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**La culture religieuse à l'école**

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**Israël: l'avenir en jeu**

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*Ensemble et libres Together and free*

# THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

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# Beijing

The other side of

**Reflections and action on China's totalitarian 'dark side' as Met reporter Alidor Aucoin reports how Albert Speer junior's urban plan for Beijing is an eerie resurrection of his father and Hitler's ideal Berlin, while Met Editor and Publisher Beryl Wajzman provides a recount of the recent Human Dignity Rally that drew 19 speakers and a broad coalition of concerned national and indigenous communities to the doorstep of the Chinese embassy in Ottawa**



**ALIDOR AUCOIN**  
Chinese mimicry of Hitler's Germania

So you thought the opening ceremonies of the Olympic games were as thrilling as they were chilling? "It was a sea of humans without an ounce of humanity," in the words of Chinese blogger and journalist Ran Yun Fei. "It was nationalist clothing over authoritarian underwear... The elevation of the state without a single person... It was stunning on the visual level, barren on the human level." It should come as no surprise to learn that Albert Speer Jr. was one of the architects involved in the

Beijing design team. Speer Junior is the son of Hitler's favourite architect, who was also Nazi Minister of Armaments. As Hitler's architect Speer redesigned the parade grounds for the 1936 Nazi party congress in Nuremberg. He designed the German Pavilion for the 1937 World Exposition in Paris, a bombastic structure which art critic Paul Westheim presciently described as a crematorium. Speer revamped Berlin for the 1938 Olympics, and began work on plans to transform Berlin as a showcase for the Third Reich. Writing in *The Third Reich in Power*, Richard J. Evans says what distinguished Nazi civic architecture was not its style, "but the maniacal gigantism of its scale. Everything might not be different from civic structures elsewhere, but it was vastly bigger than anything the world had thus far seen. This was



**BERYL WAJZMAN**  
Bringing freedom to China's doorstep

The Ottawa rally for rights in China, that we have encouraged Mon-trealers to support over the past few weeks, was held last Thursday and was a resounding success. Finally dubbed the "Human Dignity Rally", it saw hundreds of demonstrators from Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto gather in front of the Chinese Embassy, a hulking grey-stone monolith on St.

Patrick St., and demand an end to Chinese tyranny, oppression, expansionist ambitions and human rights violations. The rally was timed for the day before the official opening of the Beijing Games. More than a dozen cultural communities—representing persecuted regions, religions, ethnicities and individuals—came together in



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A DEAD GEORGIAN SOLDIER LAYS IN THE STREET IN THE SOUTH OSSETIAN TOWN OF TSKHINVALI



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## Beryl Wajzman

Rédacteur en chef et Éditeur

# LA PATRIE

STRONG MONTREAL PARTICIPATION IN "FIRING LINE FOR FREEDOM" - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

# Ottawa "Human Dignity Rally" an inspiring success

a veritable rainbow coalition. Flags of the Vietnamese, Tibetan, Uyghur and Taiwanese communities were prominent. In addition, delegations of Falun Dafa, Burmese, Sudanese, Darfuris, Nepalese and even Byelorussians participated, among others.

Some 19 speakers brought the message to the door of the Chinese

from five to eight deep in many places, and standing behind metal barriers erected by the city, the protesters looked like a military firing line. A firing line for freedom.

The day started with a press conference in the Parliamentary press gallery organized by Prof. Cotler. He presented an 11-part index of China's human rights abuses

**When Irwin Cotler shouted "the whole world is watching! Le monde entier regard!" toward the end of his remarks, it seemed as if the whole world was represented under the brilliant sunshine of that Ottawa day.**

ambassador. The breadth of the coalition was exemplified by Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler, Canada's former Justice Minister, when he shouted "*the whole world is watching! Le monde entier regard!*" toward the end of his remarks. It seemed as if the whole world was represented under the brilliant sunshine of that Ottawa day.

Two busloads of Montrealers were part of the demonstration. Organized by the Canada-Tibet Committee and the Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal, the whole city was represented from the east end to the West Island. The demonstrators stretched the length of a block the size of Place Ville Marie. Ranging

together with suggested remedies that could be implemented at the national and international levels. Former Secretary of State for Asia/Pacific David Kilgour, international human rights activist Nazanin Afshin-Jam and I, in my capacity as President of the Institute for Public Affairs, also spoke. The four of us had helped organize the rally working in concert with national, cultural and advocacy groups, in particular the CTC and Reporters sans frontières. The CTC's Dermot Travis and RSF's Katherine Borlongan were instrumental to the rally's success.

In his remarks Cotler sharply criticized China's human rights



Top left: Métropolitain Editor and Publisher Beryl Wajzman and guests MP Irwin Cotler (left) Nazanin Afshin-Jam (right), and the Hon. David Kilgour (far right) addressed the Parliamentary press Gallery prior to the 7 August event. Top right: Irwin Cotler addresses the passionate crowd outside the Chinese embassy. Photos by Chris Eustace.

record and called the awarding of the Games to Beijing a betrayal of the Olympic Charter. "What we are witnessing today ... is a persistent and pervasive assault on human rights in China," he said. "A betrayal of the Olympic Charter, the Olympic Games and China's pledge to respect both."

Among the concerns outlined in his report are the treatment of Tibetans, limits on freedom of expression and inaction in dealing with the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, where 400,000 people have died since 2003. Despite promises from the country's Communist regime to improve its human rights record when the Games were

awarded to China in 2001, abuses of human rights have escalated, said Cotler.

"China undertook, in their words, to respect human rights, to respect media freedom, and then they added, 'we will translate these words into deeds,'" Prof. Cotler said at an interview following the press conference. "Yet seven years later, the deeds mock the words." He urged foreign governments to "speak up and speak out" and in particular asked world leaders attending the Beijing Olympics to call publicly for the release of political prisoners.

David Kilgour was just as emphatic. He stated that, "unless the (Chinese) government moves

quickly in a host of areas, the Beijing Games, for good reason, will be compared mostly with those of the 1936 games in Berlin. Democracies turn and twist, but totalitarian governments are like a billiard ball, solid as a rock, but then, one day, they just shatter and disappear. I think that will eventually happen to the government in China."

Kilgour said he was "pleased" that Prime Minister Stephen Harper is not attending the Games. "That does send a message, regardless of the reason given." The prime minister has blamed a scheduling conflict and has sent Foreign Affairs Minister David Emerson in his place. ♣

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qui donc nous protège du gouvernement ?

...if the Government protects us from everything  
else, then who protects us from the government?

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WESTMOUNT-VILLE MARIE BY-ELECTION, SEPTEMBER 8, 2008

# Garneau still holds healthy lead

*Mais les priorités des électeurs sont variées*

With only three short weeks to go before polling day in the Westmount-Ville Marie by-election, Liberal candidate Marc Garneau seems to have a healthy lead and there's no reason why he should lose it before election day.

While residents in Westmount will probably continue to vote Liberal for all the usual reasons- and some out of habit—they genuinely like Garneau himself. More than a few of those asked knew about CBC journalist Anne Lagacé Dowson's serious efforts to win the riding for Jack Layton's NDP (New Democratic Party), but told *The Métropolitain* that though they liked Dowson they didn't know enough about the NDP to vote for her party.

"I'm going to vote for the man from outer space [Garneau]," said Krista Terka. "I like the Dowson lady and I think she's sincere but I don't

trust her party because I don't know her leader."

Barry Corber, the well known manager of Nicholas Hoare's music department, said the environment trumped every other issue he could think of. While he knows his contribution to the nation's ecological health is minimal, he also knows it's nothing compared to the damage caused by the nation's resource and industrial sectors that produce most of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions.

"It's going to be a choice between the Liberals and the NDP," he said. "I'll probably vote Liberal because even if everybody's talking green, Dion seems to be the only guy who actually plans to do something about it."

While the NDP hopes Lagacé Dowson will repeat Thomas Mulcair's recent upset in Montreal's Outremont

riding, doubts about Dion's capacity to lead his party are beginning to fade and traditional Liberal voters see no need to abandon their party during this by-election.

Dans le Vieux-Montréal, Nicholas Déveaux, se voyant demander quelles étaient ses plus grandes préoccupations dans cette élection, répond « qu'on devrait avant tout se débarrasser des conservateurs. » Roland Dubuc, un joaillier ayant son commerce sur la rue Saint-Paul, se montra d'accord avec Déveaux. M. Dubuc affirme que normalement, il voterait pour le Bloc Québécois, mais il ne veut pas diviser le vote contre Harper ; donc sa décision est déjà prise. Dubuc dit qu'il voterait pour Dion et ses libéraux car il pense qu'ils ont la meilleure chance de gagner cette élection. Il dit que sa conjointe est du même avis et que tous ses amis partagent son opinion.

Maryse Plamondon, une fonctionnaire de carrière, soutient plus ou moins la même chose. En emmenant son chien pour une promenade au vieux port, elle affirme qu'elle votera « pour les Rouges parce que c'est la seule façon qu'on a pour se débarrasser d'Harper. »

Electrical engineer Alexandre Rousseau thinks Dion's 'Green Shift' requires both vision and a political will if it is to become any kind of a reality. While skating near his home by the Children's Hospital in the downtown core's Shaughnessy Village, he said people should have started working on green initiatives nearly 40 years ago. He said Dion seemed to be the only one who understood what's at stake but it still may be a case of "too little and too late."

"Dion has that vision," he said, "...and what's more important is he seems to have the will to make it

happen."

However, the Liberals aren't taking an imminent victory in the Westmount-Ville Marie by-election for granted. They are working hard, as they should, particularly in the city center. The NDP are putting up a hard fight for the riding and Lagacé Dowson has significant support in the downtown core of the riding.

"The NDP's vote is finally going to have an impact in this riding," said well-known Milton Street bookstore owner Adrian King-Edwards. "Now the NDP will have far more influence in this area than it has ever had in the past."

Even as Dowson seems to be doing well among the universities in the downtown core, *The Métropolitain* found no indication that the Liberals are losing their core support. Michael Sweet, who teaches for the Lester B. Pearson school board, said poverty

While the NDP hopes Lagacé Dowson will repeat Thomas Mulcair's recent upset in Montreal's Outremont riding, doubts about Dion's capacity to lead his party are beginning to fade and traditional Liberal voters see no need to abandon their party during this by-election.



would be the single most important issue facing Canadians in the next election. He also thinks Liberal leader Stéphane Dion is the only leader who really understands the problem and actually has a plan to do something about it. As the executive director of the school board's *Learning for a Cause* project, Sweet said the Liberal candidate knows how urban poverty affects its victims "...especially kids."

