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Together and free

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LA PATRIE

QUE VEULENT LES ÉLECTEURS CANADIENS?

Décision 2011

Des élections inutiles ?

Il paraît que la majorité des Canadiens ne voulaient pas de nouvelles élections fédérales. Les voilà mis devant le fait accompli. MM. Ignatieff, Layton et Duceppe en voulaient, eux, de nouvelles élections, et Stephen Harper aussi, d'ailleurs, ne soyons pas naïfs. M. Harper a volontairement poussé ses adversaires dans leurs derniers retranchements, il a atteint son but. Les Conservateurs ne demandaient rien d'autre que d'être renversés, ils l'ont été. M. Harper a bien manoeuvré et compte bien faire élire le 2 mai prochain un gouvernement conservateur majoritaire. Aussi ne pouvons-nous le prendre au sérieux quand il affirme que ces élections sont «inutiles».

Ce qui pourrait d'ailleurs arriver de pire aux Conservateurs, si l'on se fie aux tendances révélées par les plus récents sondages, c'est de former de nouveau un gouvernement minoritaire. Serait-ce le cas, que les élections n'aient quand même pas été «inutiles», à moins de soutenir que le Canada devrait abolir la démocratie parlementaire et se transformer en régime de parti unique sous la gouverne d'un despote plus ou moins éclairé. Des élections ne sont jamais inutiles dans un pays qui n'est pas gouverné par un Saddam Hussein ou un Joseph Mugabé, qui eux ne récoltent jamais moins que 99,5 % des suffrages. Les Canadiens qui trouvent les élections «inutiles» sont donc instamment priés d'émigrer en Corée du Nord. Et qu'on ne vienne pas nous dire que des élections ça coûte cher! Trois cent millions de dollars, paraît-il. Environ vingt dollars par citoyen canadien en âge de voter. Une broutille. Moins qu'une caisse de vingt-quatre ! L'argument du prix trop élevé est absolument indigne. Si elles coûtent trop cher maintenant, les élections, elles coûteront trop cher aussi dans deux, trois ou quatre ans. Soyons conséquents, n'en faisons plus jamais!

Cela dit, le seul politicien dont on peut se demander quelle mouche l'a piqué en provoquant la chute du gouvernement, c'est Michael Ignatieff. Tous les gestes de ce dernier le

démontrent: il voulait vraiment faire tomber les Conservateurs, il voulait aller en élection. Le chef libéral a sans doute une vocation de martyr. Son parti est «en route pour l'abattoir», écrit Vincent Marissal (1). Le chroniqueur de La Presse fait surtout allusion au Québec, mais la situation n'est guère plus rose pour les libéraux ailleurs au Canada. Ne sonnons pas le glas tout de suite, la campagne électorale vient juste de débuter. Les libéraux et leur chef vont peut-être nous étonner. Mais ils ont toute une côte à remonter !

Les Canadiens ne voulaient donc pas d'élections, ils vont en avoir quand même. À défaut de voir leur premier souhait se réaliser, que désirent-ils maintenant? Un gouvernement majoritaire ou un gouvernement minoritaire? Analysons la situation. Je simplifierai à dessein, car dans certains comtés, il est clair que plusieurs électeurs voteront «stratégiquement», afin de défaire tel candidat de tel parti plutôt que pour faire élire tel autre. Dans mon comté, par exemple, le député actuel décroche toujours des majorités astronomiques. J'aimerais bien qu'il soit battu, aussi vais-je voter en désespoir de cause pour le candidat qui sera le plus susceptible de le renvoyer dans ses pénates. Tant pis s'il faut pour cela que j'accorde mon vote à un parti dont je ne souhaite pas vraiment l'arrivée au pouvoir. Mon cas n'est pas exceptionnel. Au provincial, par exemple, je connais des fédéralistes convaincus qui sont prêts à voter pour le PQ si cela peut permettre de débarrasser leur comté de l'inénarrable Amir Khadir. Mais revenons aux élections fédérales...

Nonobstant les réserves que je viens d'exprimer, il n'y a aucune équivoque : qui vote pour le Bloc Québécois ne peut espérer rien de mieux qu'un gouvernement minoritaire (libéral ou conservateur) au sein d'un parlement où le Bloc détiendrait la balance du pouvoir. Idem pour les partisans du NPD, qui n'ont aucune chance de voir leur parti dépasser les conservateurs ou les libéraux. Par ailleurs, qui vote pour le Parti Libéral

souhaite de toute évidence l'élection d'un gouvernement majoritaire libéral. Il en va de même pour les électeurs du Parti Conservateur qui ne souhaitent rien de moins qu'une majorité de gouvernement. En l'occurrence, les Conservateurs ont plus de chance de voir leur souhait se réaliser, mais il n'empêche que les libéraux ont exactement les mêmes ambitions.

Une conclusion s'impose donc : la plupart des Canadiens (en tout cas plus de 50 % d'entre eux, qui votent pour l'un ou l'autre des deux grands partis) souhaitent l'élection d'un gouvernement majoritaire. Soulignons que même les partisans du NPD, peuvent légitimement rêver du jour où leur parti dirigera le pays. Il n'y a vraiment qu'au Québec qu'un forte proportion des citoyens désire, préfère et s'organise pour que son comté et sa province soient exclus de l'exercice du pouvoir et confinés dans un rôle d'éternelle opposition, idéalement au sein d'un Parlement où aucun parti ne détient la majorité absolue. Mais si telle est bien la volonté des Québécois (du moins de 35 à 40 pour cent d'entre eux) : n'exercer dans l'administration du pays qu'un pouvoir d'obstruction, que leur vœu soit réalisé ! Et il risque d'ailleurs de l'être encore cette année, mais sans les avantages qu'offre aux bloquistes un parlement sans majorité absolue, si, ainsi qu'il est prévisible, les Conservateurs atteignent leur objectif tout en ne faisant élire au Québec qu'une dizaine de députés.

