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REPRENONS LA RUE TAKING BACK THE STREET



Left to right: Westmount MP Marc Garneau, federal Liberal leader's representative for Quebec, NDG-Lachine MP Marlene Jennings, D'Arcy McGee MNA Lawrence Bergman, Shefford MNA François Bonnardel, David Ouellet, The Metropolitan editor Beryl Wajzman and Eric Duhaime, columnist and organizer of Réseau liberté Québec. Missing from the picture are Howard Leibman, executive assistant to Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler who had also arrived to lend support and brought a message from Mr. Cotler who was out of town and community activist Sharon Freedman.

PHOTOS PA. SEVIGNY



After weeks of supporting Le Marche on St. Denis Street the anti-boycotters managed to take back the streets.

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Boycott this!

Ainsi, une partie des puissantes forces "progressives" du Québec ont décidé de boycotter les produits et les compagnies israéliens en raison de « l'apartheid politique » d'Israël. Simplement de l'hypocrisie et une ruse. Par leurs mots et leurs actions elle a démontré, en folie et en honte, le vrai visage de cette partie de la société « civile » du Québec qui tout en déclarant hardiment sa propre « différence », est vraiment hanté par un doute de soi-même poussé par une jalousie des croyances individuelles des autres.

Un aspect du dernier effort de boycott qui est agréable est la condamnation quasi-unanime de la participation du député de Québec Solidaire Amir Khadir dans l'harcèlement d'un individu qu'il est sensé représenter - Yves Archambault - qui

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Les souliers d'Amir

Le député de Québec solidaire, Amir Khadir, ne fait pas que lancer des souliers. Il les boycotte!

Au cœur de son comté de Mercier, la boutique Le Marcheur a pignon sur la rue St-Denis depuis 25 ans. Yves Archambault y vend des chaussures venues des quatre coins du monde. Le 2 octobre dernier, Monsieur Archambault reçoit une « mise en demeure » d'une organisation radicale de gauche qui le menace de piqueter devant son commerce pour lancer un appel au boycott s'il continue de vendre des souliers fabriqués en Israël.

Ces radicaux veulent « faire de la rue St-Denis une zone libre d'apartheid israélien ». Bref, une grande purge des produits de l'État juif.

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Le boycott sur St-Denis est un échec

Quand cinq députés fédéraux, les chefs du PQ et du Bloc québécois et un nombre de plus en plus important de députés provinciaux condamnent vos manifestations hebdomadaires comme étant « ... totalement inacceptables dans une société démocratique » vous pourriez envisager de plier les banderoles et de rentrer à la maison. En date du samedi passé, ce semble être ce qui s'est avéré car les militants de PAJU (Palestiniens et Juifs unis) ne se sont pas présentés alors que presque 20 personnes se sont réunis devant Le Marcheur, le magasin de chaussures de la rue St-Denis de

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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.

LA PATRIE

Notre nombril

Sommes-nous moralement supérieurs aux Américains ?

Dimanche, 9 janvier 2011, 17 heures. Les nouvelles à RDI. À quel événement Radio-Canada donne-t-il la priorité ? Choix de réponses :

1) la fusillade qui a eu lieu la veille à Tucson. Un désaxé du nom de Jared Loughner a assassiné cinq personnes et en a blessé treize, parmi lesquelles une élue de l'Arizona au Congrès, Gabrielle Giffords, qui était d'ailleurs sa cible principale. Une polémique fait déjà rage aux États-Unis. Un grand nombre de commentateurs « libéraux » accusent la droite républicaine, et plus particulièrement le Tea Party et Sarah Palin, d'avoir, par leurs propos incendiaires, provoqué le geste du meurtrier.

2) le soulèvement populaire qui se poursuit depuis décembre en Tunisie et qui est à la veille de provoquer la chute du dictateur Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali au pouvoir depuis 23 ans.

3) le référendum qui débute le jour même au Sud-Soudan, et qui est l'aboutissement d'un processus qui a débuté en 2002 avec un cessez-le feu qui mettait fin à une guerre civile qui a fait deux millions de morts. En 2005, un accord de paix accordait au Sud-Soudan une large autonomie. Du 9 au 15 janvier 2011, la population doit déterminer si le pays fera sécession ou maintiendra l'union avec le Nord.

4) aucune de ces réponses

Si vous avez répondu 4), bravo !

Le Texas, la Tunisie et le Sud-Soudan sont des contrées lointaines, les événements qui s'y déroulent intéressent peu les Québécois, surtout s'ils occupent un poste de direction au

service des nouvelles de Radio-Canada. Le grand événement du jour nous concerne davantage, car il a eu lieu chez nous. De quoi s'agit-il ? Mais du décès de Gaston l'Heureux, voyons !

Je n'ai rien contre Gaston l'Heureux, homme on ne peut plus respectable qui fut un excellent animateur. Sa mort est un triste événement. Mais que RDI en fasse la nouvelle du jour, voilà qui est symptomatique du nombrilisme qui afflige les médias québécois. Et qui ne se manifeste d'ailleurs pas seulement par le choix des nouvelles et l'ordre dans lesquelles on nous les présente, mais aussi, je dirais même surtout, dans la manière dont elles sont traitées.

Revenons, par exemple, aux événements de Tucson. La plupart des commentateurs ont repris les bobards de la gauche américaine sans plus ample informé et sans le moindre esprit critique. Joyce Napier, correspondante de Radio-Canada à Washington, nous a livré un reportage indigne d'une journaliste professionnelle. Les mêmes idées courtes ont d'ailleurs été tartinées par de nombreux reporters et commentateurs, entre autres par Richard Héту de La Presse. Évidemment, ces lancers de tartes à la crème ont pour louable conséquence de nous flatter dans le sens du poil. Tout le monde sait que nous sommes moralement supérieurs aux Étatsuniens, ce peuple de tireurs fous, où les politiciens qui sont trop lâches pour presser eux-mêmes sur la gâchette poussent les plus enragés de leurs concitoyens

à le faire à leur place.

En réalité, le débat politique est-il plus hargneux chez nos voisins du Sud que chez nous ? Permettez-moi d'en douter. Tous les béni-oui-oui bien-pensants qui accusent de racisme, de xénophobie, de fanatisme ou de crétinisme le Tea Party, Sarah Palin ou Bill O'Reilly, l'animateur vedette du réseau Fox, ont-ils oublié les sinistres frasques de notre Pierre Falardeau national (Dieu ait son âme), qui ne poussait pas les indépendantistes à faire feu sur l'ennemi fédéraliste, non, mais qui, avec une bassesse qui donnait la nausée, se réjouissait après coup de la mort naturelle d'un Claude Ryan, et qui apprenait d'ailleurs à ses enfants à haïr à la fois les Anglais et les traîtres canadiens-français. L'un de ses rejetons l'en remercia d'ailleurs à ses funérailles. Je dois rappeler à ceux qui diront que je fais trop de cas de Falardeau, qu'il était le chouchou des médias, que les milieux nationalistes en faisaient leur icône et que l'ex-premier ministre du Québec, Bernard Landry (c'est lui qui l'a dit), partageait la plupart de ses idées. Falardeau n'était pas un marginal. Son triste exemple fut suivi il y a quelques mois par Le Réseau de résistance du Québécois, qui se permit, après la mort de Claude Bécharde, de faire paraître dans son journal en ligne un forum intitulé « Un de moins », dans lequel des fanatiques se félicitaient de la mort d'un fédéraliste. Voilà donc en quoi consiste notre prétendue supériorité morale : attendre, bien planqué, que crève l'ennemi et fêter ça ensuite

quand le cancer a accompli son oeuvre !

Il faut quand même nuancer ce que je viens de dire. Au Québec, on ne se promène généralement pas avec une arme à la ceinture et encore plus rares sont ceux qui s'en servent pour tirer dans la foule. Mais il existe quelques rares exceptions, qu'il vaut la peine de rappeler. En 1984, à l'Assemblée nationale, Denis Lortie fait trois morts et huit blessés. En 1989, à Polytechnique, Gamil Gharbi, alias Marc Lépine, fait 14 morts, toutes des femmes, et 14 blessés, dont 4 hommes. En 1992, à l'université Concordia, Valérie Fabrikant tue quatre collègues et blesse une secrétaire. En 2006, au Collège Dawson, Kimveer Gill tue une étudiante et fait dix-neuf blessés.

Pas mal pour un peuple de seulement sept millions d'habitants ! Mais ne dramatisons pas, il s'agit là de cas isolés auxquels il est vain de vouloir donner un sens. Tous ces assassins étaient atteints de délire paranoïaque. Bien sûr, certaines féministes trouvent encore le moyen de dire que Marc Lépine n'était pas « fou », mais qu'il s'agissait plutôt d'un idéologue conséquent, dont elles se sont d'ailleurs hâtées de faire un porte-parole des hommes québécois. Ce délire d'interprétation proprement de chez nous est du même acabit que celui auquel la gauche américaine s'est livrée après les événements de Tucson.

Nous n'avons pas de leçon à donner aux Étatsuniens. Notre nombril, que nous aimons tant contempler, est tout aussi crasseux que le leur.



Ideas before identities.
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN



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Le rapport Payette

Un autre affront à la liberté d'expression

« *Je crois qu'il y a plus d'exemples du raccourcissement de la liberté du peuple par des empiétements progressifs et silencieux par ceux au pouvoir que par des usurpations violentes et soudaines.* » - James Madison

Au-delà d'un an, Dominique Payette, une ancienne journaliste et maintenant professeure à l'Université de Montréal, a été mandatée par la Ministre de la culture Christine St-Pierre pour étudier des façons dont les médias dans les régions du Québec et les médias indépendantes dans les villes pourraient être aidés à l'ère des nouvelles technologies. Son rapport final, présenté la semaine dernière, est allé bien au-delà de son mandat. En fait, c'est le plus grand affront à la liberté d'expression depuis les lois linguistiques. Ça mérite un rejet retentissant.

Among her fifty-one recommendations are the following: mandatory membership by all news organizations in the Quebec Press Council; use of the state's money power to coerce membership by withdrawing provincial advertising to all those who will not submit; giving the council - now a voluntary organization with only moral suasion - sanction power; controlling who is called a journalist by organizing a professional corporation to control admission and demanding language testing for all those seeking professional accreditation. "Accredited" journalists would be given preference for matters ranging from government information flow to protection of sources.

The report mirrors the past forty years of goose-step conformity and suffocating statist control in this province from its very title - "information in Quebec: a public interest." The state has used the term "public interest" for all

manner of prohibitive law and legislation constricting not only what we may do but who we may be. Now it seeks to control what we may say by controlling who may report it and who may express it. A weapon such as this in the hands of a government will give it the power to silence any opposing voice simply by influencing the "professional corporation" it gave birth to to deny "accreditation." In speaking to several leading constitutional lawyers they could think of only one other jurisdiction in the free world that had proposed such a comparable draconian control. That place is Hungary, where prosecutions of writers are actually taking place. What an example to follow.

