their US compatriots; now the aircraft manufacturers are touting the strategic nature of their industry and how they deserve help as well. Traditional manufacturing, already having suffered massive job losses during the period of the rising dollar from 2002-2007, is threatening calamity if more fiscal regime relief and stimulus is not offered soon. The list will go on and on; and you can bet that the provinces will do their own dance before their federal masters asking for increased transfer payments under exceptional circumstances, since most provincial debts (not Alberta) are proportionately

higher than their GDPs and they do not have the same borrowing

capacity as the federal government. This parade is what Governor

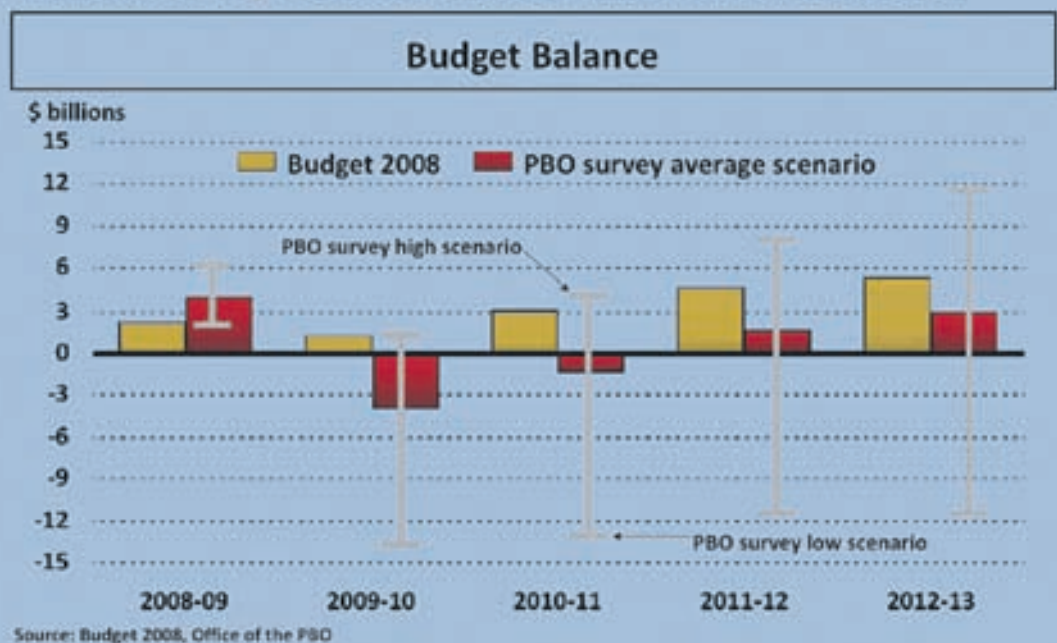
Arnold Schwarzenegger calls the kabuki, the intricate political dance

## Lowest year-to-date budget surplus in recent years



16

## Near-term deficits projected based on average scenario but balance of economic risks tilt to the downside



27

of presenting one's request, even if there is little chance of it resulting in success. All politicians recognize the right of these groups to participate in the kabuki, in the same way that kings and queens were petitioned at court in earlier times.

The most successful kabuki dancers will be the construction industry, though they may not even need to show up at all. The federal government is already talking about accelerated infrastructure spending, and that's why John Baird was transferred into the Transport portfolio, to knock heads and free up all that money for bridges, roads and repairs that seems to be slowed by bureaucratic red tape. The problem is with the speed that all of this spending can make its way into the system – the quickest way to create economic activity is to fund a project that is already underway, because all the engineering, preparatory work and contract negotiations are far advanced. If Canada is going to have only a mild recession, then most of the money to fund new projects will only get into the system towards the end of the recession, and Canadians will have to rely on more traditional fiscal measures like transfers to individuals and tax cuts to revive the

## The usual cast of characters is now traipsing before the federal government with hats in hand. First up was the auto industry, in parallel with their US compatriots; now the aircraft manufacturers are touting the strategic nature of their industry and how they deserve help as well.

economy in the meantime. I am fearful that in the quest for speed and expediency a lot of bad projects will get funded because they can be undertaken quickly, while many longer term projects with greater potential for lasting impact will remain unfunded.