Serait-ce une catastrophe ? Je ne crois pas. Le Québec ne sera sûrement pas plus mal traité par un gouvernement conservateur dont à toute fin pratique nous nous serons volontairement exclus qu'il ne l'était naguère sous Trudeau par des gouvernements libéraux qui faisaient élire 74 députés sur 75 dans la Belle Province. Et qui nous ont légué en héritage un multiculturalisme qui est en train de saper les bases mêmes du libéralisme.

(1) La Presse du 26 mars, p A 9.



Ideas before identities.
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN



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Décision 2011

Canadian Politics X

The bell has been rung, and the Tories, Grits, Dippers and Blocquistes are going another round in their bout for parliamentary supremacy. The ruling Conservatives, of course, are hoping that in their five-year quest for a majority government, the third time will prove to be the charm. Yet from the campaign's outset, there has been one factor the Tories have lustily exploited, one having little to do with their actual fitness to govern. I refer to the specter of another coalition of Opposition parties snatching the reins of power from Tory hands.

In December 2008, the Opposition leaders surprised Canadians by announcing plans to defeat the Tories in a no-confidence vote and take power at the head of a coalition government. This was unprecedented, for no-confidence votes in Canada usually end up dissolving Parliament and triggering new elections. Nonetheless, the furor that erupted over this bold move was misdirected, with too much of the criticism focusing on its supposed unconstitutionality. In truth, it would have been perfectly constitutional for Governor-General Michaëlle Jean to approve the Opposition's scheme. Such a coalition government, after all, would have held a majority of parliamentary seats, and each of its members would have been elected fair and square. The real fly in the Opposition's ointment was not the coalition's constitutional validity, but rather its democratic legitimacy—and even that hinged on the particular circumstances prevailing three Decembers ago.

At that time, a Liberal-NDP-Bloc Québécois coalition government would have come to power through a sort of legalized, bloodless coup d'état. More than half a century has elapsed since Canada was last governed by a single party with the support of a solid majority of Canadian voters. Here was a coalition of parties threatening to seize power without having been elected to govern at all. They derived no legitimacy from their having collectively won a majority of seats or votes two months before. The Opposition parties did not campaign as a coalition in the October 2008 elections; each party campaigned strictly on its own behalf. As a result, those Canadians who voted Liberal did so in the hope that only that party would form the government; the same goes for those who voted for the NDP or the Bloc. Not a single Canadian voted to elect a Liberal-NDP-BQ coalition to power, for Canadians were never even given that option.

It could be argued that most every Liberal, NDP or Bloc voter in 2008 would have voted for a coalition if given the option. That, however, is a possibility, not a certainty. Moreover, it is based on the false assumption that a coalition would have governed more or less the same way any one of those parties would have

governed alone. This assumption is understandable, since all three parties involved lean at least somewhat leftward. Nonetheless, the argument ultimately comes up short. The Liberals and NDP have had plenty of their own disagreements, especially when the former were in power; they are not separate parties for nothing. Meanwhile, it is hardly worth detailing all the monkey wrenches the separatist BQ could throw into the gears of federal policy as part of a governing coalition. Anyway, even if the assumption proved true, that would not justify speculating about how Canadians would have voted under hypothetical circumstances that ultimately never came to pass. In a democratic society, changes of government should be based on how citizens actually vote—not on how they might vote or how they will probably vote.

To inaugurate a coalition government for which no one voted—that no voter even knew was a possibility—would have been to hijack the ship of state. It would have made a mockery of the time-honoured democratic principle that the people should decide who shall govern them. As one Winnipegger told CTVNews at the time, "They don't care what we said. We voted for a Prime Minister, and they're saying, 'You know what? That doesn't matter—we don't like him.' Then why did we have an election?"

In short, the people's democratic will must be accurately ascertained before it can be obeyed. So was Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff wise to promise not to form a coalition with the NDP and the Bloc, as he did at the outset of this election campaign? Well, yes and no.

The 2008 debacle was wrong not strictly because of the prospect of a coalition government, but because the coalition sought to take power without really earning it. If the Opposition parties truly craved a government with democratic legitimacy at that time, then they should not have minded campaigning as a coalition. That way, Canadians would have made informed decisions at the polls, and any resulting coalition government would have been truly chosen by the people. By that standard, Ignatieff could legitimately join forces with the NDP and the Bloc today, as long as he does so up front—and campaigns accordingly. Then Canadians could go into the voting both with their eyes open—and vote accordingly. As another Winnipegger told CTV News back in 2008: "I'd rather vote than be told, 'Okay, I'm your leader now.'"

In that case, Mr. Ignatieff might have done better to hedge his bets, rather than paint himself into a corner by publicly forswearing another coalition caper. After all, the Liberals have

been struggling in the polls under his leadership. Meanwhile, the NDP, which has yet to win enough hearts and minds even to dream of forming its own government, might still prove amenable to such an arrangement. Without a monumental misstep by Harper (which, admittedly, is not that big an "if"), Iggy's Grits may have little hope of returning to power anytime soon without joining a coalition.