Jaelyn Schwartzman doesn't agree with Sweet. She said the environment would be the big issue and she would be supporting Jack Layton's NDP. Outside the Roddick Gates on Sherbrooke Street, she said she and her girlfriends would all be voting for Dowson.



“Not only is Dowson a serious candidate but she’s a woman and we need women in parliament,” she said. “The sisters have got to help her.”

Pourtant, les partisans de Stephen Harper et ses conservateurs trouveront toujours leurs votes en jouant sur les questions traditionnelles qu’appuient les Bleus. Richard St-

Denis dit qu’il votera pour le candidat conservateur Guy Dufort : « Harper c’est un gars qui aide les familles, » dit-il. « Non seulement croit-il dans les valeurs traditionnelles mais il est dur sur le crime et il veut faire arrêter les bandits. C’est assez pour moi et c’est assez pour qu’il gagne mon vote. »

It’s also good enough for Bruno ‘Everyone knows me’ Goldwax and his friend Eddy Gural: “Harper keeps his promises,” said Bruno. “He always comes through with what he promised and that’s always good enough for me. Gural agreed with Bruno but he also added his own reasons as to why he wasn’t going to

vote Liberal: “Dion just annoys me,” he said. “That man always says the wrong thing at the wrong time.”

Holly Jonas said she would vote for Garneau. While she admires Dion for having the courage to develop his ‘Green shift’, she still believes he is going to have a hard time trying to sell it to the Canadian

people as a working tax proposal. Professor James Jonas, her husband, said it was a simple choice and he had no problems as to where his vote was going to go: “In the end, you’re voting for the party,” said the professor. “And Garneau is an excellent candidate for this riding.” ♦



Electrical engineer Alexandre Rousseau thinks Dion’s ‘Green Shift’ requires both vision and a political will if it is to become any kind of a reality. While rollerblading near his home by the Children’s Hospital in the downtown core’s Shaughnessy Village, he said people should have started working on green initiatives nearly 40 years ago. He said Dion seemed to be the only one who understood what’s at stake but it still likely may be a case of “too little and too late” where our environmental future is concerned.

“Dion has that vision,” he said, “. . . and what’s more important is he seems to have the will to make it happen.”



Bruno Goldwax leans toward the Conservatives—primarily because his views on the trustworthiness of Stephen Harper. “He always comes through with what he promised and that’s always good enough for me.” Goldwax’s friend Eddy Gural agreed, but he also added his own reasons as to why he wasn’t going to vote Liberal: “Dion just annoys me,” he said. “That man always says the wrong thing at the wrong time.”

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Ex-dramaturge, romancier persévérant, essayiste et poète à ses heures, Pierre K. Malouf fréquente des fédéralistes et des indépendantistes, des gens de gauche et des gens de droite, des jeunes et des vieux, des écrivains et des ingénieurs. Gentil comme tout, il ne dit pas toujours tout ce qu'il pense, mais pense toujours ce qu'il écrit.

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LA RENTRÉE SCOLAIRE ET LE PROGRAMME ÉTHIQUE ET CULTURE RELIGIEUSE

# Permis d'espérer

Le 29 mars 1999, le GROUPE DE TRAVAIL SUR LA PLACE DE LA RELIGION À L'ÉCOLE formé en 1997 par Pauline Marois et présidé par Jean-Pierre Proulx déposait son rapport devant le ministre François Legault. L'une des recommandations se lisait ainsi : « [...] que les régimes pédagogiques de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire prévoient, en lieu et place des enseignements religieux catholique et protestant, un enseignement culturel des religions obligatoire pour tous ». Une note suivait : « [...] nous faisons l'hypothèse que l'enseignement moral continuerait de faire partie du curriculum, tant au primaire qu'au secondaire, et que les objectifs de formation qui y sont rattachés demeurerait obligatoires pour tous les élèves. Quant aux modalités d'organisation et de prestation de cet enseignement, elles devraient s'harmoniser avec celles de l'enseignement culturel des religions. »

C'est ainsi que fut conçu sous un gouvernement péquiste, le divin enfant que l'on confie, sous les libéraux, aux bons soins des enseignants. À quelques jours de la rentrée 2008, les mêmes questions surgissent. Pourquoi diable un enseignement culturel des religions ? Pourquoi l'infliger aux élèves du primaire, qui ont autant besoin de ça qu'un bossu d'une deuxième bosse ? Pourquoi ne pas consacrer plus de

temps à l'histoire et la géographie ? Ne vaudrait-il pas mieux, dès le primaire, initier nos enfants au savoir scientifique, aux grands principes de la pensée libérale, aux règles de fonctionnement de nos institutions ? Et tant qu'à propager des mythes, pourquoi ne pas inscrire au curriculum l'astrologie, la numérologie, la chiromancie ?

Ne vaudrait-il pas mieux, dès le primaire, initier nos enfants au savoir scientifique, aux grands principes de la pensée libérale, aux règles de fonctionnement de nos institutions ? Et tant qu'à propager des mythes, pourquoi ne pas inscrire au curriculum l'astrologie, la numérologie, la chiromancie ?

« C'est ça qui est ça ! », répondent nos maîtres, qui ne sont pas ceux qu'on pense. N'accablez pas la ministre de l'Éducation actuelle ni ses prédécesseurs : leur marge de manoeuvre est à peu près égale à celle d'une Lada remorquée par un dix-roues. Nos ministres de l'Éducation sont aux ordres. Quand on lit dans un document de 2005 : « L'instauration d'un programme

commun d'éthique et de culture religieuse pour tous les élèves du Québec prend racine dans LA VOLONTÉ DU GOUVERNEMENT de servir au mieux l'intérêt de tous : les élèves, les parents, le personnel scolaire et l'ensemble de la société », il faut décoder : « L'instauration d'un programme commun d'éthique et de culture

religieuse pour tous les élèves du Québec prend racine dans LA MAINMISE SUR LE MINISTÈRE D'UN ARÉOPAGE CONSTRUCTIVO-JOVIALISTE ». Point final.

De fragile zygote qu'elle était au moment de sa conception, la brillante idée de 1999 s'est muée après une lente gestation en animal hybride dont les cris retentissent désormais d'un bout à l'autre du Québec.

J'écrivais il y a deux mois que quoi que nous fassions nous allons « passer par là ! » Je n'ai pas changé d'avis, mais j'apporte aujourd'hui une nuance : il est vrai que ceux qui vont langer et nourrir le nouveau-né n'ont qu'à bien se tenir ! Mais le petit monstre n'a lui non plus pas fini d'en baver. J'espère pour son bien qu'on n'a pas tranché le cordon ombilical

qui le relie aux officines du Ministère. Je n'accorde évidemment aucune confiance à un syndicat comme l'Alliance des professeurs de Montréal, qui tout en favorisant l'instauration d'une école laïque approuve l'idée qu'on y enseigne l'histoire des grandes religions. Non, c'est sur les enseignants eux-mêmes qu'il faut compter pour saboter le programme.

Que disent en particulier les profs du primaire ?

- 1 La plupart continuent de soutenir qu'il ne devrait pas du tout être question de religion à l'école.
- 2 Des profs qui ont elles-mêmes des enfants d'âge scolaire craignent que ces derniers se fassent endoctriner par leurs profs.
- 3 D'autres qui se sont fait dire que l'on allait consacrer un budget de 30 \$ par élève à l'achat du matériel didactique sont scandalisés : « On n'a même pas un manuel de mathématique par élève. On est obligé de se prêter les livres d'une classe à l'autre ».
- 4 « L'enseignement des religions, c'est seulement 20 % du programme », dit un prof expérimenté qui a l'air de prendre ça cool.
- 5 Plusieurs font un lien avec la question des accommodements raisonnables : « Appliquer ce programme-là, c'est nier nos valeurs. »

Les signes avant-coureurs ne mentent pas : l'enfant chéri du ministère va subir de fort mauvais traitements. À quelques jours de la rentrée, il est encore permis d'espérer que ça va foirer. Tout ne peut pas toujours aller mal. ♣

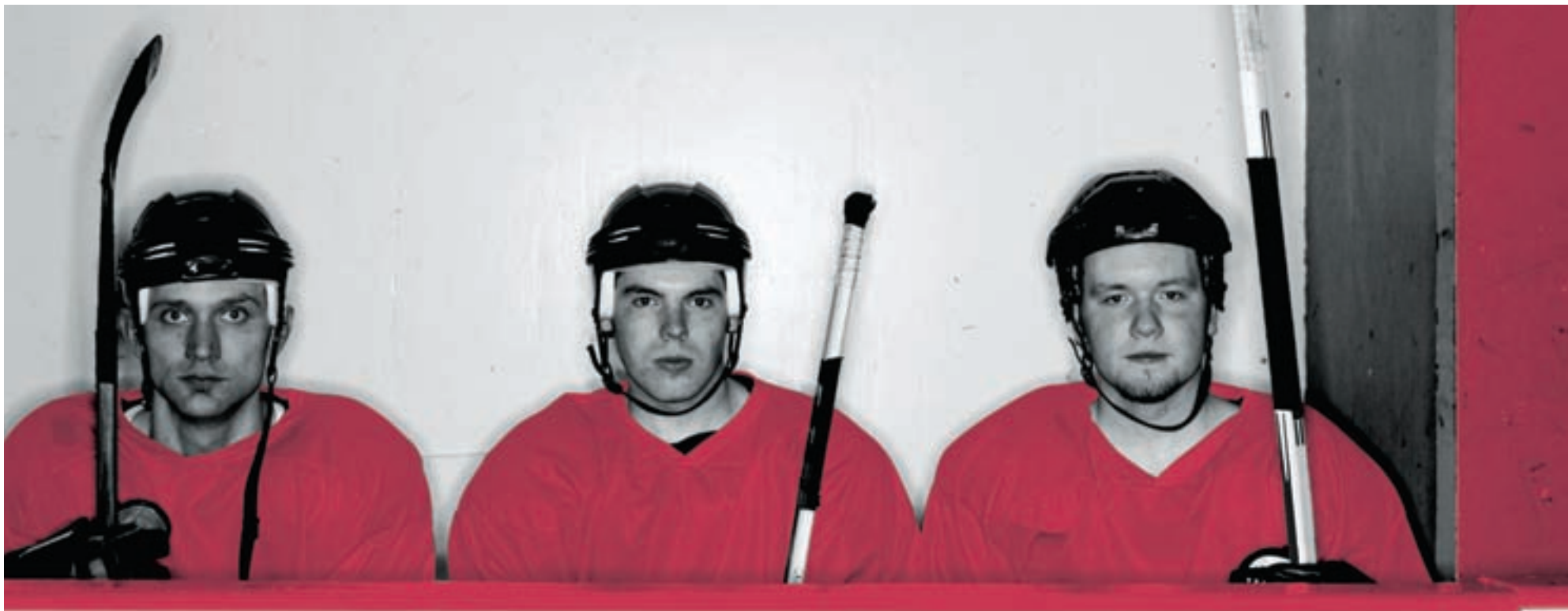
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## Jessica Murphy

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PASSED OVER OVERPASSES



# Turcot tensions

Forty years ago, Montreal looked to the future. Now, one of the iconic structures of that era—the Turcot Interchange—will be rebuilt, freeing the Turcot Yards for development. The Yards are now one of the largest empty urban spaces in North America. Whatever is built there will have a huge impact on the city. But Montreal still has no concrete plans for the area.