Let us look at just two of the more odious arrows in Payette's quiver. The Quebec Press Council has a penchant for investigating the most ludicrous complaints and giving them a seriousness they could never have on their own. This newspaper was the victim of a complaint from someone who felt that by publishing pictures of an Arab demonstration downtown where among the epitaphs chanted were "Jews are our dogs" we were inciting hatred against Arabs. The complaint did not take issue with the veracity of the report. Only with our reporting it. We won against that complaint, but not before we had to ask the council's officials whether they were seriously suggesting that by reporting hate we were inciting it. They did not know what to answer. And this organization, so bereft of moral compass is to be given more power? Stalin would be proud.

L'idée d'examen linguistiques pour recevoir l'accréditation mettrait sûrement fin aux affaires d'une grande partie des médias ethniques. C'est le but des médias ethniques. Pour communiquer avec ceux qui n'ont pas encore maîtrisé nos deux

langues officielles. Ou est-ce que c'est à proscrire aussi? Nous ne sommes pas certains si des journalistes français pourraient passer l'examen onéreux sur la grammaire française du gouvernement.

But it is the very notion that the Quebec state has the arrogance to think it has a right to control and invalidate those who practice our most essential freedom that is so objectionable. We cannot blame Payette alone. In her mandate, the Minister made reference to the necessity for this study because of the "general crises of media in industrialized countries." What crises? Too much free expression? Is there a fear that some brave and enterprising writers may actually put some dents into the historically revisionist nationalist narrative that has given birth to so many lies that have underpinned our culture wars of the past four decades? Is there a fear that too much truth shall out? But of course this is the Minister who recently encouraged Quebecers snitching on each other in order to enforce the language laws.

In speaking to senior members of the Charest administration we were assured that the report was just being studied and there was no commitment to implement it in whole or in part. We hope that is true. Because Payette's statist bias is frightening at times. In one section she clearly states that she favors "a new model of regulation for the Quebec press." we were not aware that there was an old model that regulated the press. The bedrock of a free society is an unregulated press. As Orwell wrote, the point of free expression was the right "to say and write those things that infuriate others." What part of freedom does Mme. Payette and the Minister not get? More importantly, what are they afraid of?

Un haut gradé du gouvernement Charest avec qui nous avons parlé, et avisé que nous mèneri-

ons le combat contre l'exécution de ce rapport, nous a dit qu'il était étonné que la Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec avait eu des commentaires positifs à propos du rapport. Nous avons répondu que naturellement ils en auraient. En parlant à quelques membres du FPJQ nous avons également entendu la ligne de parti qu'il y avait "trop" de gens qui s'appellent des journalistes et essayent d'entrer dans des conférences de presse et des galeries de presse législatives. Nous avons entendu l'objection aux blogueurs et aux auteurs des médias sur Internet. Ce qui est triste est qu'aux États-Unis les journalistes des journaux Internet comme Politico, the Huffington Post et Slate.com sont célébrés, ici ils seront marginalisés. De notre perspective, tout ceci est une tentative de contrôler l'expression qui vise la protection d'emplois.

Since the American and French revolutions writers and journalists have been recognized as the fourth estate of government. For centuries, those concerns of the people that the legislature will not address and that the judiciary cannot address, have been championed by a free and unfettered press. Try and control who is a journalist and you take the first step to the destruction of freedom. Accrediting writers is like accrediting who can stand for public office. At its best, the fourth estate is the staff of the innocent and the shield of the just. Destroy that and you start to destroy liberty. Papineau and Lafontaine, Cartier and Laurier, Godbout and Harvey, Trudeau and Levesque - all writers at one time in their careers - understood this intimately. They believed in the free battleground of ideas. They must now be turning in their graves at the betrayal of their most noble aspirations.

...si le Gouvernement nous protège de tout,
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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Revenge of the nerds

I was wrong. Almost exactly two years ago, I wrote in these pages that, as a proud journalist, I would be boycotting Twitter and limiting my use of Facebook. I argued at the time that traditional forms of media could remain competitive with social media if they simply fought back and put out a more entertaining product.

My six-month old Twitter handle, @delmarhasissues, demonstrates how misguided I was in writing the piece, “Is journalism dead? I will not be reduced to Twittering for attention,” and how I underestimated the power of nerds. That is to say, those who are the earliest adopters of new technologies; who have an innate ability to predict how we will be living in the years to come.

I hereby bow to our nerd overlords and embrace that journalism and social media can not only coexist, but thrive together. Now, I must warn others. The Charest government could also be underestimating nerds and even making the fatal mistake of going to war with them.

Quebec’s culture and communications minister, Christine St. Pierre, ordered last year that a government study be commissioned to look at, among other things, how the independent press could cope with new technologies. Université de Montréal journalism and communications professor Dominique Payette was given the job and her sweeping recommendations were released recently. All 51 of them.

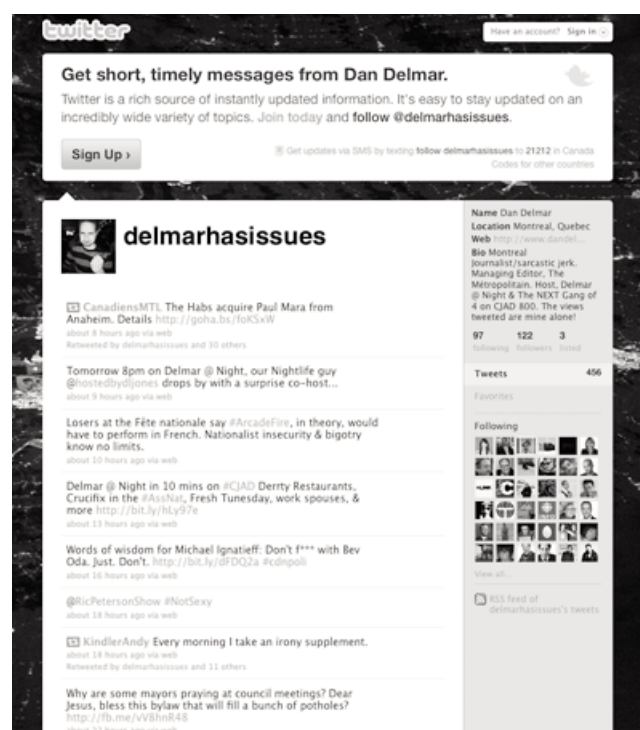
One highlight – and I use the term with tongue firmly planted in cheek – was the suggestion that all media organizations be required to buy memberships in and be regulated by the Quebec Press Council, that oracle of objectivity. Outlets like The Métropolitain who refuse to be governed by this needless regulatory body would be cut off from government advertising dollars (not that we’ve ever asked for taxpayer-funded handouts to begin with).

Another is the idea that media people would need to pass a French test in order to be “accredited” by this professional association. This could come as troubling news for hockey commentators and FM disc-jockeys across the province. C’est du gros n’importe quoi.

But the recommendation I want to focus on takes aim directly at the aforementioned nerds. Payette suggests, in a sense, that those who don’t work for these traditional, accredited media organizations cannot be real journalists. She wants to see these non-journalists placed at the bottom of the list when trying to access government information; they would also be excluded from protection mechanisms in place for their sources.

Doctors, lawyers, pharmacists...virtually all professions have some sort of regulatory body or professional association. That

makes perfect sense because these professionals require specific technical knowledge. Journalists do not require any specific technical knowledge – and journalists know that. That’s why so many of them are in favour of government-regulated media; because many know how mediocre and unremarkable



they are and that all it takes to replace them is a pulse and an internet connection.

When you’re in the business of free speech, having someone arbitrarily decide what constitutes acceptable conduct can be problematic, to say the least. When a journalist crosses the line from acceptable criticism into libel, well, we have the courts to sort that out – nothing more is needed. Despite the preaching of media purists and some journalism professors, this profession is not a science; our work is subjective and creative, thus extremely difficult, if not downright impossible to regulate.

Not only is there no consensus on what journalism is, but new media innovations are raising questions on who journalists are. And many of the best new journalists fall well outside of traditional parameters. Who are Payette or St. Pierre to potentially deny them access to information simply because they practice their craft on the internet or don’t have the buying power to join the Press Council?

Independent Canadian bloggers like Warren Kinsella or Pierre Bourque regularly break stories that mainstream media outlets miss; in fact, we often get our ideas from writers on the web (don’t tell anyone!). In the US, online media organizations are more of a force. If the American government even considered interfering with The Drudge Report, Slate.com or The Huffington Post, there would be hell to pay. In Quebec, virtually no one bats an eyelash at the thought of statist media control.

Apart from the inherent problems with government-regulated press, the Charest government would be angering an increasingly powerful group of organizations with these potential new regulations. The culture minister would be wise to look to recent examples of non-traditional media having an enormous impact on the political landscape: Wikileaks and the ongoing protests in Arab countries, where much of the word is getting out through social media.

Governments who attempt to regulate communication and free speech will undoubtedly face the wrath of the people, if only because in 2011, it is all too easy to unleash wrath (as I write this, over 700,000 on Facebook are ‘attending’ “A Virtual March of Millions in Solidarity with Egyptian Protestors”). Why brave a cold Quebec winter to protest on the streets when you can tweet? Tag your post with #Charest, and he’ll get the message – with more force than if you were waiving a placard in front of his office.

Since I wrote my anti-tech rant two years ago, I’ve experimented with social media; working inside the nerd universe, instead of being stubborn and battling against it, has led to tangible results for the organizations I am associated with. My message to the Charest government: You cannot beat the nerds. You might as well join them.

It is ludicrous to commission studies with the premise that somehow government can improve the media landscape. Media at its core is a reflection of a society and changes should happen organically, from the people. Government interference could poison media, making it even more beholden to those in power.

The Premier has had a difficult year in media. If government decided who is a real journalist and who is not, could his harshest critics be silenced? A far-fetched scenario, perhaps. But St. Pierre and Payette’s report has left the door wide open for all kinds of abuses.

Quebecers need to get on Facebook and Twitter and tell their government that “Quebec is not China. We demand a free media, #Charest” – all in a nerd-friendly 53 characters.

Delmar @ Night airs weeknights on CJAD 800 in Montreal and www.cjad.com.



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BOYCOTT THIS! SUITE DE LA PAGE 1

possède un magasin de chaussures nommé Le Marcheur et qui a la « témérité » de vendre des chaussures israéliennes. Peut-être les voix plus raisonnables de la société civile du Québec devraient maintenant se concentrer sur la CSN et la CSQ.

This call for a boycott of products and divestiture of investments in Israeli companies is not important in and of itself. Its importance lies in its manifestation of that part of Quebec society that is still caught up in the hypocrisies of petty narcissisms and the prejudices of its own narrow particularities. And how petty the narcissisms are. These groups start boycotting Israeli consumer goods and then want to move on to companies such as Caterpillar that, besides tractors, sells boots, caps, toys and pocketknives to Israel. In other words nothing that would really cause the boycotters any discomfort.

The cell phone was developed in Israel by Israelis working in the Israeli branch of Motorola. Most of the Windows NT and XP operating systems were developed by Microsoft-Israel. The Pentium microprocessor was made in Israel. Voice mail technology was developed in Israel. So our suggestion is that these "progressives" first cause themselves a little discomfort and refrain from using all these instruments that allow them to disseminate their disinformation and propaganda. But no, that would be too inconvenient for them. They want their cake and they want to eat it too. Particularly those pseudo-intellectuals in

PAJU. Well, boycott this PAJU!