Then again, the ink was barely dry on the Governor-General's prorogation of Parliament in December 2008 before Canadians, true to form, turned their attention to other matters. Since then, they have shown little interest in revisiting the issue, especially given all the other fare on the nation's public policy plate. Even if Canadians were in any mood for another tilt at this windmill, they probably would not cotton to a coalition with Quebec separatists as parliamentary kingmakers. The Leader of the Opposition cannot be blamed for refusing to give Stephen Harper another argument to deploy against him in this election campaign.

Taking the long view, Canadians' stalwart apathy on this matter is a crying shame. However democratically suspect and politically foolhardy the December 2008 power play was, at least it created an opportunity to educate Canadians about how their government really works. When Stéphane Dion stepped down as Liberal leader and was replaced by the skeptical Michael Ignatieff, causing the coalition's collapse, that "teachable moment" was lost. The landscape is littered with inconvenient truths just waiting to be brought to Canadians' attention. To name a few: Canadians do not really elect their prime minister, but rather vote only for their local MPs; that is how a parliamentary system functions. Those MPs are so crushed in the coils of party discipline that Canadians might as well be voting for whole parties rather than individual parliamentary candidates. Canada's Constitution does nothing to protect private property from arbitrary seizure by the government; anyone who resists the seizure and bulldozing of one's house to make way for a shopping mall is more or less out of luck. Perhaps worst of all, nine times out of ten, the prime minister is the only individual in government who really calls the shots.

When next will Canadians pay politics enough attention to learn how dysfunctional their democracy truly is—and hopefully do something about it? The window for the teaching of that lesson is closed, and will remain so for the time being. God alone knows when it will open again.

...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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Décision 2011

Key races to watch in central Montreal

Outremont

In what promises to be one of the more interesting races in the country – and one with high stakes – incumbent MP Thomas Mulcair will face veteran Martin Cauchon. Mulcair is the NDP's only Quebec MP while Cauchon, a former Chrétien minister, makes his return to politics in the riding he gave up in 2004. Outremont is a riding Liberals could have won in 2008. "Did everyone show up for work? No. Did everyone make an effort? No," an organizer for the losing candidate, Sébastien Dhavernas, told The Métropolitain at the time. Cauchon will presumably have more party support; he would likely be a minister in a Liberal government and, some say, a potential leadership candidate. On the other hand, Mulcair is seen as the only heir-apparent to Jack Layton, when he decides to cede the leadership of the NDP. Mulcair beat Dhavernas in 2008 by just over 2,000 votes.

Jeanne-Le Ber

Another swing riding on the island of Montreal will be crucial to restoring a Liberal presence in the province. Since the riding was created in 2004, Jeanne-Le Ber has been split between Liberals and the Bloc Québécois. Incumbent Thierry St-Cyr of the Bloc edged out Liberal Christian Feuillette in 2008 by just over 1,000 votes. Again, Liberal organizers admitted to The Métropolitain that under Stéphane Dion's leadership, there were neither the resources nor the will in 2008 to win the race. Feuillette beat out Mark Bruneau, the former head of the party's finance committee, by a handful of votes to become the Liberal nominee; this time around, an enthusiastic Bruneau is the candidate. He was chastised by the Sud-Ouest borough for putting up election posters before Parliament was dissolved.

Westmount-Ville Marie

A former Astronaut and head of the Canadian Space Agency, Marc Garneau is seeking his second mandate as MP for this Liberal stronghold. Garneau has been the opposition critic for science and technology, as well as the party's Quebec Lieutenant, and is expected to be a key figure in any future Liberal government. In 2008, he beat a star NDP candidate, Anne Lagacé Dowson, by nearly 10,000 votes. This time around, the NDP is putting a candidate with little-to-no profile, Joanne Corbeil, up against Garneau, while the Conservatives are fielding a stronger candidate, lawyer Neil Drabkin, who was chief of staff to Stockwell Day.

Mont Royal

Another Montreal Liberal stronghold is being targeted by Conservatives, who have put longtime city councillor Saulie Zajdel up against MP Irwin Cotler. In this riding, the Tories are hoping that voters in the Jewish community can help them make their first breakthrough on the island (the riding is roughly one-quarter Jewish). In 2008, Cotler defeated his closest rival, Conservative candidate Rafael Tzoubari, by nearly 20 percentage points. Zajdel, who was a Cote des Neiges councillor until 2009 and former Cotler supporter, has his work cut out for him; Mont Royal electors have voted Liberal in every federal election since 1940.

Notre-Dame-de-Grâce – Lachine

MP Marlene Jennings is also expected to coast to victory in a riding that Warren Allmand held for the Liberals before her from 1965 until 1997. NDG-Lachine electors have voted Liberal all but three times since 1949. In 2008, Jennings finished with nearly 45 per cent of the vote, compared to 16 per cent for the runner-up, Conservative Carmine Pontillo and the Bloc

Québécois' Eric Taillefer was roughly 300 votes further behind. The Bloc candidate this time around, Gabrielle Ladouceur-

Despins, has recently worked for the federal government at both Health Canada and Service Canada. The new Conservative candidate is

Matthew Conway, who was an assistant in the office of Jonquière-Alma MP Jean-Pierre Blackburn.

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Décision 2011

Are they all statisticians?

During the chummy pre-election weeks, politicians and their handlers are flirtatious but gun-shy. Journalists, viewed with grave misgivings, are being handled gingerly. The ambiance is ostentatiously egalitarian. The leaders' aides refer to their bosses as Hollywood studio execs do to all-powerful movie moguls: First names, uttered in deferentially hushed tones.