### YA DANCE WITH THE LADY WHAT BRUNG YA

We have been dancing with the United States since Canada's founding and 20 years of free trade have made us closer still. There will be tremendous political

pressure to mirror sector-specific initiatives like those for the auto industry and Canada will have no choice but to cooperate in order to avoid accusations that we are not doing our part, leading to trade disputes. However, we should resist calls from the US to deficit spend proportionately; that is, if the US is going to enact a stimulus package worth \$700 billion in 2009 (the figure being discussed by incoming Obama economic advisors) then Canada should enact a \$70 billion program of its own. We don't need that much stimulus

and we must not fall into that political trap. The result would ultimately be inflationary and would create lasting distortions in our economic landscape.

Ironically, the more the Americans spend, the less we will have to here. There is a significant spillover effect from US stimulus on Canadian manufacturing, tourism, entertainment and other consumer spending. If the Obama package aims to create 2.5 million new jobs across the US during the first two years of his term, then you can expect that the inter-related cross

border industries that will benefit will create jobs in Canada as well. Our federal government must coordinate its initiatives with the US and be in constant dialogue with them, but does not need to spend to the same extent.

### WITHER CRUMBLING MONTREAL?

Anyone driving through the Turcot interchange may vote for a quick injection of a few billion dollars to get its replacement underway before it falls down on us. Sadly, this project is not far enough along to make a difference over the next 18 months or so. However, our long-stalled CHU superhospitals could be accelerated, if only they could stop bickering long enough on the French side to finally pick a plan that would allow work to begin. There is lots of local opportunity to fix our bridges, repave our roads, build community centers and schools, tear down the Bonaventure and re-develop the Old Port, the list goes on. However, we need politicians and political pressure groups to get past the immobilisme that has hampered our progress for so long and act together to promote revitalization for Montreal. What if the federal government offers us billions and no one comes to the dance?

### AVACHE: L'AVOCAT DU « DIABLE », SUITE DE LA PAGE 9

Le Canada et les USA après les événements du 11 septembre 2001, les institutions de sécurité du Canada n'ont pas commis d'erreur ! Si erreur il y eut, c'était davantage celle des États-Unis d'Amérique, car M. Arar aurait dû être renvoyé au Canada, qui est officiellement son pays, plutôt qu'en Syrie. D'où la question principale : À qui a servi le « crime » ?

### UN PRÉCÉDENT DANGEREUX

Ainsi, le dédommagement financier de M. Arar, bien qu'il soit humainement justifiable pour certains, procure des munitions à tous ceux qui voudraient réclamer des sommes d'argent du gouvernement fédéral

en tant que dédommagement pour avoir subi des préjudices dans leurs pays d'origine ! En quelque sorte, voici une sorte d'une loterie inespérée qui est mise à la disposition des plus zélés ! Or, ceci n'est qu'une preuve concrète de la faiblesse de nos institutions, qui se laissent intimider par des personnes qui profitent largement du système. Ce dont le Canada a besoin, c'est de répondre rapidement aux appels de ses citoyens en détresse dans leurs pays d'origine. Selon les lois de ces pays, souvent dirigés par des dictateurs sanguinaires assoiffés de pouvoir et d'argent, toute personne née ou de descendance de parents originaires du pays en question, (ex. Syrie, Égypte, etc.), est considérée

« native » du pays dès lors qu'elle se trouve sur son territoire. La nationalité canadienne ne sert alors à rien et n'accorde aucun privilège à son détenteur. D'ailleurs, de nombreux cas similaires ont déjà été signalés dans plusieurs pays, où le passeport canadien n'a pas servi à grand chose d'autre qu'à être encore plus torturé et accusé d'espionnage pour le compte des ... Américains ou des Israéliens.

Aujourd'hui, nous voilà donc, encore une fois, aux prises avec trois nouvelles personnes qui défient le gouvernement et lui demandent réparation pour des crimes commis par d'autres pays. Pour peu, l'on va finir par croire que les services de sécurité canadiens ne servent plus à

rien autre que de diffuser des mensonges et de provoquer la torture par régimes interposés !