Arabs inside Israel have complete civil rights including the recognition of Arabic as an official language. There are Arab judges, diplomats and some 15 members of Parliament including several representing parties dedicated to the break-up of the State. Jews still cannot get visas to most Arab countries. We would also like to remind the CSN and CSQ that Israel is the only society in the world where more than half its population is affiliated with unions. In most of the Arab Middle East union leaders are routinely harassed, beaten up and sometimes killed.

Except for the right to vote, Palestinians living on the West Bank have - in law - many of the same equity rights. And yes, far too many cases where rights have been abrogated by individual Israeli officials. There are problems there. But hardly of the type to justify the use of the word apartheid. Israel has extended full medical, educational and social services to the Palestinian population. The infant mortality rate, as well as the rate of those finishing high school is the highest among Arab societies in the Middle East. Some 30% of the student body of Hebrew University is Palestinian. Israel not only subsidizes social services - including Palestinian universities - it has also helped to get the Palestinian Authority on its feet by fully outfitting its police force including the supply of some 150,000 weapons.

Les politiques de l'apartheid en Afrique du

Sud visaient la ségrégation, la marginalisation et l'annulation de sa population noire. L'Israël est en Cisjordanie seulement parce qu'elle s'est défendue contre des guerres d'agression de ses voisins arabes. Il n'y a aucune politique de destruction de la population palestinienne. Tout à fait le contraire. L'Israël toute entière cherche

denounced Palestinian violence and hate. For the sake of the credibility of Quebec's true progressives, it is time to hear this message out in the open, clearly proclaimed and candidly defended. If it is not done, then Quebec's dream of the "projèt national" will be hijacked by purveyors of parochial prejudice, like Amir

L'Israël est en Cisjordanie seulement parce qu'elle s'est défendue contre des guerres d'agression de ses voisins arabes. Il n'y a aucune politique de destruction de la population palestinienne. Tout à fait le contraire. L'Israël toute entière cherche sa reconnaissance et la paix de sorte qu'elle puisse seretirer.

sa reconnaissance et la paix de sorte qu'elle puisse seretirer.

Khadir, rather than led by those loyal to the doctrines of social democracy and truth.

Several years ago, at the first ever conference between leaders of Quebec civil society and Israeli diplomats - sponsored by the Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal - FTQ President Henri Massé said that he saw nothing to condemn in Israel's policies and vehemently

Martin Luther King a dit : « Une société commence à mourir quand elle demeure silencieuse envers l'injustice ». Au Québec, aujourd'hui, résolvons de ne pas rester silencieux quand nous entendons des mensonges déguisés en vérité.

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LES SOULIERS D'AMIR, SUITE DE LA PAGE 1

Même s'il n'est pas juif et que les souliers israéliens Beautifeel représentent moins de 2% de ses ventes, Monsieur Archambault refuse de céder au chantage. Il vend ces chaussures de bonne qualité depuis plus de 15 ans. Apolitique, il refuse qu'une poignée d'idéologues extrémistes lui dictent ce qu'il peut vendre.

Depuis, tous les samedis, aux meilleures heures de vente, une dizaine d'activistes obstruent l'entrée de son magasin avec des affiches anti-

communiste du Canada.

POSITIONS RADICALES

Un député, payé par vos taxes, s'efforce de nuire à un simple commerçant de sa circonscription qui vend légalement des produits venant d'un pays avec lequel le Canada a une entente de libre-échange et le Québec des accords de coopération.

De son activisme pour un groupe «islamo-marxiste» classé terroriste à son soutien public pour George Galloway, propagandiste payé par la télé d'état iranienne, Khadir n'en est

LONGUE LISTE

À la suite des attentats du 11 septembre revendiqués par al-Qaïda, Khadir évoquait la possibilité d'un complot de la CIA.

En 2006, en plein conflit armé initié par le Hezbollah, Khadir était le seul politicien à ne condamner qu'Israël sans dire un mot contre le Hezbollah.

En mars dernier, Khadir reçoit à l'Assemblée nationale Jamal Zahalka, leader politique israélo-arabe prônant la dissolution d'Israël.

En septembre dernier, Khadir participe à la commémoration des martyrs de la résistance libanaise du Hezbollah.

À l'Assemblée nationale, Khadir multiplie les interventions pour dénoncer la seule démocratie du Moyen-Orient sans jamais une seule fois condamner les organisations terroristes islamistes, ni les tyrannies du monde arabe.

Combien de Monsieur Archambault devront être terrorisés

avant que la population déçante et cesse de faire d'Amir Khadir le politicien le plus populaire au Québec?

En attendant, combattons sa campagne d'intimidation en allant magasiner chez Monsieur Archambault samedi après-midi. Votons avec nos pieds en achetant des chaussures. Nous vaincrons le terrorisme économique de Khadir une paire de souliers à la fois.

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Un député, payé par vos taxes, s'efforce de nuire à un simple commerçant de sa circonscription qui vend légalement des produits venant d'un pays avec lequel le Canada a une entente de libre-échange et le Québec des accords de coopération.

Israël, distribuent des tracts qui appellent au boycott de la boutique et apostrophent les clients.

Surprise samedi dernier: Amir Khadir s'est joint aux manifestants, en compagnie de ses camarades Jafar Khadir, ex-membre du Comité central du Parti communiste du Québec, et William Sloan, membre du comité central du Parti

pas à sa première controverse avec ses positions extrémistes sur les questions du Moyen-Orient.

Musulman non-pratiquant, Khadir ne soutient pas certaines causes islamistes par conviction religieuse, mais participe plutôt à l'alliance «anti-impérialiste» entre l'extrême-gauche et les islamistes qui se forge partout en Occident.

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LE BOYCOTT SUR ST-DENIS EST UNE ÉCHEC, SUITE DE LA PAGE 1

Yves Archambault, pour démontrer leur soutien au droit de l'homme d'affaires de la rue St-Denis de gérer sa propre entreprise et ont repris la rue. Une victoire après presque treize semaines. Les partisans du magasin avaient repris la rue et les boycotteurs de gauche et pro-Palestiniens n'étaient pas présents. Une victoire pour la liberté du commerce et le droit d'être laissé en paix.

« C'est une question de principe », a dit Normand Guay pendant qu'il quittait le magasin avec sa nouvelle paire de chaussures. « Ce type a le droit de gérer sa propre entreprise sans qu'on lui dise ce qu'il devrait ou ne devrait pas faire. »

Après le gros titre du dimanche précédent quand Le Journal de Montréal a publié une photo en première page montrant la députée de NDG Marlene Jennings essayant une paire de chaussures dans le magasin d'Archambault, un nombre de plus en plus important de députés fédéraux et provinciaux et de personnalités assorties des médias utilisent la manif sur St-Denis comme une occasion fait sur mesure pour démontrer leur soutien au milieu des affaires infortuné de la ville. Indépendamment du samedi quand Jennings et le député libéral fédéral de Westmount Marc Garneau sont venus pour acheter quelques chaussures, plusieurs informations rapportent que Benoît Dutrizac, l'animateur populaire de radio de Montréal, est venu au magasin afin de s'acheter une paire de chaussures de même que l'ancien ministre de la justice et député

fédéral de Mont-Royal Irwin Cotler. Après que le député conservateur Steven Blaney a condamné le boycott comme du « ... terrorisme économique », le chef du Bloc québécois Gilles Duceppe a suivi avec sa propre lettre dans laquelle il a dit que le boycott (avec une autre série récente d'incidents antisémitiques)

n'a aucune place dans la société ouverte et démocratique du Québec. Dans une lettre adressée à Adam Atlas, le président du Congrès juif québécois, Duceppe mentionne que le boycott est « ... totalement inacceptable dans une société démocratique », et s'est assuré qu'une copie soit envoyée à Archambault.

PAJU avait également fait face à l'embarras dans une manifestation récente quand un manifestant de PAJU - devant les leaders de la coalition anti-boycott Éric Duhaime, Beryl Wajzman et David Ouellette - a commencé à crier des insultes racistes à Tshibain Tshibungu, un nouveau immigré au Canada

Après quatre mois de manifestations intermittentes, Archambault perd rapidement la patience avec le théâtre de rue devant son magasin. Bien qu'il soit reconnaissant de tout l'appui qu'il a reçu au cours des dernières semaines, il a dit au The Metropolitain qu'il n'arrive pas encore à comprendre pourquoi ils

Après quatre mois de manifestations intermittentes, Archambault perd rapidement la patience avec le théâtre de rue devant son magasin.

originaire du Congo.

« Que fais-tu ici ? », a-t-il crié. « Ta peau n'est même pas blanche comme la mienne. »

« Qu'est-ce que la couleur de ma peau à avoir avec le droit de cet homme [Archambault] de gérer son entreprise sans que des gens lui disent quoi faire? », a demandé Tshibungu.

[Les militants de PAJU] considèrent son magasin un endroit approprié pour une discussion au sujet de la politique du Moyen-Orient

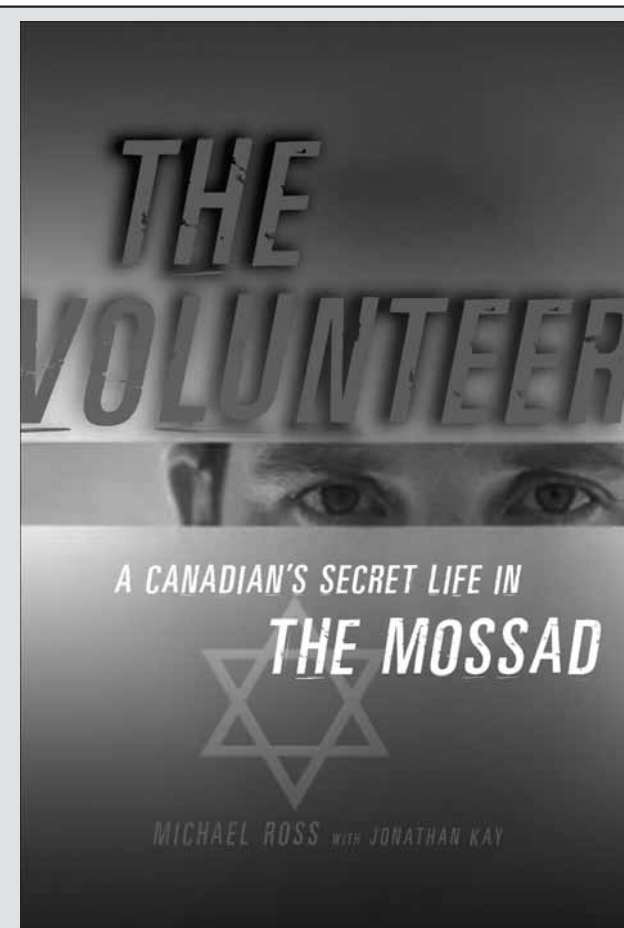
« Peut importe ce qui arrive, » a dit Archambault, « ... je ne laisserai toujours pas quiconque me dire ce que je peux ou ne peux pas vendre dans mon magasin. »

THE VOLUNTEER

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



David Solway is the award-winning author of over twenty-five books of poetry, criticism, educational theory, and travel. He is a contributor to magazines as varied as the *Atlantic*, the *Sewanee Review*, *Books in Canada*, and the *Partisan Review*. His most recent book is *The Big Lie: On Terror, Antisemitism, and Identity*.