In the campaign environment Mr. Layton, Ms. May, and Mr. Ignatieff become "Jack," "Elizabeth" and "Michael" to their handlers, whispered discreetly and democratically. I'm not sure about Gilles (M. Duceppe). If there's one thing phonier than phony formality, it's phony informality.

"George? Thanks for calling; let me see if Stephen is available."

That's OK, son. If he's not, the Prime Minister will do.

The last one is a figment of my imagination, but the atmospherics aren't. My various selves are alternately attracted and repelled. Curious self ogles the circus; cynical self wrinkles a nose. Bouncy self starts writing "Canada goes to the polls on May 2nd" but jaded self promptly pooh-poohs it.

"Why do you want to talk about the election? It's boring."

"That's not what the papers say."

"What do you expect? They have to cover it."

True enough, covering a race the outcome of which is a foregone conclusion isn't very exciting. That's when the media generate their own narrative, turning non-events into pitched battles about important issues.

Are there, in fact, any issues in this election? Sure, says my cynical self: Will the new Prime Minister's first name be Stephen or Michael?

That's a pretty big issue. You may think it isn't worth \$300-million, which is roughly what it will cost to find out, but Stephen and Michael think it is, especially Michael. Otherwise he wouldn't have triggered an election, along with his buddy Jack.

OK, my curious self asks, since you brought it up, why did they?

Stephen didn't seem to want an election; in fact, he was bending over backwards to avoid one, making himself look like a fiscal pretzel. Why would chaps trailing Stephen by 13.9

In the tradition of Orwell's Newspeak, in Canadian English the word "free" denotes a prohibition, as in "smoke-free environment." Canadians call laws and institutions that deny people fundamental freedoms of conscience, expression, and association "human rights" laws and commissions. In this eccentric world, going to the polls is like skeet-shooting in a stiff breeze: A vote for Stephen is a vote for Michael.

(Michael) and 26.2 (Jack) points in the polls force the issue? Did they know something no one else did — or did they not know what everyone knew?

What is the issue in this election? Why, the same as in all elections, my libertarian self exclaims. In the last 45 years, the only question has been whether the government implementing the NDP's policies will be Liberal or Conservative.

OK, my libertarian self exaggerates. Does it exaggerate by much? I don't think so.

The NDP may do abysmally in federal

elections, but the NDP's ideas flourish. Canada is governed from the middle, yes, but the middle is on the left. The politicians who form our next government will be statist — socialists in all but name — because there are no other kinds running. Our statisticians may vary in degree, but not in kind. Since the 1960s, classical liberals or conservatives either haven't entered the arena or changed their policies afterwards. They wouldn't have had a chance otherwise.

Here's the irony, though: If socialists called

themselves socialists, they wouldn't stand a chance either. Canadians are funny that way. They'll buy nothing but socialist policies and practices, but never from socialists. Calling things what they are isn't politically polite in Canada.

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going to the polls is like skeet-shooting in a stiff breeze: A vote for Stephen is a vote for Michael.

What about a vote for Michael? Good question. If anyone could say, maybe he wouldn't be trailing.

But look at the bright side. As statist societies go, Canada is tops. No one loses in 2011. Elizabeth making the starting grid is like qualifying for Daytona in a donkey-cart: It's a win. Gilles selling seats on an airliner advertised to self-destruct in flight is a miracle. Jack calling tunes without paying the piper is a triumph. Stephen, of course, wins because he wins, and all Michael needs to win is lose fewer seats than Stephen requires to pick up a Conservative majority. Voilà, a win-win election.

Can Stephen lose? Yes, if Michael picks up enough seats for a minority Liberal government. Can Stephen win big? Yes — same odds as Michael winning small.

Canada, a poster boy for minority government, wins for sure. It demonstrates that middling powers managed from the middle can muddle through consecutive minority governments in better shape than most majority governments. With that, Stephen can go back to governing, Elizabeth to pouting, Gilles to researching ethnic aerodynamics and Jack to wondering why socialist policies fare better in Canada than socialist politicians.

No predictions, though. Michael may be in the saddle when the dust settles. More likely, he'll be back to lecturing about the equestrian arts, at which he used to excel, as opposed to mounting a horse, at which he wasn't good enough to find out how good he might be at riding one.



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David Jones, co-author of *Uneasy Neighbo(u)rs: 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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GLOBAL VILLAGE

Once Again-Burning Qu'rans

Washington, DC - So Florida-based pastor Terry Jones is back for another bite at the 15-minutes-of-fame apple.

This time, however, the consequences of his campaign against the Qur'an has had fatal effects. His largely unremarked "trial" and "execution" by burning of a Qur'an occurred almost completely without notice in North America. One assumes that this lack of media attention in the United States/Canada was deliberate (one 15 minutes of fame per eccentric claimant) with the appreciation that publicity could have invidious effect.

But never daunted, Jones managed to get his video of the burning Qur'an onto the Internet where it had, so to speak, an incendiary effect in South Asia--and murderous consequences in Afghanistan. Three United Nations relief workers, including a woman, and four of their security guards were mob-murdered; riots with more deaths continued for two days and only slowly died (so to speak) down subsequently.

Once again, Jones was condemned. This time, at least, he was condemned for something that he did rather than what he had proposed to do.

And, once again, his critics are right--and wrong.

What Jones did was stupid, bigoted,

malicious, and hugely counterproductive for U.S. and Western interests in countering Islamic fanaticism wherever.

That said, Jones had every constitutionally protected right to burn the Qur'an. Stupidity is not illegal.