Malheureusement, une telle politique de « naïveté » peut entraîner des conséquences néfastes sur nos services, à une époque où le terrorisme est dormant à l'intérieur de nos frontières et n'attend que le bon moment, celui de la faiblesse de nos institutions, pour activer ses cellules.

Faut-il vraiment, au nom de l'humanitarisme, être laxiste au point de laisser des zélés usurper le système ? Faudrait-il purger nos institutions de sécurité pour les rendre plus efficaces et capables de mieux cerner le vrai du faux ? Sommes-nous devenus peureux au

point de nous priver de dire les choses comme elles sont, sans crainte de provoquer un soulèvement des médias au nom des « droits de la personne » ? Or, ce sur dernier point précisément, je crains que cela ne soit déjà peine perdue car, à y regarder de plus près, on peut sérieusement se demander quand s'imposera les changements à la Constitution canadienne afin qu'elle devienne plus appropriée aux détracteurs de notre société. Seul une politique « clairvoyante », efficace et rigoureuse pourrait stabiliser et remettre sur pieds nos institutions de sécurité. C'est justement là tout le défi du nouveau ministre de la Sécurité publique, Peter Van Loan.

## SOCIETY



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# Healing scars: 'the girl in the picture' speaks at Concordia University

To much of the world, she is known simply as 'the girl in the picture.' She is a stark representation of the realities of war. But when Kim Phuc spoke to the students at Concordia University, she had only one message: peace.

"My story starts with a war and a bomb," said Phuc. "Until that day in Vietnam, my most serious injuries were scrapes from falling off my bike; I understood nothing about war, or what it meant, until fire fell

from the sky."

The audience gasped as she rolled up her sleeve, revealing only a small section of the scars left from the napalm.

Phuc was in Trang Bang, a small village in Vietnam, during the Vietnam War. On June 8, 1972, her life changed forever.

"The planes were so loud, but we thought we were safe in the temple," she said. "After that, all I remember is running; my clothes had burned

off and my skin was peeled back. I remember screaming and the most horrible smell."

Four napalm bombs had hit the temple where Phuc and several other children were seeking refuge. Footage of the bombing revealed several children, including infants, emerging from the fires. Many of them would eventually die as a result of their injuries. After photographer Nick Ut snapped the now famous photo, he scooped Phuc up

and rushed her to the nearest hospital.

"When my parents found me three days later, the doctors had given up hope, they said my burns were too severe and I was left to die," said Phuc, as she grimaced. "Napalm is the worst burn you can imagine, it is burning gasoline that gets under your skin. It generates a heat of 800 to 1200 degrees Celsius."

After being moved to the burn unit at another hospital in Saigon, Phuc

recounts how she would pass out each time the nurses changed her bandages because the pain was simply too unbearable.

"I spent 14 months in the hospital, I had 17 operations and I almost died many times, but I am still here," she says. "Somehow I survived, somewhere I found strength I didn't know I had; inside of me was a tough little girl that told me to live."

What she didn't know, was that while she was recovering from her burns, people all over the world were seeing her photo. She was becoming the poster child for civilian-victims of war.

"People have said the picture helped to bring an end to the war," said Phuc. "I did not choose to become a symbol of war, and for years I wanted to escape that picture. But even in tragedy there are miracles."

Phuc eventually convinced the Vietnamese government to allow her to pursue an education. They sent her to Cuba to study medicine, though she would eventually change her major to English. She recounted how difficult it was to live under the communist regimes in both countries.

"Even though I had recovered physically, I was still in an emotional prison," she says. "I wasn't allowed to use my photo to speak out against violence because my government wouldn't allow it; I had no real freedom."

While studying, she met a man who would eventually become her husband. After they were married in Havana, the couple defected to Canada while en route to Moscow for their honeymoon. A determined Phuc snuck through an open door at the airport in Newfoundland while waiting for their plane to be refueled.