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Canada already knows a Muslim Sit-Com is not the answer

CBS anchor Katie Couric recently went on record deploring the “bigotry” and “seething hatred” that Muslims are supposed to be facing in the U.S., and proposing a “Muslim version of the *Cosby Show*” as a remedy to this lamentable situation. Of course, Ms. Couric’s reading of America’s ostensible anti-Muslim attitude is total nonsense of the sort associated with the political delirium of the “progressivist” class. The American people on the whole are probably among the most tolerant to be found anywhere in the world, with the glaring exception of the scandal-mongering left that has falsely donned the egalitarian mantle.

Apart from the sheer absurdity of Ms. Couric’s suggestion, there is also adramatis personae problem. Who would such a TV show include among its characters, wonders Abigail Esman in a *FrontPage Magazine* article: wannabe Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad, or Farooque Ahmed who planned to bomb Washington’s Metrorail stations, or Nadal Malik Hassan who slaughtered his fellow soldiers at Ford Hood? But why stop there? How about Dallas resident Yasser Abdel Said who did away with his two teenage daughters for dating unapproved boys? Or Zein Issa in St. Louis who killed his daughter for dating an African-American? Or Chaudhry Rashid in Jonesboro, Georgia, who strangled his daughter for trying to leave an arranged marriage? Or Mohammed Shojaeifard of Roslyn, New York, who shot his estranged wife, mother-in-law and young daughter? To name just a few.

Indeed, several of the 9/11 nineteen trained and operated in the U.S. Perhaps some of their thespian impersonators might make a cameo appearance on the hypothetical al-Cosby show, trading jokes with the rest of the cast. The comic material would be inexhaustible: honor killings, wife beating, polygamy, martyrdoms, dhimmitude, jizzya, blowing up churches, incinerating buildings, Jew-bashing, slavery, lawfare, paramilitary recruiting—the laughs just keep on coming. That should put America at ease and salve Ms. Couric’s tender soul.

Here in the Great White North, we have already mounted a Muslim-friendly sit-com, courtesy of the left-leaning Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, called *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. It is filled with babbling pseudo-Muslims who have little in common with their real-world compatriots. The women on the show are Westernized females in silky chadors lording it over their men like not-so desperate housewives. The clean-shaven, jeans-clad, latte-quaffing, yuppie imam exists nowhere in Islam. The sort of problems which the little community must

resolve—whether the fast of Ramadan ends with cucumber sandwiches or goat stew—are offensively disingenuous efforts to minimize the threat of a slickly encroaching Islamic ethos. The stated intention of Little Mosque’s creator, Zarqa Nawaz, is to put the “fun back into fundamentalism” and to give people “a sense that Muslims have so many similarities to non-Muslims. . . . It’s the same issues, you know, a father and his rebellious teenage daughter. . . just because you’re Muslim your standards may be a little bit different, but they’re still the same issues.”

One begs to differ, if one must beg at all. Pace Ms. Nawaz, standards tend to be a lot different. Muslim daughters have good reason to fear their fathers and brothers who often regard rebelliousness as a capital offence. The three daughters of Muslim-Canadian business man Muhammad Shafia, who were found drowned in a car at the bottom of the Rideau Canal near Kingston, Ontario, might attest to the truth that programs like Little Mosque labor to dissemble. So might 16-year old Aqsa Parvez, murdered by her father for

were planning to blow up buildings and public transit systems? Where are the so-called Toronto 18 who conspired to blow up the Toronto Stock Exchange and behead the Canadian prime minister? Or Said Namouth involved in an international terrorist plot or Momin Khawaja convicted of terrorism-financing operations and building a remote-control detonating device or Montreal resident Ahmed Ressam of the thwarted LAX strike? This is only an abridged list.

Little Mosque on the Prairie is a fable in bad taste. (I have just now watched an episode in which one of the characters flaunts a gleaming razor-sharp box cutter to disembowel a sofa chair. Have they forgotten so soon?) Canadian viewers who enjoy this program and chuckle at its fusty and inappropriate humor are in a state of denial or, in Andrew Bostom’s apt phrase, “Islamically perplexed.” But at some point reality must intervene. The genuine issue has nothing to do with the canard of “Islamophobia,” which is nonexistent, or a supposed “backlash” against Muslims, which is frankly undetectable. Media

Little Mosque on the Prairie is an averting fiction, a fantasy which has no reality outside the heads of multiculti CBC executives and a politically indifferent audience. True, all sit-coms are averting fantasies and are meant to be reassuringly non-controversial. But in cases like this one, the subject is already heavily politicized and bears the clear implications of social disquietude, if not outright menace.

refusing to wear the hijab, or 20-year-old Khatera Sadiqi gunned down by her brother, along with her fiancé, for the crime of asserting her independence.

Little Mosque on the Prairie is an averting fiction, a fantasy which has no reality outside the heads of multiculti CBC executives and a politically indifferent audience. True, all sit-coms are averting fantasies and are meant to be reassuringly non-controversial. But in cases like this one, the subject is already heavily politicized and bears the clear implications of social disquietude, if not outright menace. There are far too many troubling, real-life characters “out there”—convinced jihadists, second-generation extremists, terror mentors, fundamentalist preceptors, inflammatory imams, philosophical enablers and practicing killers—to allow for a calming immunity to the actual.

Indeed, were Abigail Esman surveying the Canadian scene, she might wonder why certain prominent Muslim jihadists are nowhere to be seen on Little Mosque. Where are Misbahuddin Ahmed, Hiza Alizadeh and Khurran Sher who

entertainment initiatives intended to neutralize what does not exist do far more harm than good since they effectively obscure what does.

The real issue, whether in Canada or the United States or anywhere in the West, has to do with the infiltration of Sharia-compliant usages and customs throughout the culture, and especially with the proliferation of Islamic schools featuring a jihadist curriculum, all too often winked at by our public authorities. For example, the Dar al-Imam school in Montreal sports an affiliation with the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) and the Muslim Brotherhood, both jihadist organizations. According to Marc Lebus, editor of the website Point de Bascule (Tipping Point) which diligently tracks the inroads made by stealth jihad and Shari’a advocacy programs in Canada, the school’s program is anti-Semitic, anti-Gay, anti-Women, pro-suicide bombing, and endorses noted Islamic apologists like Salam Elmenyawi, Tariq Ramadan, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Waleed Najmedinne and Sheema Khan—the latter Chair of CAIR-CAN, who believes that Muslims must “fortify” themselves against Islamophobia.

Nor are institutes like Dar al-Islam merely localized phenomena. Lebus informs us that in Edmonton, “some public schools offer an Islamic Studies course to ‘expose’ their students to Sharia,” without the slightest “challenging view” of what Shari’a entails. The curriculum is “developed by MAC’s representatives in Alberta, and only MAC approved books are being studied.” The Islamic syllabus is going national.

The same is true in the U.S. As Robert Spencer, director of Jihad Watch and prolific author on the subject of the history and politics of Islam, points out, “the Islamic groups that vet American public school textbooks. . . make sure that the Islamic instruction in these textbooks presents a picture of Islam that is so pristine. . . it sometimes crosses the boundary from mere pro-Muslim bias into outright Islamic proselytizing.” Spencer continues: “Of all the arenas in which the stealth jihad is advancing, the most crucial is in our schools, where stealth jihadists have found a welcoming environment among teachers deeply steeped in the multicultural ethos.” These credulous or

partisan pedagogues “present a view of Islam that whitewashes its violent history and intolerant religious imperatives.” We might designate these schools as representing the higher sit-com. The Islamic academies go much further, bordering on the status of domestic maddrasas inculcating “an unequivocal hatred toward non-Muslims and a deep suspicion toward Western culture.”

The sandstorm bearing down on us is no desert mirage. If we do not learn to practice the discipline of political meteorology, we will eventually find ourselves buried under the turbulent changes in the world’s ideological climate. Certainly, promoting sit-coms that suppress the Islamic agenda and somnolize the public is not the answer we are looking for. Monitoring or closing down Islamic schools that indoctrinate Muslim youth in favor of Islamic advances into the heritage culture would be far more useful, as would the defusing of the curricular bomb being primed and armed in our own mainstream educational system.

Sit-coms or no sit-coms, this is no laughing matter.

GLOBAL VILLAGE



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David Jones, co-author of *Uneasy Neighb(u)r(s): Canada, the USA and the Dynamics of State, Industry and Culture*, is a former U.S. diplomat who served in Ottawa. He now lives in Arlington, Virginia."

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New START Had It Easy

On December 22, 2010, the Senate having spent much time wailing and gnashing teeth approved the New START Treaty with Russia. From the language, one could have thought its advocates believed it to be the arms control's Second Coming (or at least a much accelerated new millennium) while its opponents characterized it as a cup of hemlock for the

Republic.

The rhetoric was over the top; the truth, of course, more complicated. New START is a useful follow on to the expired START treaty notably with prospective additional strategic missile reductions and a revived inspection regime. Its problems fall into the category of what cannot be known, rather than what specifically is in the Treaty.

And this falls into the category of "trust"-- not the Reganesque "trust but verify" sobriquet that characterized the 1987 Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty. "Trust" in INF was easy--it was with the Soviets. "Trust" for New START is harder--the Republicans need to trust a Democratic president and administration to implement promised nuclear warhead modernization and

upgrades and to trust that the intimation in the New START preamble that defensive antiballistic missile systems are not limited. Trusting Americans is much harder. And trying to nail down an Obama commitment is akin to nailing Jello to a wall.

There really is nothing new under the sun. In 1988, having completed the INF Treaty with Presidents Reagan-Gorbachev signing on December 8, 1987, the Administration anticipated rapid ratification by the Senate. The Treaty was widely popular in the United States and globally, particularly in Europe. It had been part of Europe/NATO politics for most of a decade from painstakingly agreed deployments in European basing countries to stop-and-start negotiations to a comprehensive agreement eliminating all intermediate and shorter range U.S./Soviet missiles with detailed arrangements for their destruction and subsequent verification of their elimination.

But the Democratic controlled Senate had no special interest in making the Republican president (and the prospective Republican presidential nominee for 1988) look good by quickly endorsing a Republican drafted/negotiated arms control agreement. (Does this tension between Executive and Congress sound familiar?)

So the Senate Democrats decided to put its mark on the INF Treaty. Most didn't want to reject it; after all "arms control" was one of their political icons, but they wanted to leave the impression that the Republicans hadn't done that good a job (and they could have done better). So they:

-- demanded endless testimony by a wide variety of senior figures to appear before not just the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services committees but their House analogues;

-- posed quite literally 1,000 questions regarding the Treaty-- questions with complex, multipart variants only with ancillary connection to INF but which protocol demanded be answered in painstaking,

interagency cleared (and thereby time consuming) detail;

-- blew off the endorsements by every living former Secretary of State.

Does the above sound familiar?

Moreover, as was the case for New START, the Senate demanded the "negotiating record" of the INF Treaty. This demand was a consequence of an Executive Branch claim that it could adjust elements of the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty based on points discussed during the negotiations albeit not directly reflected in treaty text. After much negotiation over what was to be provided (and diplomatic thrashing to compile detailed records of negotiating sessions), the INF delegation provided a large safe filled with material to be seen only by senators and/or staff with appropriate security clearances. The upshot? Virtually nobody ever accessed the INF material; it was a political rather than a substantive demand. In contrast, the New START delegation stiff-armed the demand for the negotiating record, and it was never provided and thus what may have been discussed about defensive systems remains unknown.