André Lavallée, executive committee member responsible for urban planning and public transit, has only recently set up a committee of local mayors to study potential plans for the roughly 100 hectares of land slated for development. They are expected to table an action plan addressing different challenges, priorities and concerns by the end of this year, before consulting with the public.

"We do have ideas," said Darren Becker, spokesman for the City. "But I can't tell you—they're still preliminary. The area has been studied for years, it's like Blue Bonnets, it's still on the drawing board level." Neither Montreal's current master urban plan nor its 2025 plan offer much in terms of clarification. Both mention improving accessibility to a site that suffers the disadvantage of natural barriers that hinder access. Both plans mention preserving the St. Jacques escarpment, a recognized eco-territory. They also mention job development by attracting "job-creating industrial firms."

The Yards are part of the main east-west hub joining highways 15, 20 and the Ville Marie and are part of a portal between the West Island, the South Shore and Pierre Elliott Trudeau International airport. They are in close proximity to the new McGill University Health Centre, the Lachine Canal, and downtown.

There's a minimum of \$1.5 billion worth of public money being spent on reworking the Interchange alone. So where is Montreal's vision for the future?

"The city is reacting, that's part of the problem," said Pierre Gauthier, associate professor with Concordia's department of geography, planning and environment. "(Transport Quebec, the City and the boroughs) don't talk to one another. One of the problems with Montreal is the planning decisions are taken (in isolation). People are reacting, the city is reacting, there's no global vision. There's no reason for it not to be debated publicly, it's not the result of a private initiative. We're talking about public money and public investments."

Montreal photographer Ken McLaughlin agrees. He's behind the blog Walking Turcot Yards and has been exploring the area since 2004.

"There are a lot of projects going on: the Turcot Interchange, the Turcot Yards, the hospital, the Angrignon Interchange, the Dorval Circle and with all that they want a high speed rail train from the airport. Then you have the Griffintown project. All these things are happening simultaneously," he said. "The City of Montreal has been very quiet on this."

Until 2002 the Turcot Yards—bordered by the St. Jacques escarpment to the north and Highway 20 and Notre Dame Street to the south—were used by Canadian National Railways as a transfer yard where cargo was on- and off-loaded between rail and road vehicles. The deserted Yards are now used as a city snow dump. Work on the Interchange is to begin in 2009 and last until 2015. A new structure will be built next to the existing highway and the old one

will then be torn down. The area that will be freed for development is owned by the provincial government, who is currently negotiating a land transfer agreement with the municipality.

Gauthier believes the area has tremendous potential for Montreal's future development—if it's done right.

"It's the perfect spot if well-developed and well-planned," he said. "There's enough space to create a small neighbourhood that could be fairly autonomous." Creating a neighbourhood of socially mixed housing that would be attractive to the middle-class could help repopulate the inner city and re-develop its tax base.

But the governments are not off to a good start.

"It's mind boggling that this proposal does not include a component on public transportation," he said. "We should be using Turcotte to launch a new initiative—a city of tomorrow, a post-automobile era."

He warns against repeating the mistakes of 1967 when the Turcot Interchange was completed—when governments failed to see the broader economic and environmental impacts of the project.

"It's easy to pass judgment on the past, but it's shocking we're repeating the same mistakes," he said. Other groups are attempting to fill the vacuum left by the city.

Heritage Laurentien, an ecological organization, has drawn up plans for a 400 hectare green network that would connect parks, golf courses, and natural habitats across the Island. Former Montreal city councilor Jean Fortier has drawn up plans to transform the Yards into a massive park.

"Everyone involved has implied some sort of park or public use," said McLaughlin. "People want a lot of things. Different groups have similar ideas, but it's difficult to develop a cohesion between the different boroughs and bureaucracies."

The Interchange reconstruction, though slated to begin next year, is still undergoing studies and public consultations. Local opposition to the current plan is growing. And with the plans for the Yards in only preliminary stages, Montrealers may have to wait years to know what will be done with the whole Turcot complex.

Becker said the city was in no hurry. "We still have two years (before construction begins)," he said, and the city will "ideally work in tandem" with Transport Quebec. That type of thinking leaves Gauthier concerned. "It's not integrated. It's not part of a larger scheme for how this city needs to be developed. There's no holistic approach." ❖

"It's mind boggling that this proposal doesn't include a component on public transportation. We should be using Turcotte to launch a new initiative—a city of tomorrow, a post-automobile era."

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L'INTOLÉRANCE LÀ OÙ ELLE NE DEVRAIT SURTOUT PAS ÊTRE

# Ces « poètes » de brousse...

Ils parlent tous du contexte... Le contexte dans lequel ils ont grandi, par exemple. « Très jeune, je voulais devenir écrivain », pour reprendre du même souffle : « l'école – c'est-à-dire la société –, ne semblait pas répondre à ce rêve ». Les multiples fois où j'ai entendu cette phrase... pour expliquer les nombreux manuscrits qui dorment là... qu'ils disent avoir ébauché, dans ce « monde pourri », cette « société poubelle », « cruelle », « fédéraliste ». En même temps qu'ils s'autoflagellent à qui mieux mieux, ils se la jouent au maximum, avec les habits du poète de service : un formalisme bête à pleurer, un pseudo marxisme tout droit sorti d'un taudis du Plateau. Bref, tous plus guenillous les uns que les autres – on devine cependant la recherche poussée de ce look déjanté, pour prouver au monde actuel des vues propres sur l'actualité culturelle, un amalgame entre poésie et contexte socio-politique.

Pas forcément apathiques, capables de perfectionnisme, tel Gauguin qui, s'il peignait une toile qui n'était pas à sa convenance, en peignait une autre par-dessus, ils sont aussi capables de

se glisser dans la peau d'un personnage réactionnaire, par exemple en imposant l'idée de l'indépendance du Québec comme étant LA solution à tous les maux imaginables. Ils sont d'ailleurs capables de gloser très longtemps sur ce même thème. De plus, pour garnir leurs imaginaires, ils sont capables d'insulter tout le monde ne partageant pas leurs idées, de voir des complots et des « idoles fédéralistes » partout, ou pire, d'aller chier sans remords sur une tombe illustre.

Les plus cyniques parmi eux ont fait un doctorat en « création littéraire » à l'université du coin, ce qui les amène à croire qu'il est légitime que cette éducation très poussée leur donne tous les droits de lèse-personne. Faut les voir brandir leur fausse humilité, qui se détache comme une sorte de hors d'œuvre du plat de bêtises qu'ils s'approprient à nous servir si – Oh infamie ! – nous avons des opinions politiques qui diffèrent des leurs, et si en plus nous avons le malheur d'aimer la langue française au point de ne pas forcément chercher à s'exprimer comme un ignare, et si aussi, voire qui plus est, nous n'avons pas de

foulard qui vole au vent et le joint de pot dans les poches.

Je caricature, mais à peine. Nous sommes pris avec cette culture-là, au Québec. Tous l'observent, s'en attristent, mais peu en parlent, avant de se résigner devant la télévision, le dimanche soir. Le culte de nos

d'histoires lorsqu'ils achètent un roman, ils ne cherchent pas à tout prix à faire simple pour épater la galerie lorsqu'on parle de grand art, et, aussi, ils sont capables de recherche dans la langue, qui est un matériau vivant, plus que jamais international, qui évolue et qui

des traits schizoïdes.

Si je vous confie tout ça, c'est parce qu'un poète est mort subitement à l'âge de 62 ans, au mois d'avril dernier. Il s'appelait Robbert Fortin et il était ; le directeur de « L'appel des mots », la section poésie de la maison d'édition

Me revient en tête cette citation de Martin Luther King :  
"Une seule parcelle d'amour chasse l'obscurité."

vedettes, d'ailleurs, a de quoi laisser pantois. « Moi j'ai la chance de vivre dans mes rêves », me confiait un jour un écrivain extraordinaire, qui se situe bien au-dessus des questions politiques. Il est pourtant ostracisé par le clan dit des « vrais poètes et écrivains » – c'est-à-dire des écrivains nationalistes qui avaient vu en lui un drapeau à brûler à tout prix. On n'embrigade pas facilement les esprits libres et les artistes dignes de ce nom ne se laissent pas aisément domestiquer. Ils ne se sentent pas outrés si l'auteur ne leur raconte pas

commande une recherche d'ouverture à l'autre, par des créations vivantes, même si cela inclut des doutes et des contradictions.

Parfois, il me semble que les tenants de l'indépendance à tout prix sont d'un fanatisme désespérant. Comme s'il fallait que l'ensemble des œuvres publiées répondent à leurs goûts politiques exclusifs et excluant ceux qui ne pensent pas comme eux. Or, on le sait, le fanatisme est dans le continuum de l'obsession. Pourtant, même si on le fait trop souvent, le fanatisme cache

L'Hexagone. Il avait lu mon manuscrit, dès mon arrivée à Montréal, et il m'avait aidée à orienter mes mots, à trouver la lumière. Il était pour moi une source d'inspiration, un ami, un phare dans la nuit. J'ignorais ses idées politiques et je n'ai jamais cherché à les découvrir.