"My journey to freedom ended in

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Instead of working to bring about positive change, Canadian aid allows these dysfunctional and sometimes tyrannical regimes to remain intact while we apply band-aids to the symptoms.

Canada consistently fails to support democracies around the world such as India, Taiwan, America and Israel. In many cases, we actively work against them. And with the exception of Ukraine, Canada refuses to take measurable action to support the billions of people aspiring for democracy, freedom and accountable governments around the world.

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“Even though I had recovered physically, I was still in an emotional prison,” she says.

THE GIRL IN THE PICTURE continued from page 14

Canada,” she says. “When I entered Canada, I was finally free, for the first time and I could speak about the picture on my own terms and use it for good.”

Now a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Phuc has traveled the globe telling her story.

“I share my story so that people can learn something and have a better life,” says Phuc. “People need to know that even a horrible story can have a happy ending.”

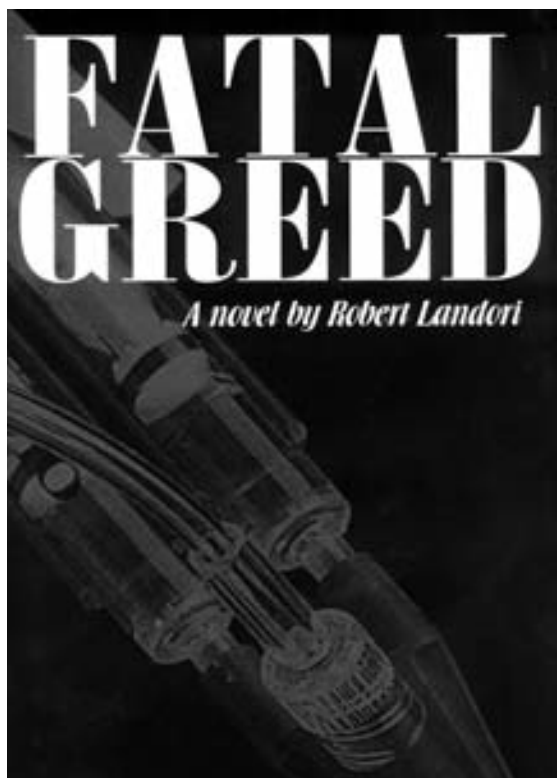
Phuc says she has forgiven those involved in the bombings in Vietnam. She has made it her personal mission to teach others about the horrors of war and how to find forgiveness in their own lives.

“The pain and nerve damage I have from the burns are a constant reminder of the violence that exists in the world,” said Phuc. “But I use it to show others that individuals can make a difference in the world, no matter what their story is.”

A smiling Phuc had one last message for the hundreds of people in the packed auditorium.

“In the end, napalm is no match for love, forgiveness and the human spirit.”

Phuc currently resides in Ajax, Ontario with her husband and two sons. She continues to serve as a UNESCO Ambassador and has received multiple awards for her humanitarian work, including an honorary doctorate of Law from York University in Toronto, Ontario.



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# Le festin lu

ÉDITIONS LIBER, 2008, 315 P.

Le repas est un acte social. Il est le rituel par excellence de la socialisation, soutenu, à partir du dix-neuvième siècle, par un nouveau discours alimentaire, tout à la fois hédoniste et normatif. Le récent ouvrage de Geneviève Sicotte, *Le Festin lu*, nous transporte directement chez les Flaubert, Zola, et Huysman, à l'intérieur de plusieurs scènes de repas, lesquelles racontent généralement une histoire, pour révéler un mode de vie.

sur un monde renouvelé.