If he could burn the Bible, the Talmud, the

1989 rape and beating of the Central Park Jogger on the female victim--for having jogged alone late at night. She was foolish to have done so (and paid a horrible price in continued physical and mental limitations), but it was her rapist/assailant who bears total legal responsibility for the assault.

Blaming Jones for the subsequent murders in Afghanistan is as misguided as blaming the 1989 rape and beating of the Central Park Jogger on the female victim--for having jogged alone late at night.

Book of Mormon, religious texts of every other religion, the Constitution, the Charter of Rights, the U.S. flag, MeinKampf, and the communist manifesto, why not the Qur'an?

Blaming Jones for the subsequent murders in Afghanistan is as misguided as blaming the

One can examine national reactions to Jones' Qur'an arson from two perspectives. One, the highly public condemnations by senior political and military figures is driven by the reality that trying to fight and win a war in Afghanistan is a terribly difficult exercise.

With the most carefully devised military management and message manipulation, Coalition forces have made slow but distinct progress. Jones made it harder for our efforts to succeed and gave the Taliban another cudgel to use against our presence--so condemning Jones is perfectly understandable.

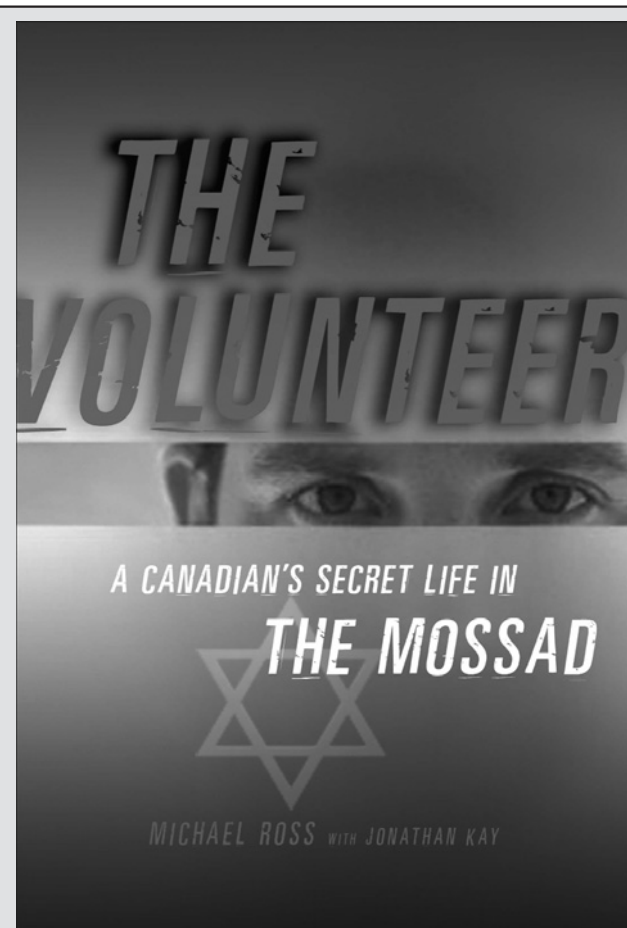
More problematic is the conditioning effect that such violence has/will have on free speech in the West. Clearly neither condemnation nor cautionary comment will mute Jones; he may be courting martyrdom. But more importantly, already journalists and publishers live in fear and frequently under protection from Islamic fanatics committed to killing them for publications that are either trivial or decades old--or both. Thus the still extant fatwa against Salman Rushdie for writing the 1988 Satanic Verses. So far a number of the translators of the book have been killed. Likewise, the still smoldering global reaction against the 2005 Danish cartoonists depicting the Muslim prophet Mohammed resulted in a reported 100 deaths. Efforts to kill individual cartoonists have continued. The level of courage required to continue such action or reprint the cartoons appears disproportionate to the risk. Discretion may not be valorous, but most journalists would rather live to write again.

THE VOLUNTEER

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

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

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





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Montreal's 'Socratic' dialogues

City conference cites 'Canadian Model' as a working plan for a 'post-crisis world'

Ninety nine years to the day after the R.M.S. Titanic hit an iceberg and sank while trying to break a trans-Atlantic speed record on its way to New York, Professor Kimon Valaskakis and his New School of Athens are determined to devise the means by which the world's assorted economies can avoid similar disasters.

"We must face the facts," said Valaskakis. "The recent financial earthquake caused a socio-political tsunami which has spread all the way from the Persian Gulf to Madison, Wisconsin."

During the recent high level conference held in Montreal's signature ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) building, Valaskakis and theNSoA held the second of a series of nine separate conferences by which the school intends to define and develop working strategies for the world's post-crisis business environment. While three of the city's leading political figures, including two former Prime Ministers, dominated the day's agenda, several of the city's leading business executives could be seen among the crowds of lawyers, journalists and academics who attended the conference. Based upon its intentions to discuss the relative merits of what conference leaders described as 'the Canadian

Model', the conference was broken up into three separate workshops where a quasi-Socratic dialogue attempted to discuss both problems and solutions as defined by Canada's economic experience. Former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien was in fine form when he

order to survive a future catastrophe. As the former head of Québec's Treasury Board and a former provincial finance Minister, Monique Jérôme-Forget had more than a few words to say about the Chrétien government's decision to cut all of its budgets to the bone while down-

The conference was broken up into three separate workshops where a quasi-Socratic dialogue attempted to discuss both problems and solutions as defined by Canada's economic experience.

opened the conference with a typically humorous and upbeat speech in which he stressed how working governments must learn to control their expenses and pay down debt in

loading program costs onto the provinces. Chrétien said he could understand her resentment but he also believes the nation could no longer deal with its crushing debt-load. As a



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committed advocate for free trade, Chrétien said Canada could not step back "...unless we all step back together."