Le lendemain de sa mort, j'exprime ma surprise et ma tristesse sur mon profil « Facebook », lequel profil regorge de poètes et d'artistes. Quelle ne fut pas ma stupeur de constater, après un échange de courriels, qu'un poète, qui a récemment gagné le prix Émile Nelligan pour son recueil, m'attaqua lâchement et explosa toute sa hargne sur mon compte. En effet, vu ce qu'il appelait mes « idoles fédéralistes », je n'avais tout simplement pas le droit d'avoir de la peine suite à la mort d'un poète que j'estimais. J'en suis restée estomaquée : mais qui était donc ce poète dont la sensibilité ne ressemblait, ni plus ni moins, qu'à de la barbarie, et de quel droit osait-il parler « idoles », moi qui ai toujours eu horreur des lécheux de bottes et autres petits chiens de poche sans personnalité. Non mais, on croit rêver, et puis non... Ce type de poètes, qui aiment se dire « poètes de brousse », existe bel et bien. Par le fait même, ils font exister une vision du monde où priment la médiocrité, l'intolérance et la haine. En réalité, ce type d'individu constitue une honte pour tous les poètes et les artistes dont la sensibilité puise sa source dans le respect et dans la dignité humaine.

Comme me revient en tête cette citation de Martin Luther King : « Une seule parcelle d'amour chasse l'obscurité », je sais, moi aussi, comme l'a si joliment écrit le poète Tony Tremblay, dont je ne cherche pas non plus à découvrir les opinions politiques : « Le jour où nous serons libres, vivants à l'intérieur d'un même poème, tous ensemble, ce jour-là, nous pourrions célébrer, sans chapelle des damnées, la vie ». La vie belle. ♡



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"I'M UNPOLISHED, I'M RAW... I'M ME"

# Mark Bruneau—raw

It is apparent from the start that Mark Bruneau, who is seeking the Liberal party nomination in the south-west Jeanne-Le Ber riding, is different. And not the kind of "different" that is bandied about by most politicians who want to set themselves apart from so many of their dull and mediocre colleagues. Bruneau, 47, is an eccentric, in-your-face, heavy-set multi-millionaire with razor-sharp wit and, he says, a desire to spend the next quarter-century serving his country. In short, he breaks the mold.

"My entry into politics is not about opportunism," he said. "The access I had to education and opportunities are marks of good, Liberal policy."

A B.Comm from the University of Ottawa, an MBA from Harvard, Bruneau is an entrepreneur in the telecommunications industry, having founded (and sold) Adventis, a Boston-based consultancy, and is also a former vice-president in charge of strategy at BCE. His only clear link to Jeanne-Le Ber—the riding Liza Frulla lost to the Bloc Québécois two years ago—is his involvement with the construction of the new Bell Campus on Nun's Island.

Apart from the Island, most of the riding is working-class and working-poor. Verdun, Saint-Henri, Little Burgundy, and Pointe-Saint-Charles: not exactly neighbourhoods whose residents could easily relate to a man who lives in a three-storey Old Port penthouse condo. A penthouse sumptuous enough to have cost a small fortune yet which he unabashedly revealed to *The Métropolitain* in the midst of a nomination campaign.

It's all there, from the backlit colour-shifting walls to the mahogany library stocked with rare first editions to the gigantic terrace which takes up much of the building's roof. "I'm just a poor kid from Hawkesbury," Bruneau said. "I get off on this."

Addressing concerns that his arrival in Jeanne-Le Ber is strictly political expedient and that his wealth alone may put distance between himself and potential constituents, he was blunt: "J'étais plus pauvre que toi, pendant plus longtemps, et je m'en suis sorti!" Growing up poor in a small Ontario town along the Quebec border gave Bruneau a sense of humility. And some deep personal memories. He tears up when speaking of his late mother whose sacrifices allowed him to pursue higher education.

"If I hadn't had some success in life, my mom would have been in

line for \$3 a day meals," he said.

That may explain his involvement with Resto Plateau, a community kitchen and job-training centre where he is the honorary president. He said he isn't afraid to twist a few corporate arms to make sure funds are made available to causes close to his heart.

Bruneau is certainly good with money. As the Finance chair for the party's Quebec wing, he is charged with replenishing Liberal coffers ahead of a possible autumn election, at a time when donations are at one of their lowest levels ever.

"We're involving more young people," Bruneau said. "Not the shrimp cocktail crowd at 500 bucks a pop, but the beer/terrace crowd at \$20 a pop."

He added that he will stick strictly to the party's finances and, as far as leader Stéphane Dion's financial problems are concerned, he "won't be touching the personal debts of anyone." Varying reports put Dion in the red to the tune of \$250,000; perhaps as much as \$690,000 following the 2006 Liberal leadership race. With regards to his field of expertise, Bruneau said he sympathizes with Canadian cell phone subscribers who pay some of the highest rates on earth and is in favour of telecommunication industry deregulation. He supports an American-style banking system where financial institutions would be freer to merge and compete on a global scale, with added competitive openness for foreign banks to operate in Canada. He's very enthusiastic about "new



"Je me presente pour être ton employé. Embauchez comme du monde. I'm not smarter than many people, but goddamn I work *hard*."

economy" jobs and helping out small and medium-sized businesses. "We over-tax the knowledge sector of our economy and we under-tax the old resource sector," said Bruneau, who spent most of his professional life, 18 years, in Boston. "We attract minds, students and redistribute. We don't retain. We need to keep them here and put them to work."

From the aggressive pro-globalization capitalist to the sentimental philanthropist, from the metrosexual gadget-lover to the teary-eyed orphan, Bruneau is all about contrasts. His 6-year-old son, an adopted Russian Jew, splits his time between Bruneau's bachelor pad and his ex-partner's home in

Vermont. His son's drawings are displayed proudly on the refrigerator, meters away from chic sculptures. The clashing of lifestyles also carries over to his views on Liberal policy. "I believe in self-reliance and in helping others," reads a line from his website biography. Is the working-class rhetoric sincere, making him an intensely complex character, or is it a routine to get elected? Either way, he yells, swears and bangs his fists on the table to drive home his point:

"Embauchez quelqu'un qui va travailler pour vous," is Bruneau's message to the residents of Jeanne-Le Ber. "Je me presente pour être ton employé. Embauchez comme du monde. I'm not smarter than many people, but god-damn I work hard. I got my big condo..."

"I don't need this job," Bruneau emphasizes, "I *want* this job." ♦

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## GLOBAL VILLAGE



## Alain-Michel Ayache

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ISRAËL

L'avenir en jeu

# La vision israélienne

Il fallait s'y attendre, la décision du Premier ministre israélien, Ehud Olmert, de démissionner, sonne le glas d'une courte ère aux conséquences néfastes pour l'image de marque d'Israël.

En effet, depuis la « Seconde guerre du Liban » en juillet 2006 contre le Hezbollah et la victoire politique de ce dernier, Ehud Olmert s'est retrouvé dans le collimateur de la droite israélienne qui lui reproche non seulement d'avoir mal géré une guerre, mais d'avoir également et

surtout affaibli l'image dissuasive d'un Israël fort dans un océan islamiste hostile à l'État hébreu. Cela est devenu plus grave encore suite au dernier échange de prisonniers avec le Hezbollah grâce à la médiation allemande. Un échange qui crédite plus « la victoire du Hezbollah » dans la rue arabe, mais qui en contrepartie revêt pour les Israéliens un visage humanitaire pour apporter une fin à la souffrance des parents des deux soldats israéliens enlevés par les miliciens du Hezbollah en 2006.

Or, bien que l'ensemble de la classe politique israélienne se félicite du retour des corps des soldats, il n'en demeure pas moins que le charisme d'Olmert et son savoir-faire sont pointés du doigt par le Likoud. À cela s'ajoute la série de scandales qui touchent personnellement le Premier ministre israélien. Tout cela ne pouvait que se terminer logiquement par la démission d'Ehud Olmert. Ce qui est chose faite.

Ainsi, trois scénarios s'offrent actuellement aux Israéliens et qui

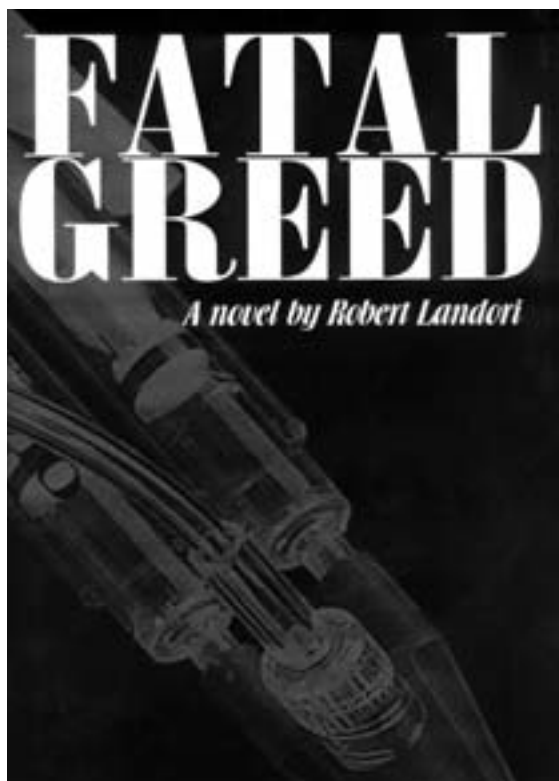
auront certainement un impact considérable sur l'ensemble de la région du Proche et Moyen-Orient et sur l'avenir des pourparlers de paix entre Palestiniens et Israéliens.

## 1—Arrivée du Likoud au gouvernement

Un succès de Netanyahu donnera sans doute plus d'ailes à Tsahal et une remontée du moral des troupes car nul n'ignore le langage fort et direct du chef du Likoud qui oppose toute concession aux groupes « terroristes » ou aux ennemis

d'Israël. Cela se traduira notamment par une éventuelle attaque préventive contre les installations nucléaires iraniennes, si Téhéran persiste dans son programme nucléaire et ignore les demandes de l'Occident. Advenant une telle attaque, le résultat sera la montée encore plus grave des prix du pétrole et une crise économique sans précédent qui touchera l'Occident en entier sans parler des conséquences militaires des éventuelles représailles de parts et d'autres.

Quoi qu'il en soit, les mois à venir sont cruciaux aussi bien pour Israël, que pour la Syrie, l'Iran et le Liban. Une quelconque fausse décision politique pourrait enflammer la région et affecter les économies des plus grands... L'Occident ne sortira point nécessairement le grand gagnant et l'instabilité interne pourra le gangrener de l'intérieur dû au terrorisme latent. . . .



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ISRAËL

### L'avenir en jeu

# La réaction arabe

Il y a quelques semaines, suite à l'accord conclut avec Israël par l'intermédiaire de la médiation allemande pour libérer les prisonniers libanais et palestiniens des prisons israéliennes en échange des corps des deux soldats israéliens, le Secrétaire général du Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, déclarait publiquement devant des dizaines de milliers de partisans « chose promise, chose due! »

Aujourd'hui, deux ans après sa « victoire divine », Nasrallah, s'adresse aux Libanais – et aux Arabes – sur la chaîne de télévision satellitaire du Hezbollah, Al-Manar. Dans son discours à la nation arabe de près de 70 minutes, il souligne les réalisations de son parti et critique à la fois Israël et les États-Unis. Il dépeint la guerre de 2006 comme le début de la fin du mythe israélien.