Chez Flaubert, il se dégage plutôt un tableau idyllique, presque lascif. Toutefois, les personnages se trouvent affectés par une impossibilité de réalisation. Toujours dans le sublime, ils fabulent leurs vies, et la table devient, dans ce prolongement, le théâtre d'attentes mortifères. En fait, le tableau idyllique se dégrade dès qu'il commence à bouger, pour demeurer inachevé, incapable de prendre possession du monde, voire incapable de grâce véritable. Les convives ressemblent à s'y mépren-

crystalliser les enjeux présentés dans l'œuvre de Zola. Particulièrement efficace, Zola utilise parfois le repas pour exposer des thèmes tels la mobilité de la population, les échanges économiques ou la répartition des richesses. En somme, le repas possède un rôle vital et renvoie à la « lutte pour la vie », à travers plusieurs expressions telles « Les gros mangent les petits » ou « Manger ou être mangés ». Le repas devient un rite, une chorégraphie autour de la domination, ou de la soumission, des uns par rapport aux

être rédempteur. Chez les tarés, évidemment, c'est l'inverse, ceux-ci cherchant des boucs-émissaires à toutes leurs frustrations. En fait, on

peut mesurer le caractère dysfonctionnel d'une personne simplement en la regardant manger avec les autres.

## les manières de manger sont des indices de la capacité des personnages à jouir ou à se contraindre

Chez Huysmans, sans doute parce qu'il est un chef de file d'une décadence tout entière organisée par le biais d'une thématique religieuse où le sacrifice joue un rôle fondamental et structurant, le repas n'est mauvais que pour le célibataire. Incapable de s'adapter à la société, celui-ci est en quelque sorte l'exclu de service. En fait, dans tous les repas huysmansiens, l'individu est toujours décrit comme grossier, incapable de délicatesse et de relations vraies, imperméable aux beautés et aux arts, soumis aux intérêts de l'argent et préoccupé de sa promotion sociale. Au final, le repas est funeste, car il ne débouche jamais

dre à une bande de truies en chaleur et de cochons affamés, fascinés par le miroir aux alouettes de l'abondance, du prestige social, ou simplement par une plénitude impossible à atteindre. En somme, ils n'obtiennent jamais de satisfaction véritable et le quotidien devient immangeable, d'où la place de l'écrivain qui se situe donc hors du monde.

Le repas chez Émile Zola, à l'inverse, est tout entier plongé dans son époque, presque comme un copier-coller, tout en mettant en lumière les tensions de classes sociales et les conflits politiques. Ainsi, ils sont une métaphore concrète d'une époque, permettant de

autres, tout cela dans une valse colorée décrivant les rapports de pouvoir dans toute leur violence niaise, tant le débat ne va nulle part et ne vise, au final, qu'à marquer la différence des classes. Toutefois, on ne peut que saluer l'écrivain qui, comme l'affirme lui-même Zola, « mange son siècle ».

Finalement, les manières de manger sont des indices de la capacité des personnages à jouir ou à se contraindre, tout comme elles révèlent et régissent le code pulsionnel d'une époque. En ce sens, le plaisir que l'on prend à manger ensemble fonde le lieu idéologique, le lieu de langage, où le verbe peut



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DR. LAURIE BETITO JOINS THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

# Sex: Uncovered

For the last two decades, Dr. Laurie Betito has been shining a light into the dark, dirty and sometimes depraved corners of the human psyche. “Better communication, better sex,” is her motto and beginning this week, she will help take readers of *The Métropolitain* on a journey to new heights of sexual enlightenment.

Without being sensational, raunchy or inappropriate, Betito, 44,

has been helping Montrealers have better sex and healthier relationships as the host of *Passion* on CJAD 800; a radio program that has consistently dominated the competition in its 10 p.m. nightly timeslot and recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. She’s a psychologist and sex therapist with her own private practice and she’s on a mission to demystify issues relating to sexuality that most in media consider to be taboo.

“I believe sex has to come out of the closet,” she said. “It’s on everybody’s mind but no one wants to talk about it. People have concerns and can often feel very abnormal, when all they need is some information.”

A native of Casablanca, Morocco, she is the president of the Sexual Health Network of Quebec, formally known as Planned Parenthood; a non-profit group that aims to

## She’s on a mission to demystify issues relating to sexuality that most in media consider to be taboo.

“provide access to accurate and comprehensive information regarding sexual health to youth across Quebec... through education, including the prevention of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.”