As one of the nation's leading business figures, Thomas D'Aquino led a workshop which discussed a multitude of different opinions about the nation's working socio-economic model. As a former Deputy Minister of Finance and the chief economist for the TD (Toronto Dominion) Bank's financial group, Don Drummond had a lot to say about the nation's economic policies over the past three decades. While taking a break from the hectic life of a working politician during a national election campaign, his colleague, former Canadian Space Agency President Marc Garneau, did not hesitate to warn his audience about the importance of Canada's research & development facilities and infrastructure if the nation wants to maintain its place in the planet's new globalized economy.

"We've had some success," said Garneau. As a committed scientist who understands the crucial importance of new technology in a digital world, Garneau believes the government has little choice but to increase its efforts to support committed entrepreneurs if they are to compete in a global economy. While he admits Canada is putting a minimal fraction (roughly 1.5%) of its national budget into the nation's assorted Research & Development sectors, Garneau also said it's a fraction of what smaller nations like Israel are spending to finance their schools and laboratories. As one of the country's leading advocates for a coherent and committed research and development policy, Garneau believes the government can learn a lot from what other people around the world are doing to help their own entrepreneurs compete in a global economy.

"While we've had some success," said Garneau, "...but we could be doing a lot better."

As the chairman of the second workshop, Monique Jérôme-Forget lost no time in



reminding her audience why so many civil servants used to describe her as Québec's 'Dame de Fer' - Québec's own Iron Lady. Following the morning's session where Author Marcel Boyer described Québec's economy as a 'work in progress, leading PQ (Parti Québécois) ideologue Jean-Francois Lisée also had a lot to say about Québec's economic development over the past three decades. Unfortunately, very little was said about Bill 101-Québec's 800 pound gorilla which still

refuses to leave the room. Apart from being the spark behind one of the greatest, if not the greatest, demographic shifts in the nation's history, nothing was said about Montreal's obvious decline following the catastrophic exodus of capital and talent which quickly reduced one of the continent's great cities into little more than a regional center within a single generation.

Apart from the usual questions raised Canada's geo-political contributions during the

post-war era, many considered former diplomat Raymond Chrétien as the perfect candidate to handle questions raised about Canada's place in the new post-crisis world. During the third workshop's opening statements, Chrétien had to preside over a lot of talk about Canada's peacekeeping tradition, its new 'responsibility to protect' doctrine, 'reasonable accommodations' and other multicultural issues. Based upon a time-honored Socratic tradition, Chrétien fielded a lively debate about Canada's assorted geo-political contributions, their relevance in a post-crisis environment and what lessons could be gained by the experience. Following a quick lunch after which Senator Hugh Segal's short speech reminded the audience about how much they miss Canada's 'Red Tories', the afternoon's sessions included new questions and further dialogue on related subjects which managed to add further depth and dimension to the ongoing dialogue.

Valaskakis was happy after the day's events. "This is only the beginning," he said. Apart from his intention to recreate Plato's Academy as a web-based 21st century university with its own well-defined mission set to focus the world's attention on global issues, he also wants the NSoA to be a combination 'think tank' and 'do tank' focused on the "analysis of global challenges and on action plans for their successful resolution." Citing precedents such as the successful resurrection of the Olympic Games by the French Baron De Coubertin and the recent revival of the Library of Alexandria, Prof. Valaskakis hopes new century's NSoA will complete the trilogy. "Before long, people will be using the web to carry on a Socratic dialogue which began over 2000 years ago."

Following the Bordeaux dialogues, The Montreal dialogues were the second in a series of nine separate conferences which will be held all over the world.

"I can only hope," said Valskakis, "...that we're not dépasser par les évènements."



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Creative Destruction in Japan

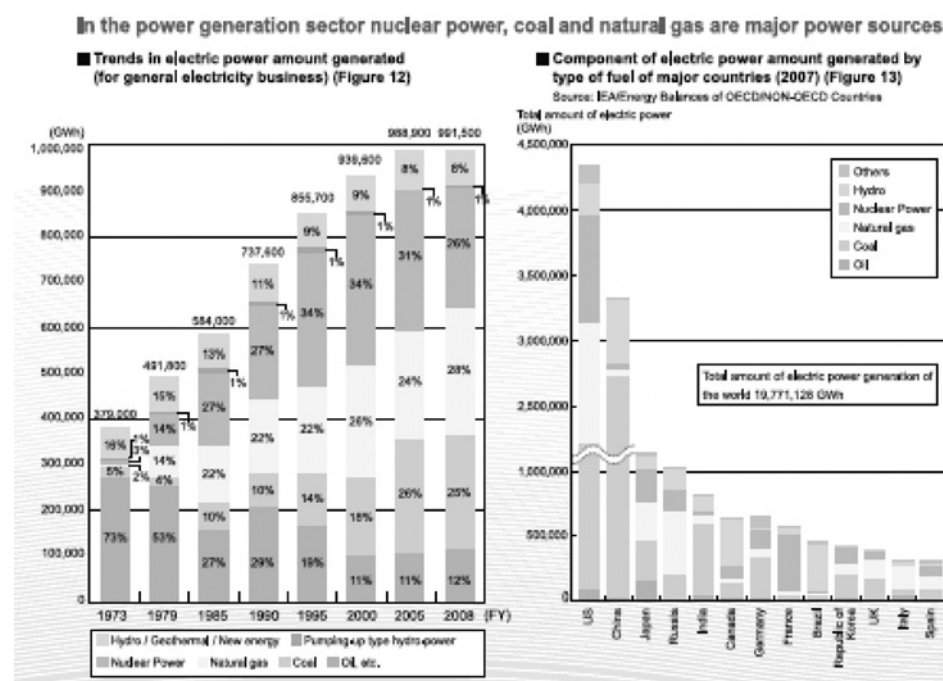
Some may recall the teachings of Joseph Schumpeter, the Austrian economist (1883-1950) who advocated the concept of creative destruction. Schumpeter argued that old economic models or investments had to be destroyed in order to liberate the financial and human capital to undertake new, innovative and more profitable ventures. For the first time since the end of WWII, a major developed economy has suffered an economic calamity of the scale deserving an analysis under Schumpeter's model. The question is whether Japan, as an economic and social society, is prepared to seize this moment to radically change its economic model, or if it will miss the moment and re-create what has not served it well over the past 20 years.