En effet, Nasrallah évoque cette guerre de 2006 comme étant derrière le licenciement d'un certain nombre de dirigeants militaires en Israël, ainsi que derrière l'effondrement du populaire Premier ministre Ehud Olmert, qui a dit aux Israéliens – comme Nasrallah le rapporte – qu'il « est mort dans la guerre au Liban, mais a été enterré au bout de deux ans, en raison des scandales de corruption ».

Nasrallah a critiqué le point de vue israélien qui croit que la raison de défaite dans cette guerre, était due au manque d'expérience, en particulier au sein de l'équipe dirigeante aussi bien politique que militaire. Il rappelle ironiquement à ceux qui accusent l'actuelle Administration israélienne et la blâment de la défaite de juillet 2006 (en particulier Ehud

Barak), la première « défaite d'Israël et son retrait du Liban en 2000 ».

#### Un changement important dans le lexique états-unien

Par ailleurs, le Secrétaire général a souligné que les répercussions de cette guerre ainsi que la disparition de l'utilisation des termes « nouveau Moyen-Orient », qui a été annoncée par la secrétaire d'État américaine Condoleezza Rice, confirment que cette approche s'est effondrée et ses termes sont rendus obsolètes.

Il a en outre souligné que les pourparlers syro-israéliens en cours sont le résultat de ces conséquences, « car Israël a abandonné la politique de menaces et s'est tourné vers la politique de négociation ». De même, Nasrallah a évoqué « la confusion actuelle d'Israël vis-à-vis l'Iran, où « L'État hébreu est encore réticent à prendre des mesures concrètes s'il y a lieu d'attaquer l'Iran ou pas! »

#### La confirmation de son leadership

Ces déclarations soulignent la montée en puissance du Hezbollah depuis l'an 2000 à la suite de la triple « victoire » politique qu'il a marquées contre Israël, et qui sont le retrait rapide du Liban en Mai 2000, la guerre de 2006 et plus tard l'échange de prisonniers en 2008 qui poussent Israël à libérer un tueur d'enfant ainsi que des prisonniers de guerre du Hezbollah et d'autres prisonniers palestiniens.

Aujourd'hui, après la prise de Beyrouth de Mai 2008 par les combattants du Hezbollah et la formation d'un nouveau gouvernement libanais, où les ministres chiites



**En effet, avec la montée en puissance d'un Hezbollah plus que jamais fort d'un appui populaire, non seulement chiite, mais sunnite dans certains cas (à Gaza et certains pays arabes) et chrétien dans d'autres (au Liban), notamment après la dernière crise interlibanaise, rien ne garantit à Israël que les demandes et exigences du Hezbollah vont s'arrêter!**

et leurs alliés détiennent un droit de veto sur toutes les décisions du Cabinet, les voix qui osent s'élever pour demander l'élimination des armes du Hezbollah sont étouffées par la machine de guerre et de propagande de ce dernier. En effet, dans son discours télévisé, Nasrallah

insiste sur le fait que les « armes de la résistance » sont sacrées et souligne que « les partis libanais ne doivent pas essayer de demander leur élimination, car cela serait jouer le jeu israélien, pour désarmer la résistance, alors que le territoire libanais reste encore occupé ».

Aujourd'hui, dans la langue du commun des mortels, cette « victoire » est unique. En effet, la rue arabe l'endosse quelle que soit la religion et les affinités politiques que cette rue détienne. D'ailleurs, la décision de démission du Premier Ministre israélien, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah confirme encore une fois sa position de « leader » incontesté de la rue arabe et musulmane tous azimuts.

#### Une image plus solide que jamais

En effet, en s'affichant comme le parti qui a su mettre à genoux la plus puissante des armées de la région voire du monde, le Hezbollah a d'un seul coup remonté le moral de la rue arabe et lui a donné une cause nouvelle et un espoir de reprendre la revanche sur un Occident colonialiste et impérialiste; et par-dessus tout, de reprendre le combat contre l'Infidèle, le Croisé et plus tard le Mécréant qui avaient conquis la



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« Terre Sainte de l'Islam : Al-Quds » (Jérusalem). Mieux encore, la victoire politique sans contestation de la guerre de juillet 2006 a donné plus de poids à la stature du Secrétaire général du Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

Ce dernier est devenu le porte-parole de la résistance islamique non seulement au Liban mais à travers le monde arabo-musulman où les peuples cherchent désespérément une figure historique qui leur rappelle les victoires passées de l'Islam et son apogée dans les siècles passés face à un Occident en perdition et dont la société n'a plus de valeurs au sens sociétal et familial du terme. Ainsi, Nasrallah devient l'exemple de la pureté de l'esprit musulman et de la lutte contre « l'Infidèle » et le « Sioniste ».

#### Les signes de faiblesse d'Olmert...

La décision d'Olmert de démissionner quelques jours seulement après avoir accepté de libérer les prisonniers libanais et palestiniens dont Samir Al-Kantar, accusé par Israël d'avoir commis un massacre en plein territoire israélien, est le résultat direct d'une faiblesse sans contestation de cette politique « olmertienne ». Ce qui pousse la rue arabe encore vers une quasi-adoration de Nasrallah pour ajouter « victoire » après « victoire » contre l'État hébreu.

Or, à analyser de près la politique « olmertienne », l'on constate qu'elle est pour le moins dangereuse pour l'avenir même de l'État hébreu, aussi réaliste et « humanitaire » qu'elle ne paraisse aux yeux de l'actuel gouvernement israélien. En effet, avec la

montée en puissance d'un Hezbollah plus que jamais fort d'un appui populaire, non seulement chiite, mais sunnite dans certains cas (à Gaza et certains pays arabes) et chrétien dans d'autres (au Liban), notamment après la dernière crise interlibanaise, rien ne garantit à Israël que les demandent et exigences du

Hezbollah vont s'arrêter!

De plus, l'insistance du Hezbollah sur la l'identité libanaise des fermes de Chebaa malgré qu'elles aient été conquises par Israël de l'armée syrienne, fait en sorte que ce dossier demeure comme une épée de Damoclès pour Israël. Sans oublier, bien entendu, l'armement sophistiqué

du Hezbollah et sa présence au nord de la frontière israélienne malgré la présence de la FINUL censée interdire cela selon la résolution 1701 du Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies. À cela s'ajoute un Iran plus fort que jamais et une politique américaine chancelante et en perdition dans la région, malgré une apparence

**Ainsi, Israël n'a jamais paru aussi faible aux yeux de la rue arabe qui rêve maintenant de donner l'assaut final pour libérer « Al-Quds » et rendre à l'Islam son prestige d'antan. Mais alors comment faire pour mettre un terme à cette faiblesse?**

de confrontation avec l'État perse.

#### ...Et le message capté par la rue arabe !

Ainsi, Israël n'a jamais paru aussi faible aux yeux de la rue arabe qui rêve maintenant de donner l'assaut final pour libérer « Al-Quds » et rendre à l'Islam son prestige d'antan. Mais alors comment faire pour mettre un terme à cette faiblesse? La question se pose dans plus d'un cercle, aussi bien israélien qu'occidental. La réponse demeure toutefois insatisfaisante car les conséquences pourraient être graves non seulement pour Israël mais pour l'ensemble de la région voire de la planète.

En effet, dans cette réponse trois scénarios sont plausibles et tous les trois passent par le remplacement d'Ehud Olmert à la tête du gouvernement israélien :

Le premier se traduirait sans doute par l'arrivée au pouvoir de l'aile radicale de la société israélienne, représentée en partie par le Likoud et donc par Benjamin Netanyahu.

La seconde, serait que l'actuel parti au pouvoir, Kadima, reste au pouvoir en substituant son chef, donc en remplaçant Olmert par un autre dont le charisme fera en sorte de sauvegarder l'honneur du parti sans pour autant permettre aux plus radicaux de reprendre le dessus. Le dernier cas de figure serait celui de l'arrivée des Travailleurs au pouvoir et donc d'Ehud Barak à la tête du gouvernement. ♣

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## Prof. Thomas Velk and "Publius"

Prof. Thomas Velk is Chair of the North American Studies Program at McGill University. Publius is an unnamed American public official.

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THE LOGIC OF CHANGE

# Why McCain can't let Obama run against Bush

George Bush is not running for President, but Barack Obama is running against him anyway. With every call for change, the charismatic young Senator reminds the electorate that he is not merely anti-Bush, but The Anti-Bush. Every

argument for electing Obama can be reduced to an argument against Bush, and every line in the candidate's bio is the logical opposite of its corresponding number in the President's vita. Bush is pro-war, Obama is anti-war. Bush is white,

Obama is not white, etc. Audaciously enough, Obama hopes that an electorate, unhappy with the current president, will fall for the following syllogism:

Bush has been a bad president.  
Obama is the opposite of Bush.

Therefore, Obama will be a good President.

But, are Obama and Bush really all that different? Like Obama, Bush exploited anti-incumbant sentiment in 2000, but the differentiation he sought was primarily on questions of charac-

and public administration in the playbooks of Carter and Dukakis and the textbooks of Krugman and Keynes. If Bush is a latter day Teddy Roosevelt -- Barack is Franklin D.

Enter John McCain.  
As much as he'd like to, Obama is

To the gathering dismay of liberals and libertarians alike, Bush transformed the office of the presidency—expanding executive power and experimenting with heterodox policies to fight terrorism (democracy building), provide social services (faith-based initiatives), and improve education (No Child Left Behind). Not since Teddy Roosevelt has the Republican Party so openly embraced elements of the progressive agenda, repackaged for a new generation as compassionate conservatism.

ter (read: marital fidelity). The real change Bush had in mind was a reimagining of conservatism as a political philosophy not antithetical to big government. In this regard Bush has been a once in a generation agent of change. To the gathering dismay of liberals and libertarians alike, Bush transformed the office of the presidency - expanding executive power and experimenting with heterodox policies to fight terrorism (democracy building), provide social services (faith-based initiatives), and improve education (No Child Left Behind). Not since Teddy Roosevelt has the Republican Party so openly embraced elements of the progressive agenda, repackaged for a new generation as compassionate conservatism.