Finally, Senator Nunn batted on an obscure piece of Treaty language and insisted that its wording would permit the Soviets to manufacture SS-20 stages. Absurd, but no counter argument could convince the senator, so the U.S. negotiators returned to Geneva to create language to satisfy him. In contrast, Republican Senator McCain insisted that New START preamble language noting "...the interrelationship between strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms...will become more important as strategic nuclear arms are reduced..." prejudiced development of the U.S. ballistic missile defense program and should be deleted. Arguing that the preamble was not legally binding, the Administration declined to renegotiate the point, leaving the issue unresolved.

Ultimately, the Senate ratified INF 93-5, but New START only 71-26, a "squeaker" in political terms.

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Haiti and the scandal of The Global Fund

Your hard-earned tax dollars have been pouring into Haiti since the earthquake last year and things have only worsened. Here's a thought... maybe money and aid aren't the answer.

It is now crystal clear that The Global Fund, although much ballyhooed, is totally corrupt. This is the high profile charity that pretends to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and which benefits from lucrative, high-profile support from the likes of U2 front-man Bono, Microsoft founder Bill Gates and France's First Lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy. The United States and Canada have pledged to give a whopping \$10 billion to this fund for various third-world improvement projects, including Haiti. But if the fund can't even keep its own affairs straight, we must demand that our politicians stop contributing

to it immediately.

And who is it that has pointed to the corruption of Bono's, Gates' and Bruni-Sarkozy's fave charity? Some nasty American right-wing think tank? Nope. It was none other than John Parsons, the inspector general of The Global Fund. He examined just four of the 145 countries that the fund claims to help and found a whopping \$34 million had been stolen!

Are these just isolated examples, as the fund's executive director, Michel Kazatchkine, claims? Nope. The really interesting part is that Parsons can't examine the books of the other 141 projects because the countries being helped won't allow it. 'Scuze me? Even the United Nations isn't this corrupt. Well folks, hold onto your hats, and wallets, because it turns out they are.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) distributes the money collected by The Global Fund. It's an über-liberal UN bureaucracy with zero transparency. Nile Gardiner, a senior fellow at the American Heritage Foundation, characterizes the UNDP as "a large black hole." Can you believe this? People are dying in Haiti and surprise! the UN is to blame.

Here's a little tip for the bleeding-heart jet-set: if you see the letters U and N next to each other on any of the paperwork for your favorite charity, BAIL the-heck OUT! Hey Bono, Gates and Bruni-Sarkozy! I'm talkin' to you!

Haiti doesn't need charity. First it needs joint Canadian and American military rule to bring law and order. Sound cruel? The alternative to responsible military rule by responsible nations like Canada

and the U.S. is more of the highly irresponsible military and criminal gang rule that Haitians have been subjected to since they were a French colony. Second, Haiti needs businesses, lots of 'em. Only businesses create jobs. You'd think smart people like Bono, Gates and Bruni-Sarkozy might realize this. After all, they all owe their success to business. Why are Haitians any different?

Liberal bleeding hearts have to learn that you can't "inject" prosperity into people. Prosperity has to be earned, not because it's the fair way to go, but because history shows it's the ONLY way to go. Even when medicine and food are donated instead of cash, they're stolen by Haitian officials, sold on the black market, and the money all ends up in Swiss bank accounts. You feeling all warm-n'-fuzzy inside yet? Sadly, it's time for some realism.



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The Hon. David Kilgour is Canada's former Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific and for Central & Eastern Europe and the Middle East. He is a tireless international human rights campaigner and has co-authored, with David Matas, the seminal study on the tragedy of organ harvesting in China. He is the co-author with David T. Jones of *Uneasy Neighbours*.

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Democracy in the Arab world

As more and more Arab countries turn their backs on autocracy, Canada can be a key player in encouraging democratic governments to take hold.

In the 22 member states of the Arab League, many people now appear to be turning their backs on autocracy, declaring to themselves and the world that governance of, by, and for the people is a universal value.

The end seems closer for democratic window-dressing, pious declarations of good intentions, and unfair elections like the one in Egypt last year, where the governing party's majority in parliament jumped from 75 to 95 per cent in the first round of voting.

Hosni Mubarak reportedly once described the Egyptian army as democratic because army commanders weighed opinions from their officers before making decisions. How ironic that the army's conduct in the huge popular uprising against Mubarak has thus far been mostly exemplary, with soldiers marshalling citizens amicably through the street protests in Cairo.

Egyptians have had enough of tyranny, corruption, and torture by the interior ministry, and have indicated that the recent looting was done in part by secret police seeking to create the impression that, without Mubarak, the country would fall into chaos. Why, they ask, do roughly 36 million Egyptians live on less than a dollar a day? And why are 90 per cent of the unemployed under 30 years of age? In terms of gender equality, Egypt currently ranks 124 out of 130 nations surveyed.

In the Economist's 2010 democracy index of 167 countries, Egypt ranked 138, Tunisia 144, and Yemen 146. What must the citizens of the Arab League countries that fared even worse – Saudi Arabia (160), Libya (158), Djibouti (154), Sudan (151), and the United Arab Emirates (148) – be thinking now?

Many diverse populations around the world have cast off tyrants in the past. An estimated 85 of those tyrants were toppled by popular protests, and about 62 of the countries in question have since become democratic (in the broader sense of the term), despite some reversals in recent years.

The experiences of new, emerging, and restored democracies offer lessons for the rest of the world. One of the most important is the need for national reconciliation in often difficult transitions – as in the case of South Africa under Nelson Mandela, for example. Those who commit crimes should be held accountable in courts, and anger must not descend into violence and score-settling.

For members of the Arab League – all with large Muslim majorities – a major issue in terms of democratic governance will be how to apply the direction given in the Qur'an:

For members of the Arab League – all with large Muslim majorities – a major issue in terms of democratic governance will be how to apply the direction given in the Qur'an: "commanding right and forbidding wrong."

"commanding right and forbidding wrong."

When Indonesia, the largest Muslim democracy, held parliamentary elections in 2009, support for fundamentalist parties declined. Most voters seemed concerned about good governance, jobs, and economic development. Overall, support for fundamentalist parties fell from 39 per cent to 29.5 per cent. In the later presidential election, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won re-election easily; his strategy of co-opting the good governance agenda and launching a wide-ranging anti-corruption campaign was well received. Similarly, in Malaysia's 2008 elections, most of the electorate voted for parties that promised good governance. Parties that had purely religious agendas did poorly. Voters, two-thirds of which are Muslim, resoundingly rejected the ruling party in four major states, despite its attempts to appeal to religious sentiments.

On Feb. 2, Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who ordered violent attacks on pro-democracy protesters in 2009, claimed weakly to have encouraged the uprising in Egypt. Independent observers say the common cause for which people are rallying is not religion, but democracy, and that the Tehran regime is

increasingly fearful of another democratic uprising at home.

There are several initiatives Canada could take to encourage democracy in the Arab world. One is to improve our own governance, for instance by improving the dignity of low-income Canadians.

As well, in future dealings with despots, our government should be clearer about Canadian values, including independent media, pluralism, an impartial judiciary, and transparent, accountable, and responsive governance. We should no longer permit persons connected to authoritarian regimes – such as

Belhassen Trabelsi, the brother-in-law of ousted Tunisian president Ben Ali – to become permanent residents of Canada.

We should deliver aid to countries with corrupt governance only through civil society organizations in the receiving country or through international NGOs. Building good governance institutions, including human-rights organizations, should be a major focus. CIDA is currently disbursing \$20 million to Egypt and \$1.3 million to Tunisia every year. With the strong likelihood of severe food shortages arising almost immediately in both countries, CIDA should announce a special food relief and deliver it quickly.

In essence, what Egyptians, Tunisians, and others in the Arab world are doing is eschewing the West's security and stability concerns in favour of their own democratic and development aspirations. Their cries of "Hurriyya" (liberty) have so far not been accompanied by anti-western ones; instead, many Arab democrats appear to be looking to the West for unequivocal support for meaningful democratic change.

This article first appeared in themark.com

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The Flashlight at the End of the Tunnel

Can we cement a fragile recovery in 2011?

Statistics often mask a reality that is more complex than the numbers. The US has been in recovery for over a year, yet most Americans will tell you that it feels as if it has not even started. In Canada, our recession was the mildest of all the industrialized nations yet our mindset is still influenced by the slow recovery of our southern neighbour. Economists in both countries have said that employment growth is the key to sustaining the recovery; consumer confidence and, eventually, consumer spending must be strengthened via income growth overall. Those who are already employed need to have more disposable income in order to increase household spending and those who successfully return to the workforce must re-initiate their normal spending levels. Increased consumer spending and confidence are self-reinforcing and given that consumer spending is now 65% of all North American economic activity, there can be no sustained recovery without a growing workforce.

Throughout 2010 most corporations rebuilt their profitability without rehiring workers, seeking profits through higher productivity. That trick has to come to an end as eventually companies realize that they need to expand their workforces to sustain the supply of good and services. We finally saw companies start hiring in earnest in the last quarter and now both the US and Canadian economies are creating jobs consistent with their long term monthly averages.

The U.S. has a lot of catching up to do – they

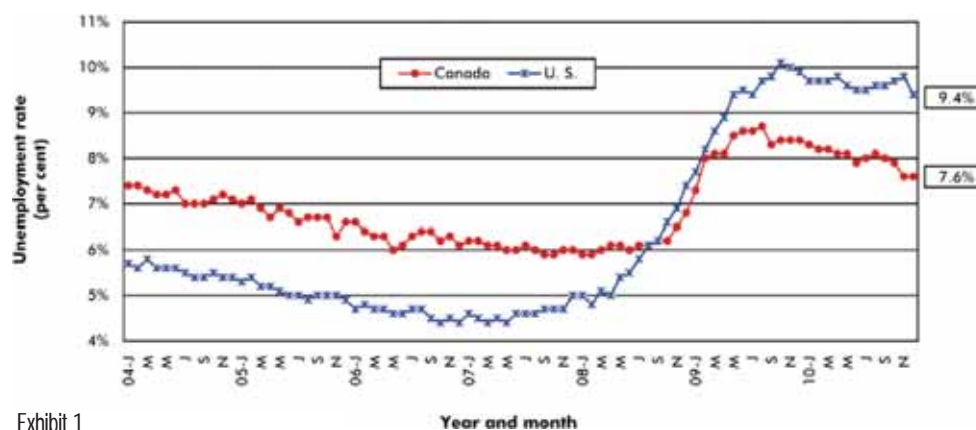


Exhibit 1

lost over 8 million jobs during their two year recession and have only added back just over 1 million workers. Canada, in contrast, lost only 400,000 jobs during its 9 month recession and has added back almost all of those. Indeed, Canada is poised to outstrip the U.S. in relative job growth in 2011.

Exhibit 1: Canada vs. U.S. monthly unemployment rate (percent) seasonally adjusted data

Data sources (seasonally adjusted): Statistics Canada and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Department of Labor). / Chart: CanaData - Reed Construction Data.