First, a bit of historical review is in order. The German and Japanese economies lay in ruins after WWII. In the decades that followed, these nations embraced a high quality, high productivity export-oriented goods manufacturing strategy that served them very well. Both had strong currencies that did not detract from their competitiveness; continued investment in productivity enhancing technologies kept them strong and allowed them to consistently reduce the costs of production.

Japan also exported production to lower cost nations, to Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and later, China. Germany took advantage of the fall of the Eastern Bloc to invest heavily in these formerly communist nations and profited from modernizing their production base.

Japan fell off the rails when their real estate bubble burst at the end of the 1980s and the government was unwilling to force the banks to restructure and cleanse themselves of their excess debt. The deflationary spiral that resulted increased the debt burden on both the private and public sectors to the point where the current Japanese debt level is over 200 percent of GDP. Japan was granted an exemption on debt to GDP targets set by the G20 last year because everyone recognized that there was no way that Japan could comply without causing their domestic consumption to implode.

Japan is the poster child for the non-renewable-based economy. The means of production runs on fossil fuels or nuclear; green, renewable energy is a small percentage of their energy pie. Oil still accounts for just under half of all energy consumed, according to the 2010 Energy in Japan report. A review of the graphic indicates that renewable energy is not going to displace fossil fuels anytime soon for energy production. Even hydroelectric power has seen its share cut in half over the past 60 years, below 10%.



The earthquake, tsunami and meltdown at the Fukushima plant are a disaster of epic proportions for the nation as a whole, but the highest level of economic catastrophe is reserved for the power industry. Nuclear power was perceived by the general public as safe and clean, since it had no emissions and the plants ran well. The dirty little secret was that coal and natural gas, non-renewable and polluting sources of energy, were growing in importance as the country tried to get away from imported oil. If nothing changes, Japan will be forced to bring oil plants back online, expand existing coal and gas facilities, and bring older hydro plants into service as well. In fact, Tokyo Electric Power has already put seven mothballed hydro plants back into service to try to fill the output gap created by the Fukushima shut-down.

The coastal areas laid waste by the tsunami, including the port city of Sendai and the whole Miyagi Prefecture are the largest area destroyed in a developed nation since the WWII. Looking beyond the human misery and economic cost of rebuilding estimated at \$300 billion, the debate must now become what energy and economic models will be used to reconstruct this area.

Schumpeter would probably look at the poor economic performance of Japan over the last 20 years and determine that the lack of political appetite for reform among the political class would not give him hope that the bureaucratic planners are willing to embrace radical change. Most international observers would agree – but the reality is that the leadership may have no choice. The Fukushima plant will never again produce electricity to supply the Miyagi Prefecture, so any building codes for

replacement housing will have to embrace low energy consumption principles as simple as outlawing wasteful incandescent light bulbs. Flat roof buildings will need to be equipped with green design features such as rainwater collection for irrigation or toilet flushing, even going so far as to having grass or gardens for self sufficiency.

The earthquake, tsunami and meltdown at the Fukushima plant are a disaster of epic proportions for the nation as a whole, but the highest level of economic catastrophe is reserved for the power industry. Nuclear power was perceived by the general public as safe and clean, since it had no emissions and the plants ran well. The dirty little secret was that coal and natural gas, non-renewable and polluting sources of energy, were growing in importance as the country tried to get away from imported oil.

Efficient community heating from central steam boiler plants would come into vogue; some cities in the world, notably Moscow, never abandoned this arrangement and the Chinese city of Shangri-La is currently installing 200 megawatts of electrode boilers for just such a system. Old and new ideas about efficient energy consumption will have to come together to make this work.

Solar and wind power can be experimented

with on a grand scale for dedicated regional use. If the new energy sources and policies are applied to Miyagi, then it will create a “green” economy contained within a fossil fuel economy that will finally demonstrate whether all these revolutionary technologies and practices can support a first world multi-industry economic base.

Car ownership will likely face severe restrictions with one gasoline powered vehicle permitted per household in order avoid rebuilding the same fuel distribution infrastructure that existed before the disaster. Workers will be encouraged to live near their place of business, and we may even see self-contained commercial villages run by a single employer, similar to what exists in rural China. The Japanese possess the cultural values necessary to sacrifice personal choice and flexibility for the greater good of the collective; just witness the calm, orderly behavior of those citizens affected by the crisis. How many of us would have lined up so patiently to be tested for radiation levels by government officials, ironically from the same department that oversees nuclear safety?