The Bush legacy can thus be undone in two ways. The next president could opt to roll back executive power -- restoring Constitutional checks and balances to their pre-Bush equilibrium. Alternatively, he could harness the awe inspiring power of a war-time executive to usher in a new era of progressivism. Those who cherish liberty hope against hope for the former. If only Obama were as unlike Bush as he would have us believe.

Of course, the Democrats' standard bearer has no interest in challenging his party's orthodoxy. The rookie Senator built a platform on the bedrock of generic progressivism that now passes for conventional wisdom among media and academic elites. Obama sees the answers to the great questions of economic growth, national security,

not running against George Bush. His adversary is, ironically enough, the man who came closest to smothering compassionate conservatism in its crib back in 2000. Will McCain bring change? His mix of policy preferences is far from purely Republican. (Until recently) too Green to drill the 2000 acres of Alaskan snow that cover ten years worth of American oil; too much a populist to know that "speculators" have, in comparison with supply and demand, little to do with gasoline prices. He's too conservative to believably deliver an Obama-style, tub thumping, *Amen* inducing, sermonizing "yes we can" speech to a congregation of adoring never-yet voted twenty-somethings, but independent enough to have been offered a spot on John Kerry's ticket in 2004. McCain is a unique character, above party label, but Obama's got a syllogism for him too. It goes like this:

Obama is the opposite of Bush.

McCain is running against Obama.

Therefore, McCain is the same as Bush.

Conscious of his outsider status among the Party's base, the maverick McCain has hesitated to reject this mischaracterization, but it's high time he reminded the hope smitten electorate that he's his own man. While he's at it, he might try outing the Obama candidacy for what it is -- a throwback to the big government liberalism of democratic administrations fast on track to take over the reins of a super-empowered executive branch. ♣

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THOUGHTS ON THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

# Artificial Cities

When diplomats travel, they observe. Usually those observations are of the "foreign" countries to which they are professionally assigned or are encountering for professional reasons. But it can also be interesting--and even self-instructive--to play diplomatic observer in one's own country. Having recently been a first-time visitor to Las Vegas, Nevada; the national parks of Bryce Canyon and Zion, Utah; and Hoover Dam, Nevada, prompted a series of thoughts that might interest far-away Canadians.

Both Canada and the United States are familiar with the creation of artificial cities, respectively Ottawa

and Washington, DC. In both instances, a capital city was necessary that would balance sectional differences and focus on the business of governance. Other countries such as Brazil (Brasilia); Pakistan (Islamabad); Turkey (Ankara); Nigeria (Abuja) have either avoided the largest/oldest city in their country and elected to make a fresh start in a new location, perhaps hoping also to leave behind some of the political baggage associated with the old.

But only the United States has created an artificial city essentially directed at once illicit but still tempting pleasures, i.e., "sins" and

transformed it into a massive money machine. Las Vegas is such a creation and its 4.5 mile long "strip" with over 40 casinos is an unprecedented money machine generating in excess of \$8 billion in 2006. There is always a suspend disbelief element to a gambling casino--even when the odds against the player are clearly listed on a game-by-game basis; there are those who believe they can beat the system and make money from gambling. Essentially, the only participant that makes money from gambling is the "house," but if gambling is viewed as entertainment, a (self-aware) visitor can be amused by the process.

But not far beneath the Vegas glitter is the sleaze. Street solicitors distribute playing cards featuring the charms of assorted females with the promise that one will arrive "totally nude... to your room in 20 minutes." Prostitution is not illegal in Nevada. Some year ago, Las Vegas attempted a make-over and promoted itself as "family friendly," but more recently the tag line has become "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" and that sobriquet doesn't envision 24/7 Bible reading.



## 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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Each of the casinos is the equivalent of amusement theme parks. Thus you have "Paris," "New York," and "Venice" with representations of iconic structures (Eifel Tower, Empire State Building) and activities (gondolas). Or you have fantasy piled upon fantasy with "Excalibur" (recreating Camelot), "Treasure Island" (Robert Stevenson spins in his grave), and a semi-permanent "Star Trek" exhibit that inhabits the Hilton and permits the visitor to encounter Klingons and avoid assimilation with the Borg. But the fantasy, the star-studded performers' lists, and the endless cheap buffets are all designed to keep the visitor in

a particular casino--and continue gambling. Thus a show such as *Phantom of the Opera*, retains all of its songs, but cuts much dialogue to move the audience back to the gambling tables in approximately 90 minutes.

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happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" and that sobriquet doesn't envision 24/7 Bible reading.

Hoover Dam powers Las Vegas (and much of the southwest). Finished in five years (1936), it is a collector of superlatives: once the world's largest concrete structure, it still holds the largest man-made lake in the U.S. and continues to be the major electric generator for the region. But one's first conclusion is that it could never be duplicated in today's USA. Not the civil engineering aspect, which is massive but not unique, although working laborers seven days per week at 50 cents an hour is presumably passé. Rather it

would be the inability of any comparable construction to surmount the requirement for an environmental impact statement and the not-in-my-backyard naysayers. In today's post 9/11 world, dam security is an increasing concern with trucks no longer permitted to drive across its top. Plans for a bypass, including a bridge over the gorge above Hoover dam, have been left quite literally in mid air as high winds in September 2006 toppled cranes involved in the construction, indefinitely delaying its projected 2008 completion date (in contrast, the Hoover Dam was completed 2 years ahead of time).

But ultimately it is the incomparable natural vistas in the region that leave the greatest effect on an observer. Nature will do that, and the area is replete with breath-taking national parks, starting with the Grand Canyon, but the combination of the less-visited Bryce Canyon and Zion national park leaves one breathless (particularly at an altitude of 9,000 feet for Bryce) over the action of natural forces over geological time. We can take some comfort that long after Vegas casinos have crumbled and even beyond the 2,000 year projected life expectancy of Hoover, they will remain to spark our awe. ♠



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## Guillaume Durou

MONTRÉAL-NORD

# Quand la colère brûle, la haine rit

«Le choc entre une voiture de police et une mini-moto, dans lequel deux adolescents, Moushin et Larami, ont trouvé la mort, a-t-il résulté d'un accident ou d'une « bavure » policière ? »<sup>1</sup> La nuit suivante, le département français de Val d'Oise flambe. Voitures, poubelles, tout y passe. Les émeutiers fulminent, scandent la bavure policière et la récurrence du racisme alors que la populace impuissante crie à l'accident. Tout ceci alimentait, fin 2007, les quotidiens de l'Hexagone et du monde entier.

De ces événements, il faut bien accepter l'analogie avec ce qui s'est produit à Montréal-Nord le 9-10 août dernier, mais il demeure difficile d'accepter, comme certains le prétendent, qu'il y aurait une similitude frappante avec la situation française. Il n'y en a aucune. La Compagnie républicaine de sécurité (CRS) n'a rien avoir avec le SPVM ou

l'escouade tactique de la ville. Mais certains quotidiens ont semblé ignorer le contexte et associer, voire calquer exactement les faits ayant eu lieu sur un autre continent avec ceux s'étant déroulé ici.

Le danger de cette approche ? C'est la tentation de construire une réalité qui n'est pas la nôtre. Des quartiers « sensibles », il y en a dans toutes les métropoles, mais rien ne nous porte à penser qu'ils auraient tous la même origine. Il est urgent de sortir de cette enclave interprétative qui, d'un côté, tente de mousser l'existence et l'épanchement d'un racisme exacerbé qui n'en est pas un, en le transformant en réaction d'antiracisme et, de l'autre, de blâmer une certaine incompatibilité policière vis-à-vis les quartiers chauds de l'île. Cet antiracisme qui se dessine propose lui-même l'objet de la discrimination. Le racisme explique tout : il y a les victimes et les racistes. Mais il s'agit d'une opposition trop simple qui n'informe pas de la profondeur de la situation. Cette réaction antiraciste, par sa portée unanime, devrait cerner de réels actes racistes, et non pas recourir à la peur, à la confusion et à la tension suscitées par un démêlé avec les forces de l'ordre en l'interprétant comme une pure action raciste.

Quartier pauvre, délabré, insalubre, Montréal-Nord survit. L'éducation y subsiste et tente de s'intégrer au quotidien de chacun. Comme le souligne une enseignante de l'arrondissement, «il est souvent navrant de voir comme certains étudiants talentueux brûlent littéralement leurs chances de réussite dans les milieux d'enseignement supérieur en indisposant leurs professeurs en les appelant «man»<sup>2</sup>». L'effacement des «codes sociaux» et le peu de place pour le compromis laissent croire à une réalité désabusée d'elle-même, se repliant sur ce qu'il y a de plus concret, la survie. L'urgence est au dialogue. Quand parcs, arénas, ruelles deviennent des espaces où s'émanche une vie hors du cadre social *a priori*, quand la normalité ressemble au seuil de la pauvreté et que le terrain de jeux devient le terrain non pas des ententes mais des conflits, le racisme ne devient qu'un terme vide d'explication. Les

enseignant demeurent les premiers témoins de certaines incompatibilités sociales et de l'urgence de panser les mentalités heurtées et colériques. Dans ces lieux, l'école se présente donc comme un obstacle, un passage obligé et pénible, qui allonge le parcours de ces jeunes dont les futures carrières semblent déjà compromises.

Bien avant le racisme, et surtout bien avant cet antiracisme qui se réclame équivoquement de la contestation, il y a l'exclusion, la mécompréhension des communautés, la pauvreté qui tapissent la réalité sociale des quartiers chauds de Montréal. Or, l'inverse semble avoir été compris, c'est-à-dire qu'on croit à un racisme évident qui aurait d'une façon tacite exclu, «ghettoisé» les communautés de sorte que celles-ci, très sensibles à leur différences culturelles vis-à-vis la majorité, exploseraient, «spontaneraient» sans compromission.

La réflexion ne doit pas se faire dans le sens d'un racisme ou non, de la violence ou pas, mais plutôt vers la question des communautés. L'intégration et l'aide demeurent la solution la plus apte à cicatrifier les profondes plaies sociales. Avions-nous suffisamment réfléchi à l'intégration ? Malheureusement, le mode semble aux réactions vives : descendre dans les rues et mettre le quartier en feu. C'est justement parce qu'il y a une sorte «d'exclusion anthropologique», un repoussement des frontières entre les nantis et les Autres, qu'il se crée une tension qui parfois, comme les séismes naturels, s'incarne dans le carnage et la destruction, avec pour seul message la colère. Ce soit disant racisme n'est que la façade des lacunes de l'intégration, du mépris de la différence.

Rien n'excuse la destruction, rien ne pardonne la mort accidentelle. Mais notons aussi que les morts accidentelles des policiers Valérie Gignac et Daniel Tessier, en 2005, n'ont en rien enclenché l'expression de haine dans les rues, ni des actes démesurés de vandalisme.