For full-time workers the only way to increase their spending power is via wage hikes, and exhibit 2 looks at the relationship between U.S. wage increases and spending growth over nearly 20 years. The correlation is remarkable; with 4% real wage growth in 2010, there is more income available to be spent – but that money may be sucked up by expenditures that do not promote

economic growth. Consumers are facing a host of attacks on their pocketbooks for basic staples of a typical North American existence that could dampen disposable income and therefore slow growth in 2011.

Here are the major economic headwinds of 2011 facing North America:

1) Record prices for basic foodstuffs: The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization reported in early January that food prices have spiked to their highest nominal levels since 1990, exceeding

Continued on page 14

Exhibit 2: Private Sector Compensation Growth & Personal Consumption Expenditure Growth



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Haver Analytics.

FATAL GREED

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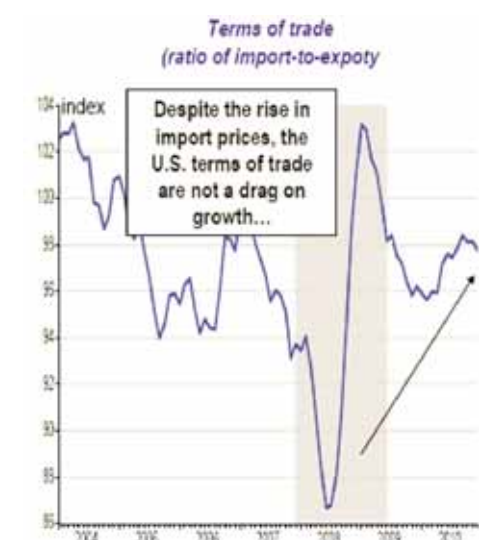
THE FLASHLIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

the previous high set in 2008. Food prices are at record levels in 61 countries, and a return to food riots is a virtual certainty in the developing world in countries where current government subsidies are unsustainable. For the North American consumer, foods made with wheat, rice, corn and sugar are going up, as are other staples like coffee. Consumers may end up having to spend what they thought was discretionary income on the basic necessities of their daily existence.

2) Sustained higher oil prices: While we may not see the record \$145 per barrel price of late 2008, it is likely that a \$100 barrel will translate into \$4 per gallon gas across many regions of the US and sustain \$1.30 per litre in Canada. Those who recall the onset of the financial crisis in October 2008 will remember that it coincided with record high gas prices, leading many who were faced with refinancing their homes at that time with the stark choice of either paying their mortgage or gassing up the car to go to work. Oil is also an important factor in food transportation and therefore has a double effect on consumers – in their cars and at the dinner table. If consumers spend their extra income on transportation, then they cannot spend it at Wal-Mart or Target.

3) Chinese Yuan appreciation: Referring to Wal-Mart and Target, a lot of those products from toys to knock-down furniture come to us from China. Consumers have benefitted from almost 30 years of falling prices on a wide range of goods due to the ever-increasing economies of scale afforded to us via Chinese industrialization. In short, the Chinese made it cheaper and the savings were passed on to us; we bought these goods with debt and then the Chinese invested their profits in the debt that we issued to them. It was a good game until our debt got out of hand and now the goods are going to get more expensive. Some economists estimate that the Yuan is undervalued by up to 40%; most agree that an appreciation of at least 20% is inevitable in order to address significant international trade imbalances that have been created by having the Yuan linked to a falling US Dollar. Referring to the two graphs representing the US-Chinese trading relationship, Chinese exports to the US have recovered but the rising value of the Yuan is an increasing threat to

prices. After falling during the recession, Chinese prices are rising not only because of gradual Yuan appreciation but also because of inflationary pressures (wages and input costs) within the Chinese economy. The era of cheap Chinese manufacturing is coming to an end due to internal structural changes in their economy and the effect will be amplified by a rising Yuan, forcing consumers to suddenly start



NBF Economy & Strategy (ICI data via Datastream)

paying more for goods for which they received only price cuts in previous years.

4) Taxes, taxes, taxes: At least 10 US states and one Canadian province (Ontario) are in such dire fiscal shape that taxes will have to rise substantially to fill the deficit gap. Illinois was one of the first to take the plunge by hiking the state tax rate from 3% to 5% to fill an expected deficit of 40% of their state budget. Measures such as these will become the norm as states slash spending and raise revenues to compensate for the massive compression of their tax bases following the recession. Ontario's go-slow attitude towards reducing its \$20 billion CAD annual deficits is going to make it the top debtor province before long and will make Quebec look like a fiscal tightwad – their taxes are going up as well, but not before this year's provincial election. Employers will increase salaries only to see those extra funds transferred to the local authorities. Note that this scenario does not consider the tax deal recently concluded in the

US Congress that maintains the Bush-era tax cuts for two more years with no significant spending reductions – that game will also come to an end soon, and Americans will start to pay to close the federal deficit as well.

5) An international crisis ignored so far – Pakistan: Not enough people are talking about the assassination of Punjab provincial governor Salman Taseer who opposed his country's



Employment growth is the key to sustaining the recovery; consumer confidence and, eventually, consumer spending must be strengthened via income growth overall.

instability is downplayed on purpose in the popular media because those in charge think that the situation is too complicated to explain to a population base ignorant of international affairs. Imagine the challenge our news editors are going to face when they have to educate everyone on how Pakistan became a problem so “quickly” and why we were not told sooner.

radical anti-blasphemy laws, which made him a liberal politician in an increasingly radicalized society. The gradual disintegration of Pakistan reminds me of the slow decomposition of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires between 1848 and 1914 – it happened in small incremental steps, ever weakening the fabric of their governments and societies until a war was unleashed and they imploded. The danger today is that we cannot afford to let Pakistan become a failed state, not only because it has nuclear weapons but also because of the size of its population, its critical geopolitical positioning and the utter impossibility of occupying its territory to put it back together. North Americans need to be concerned because the outbreak of a civil or regional war in Pakistan would certainly involve India, possibly China, coalition forces in Afghanistan and the Russians. It would disrupt world trade and most likely cause a double-dip recession in the West as consumers close their wallets out of fear. Pakistan's

Every economic recovery faces challenges, whether economic or political. In the case of the current recovery from the Great Recession, we did not collectively address many of the structural economic and, indeed, social problems it exposed. We papered them over with cheap government money and hoped for the best, that a future government, or indeed, a future generation, would solve them. Procrastination is not absolution, not given the magnitude of what we have proverbially swept under the rug. Our job-based recovery will continue only as long as the problems described above remain simmering and do not froth over. The chance of all five of these issues remaining contained is not high, but we can probably deal with them individually without throwing the recovery off track. If two or three become critical concurrently then we can expect the recovery to come to an abrupt end.



Ideas before identities.
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

George Jonas is a Canadian journalist, who has also written novels, plays, and poetry.

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SOCIETY

The imperative of individualism

When I was 10, a rusty mastiff followed me home from the playground. It accepted a dish of liver from my mother, then curled up in front of my bed. Whenever my parents approached, it raised its massive head and growled.

I felt flattered. The dog had a collar but no tag. “Can I keep it?” I asked my father.

“If that were a real question,” my father replied, “my answer might be yes. But you and I know that what you’re actually asking is: Will you, dear parents, keep a dog for me? Feed it, walk it, groom it, muzzle it? And the answer to that is no.”

Considering the rusty beast sucked down more liver at one sitting than my weekly allowance, Dad was probably right. Letting a

coin. A call for individual responsibility: “Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for yourself!” would have impressed me more.

Such a call would have cut against the grain of the times, though. People doing things for themselves were the last thing governments wanted. As the 1950s receded, modern welfare states started recognizing everywhere what a treasure irresponsible and dependent people were to them. Dysfunctional citizens were a master key in the hands of the official bureaucracy, the new ruling class. They could open every private door that the responsible and the independent had locked, turning a man’s house from a man’s castle into the government’s theme park.

Nowadays, sports are almost alone in defining the concept of “fairness” accurately as one person having the same chance as every other. Competitive sports teach us to expect equality of opportunity, not equality of results. Virtually no other social arena does that anymore.

child adopt a dog teaches responsibility, but parents adopting a dog for a child teaches only indulgence. Mostly Mastiff, as father dubbed the liver-guzzler, went to an acquaintance’s farm, where it soon distinguished itself by staring down a fox that was after a prize turkey cock. This act of bravery netted Mostly Mastiff many Brownie-points, only to lose them a week later when it gobbled down the gobbler it saved.

Father saw a lesson in this for me, as he did in most things. “Any dog sturdy enough to stare down a marauding fox is sturdy enough to eat a tom turkey,” he commented. I often thought of this in later years while observing the watchdogs of the state in action. Long before I heard the question “Who is guarding the guardians?” Mostly Mastiff had answered it for me.

Perhaps this is why President John F. Kennedy’s inaugural exhortation to Americans: “Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country” never inspired me. States doing things for individuals and individuals doing things for states seemed two sides of the same

In officialdom’s daily raids on personal sovereignty, in its oozing takeover of the individual, the irresponsible have become the battering ram of the state. They provide the excuse, the justification, the casus belli for government intrusion. We’re in a period in which dependence is patriotic, the role model is a snitch, and the ideal citizen a ward of the state.

Paradoxically, it’s the recreational world, the world of sports, the seemingly frivolous playing fields, that continue to foster a willing assumption of personal responsibility, along with daring, risk-taking and independence. If athletes, from parachutists to sumo wrestlers, share one principle, it’s that there are no excuses. Unless individuals pull their weight as competitors or members of the team, no one can (or should) pull it for them.

Nowadays, sports are almost alone in defining the concept of “fairness” accurately as one person having the same chance as every other. Competitive sports teach us to expect equality of opportunity, not equality of results. Virtually no other social arena does that anymore.

Sports come in two kinds, gladiatorial and athletic. Both require skill, endurance, and determination, but gladiatorial sports routinely involve mortal risk as well. In gladiatorial sports, failure doesn’t translate into the loss of points on a scoreboard but the loss of one’s life, at least potentially.

Skiers, mountaineers, speed contestants, and aviators are among those who engage in gladiatorial sports. Their performance is usually measured by a stopwatch rather than opinion, and their worst penalties are assessed not by a referee but by gravity. The laws of physics are unforgiving but fair. They consider no one’s gender or religion. Friction acts equally on the privileged and the dispossessed. Inertia has never heard about prejudice or affirmative action. This understanding often makes risk-takers highly responsible individu-

als, contrary to the stereotype cultivated by our risk-averse society.

Take seat belts. Responsible risk-takers had them installed in their cars long before anyone obliged them — I did in the early 1960s — but this didn’t make mandating seat-belt use less intrusive. Seat belts save lives that seat-belt laws demean. That’s simple enough — but it’s unfortunate that some people protest Big Nurse’s intrusion by choosing the worst of both worlds. They refuse to put on their seat belts — until they see a policeman.

Unwise. It’s not just cutting off your nose to spite your face but risking your life without making a point. A responsible civil libertarian keeps buckled up. The time to release oneself from the grip of the nanny-state is when a police officer pulls alongside. Do it then — the more ostentatiously, the better.

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L'Itineraire

The newsroom at L'Itineraire, magazine remains one of the most unique in Montreal because it is the only one in the city where you will also find several tables set aside for homeless people to eat. That's because the publication is published, sold and written by members of Montreal's homeless population and serves as a vehicle to help restore their pride while articulating their points of view.