STIs – a revised and more accurate term for STDs – are on the rise. As Betito points out “one in five teens do not use protection during their first time; many believe that a girl cannot get pregnant while losing her virginity. By the age of 20, nearly half of all young adults will not use condoms on a consistent basis. Over 100,000 abortions are performed every year in Canada. These are troubling statistics. Not giving teens the means to reduce the risks that come with sexual activity is nothing short of irresponsible.”

She is bothered that in Quebec – a province known for having a supposedly open attitude toward sexuality – sex education courses are not offered in most schools. It’s up to teachers who specialize in other subjects to give the occasional lesson.

“We end up having a lot of misinformed adults,” Betito said. “What I would like to see is across-the-board, comprehensive sex education. Other provinces have adopted that, why shouldn’t we?”

With two pre-teens girls of her own, the consequences of risky behaviour hit home. She encourages parents to answer any and all questions their kids may have about their bodies and their sexuality. Using “teachable moments,” parents can relate advice in a casual way, on an ongoing basis, without avoiding

the topic for years and saving it all for “the big talk.”

A tabloid cover of an anorexic teen actress being displayed at the grocery store, a news report about gay marriage being banned in some American states, or the underage daughter of a politician choosing carry a pregnancy to term; all excellent lead-in topics to begin an ongoing dialogue about sexuality, says Betito.

“Statistics clearly show that children whose parents talk to them regularly about sex delay sexuality and, when they do engage in sexuality, they’re more likely to use protection.”

Betito frequently takes anonymous questions from readers or listeners of *Passion* and uses them as case studies to inform the public about a very wide array of topics: Dating, divorce, senior sexuality, fetishes, pornography, orgasms – nothing is off-limits.

As a patient of hers observed on RateMDs.com, “she listens compassionately and always offers valuable insight. In the time she has been my therapist, she was never less than on top of everything I was throwing at her. She brought me from a very desperate place to a healing and almost peace-filled place... I got to know a part of me I never knew was there before.”

“Expect open, honest answers from me,” she said. “I want to offer my help, direction and insight into sex and relationship concerns that many of us deal with on a daily basis. And if you’re going through something that is less common, know that you’re not alone.”



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# Intimate Passions

Dear Dr. Laurie,

I recently saw an advertisement for surgery in the vaginal area to make it look "more youthful, more esthetically pleasing". I didn't realize that women could get such procedures done. Do you know of any doctors who perform these surgeries and how much they cost?

Vaginally Challenged

To tell you the truth, I am a little reluctant to send you off to a clinical for what has now been dubbed a "designer vagina". Unless you suffer from great physical discomfort due to large, or hanging labia, then I would not recommend such surgery. You will see more and more of these ads and plastic surgeons offering all kinds of procedures such as reducing the inner labia, injecting fat into the outer labia, liposuction of the mons pubis, removal of the clitoral hood, collagen injections inside the vaginal walls (known as the "G-shot"), and even anal bleaching. If you Google "designer vaginas" you will get over 230,000 hits with hundreds of plastic surgery clinics offering these services. Recently, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the British Medical Journal have warned against these types of surgeries. They state that there is not

sufficient scientific evidence to warrant such cosmetic procedures. Furthermore, possible dangers include infection, scarring, nerve damage and loss of sensation. So why are women even considering these procedures? Maybe for the same reason so many women have gone under the knife for breast augmentation. Many women believe that by "beautifying" their genitals, their self esteem will improve. The reality is that such procedures do little to alleviate such body image preoccupations. Self esteem issues are psychological and should be dealt with first and foremost in psychotherapy, not in the operating room.

One question we should all ask ourselves is WHY? Why this preoccupation with youthful looking genitalia? We can blame pornography for this one. One third of visitors to porn sites are women. Pornography has now become our reference point for female beauty. I spoke to several plastic surgeons about this and they told me that many of their patients come to them with a picture, usually taken out of a porn magazine, asking to look just like them.....genitally speaking. I truly believe that the media, commercialism and social pressures have created a problem that now makes women question

the normalcy of their genitals, and the same people who created the "problem" are offering a solution---costly plastic surgery. Remember one thing: genitals come in all shapes, shades and sizes. No two vulvas are the same. The problem is that many women have never even had a good look at their genitals, nor do they have enough information about the normal range and variability of female genitalia. This leaves them vulnerable to such advertisements that lead them to question their natural beauty. As one young man put it: "Don't touch them! Vaginas are beautiful and unique works of art. We don't want women who have vulvas that look like those of a 12 year old."