1. Villiers-le-Bel, de la mort à la rage, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 27 novembre 2007.
2. Le Devoir, *Lettre ouverte*, 11 août 2008.



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## Duff Conacher

Duff Conacher is the Coordinator of *Democracy Watch*, Canada's leading democratic reform organization.



## JUSTICE

WHAT PRICE JUSTICE?

# Extraordinary ruling in Democracy Watch lobbying challenge

In an extraordinary one-line ruling, without giving any reasons, Federal Court of Canada Justice Alan M. Linden recently ordered Democracy Watch to pay \$10,000 in advance into court to cover costs it may possibly have to pay in the future to lobbyist Barry Campbell, as a result of Democracy Watch's appeal of the February 2008 Federal Court ruling by Deputy Judge Orville Frenette that legalizes federal registered lobbyists

conflict of interest.

Democracy Watch challenged the Registrar's ruling in the Federal Court. On February 19, 2008 Deputy Judge Frenette issued his ruling which, after only a two-paragraph-long review of the Registrar's ruling that did not mention relevant evidence or Cabinet ethics rules, concluded that the Registrar's ruling was reasonable and that Democracy Watch was not a public interest

Nelson revealed that in December 2005 he had issued a legal notice to all federally registered lobbyists (which he failed to post on his website or make public in any other way) stating that lobbyists will often place politicians in a conflict of interest when they raise money for them or their party or assist them in other ways.

Incredibly, 11 months later the Registrar directly contradicted this notice when he ruled on Democracy

Watch's complaint. The Registrar's ruling was on the complaint filed by Democracy Watch on April 13, 2000 about former Liberal MP-turned lobbyist Barry Campbell who, as a favour for Jim Peterson, then-Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), "organized a benefit dinner for Mr. Peterson's re-election campaign in 1999, at which \$70,000 was raised, while registered to lobby the Finance Ministry for a variety of financial institutions" (as Deputy Judge Frenette described it in para. 2 of his ruling).

Campbell was registered as Chairman of the company APCO Canada to lobby on issues for which Peterson was responsible. The invita-

tion to the fundraising event was sent out on APCO Canada letterhead, in an envelope and with a return envelope all identifying Mr. Campbell as the lead organizer of the event. We alleged in the complaint that Campbell's actions violated Rule 8 of the 11-year-old *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct (Lobbyists' Code)*, which states:

"8. Lobbyists shall not place public office holders in a conflict of interest

July 2004 that the Ethics Counsellor was biased, and the federal *Lobbying Act* prohibits such opinions). The Registrar concluded that Mr. Campbell had been lobbying Mr. Peterson, but that lobbying does not interfere with a Cabinet minister's decision-making, and organizing the fundraising event did not wrongfully constrain, induce or take advantage of Mr. Peterson.

Democracy Watch's position is,

Democracy Watch contested because we felt that the Federal Court ruling makes it legal for federal lobbyists to do things for federal Cabinet ministers that the ministers' ethics rules say ministers cannot have done for them by lobbyists.

raising money and doing favours for Cabinet ministers they lobby. Justice Linden's July 30 ruling on

Mr. Campbell's motion states "*Security for costs in the amount of \$10,000.00 shall be paid into Court by August 29, 2008, failing which the appeal shall be dismissed.*"

Democracy Watch's appeal application is Federal Court of Appeal file number A-128-08. Former federal Registrar of Lobbyists Michael Nelson initially ruled in October 2006 (on a Democracy Watch complaint filed on April 13, 2000) that a lobbyist raising money for a Cabinet minister while also lobbying the same minister does not create a

litigant and therefore must pay the costs of the other parties. Democracy Watch's appeal contests both of Frenette's conclusions.

We contested because we felt that the Federal Court ruling makes it legal for federal lobbyists to do things for federal Cabinet ministers that the ministers' ethics rules say ministers cannot have done for them by lobbyists. We believe that making it legal for lobbyists to do favours for Cabinet ministers creates conflicts of interest that are dangerous to democracy, as the OECD, the U.S. and other countries, and some Canadian provinces have recognized.

After Deputy Judge Frenette's ruling, Registrar of Lobbyists Michael

Watch's complaint.

The Registrar's ruling was on the complaint filed by Democracy Watch on April 13, 2000 about former Liberal MP-turned lobbyist Barry Campbell who, as a favour for Jim Peterson, then-Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), "organized a benefit dinner for Mr. Peterson's re-election campaign in 1999, at which \$70,000 was raised, while registered to lobby the Finance Ministry for a variety of financial institutions" (as Deputy Judge Frenette described it in para. 2 of his ruling).

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"8. Lobbyists shall not place public office holders in a conflict of interest

by proposing or undertaking any action that would constitute an improper influence on a public office holder." Former Ethics Counsellor Howard Wilson did not issue a public ruling on Democracy Watch's April 2000 complaint about Mr. Campbell and Mr. Peterson, even though he enforced the *Lobbyists' Code* until May 2004, and former Ethics Commissioner Bernard Shapiro refused to rule on the complaint. However, in September 2002 Wilson issued, in the opinion of Democracy Watch, an incorrect and illegal Advisory Opinion about Rule 8 that stated a federal lobbyist only violates Rule 8 if the lobbyist's actions: interfere with the decisions of a public office holder (meaning a federal politician, political staff, Cabinet appointee, or a public servant) in a way that amounts to a "wrongful constraint whereby the will of the public office holder was overpowered" and/or if the public office holder "was induced to do or forbear an act which he or she would not do if left to act freely" and/or "whether the lobbyist took advantage of a public office holder's weakness, infirmity or distress to alter that public office holder's actions or decision."

The federal Registrar of Lobbyists used the Ethics Counsellor's Advisory Opinion as the basis of his October 10, 2006 ruling on Democracy Watch's complaint (even though the Federal Court ruled in

given that the Preamble of the *Lobbyists' Code* states that together it and the ethics codes for public office holders (politicians, their staff and government officials) "play an important role in safeguarding the public interest in the integrity of government decision-making", therefore the interpretation of Rule 8 of the *Lobbyists' Code* must be based on public office holders ethics rules.

There are rules that make it clear what types of influence are improper and cause conflicts of interest in the 22-year-old federal *Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders* (which applies to Cabinet ministers, full-time ministerial staff, and many senior government officials) and the *Conflict of Interest Act* which replaced that *Code* in July 2007, and in the four-year-old *Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons*, and in the three-year-old *Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* and in the 10-year-old federal *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service*.

Specifically, all of these codes state that it is improper to receive a gift of money, property or services that could influence a decision. Given that lobbyists, by definition, try to influence the decisions of public office holders, Democracy Watch's position is that Rule 8 of the *Lobbyists' Code* clearly prohibits lobbyists from providing money, property or services to a public office holder. ♣

## 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.





## ARTS &amp; STYLE

## Alidor Aucoin

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BEIJING AND ALBERT SPEER'S PROGENY - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The most distinctive feature of Speer Jr's blueprint is a central five-mile strip, running from a new railway station in the south of the capital past Tianan-men Square and the Forbidden City to the new Olympic Green. The strip is known as the "central north-south axis" and critics have suggested it bears an uncanny parallel between Speer's plan and the infamous three-mile north-south axis, also flanked by train stations, that was planned by his father for Hitler's new Berlin.

apparent in the models of Berlin that Speer spent so much time inspecting with Hitler.

On one occasion he showed them to his 75-year old father, himself a retired architect. "You've all gone completely Crazy" the old man is reported to have said.

After the war, Speer was the only top ranking Nazi to apologize for his war crimes and became known as "the Nazi who said I'm sorry." The Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal sentenced him to 20 years in prison and he became one of only three men investigated at Nuremberg who avoided execution.

Few children of Nazi leaders have followed so closely in their fathers' footsteps as Albert Speer Senior's son. The Chinese didn't go out of their way to advertise the fact, but it was Albert Speer Junior who designed the 17-kilometer corridor between the train station and the Olympic Park in Beijing—the same

breathtaking avenue that was illuminated by 29 different fireworks displays when the games opened to symbolize the 29 modern summer Olympic games.

Now, the Beijing Times reports the "live" coverage was faked and that producers used computerized graphics to create the amazing pyrotechnical display along Speer's broad boulevard.

According to the Geneva based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, Speer would have been complicit in the expropriation of the properties of an estimated 1-million Chinese who were displaced to make way for his magnificent avenue. Entire blocks of low rise tenements were expropriated, and in many cases, property owners were paid about US\$80 for their homes.

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Albert Speer Sr.'s Berlin (which was to be renamed 'Germania') axis was never finished, although thousands of Jewish tenants were evicted and their homes bulldozed to make way for the grand avenue.

His son worked for totalitarian regimes in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Yemen before he obtained his first commission in China in 1994, when he was hired to redesign an old quarter of Tianjin. He also designed a satellite town outside Shanghai based on a German village. Known as "German Town" it is a subdivision in Jiading far from downtown Shanghai, and home to an international automotive center. The project entailed the construction of various German-style buildings, and Speer Jr. was more aware than most that his concept was steeped in pejorative associations.

"Obviously, we didn't recreate Rothenburg ob der Tauber," he pointed out in an interview with public broadcaster MDR. "We wanted to build a small, modern town with,

for example, tiled roofs. Visually, the streets are different than what the Chinese are used to, they are slighted curved and lined with trees."

Speers admits the comparisons with his father are unavoidable, but added they are unfair because he never really knew his notorious father. "I was five years old when the war began, and 14 when my father went to Prison." He told the Daily Telegraph. "He sat in prison for 20 years. I was allowed to visit him, but it was more of a strain than a pleasure. When he came out, we still kept our distance."

Shao Zi Qian, a Beijing Olympics spokesman said Speer's connection to the Nazi past is irrelevant.

"The axis he designed for Beijing is based on an ancient city artery, and is designed to incorporate the latest in urban design while providing more space to enhance traditional parts of the city. The feng shui of his design is very good. We don't mind who Speer is, but we worry a little that other people could misunderstand this." ♦

SKALA HOMEWARE PRODUCTS INC.  
L'ART DE LA SALLE DE BAIN

The advertisement is a collage of images showcasing bathroom products. At the top left is the company logo and name. Below it, a woman in a white bathrobe sits on a toilet, reading a book. To her right, a woman is shown from behind, splashing water. Below these are several images of bathroom fixtures: a shower head, a vanity unit with a sink, a bidet, a toilet, and a modern shower enclosure. The bottom of the ad contains contact information.