The magazine is published by a non-profit organization and about 150 people, including myself, sell L'Itineraire in different locations across the island of Montreal. Each vendor is assigned at least one or two locations to sell. A number of us can also be found in métro stations.

I will soon be celebrating a small milestone as March 22nd will mark my 5 year anniversary of selling L'Itineraire. I still remember March 22nd 2006, the first day I started working at the Atwater Market selling the magazine. It was a bit of an inauspicious debut. I bought a few copies and was given a few extra copies for free to get me started. However I did not last long that day. In fact, I was so discouraged I did not return until Easter weekend when the weather turned milder. This time, Mother Nature seemed to be smiling down on me as I was able to sell as many magazines as I had I had brought with me.

I soon also realized that due to the high volume of people who frequent the market it remained a location that was worth frequenting on a regular basis. So much so, that I started working there three days a week. I became a regular fixture and throughout the year I continued uttering my sales pitch, "Journal de la rue pour aidez les sans abris, street paper to help the homeless". Sometimes my words fell on deaf ears with disinterested people passing me by and seemingly looking straight through me while other times I had



the pleasure of meeting many friendly and interesting people who offered me a friendly ear before purchasing a copy. I worked three consecutive winters outside in the cold selling the magazine. December has always been my best month and I try to work as many days as possible. It was quite a relief when I was eventually given permission to sell the magazine indoors.

I continued working at different sites in and around the market. However my successful experiences selling the magazine soon awakened a new fire inside of me as I sought to expand my horizons by also writing articles for L'Itineraire.

I am proud to say that five months after I started selling the magazine through rain, sleet and snow I had my first article published. Soon after my articles started appearing every month. It was an extremely valorizing experience to see my name and words in print. Eventually some of the people I met at Atwater Market would stop to tell me that they had enjoyed my articles

and encouraged me to pursue my new career path.

I continued writing and working harder, gaining confidence with each tap of the keyboard. I subsequently also gained more confidence when it came to dealing with the many people I was encountering on a daily basis.

Every month L'Itineraire provides us with subject ideas to write about but I have also been able to generate my own ideas most of the time. And it is these articles that I feel particularly attached to as they have generated the most positive feedback. One entitled "The value of a friend", as well as another called "Honesty counts" received particularly favourable reviews from my clients. In fact, on one occasion a Montreal-area teacher came over to shake my hand at the market and told me that he had read my article to his students in the classroom and that it received positive feedback.

The next time you visit Atwater Market there is a good chance you will see me as I currently still work there five days a week. I still enjoy chatting with merchants and supplying them with change. Many people are used to me being there and are loyal customers - I know many on a first-name basis.

Some people working at the market buy the magazine regularly and I'm proud to say I remain one of our top sellers.

I have truly enjoyed working in the Atwater Market and I love the atmosphere. It feels great to help the homeless people of Montreal as well as the entire L'Itineraire organization over these past five years.

I want to continue doing my job as working hard and honestly provide great rewards. This has truly been an eye-opening experience that has also allowed me to gain a new understanding and appreciation of the true powers of the printed word.

"You can get anything you want in life if you help others get what they want."

- George F. Lengvari, Sr.



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Rev. John Vaudry is a Presbyterian minister, pastor of Cote des Neiges Presbyterian Church, Montreal.

Rev. John Vaudry
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It Can Happen Here

American author Sinclair Lewis, in his chilling 1935 novel *It Can't Happen Here*, imagines the United States becoming a fascist state. Doremus Jessop, a small town Vermont newspaper editor, tries valiantly to warn his compatriots that what is taking place in Europe in the 1930s could occur on this side of the Atlantic, but is met with disbelief—"It can't happen here."

The National Assembly of Quebec's Select Committee on Dying with Dignity (with the slogan of the pro-euthanasia movement of the last 30 years written into its very title!) has been holding hearings across the province for several months. They have heard a variety of opinions and will soon be faced with the unenviable task of writing their report.

Of course, this matter of the care of the sick, the suffering and the terminally ill is extremely important. Protestant theologian Karl Barth wrote, "No community, whether family, village or state, is really strong if it will not carry its weak and even its weakest members... a community which regards its weak members as a hindrance, and even proceeds to their extermination is on the verge of collapse."

Many people feel that mercy-killing (euthanasia) and assisted suicide should be legalized. But are these the best options we can come up with? And do we really want to turn our physicians, with a tradition—going back at least to the Hippocratic Oath—of being healers, into killers?

We are always assured by the proponents of doctor-assisted suicide and euthanasia that such practices would be strictly voluntary. It would always be a matter of the sick person choosing freely to have his or her life ended.

No doubt, safeguards would be written into the law to prevent any abuses.

As someone who met with the Select Committee, I was struck by the astonishing naiveté of the several of the members who seem to think that voluntary euthanasia could not possibly become involuntary in time. It is well documented that the Netherlands, for example, began by permitting doctors to kill only those patients who wished to die, but eventually came to adopt a lax attitude toward the legal safeguards surrounding the practice. Dr Antoine Boivin,

who has studied the Dutch situation first-hand, wrote in *La Presse* in October, 2010 that, "In 2005, in the Netherlands, doctors intentionally brought about the deaths of over 1,000 people without their explicit request or without reporting their actions to the authorities."

It appears impossible to deny that there was a slope (slippery or otherwise) in Holland, and it is difficult to see why we in Quebec would be any different from the Dutch. Is it obvious that we are morally and ethically superior to others? Is human

Accuse)—was produced in Germany in 1941 as Nazi propaganda. The Nazis had already been practicing euthanasia for the mentally and physically handicapped. Dr Leo Alexander, a psychiatrist who worked with the Office of the Chief of Counsel for War Crimes at Nuremberg, stated in "Medical Science Under Dictatorship" (*New England Journal of Medicine*, July 1949) that according to the records, some 275,000 "socially unfit" people were put to death in "killing centers" under the Nazis.

Protestant theologian Karl Barth wrote, "No community, whether family, village or state, is really strong if it will not carry its weak and even its weakest members. . . a community which regards its weak members as a hindrance, and even proceeds to their extermination is on the verge of collapse."

nature here and now somehow radically unlike human nature in other countries and other times?

Recently, I watched a classic foreign film (subtitles and all) that very sympathetically tells the story of a woman with an incurable debilitating illness who asks her physician husband to kill her by means of a lethal drug dose. He agrees to her request and she dies to soft piano music being played in the next room. It is a powerful presentation of the case for voluntary euthanasia, and it has been used by some in our day to promote the cause of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

However, just as you are about to be seduced by the film's message, you remember that this movie—*Ich Klage An* (I

As ghastly as this was, Alexander observed, it was only the thin end of the wedge. "The methods used and personnel trained in the killing centers for the chronically sick became the nucleus of the much larger centers in the East, where the plan was to kill all Jews and Poles and to cut down the Russian population by 30,000,000."

Present-day Holland's practice of euthanasia is, of course, quite different from that of Nazi Germany, but both are examples of societies moving away from respect for the inviolability of the person, and arriving at the point where involuntary euthanasia is tolerated. It can't happen here? God help us if we don't awaken from our complacent slumbers.



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Editor's Note: We received an overwhelming response to our Wednesday Night Celebration edition in the last Met. The following are more tributes to this remarkable institution.

More celebrations of Wednesday Nights

A tribute to Diana and David Nicholson's Wednesday Nights

Isabelle Ramsay-Brackstone
Paget, Bermuda

The Nicholsons greeted me in their salon for the first time back in 1996. I was then a graduate student at HEC Montreal, completing a M.Sc. in International Business. I love debates, sharing ideas, learning about the arts, trade, diplomacy, and politics, among many other subjects.

There are few places where civil debates are still allowed, where ideas are shared and where great minds can meet.

Wednesday Night's is where this happens. Where true "thinking outside the box" takes place. Not your typical "You must think this way" forum, but a true and honest exchange of ideas. I cherish the fact that opinions are welcomed and not shut down, where you are allowed to argue your point of view and often agree to disagree. It is a place where thinking differently is celebrated.

I love going to Wednesday Nights because I always meet fascinating characters, find business relationships, and more importantly develop friendships. David and Diana always

ensure that the right connections between the invites are made and that the tone and environment promote great conversations. I met my husband, Kirby Brackstone, at Wednesday Night back in 1997. Kirby and I now live in Bermuda, but always go to Wednesday Nights when we are in Montreal. Diana is Kirby's Godmother. We sure wish we could be closer to be part of their salon more often.

Kirby joins me in wishing David and Diana many more years of fascinating Wednesday Nights. May love, health and peace accompany them every week.



They make it relevant

Donna Logan
Founding Director, The School of Journalism
University of British Columbia

I had the great, good fortune to meet Diana and David long before they started the Wednesday Night Salon. I already knew they were very special people. The salon started... I have many fond memories of great sessions and meeting a broad, cross-section of incredible people! Then political events intervened, The Montreal Star, where I toiled, died... I went to Toronto and subsequently to Vancouver. Fortunately, I travelled a fair bit and would drop in on Wednesday nights whenever I could. I was constantly amazed at the parade of luminaries and intellectuals who came through the door at 33 Rosemount. I think if Queen Elizabeth II had walked in, I would not have been too, too surprised. The truly amazing part of all this is that Diana and David managed to revive an anachronistic practice and make it relevant to the modern world. Having lived in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, I believe it could not have happened anywhere else in Canada.

Dear Wednesday Nighters

David Beigie

I regret that I was unable to represent my dad Carl at the 1500th gathering. But I wanted to share these words of congratulations as you embark on the next 1500.

My father enjoyed debate and discussion. And he loved to teach. This was his main currency in life. Wednesday Night provided an ideal setting for all his passions to come together in one place with people he cared about.

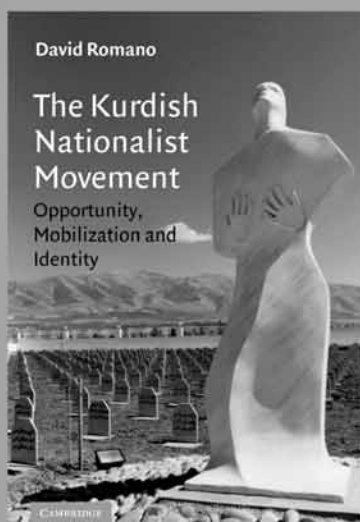
The concept of a salon – while centuries old – couldn't be more current. At a time when so much is made of social media, I find that the term comes up decidedly short in the "social" department. The challenges and opportunities facing our nation and world today can't be meaningfully distilled into short tweets and sound bites. Yet people still try.

It is my view that individuals very soon will set aside notions of relations by keypad and mouse click and return to actual conversation and in-person engagement. After all, this is what we are put on earth for – to participate in actual human relations – however graceful or messy.

So everything old is new again. And at this mile marker I hope people gathered this evening realize that you are at once both old-fashioned – and the next big thing! My father would have been pleased to be in the thick of things with all of you.

Best wishes for the future.

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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More celebrations of Wednesday Nights

Rage, rage into Wednesday Night

Reflections by Felix von Geyer

*“Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage, against the dying of the light.”*
(Dylan Thomas)

Like the two matching lines of a villanelle poem such as Dylan Thomas above, Diana and David Nicholson intertwine their alternate lines that have recurred throughout the poetry of Wednesday Night that last December pushed through its 1500th successive Wednesday – more than 25 years.