So to answer your question, Vaginally Challenged: if you have a condition that makes your daily living or your sex life difficult, then see your gynecologist first and discuss your options. A visit to the plastic surgeon will surely cost you hundreds if not thousands of dollars.

Dr. Laurie Betito is Clinical Psychologist and Sex Therapist. She is the President of the Sexual Health Network of Quebec ([www.shnq.ca](http://www.shnq.ca)). She can be heard weeknights on CJAD800 on her radio talk show *Passion* (10 to 11PM). You can write to Dr. Laurie at [laurie@drlaurie.com](mailto:laurie@drlaurie.com)

## Pornography has now become our reference point for female beauty.



## Cambridge Middle East Studies



David Romano focuses on the Kurdish case to generally try and make sense of ethnic nationalist resurgence. In a world rent by a growing number of such conflicts, the questions posed about why, how and when such challenges to the state arise are becoming increasingly urgent.

Throughout the author analyzes these questions through the lens of social movement theory, considering in particular politico-social structures, resource mobilization strategies and cultural identity. His conclusions offer some thought-provoking insights into Kurdish nationalism, as well as into the strengths and weaknesses of various social movement theories.

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# Free-wheeling Skydive

**S**kydive, running at the Centaur Theatre until Dec. 7, is a free wheeling piece of inspirational, intimate theatre - an original high risk, high-tech show that allows quadriplegic actor James Sanders to achieve his ambition to be an ariel acrobat and soar high above the stage with colleague Bob Frazer.

Call it an eye-catching circus trapeze act with depth.

Written by Governor General's Award winning playwright Kevin Kerr, Skydive delves into the relationship between two siblings, Daniel and Morgan. Morgan, (Sanders) is a gregarious front man for an 80's cover band, Hawk Rider, who persuades his agoraphobic brother, Daniel, (Frazer) that his neuroses can be cured by taking up skydiving. "Soaring on the exhalation of God," as Morgan describes it.

The backstory of their lives is told in a series of scenes, while they are falling and engaged in "lucid dreaming."

Those flashbacks open a pandora's box of childhood memories, which gradually explain how the two boys became alienated from each other.

As they plunge earthward they reminisce and ruminates and see their lives pass before them. The actors are strapped to an ES Dance Instrument invented by choreographer Sven Johansson. Both are manipulated by four mostly unseen operators. But its hard to tune out the mechanics for the pleasure of just watching two very good performers being tossed about like a couple of olives on giant swizzle sticks.

Originally, Skydive was created for the 2007 PuSh International Performing Arts Festival in Vancouver where it was acclaimed for its cutting edge production values.

As directed by The Centaur's new artistic director, Roy Surette and Stephen Drover, the high flying antics are propelled by driving rock tunes. The show includes hilarious genderbending moments, especially Frazer's showstopping lip sync version of Madonna's Like a Prayer.

With eyes fixed on the ground rather than on each other the banter between the two actors, however, loses some of its impact. It is meant to be an intimate experience, something serious is happening



between these people, but they don't quite connect. None of it would be as effective without Adrian Muir's lighting effects, or without the ground crew, Jethelo Espaldon Cabilete, Shane Snow, Christopher Frary and Lee Vincent who make the whole show fly.

There is no denying Skydive is a fresh, inventive work, but without the flying gizmos, it would have been rather mundane.

Still, no matter how you look at it, it's a thrill.

Skydive continues at The Centaur Theatre, 453 St. François Xavier St.

in Old Montreal until Dec 7. Adult tickets range from \$32.50 to \$42.50; senior tickets range from \$30 to \$35 (depending on day and time of performance). Student tickets cost \$24. Call (514) 288-3161 or visit [www.centaurtheatre.com](http://www.centaurtheatre.com). Also, visit [www.realwheels.ca](http://www.realwheels.ca).

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