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BILL C-10 AND THE LESSONS OF OUR PAST

## Ottawa should learn from Québec's censorship history

The federal government should take the time to watch Québec journalist Eric Parent's new film, "Les Ennemis du Cinéma" before letting Canada's fundamentalist evangelical groups bully him into making a humiliating, and possibly fatal error for his party's chances in a not-too-distant election.

If fundamentalist leader and spokesman Charles McVety has his way, the fine print in the Harper government's new Bill C-10 would permit government censors to revoke financial aid for any film or television production they deem to be offensive even after government agencies have already invested the taxpayer's money in selected productions.

As per the new bill, every project receiving federal funding will be examined by government bureaucrats

in the new "Canadian Audio-visual Certification Office" who would then take the necessary steps to protect the Canadian public from what they perceive to be displays of sin and corruption considered to be not in the public's evident and morally acceptable interest.

Should Prime Minister Harper take the time to consider Parent's thesis, he might understand how such cultural roadblocks have already proved themselves to be ineffective and nothing less than a humiliation for any government that would propose such legislation. While Québec's mass media have long moved away and out of the province's "Grande Noirceur", right-wing evangelical groups in the rest of the nation seem determined to plunge the ROC into a new post-modern version of

Québec's dark ages.

Not only does Parent's new documentary take a quasi-academic, medium-cool look at one of the more bizarre episodes in Québec's modern history, it also provides a sub-text which is a reflection of Québec's own historic, linguistic and cultural insecurities. Given the hard-core sex and violence that defines much of today's so-called "popular culture", it's hard to believe Québec's Catholic Church once defined what people could or could not watch on the city's "silver screens". While much of Parent's film deals with the censorship bureau's prurient and sometimes comic obsessions about human sexuality, its message is nothing less than a warning for today's journalists, film-makers and their audience.

Parent believes much of today's contemporary free flow of hard core sex and violence is nothing less than a fiction designed to blur and hide a more disturbing and sometimes dangerous reality. In other words, today's reality will beat fiction every time. While many believe Québec's quiet revolution tossed the province's censors into the trash bin of modern history, Parent's film takes the trouble to warn the viewer as to how an established society's censors are still at work and how Québec's assorted media are still being censored by different people for different reasons and a different purpose.

Parent believes the origins of today's new censorship began to take hold as the documentary became the province's post-modern battlefield.

Film-maker and Oscar-winner Denys Arcand recalls how his documentary, *On est au coton*, produced by Canada's own national Film Board, was shelved after executives at strike-bound Dominion Textile asked their Liberal friends in Ottawa to halt its distribution.

While Heritage minister Josée Verner recently told opposition critics her government had absolutely no intention to alter the new bill, more than a few media and political professionals believe the bill has a chance of clearing the Liberal controlled senate's finance committee. However, others continue to question why Stephen Harper would ever want to repeat Québec Premier Gouin's mistake and allow religious conservatives to influence what people can do or even think about.



Louise V. Labrecque

Lu

## Nous sommes l'espèce fabulatrice



L'espèce fabulatrice  
Nancy Houston  
Éditions Actes Sud/Léméac  
Arlès/Montréal  
197 pages

surgit-il ? Du temps, fort probablement, de l'intuition. Et de ce que c'est qu'une *vie entière*.

Contrairement aux animaux, seuls les humains savent qu'ils sont nés et qu'il vont mourir. Une courbe. Nous seuls percevons notre existence comme une trajectoire, un *récit*, en somme, un sens. Un Sens humain, avec un grand S. Pourtant, nous sommes incapables de constater, sans aussitôt chercher à comprendre.

Ainsi, sommes-nous tous des acteurs, des constructions de nous-mêmes ? Nancy Houston le pense et l'affirme en signant cet essai : *L'espèce fabulatrice*. Notre propre

nom, notre identité, tout ce que nous sommes, tout ce qui nous entoure, serait purement fictionnel. Une vision de l'esprit, une réalité dans la réalité, ou, comme l'expliquaient les surréalistes, dont Breton, Dali et Bataille : une forme de rationnel qui puise sa source dans l'irrationnel, ce qui revient à dire que là se trouve le véritable rationnel. En effet, rien de plus bête que ces intellectuels qui se branlent de formules et concepts académiques mille fois remâchés, qui s'entêtent à définir les faits, et seulement les faits, comme étant la seule réalité acceptable, et qui plus est, selon leurs propres normes, sont

incapables de voir au-delà de leurs vues de l'esprit, et ce, jusqu'à imposer un dogmatisme subtil, parce que ces représentations choisies sont les seuls possibles, car bâties en vue de la consolidation et de l'extension de la pensée rationnelle. Pour Nancy Houston, tout cela n'est qu'un leurre. Ces rationnels totalitaires sont mal équipés pour la mise en place de cette réalité, puisqu'ils sont sourds et borgnes vis-à-vis de ce qui peut être suggéré et qui dérange leur insatiable besoin de classement, de définitions en catégories, pour décrire un environnement qui les entoure.

De plus, rien de plus bête, selon Nancy Houston, que la cohérence crasse des dictionnaires, qui oublie que l'être humain est capable de penser, de construire un raisonnement sans chapelle, mot fréquemment utilisé dans le monde des chercheurs pour signifier qu'en plus de la cohérence, il y a une impression d'isolement volontaire, de fermeture, vis-à-vis d'autres équipes de recherche travaillant dans le même domaine. Bref, dans la cohérence, il existe d'autres cohérences. Les cohérences sont multiples dans notre monde moderne, par exemple en physique

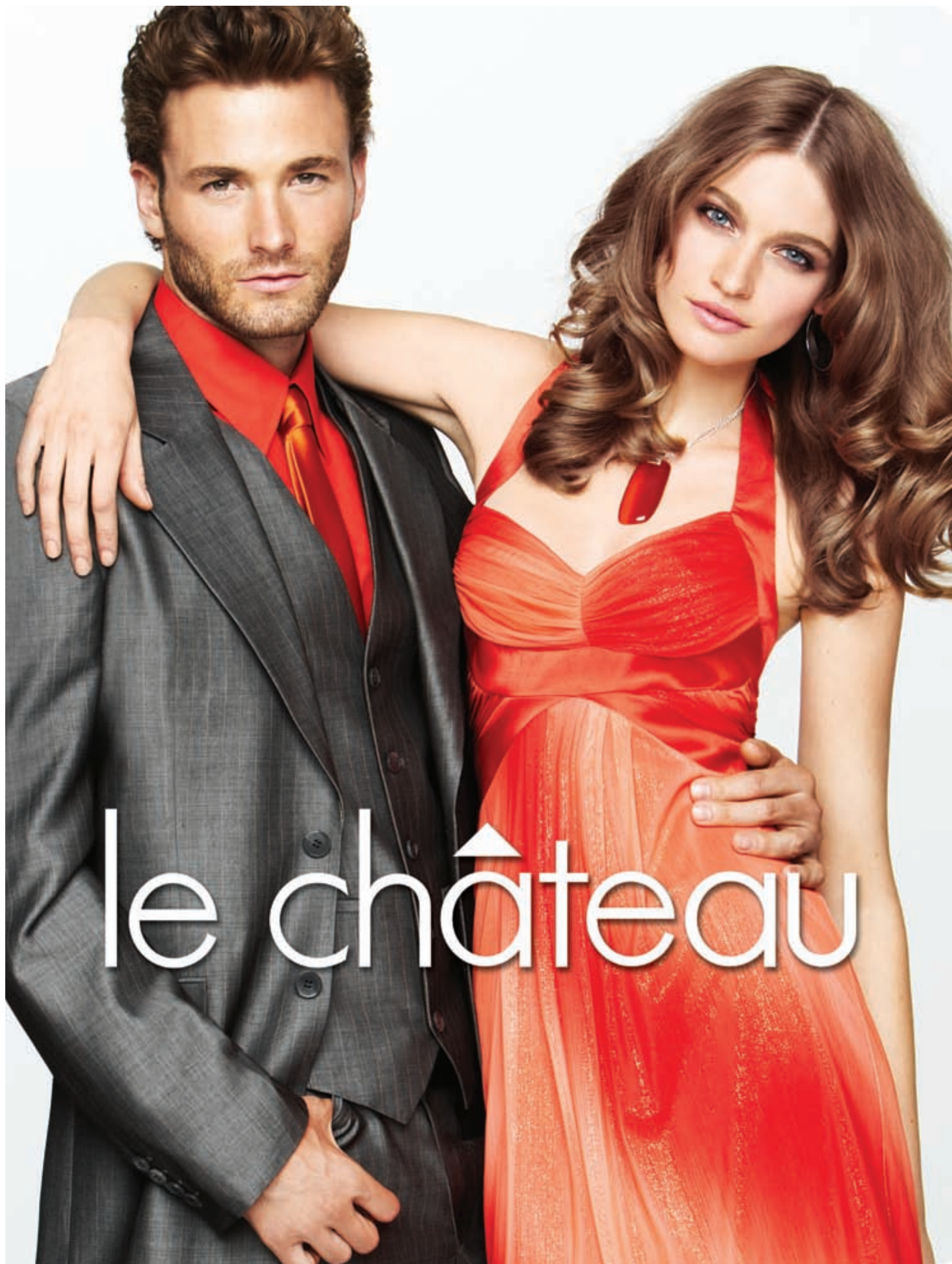
classique, on retrouve l'optique géométrique, l'optique ondulatoire, la thermodynamique, l'acoustique, l'électromagnétisme, chacune de ces cohérences s'établit et se referme, comme pour se suffire à elle-même, par un raisonnement cartésien, une logique aristotélicienne, un système d'où on tirera par exemple des outils techniques. Et si on regarde au-delà, si on transgresse un peu, il est facile, pour tous les scientifiques dignes de ce nom, de reconnaître des fissures, qui sont, en définitive, de la lumière, par laquelle se révèlent le véritable savoir et la véritable intelligence.

Nancy Houston dédie ce livre à son père, atteint de dommages au cerveau suite à une intervention chirurgicale. Pour ce père, les souvenirs ont pris une nouvelle tournure, et une nouvelle réalité s'est mise en place. De là le point de départ de Nancy Houston sur la réflexion des états de conscience et de réalité. L'imaginaire est ici fouillé de fond en comble, dans cet essai pour le moins audacieux, de près de deux cents pages. De nos scénarios, Nancy Houston conclue : « Ils sont réels, puisqu'ils font partie de notre réalité, mais ils ne sont pas vrais ». Et d'ajouter : « Nous sommes l'espèce fabulatrice ». ♣

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