Between them they introduce, compare and contrast people, their perspectives, opinions and deeds that are the substance and form that bring shape, solidity and occasionally lingering

noeticism to any informed debate or opinion.

They also cover the spectrum of small ‘I’ liberalism. Where Leonard Schapiro once divided the Rationalists and Nationalists of 19th century Russia into liberal-conservatives and liberal-radicals; David’s focus is more conventional, markets, finance and who might be doing what and where. Importantly, he guarantees the bounds and realms of relevance and decorum, though occasionally is guilty of slicing out an incisive observation and fails to allow debate to become too penetrating. However, his task is a little like the Speaker of the House, which he undertakes objectively and usually with aplomb.

Diana however seemingly embraces the new age of sustainable development and one suspects privately she believes the way is possible but political will is lacking. Her forte

– which as anyone who comes to know her soon realizes can never be limited to one – is the vastness of her social network where she is held with the highest esteem.

Had she been Shakespeare’s role model for the nurse in Romeo and Juliet, would an entirely different play have emerged, avoiding the banalities of Act 5 (as a Theatre Director friend of mine has referred to them)?

One cannot but wonder how as a couple, they upend the idea of ‘behind every great man is an even greater woman’ for Diana is ably and encouragingly supported by her husband in what she does, says and whom she cares to know – even if intelligence services visit to find out if secrets might be in the process of being traded. Perhaps they too should come along and find out – just bring a bottle of red wine.

For what is unique to Wednesday Night and common to all Wednesday Nighters is its surrounding bonhomie.

If invited back for a second time it seems, you are always a Wednesday Nighter and wherever you are when you bump into fellow Wednesday Nighters away from the Nicholsons, it is as though an unexpected and welcome family reunion.

As bland as this may sound, once you realize the variety of professionals, finance experts, economists, academics, diplomats, politicians, intelligence experts, documentary and film makers not to mention journalists who grace their threshold, then like the red wine that seeps between your lips while there, you’ll value the experience of being a Wednesday Nighter, even if David won’t quite allow anyone to rage, rage into the night!

Beyond measure

An Thien Ngo

How to measure the contribution of Wednesday Night to our society and to the lives of the individuals who gather each week in the Nicholsons’ salon? By insights gained, connections forged, endeavours catalyzed, new fields explored?

What has the greatest impact? Is it the informal conversations with prominent figures from the upper echelons, or the warm welcome extended to each new guest, making him or her feel instantly at home?

Why is each evening so uniquely enjoyable? Is it the timeliness of the selected topics, or the skillful shaping of the conversation to highlight the knowledge and interests of the assembly?

We need more spaces like Wednesday Night, where people with diverse expertise meet with learners and teachers from all walks of life, to share their opinions on issues that matter.

Bravo David and Diana, and best wishes for all your Wednesday Nights in the future!

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Proud to be Canadian?

Canada provides hundreds of million of dollars in aid to dictators, tyrants, and corrupt governments around the world.

Of the 25 countries named in the new International Policy Statement as key recipients of Canadian aid, only 6 are deemed by Freedom House to be free, while 19 are unfree or dictatorships. All 25 are identified as having corruption as a major problem, combined with weak parliaments, a lack of transparency and little respect for the rule of law.

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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Canada's foreign policy is centred around three Ds (Defense, Development and Diplomacy). CCD believes that our policies should be guided by a 4th D, Democracy. Canada must make ending corruption, respect for the rule of law, and open, accountable and transparent governments key foreign policy priorities. If you agree, become a member of the CCD.

Founded in 2003, the Canadian Coalition for Democracies (CCD) is an organization of concerned Canadians dedicated to the protection and promotion of democracy at home and abroad. CCD will influence the Canadian political process and public opinion to achieve a more pro-democracy foreign policy.

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More celebrations of Wednesday Nights

The University of Wednesday-Night

P. David Mitchell

The Age of Enlightenment spawned the salon, an important place for the exchange of ideas, an increase in knowledge and a source of pleasure and friendship for participants. And an influence on society.

Wikipedia tells us that salons “were carried on until quite recently, in urban settings, among like-minded people”. Clearly that author never visited David and Diana Nicholson’s stately home on Rosemount Avenue on any of the past 1500+ Wednesday-Nights where still can be found a warm welcome, lively conversation over a glass of wine and a large adopted family gathered to learn, to share and to enjoy informal and formal discussion

spanning a myriad of ideas. On occasion, seated around the dining room table were money managers who oversaw billions of dollars in funds; at other times specialists in computer security, foreign policy, economics, politics, medicine, education, etc. occupied these chairs. Our gracious hosts invite guests from all walks of life and many countries to share their knowledge or perspective on nearly every conceivable topic. Those privileged to be regular guests owe a debt of gratitude to David and Diana for conceiving and offering this incomparable educational opportunity. And for cleaning up the next day.

Host David magically produces a video to provide background information for

almost every topic and visitor before opening discussion, which he steers like a pilot through calm and sometimes turbulent skies, encouraging ‘experts’ to share their wisdom yet attempting to permit all to have input. An impossible task at which he excels.

Traditionally salons were organized by women and Wednesday-Night is no exception. Like the Parisian “salonnières” who were “the

legitimate governors of [the] potentially unruly discourse” that took place, Diana is the ultimate helmsman guiding the agenda and implicitly the discourse, holding in abeyance her symbol of power -- breakfast for David.

It is customary for someone to thank special guests and the group; I will attempt to express collective appreciation for our hosts. Unlike a university seminar (which

Wednesday-Night resembles) no one is expected to study before-hand but a time-consuming-to-prepare and extensive set of background reading usually is provided. And two massive websites devoted to Wednesday-Night summarize and expand on discussions. Through my participation I found that I was much better informed about current events, political intrigue, the economy, the

market, the arts, etc. than would have been possible in any other way. David and Diana I am grateful for the opportunity to experience your gracious hospitality and to participate in the development and sharing of knowledge and friendships. May you continue as long as you wish and then participate in some future salon hived off from Wednesday-Night. Viva Wednesday-Night! Excelsior!

Something unique

Laura and David Kilgour
Ottawa

Diana, David and friends have achieved something unique and important with their uninterrupted Wednesday salons over so many years. In our travels around the world, we have never heard a similar institution.

All of us who have participated are wiser and better for the experience. We only wish we could have attended more often from Ottawa.

Long live David, Diana and Wednesday Nights.

Never better, never warmer

Stephen Blank

From someone who spent some moments on Canadian TV in the 1990s (when I headed the Council of the America’s Canadian Program in New York City), I can tell you that the lights were never hotter, the questions never tougher, the company never keener and the conversation never quicker than around the Nicholson’s table on Wednesday night. Might I also say, the friendships were never warmer, the wine more plentiful or hosts more gracious. Hail to David and Diana!

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More celebrations of Wednesday Nights

Plus ça change..the 700th tribute

By Sam Totah

Dear Diana and David,

The year is now 2011, you have just moved out of the house - 33 Rosemount avenue, Westmount, Quebec, still in Canada (!) and I just reviewed what I had written some fifteen years ago about your Wednesday Nights Salon on the occasion of the 700th anniversary. Now, you have passed your 1500th anniversary of your unforgettable “plus ça change plus c’est la même chose” soirées with some slight changes, but the spirit is still the same ! Hope you would like the following to ...my tribute to the 700th

August 2, 1995

The anniversary date is always a good opportunity to look back and view the events from a different point of view i.e. in hindsight. When David and Dianastarted these unique soirées – long, long long time, almost 14 years, ago — their first special guest was Dr. Carl Beigie – the US-made Economist who was residing then with the Nicholson family — in Canada. 14 years multiplied by 365 days is a long time in anyone’s calendar. But it seems that David is breathing the same air he was breathing almost a decade and a half ago. The air that David breathes is “the success of the soirées, the exchange of information, the discussion, the arguments, the video output during the soirées, the video input during the off-hours, the faxes to the guests, the telephone calls to the special guests, and on and on and on... “Indeed very few of us realize what goes on behind the scenes and for that matter in the specially designed studio basement of the Nicholsons until that special Wednesday arrives on our agenda.

Then we have to rush for that “bottle” from the Government controlled Liquor Store, where the staff have become friendlier in recent years. I don’t know why. Maybe there is some kind of privatization or competition in the air!

Back to the Nicholsons –theirs by contrast is a private initiative– not government supported and yet it has survived for 14 years. Chapeau. Hats off.

All in all — the Nicholsons soirées

are very special—”don’t leave home without it”

I do want to mention– in a special way– the name of Diana– the hostess, the other partner in this private enterprise of the Nicholsons. She plays a different role. In fact, while David is the official spokesman of the agenda and the official moderator of the production known to all attendees as the “Wednesday Night out chez les Nicholsons”, Diana is in fact the unofficial moderator. She is the one that senses the pulse and depth of the discussion and at times brings the discussions tangentially to virtual reality.

I am writing on the Nicholsons’ soirées the way I see in the dim light when I enter that well known house in Westmount. Yes, in Westmount, but not necessarily for Westmounters. The guests come from all over the world. If my memory serves me well, dignitaries that walked in through the doors have included the Managing Director of the

IMF, well known diplomats, ambassadors, consuls, politicians - including the ex-Premier of the Province, professionals from all walks of life– specially lawyers and investment executives, and multiple choice of others. ... from A to Z. The point is that indeed these soirées attract “by-invitation-only” people from all countries and professions. The common denominator is that someone knows either David or Diana or one of their guests. Anyhow– an interesting mix of people and topics and wine is what makes up these evenings–officially from 8:00p.m. to midnight.

The first hour on each side of the spectrum is for the very brave. In fact, from eight to nine p.m. there is some socializing– one greets each other and the hosts, and people try to figure out both what you do and how you happen to be in the same spot that same evening!

The shallowness of these casual discussions is very much in contrast with what is to come after David gives

his famous signal on the huge bell right above the bar. That signals that the drinking period will be sitting instead of standing. Seriously– that is when guests are channeled to an adjacent room and then those sitting round the large rectangular table and others taking the back seats better distinguish the triage of “who is who”. Noblesse oblige– everyone finds his little niche in the atmosphere of silence among attendees and blasting videos contouring the three sides of the elegant room–signaling indeed the tumultuous discussions are yet to commence.

Et voilà...

That is when real action begins. Both politicians and diplomats are relaxed when the famous motto off the record is reiterated officially. Then there is spring in the air– and everyone wants to talk more than just sit back and listen to the wisdom freely expounded. This is not exactly it! One realizes that it is very difficult to assemble images on the spoken words alone. Something I

am trying to do, right at this moment. In resumé to visualize what exactly transpires on the scene at the Nicholsons’ Wednesday soirées you have to be there in person. “Point finale”. All hearsay can give you a clue to what some people call comme les soirées intellectuelles du XIXième siècle en Europe!.

That’s it!–you never know what to expect from the hosts and for that matter from the guests. What appears on the surface to be a simple subject of discussion is more complex when people of all walks of life present different points of view. I witnessed discussions on the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and came out of these soirées, perplexed by what I learned to be the other person’s point of view. There will be at times a feeling of déjà-vu and other times you will be filled with so much new information that you can hardly wait for the next New York Times Sunday edition to re-educate yourself.



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