It will take several months to finally contain the radiation at the Fukushima site. It may not be safe to repopulate the area immediately surrounding the plant, but the debate over how

to rebuild the coastline and what will power it should begin in earnest. The Japanese embraced the concept that “quality is free” and demonstrated that they could undercut North American production on price and surpass it in quality. The challenge has been placed before them to show us that “green is free” – let’s hope that they pursue it wholeheartedly and show us a better economic model for the next industrial revolution.



This year in Jerusalem

A trip to Jerusalem is an act of faith no matter what your convictions.

Jerusalem is the capital of Israel but it is not by any stretch of the imagination, an exclusively Jewish city. It throbs with a brash energy, pulsates with Semitic and Slavic rhythms and resonates with a sense of shared history unequalled in any other place on earth. In the words of one writer, it remains “a golden object of desire,” a site for pleasure, prayer and

West Jerusalem in particular has been radically transformed in the last couple of years, Canadian architect

Moshe Safdie has for the last 40 years been largely responsible for building a New Jerusalem that rivals any temple Solomon could have built. Safdie’s latest project, the \$150-million Mamilla pedestrian mall is a sublime high end souq of pale limestone which leads to the Jaffa Gate into the old city’s Christian quarter with its warren of cramped narrow streets.

More than 75,000 Canadians visited Israel last year, according to the Israel Government Tourist Office, triple the number that went 10 years ago. Tourism, especially religious

tourism, has been increasing steadily, but the first question that everyone asks when you tell them you are leaving for Israel is “Is it safe?”

Israeli soldiers in uniform are everywhere and body checks when you walk into a shopping mall can be unsettling, but given the current political climate, understandable. But the overall atmosphere in Israel is much more relaxed now than it was 30 years when I last visited.

“Now is the best time to go because the uprisings are in every other country in the Middle East, not in Israel,” said Anastasia Zimmerman



Moshe Safdie and Alan Hustak

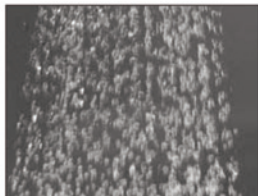
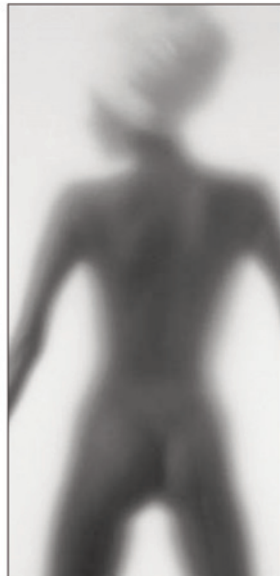
who was visiting from Calgary. “Jerusalem has never been a “safe” city because too many people want a piece of it. It will never be completely at ease, but it has always been an exhilarating place to visit.” Another tourist, said she was “concerned for Israelis but not for myself. I feel I am well protected.”

There is no better time of the year to go than in the weeks leading up to Easter and Passover when Jews are busy with their traditional spring cleaning, ridding their homes of any trace of chametz. Christians making their Lenten devotions through the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives. Across the Kidron Valley there is a breathtaking view of the storied pale stone fortress walls and the golden Dome of the Rock, Qubbat as-Sakhrah, the Islamic mosque on Temple Mount from which Muslims believe Mohammed ascended into heaven. Because of ongoing local tensions between Muslims and Jews the Dome of the Rock is now out of bounds to all but Muslims who may visit between 8:30 and 3 p.m. The old quarter is a religious Disneyland, a messy place divided between Arabs, Christians, Armenians and Jews, that smells of sweat, incense and spices. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the Christian quarter, arguably the most important church in Christendom, is divided by ancient schisms and Christian rivalries. The keys to the church are held by a Muslim

intermediary, and the place is run by six different denominations. Copts, Ethiopians and Syrians are jointly responsible for the tomb although the outer chapel of the angel is a Greek Orthodox altar. Armenians have a basement chapel. Roman and Greek Orthodox Catholics run two small upstairs chapels on what was the site of Golgotha, the hill where Jesus was crucified. As gospel singing fundamentalists work their way through the streets, it is not unusual to hear a Muezzin chanting Adhan their haunting call to prayer, as Orthodox Jews stand in quiet prayer before the Western Wall, the site of Solomon’s temple Below the wall is the City of David, a steeply stepped archeological dig which includes the footprints of King David’s Palace, a sophisticated system of tunnels that provided the city with its water supply, and the recently uncovered Pool of Siloam, where according to John (Chap 9.) Jesus cured a blind man. No visit to Jerusalem would be complete without a visit to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial and archives. Once you enter, there is no turning back. It is an emotionally draining experience.

The biggest challenge for a visitor to Jerusalem, however, is to sort out the confusion, to discover the real Jerusalem and wonder how one place can hold so much history, so much anguish, so much life, and still be so fractious and tumultuous.

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Dr. Patrick Moore “How Greenpeace turned its back on science”

Following a recent lunch and lecture in Montreal's well-appointed Omni Hotel, city business people were lining up to meet Patrick Moore who was one of the founding members of the Greenpeace organization and is now one of its more notable critics.

“We did a lot of good things over the early years,” said Moore, “...but after 15 years, there came a point where we had to part ways over obvious scientific issues.”

While proud of his 15 years with Greenpeace, he told his audience he could no longer be a part of an organization which seems to be far more interested in its own image as environmental activists than actually being effective advocates for the environment. Apart from the fact that he still believes science has the capacity to develop logical solutions to environmental problems, he could no longer tolerate the qualified hysteria and fear mongering which often defines Greenpeace and the rest of the Green movement. In his new book *Confessions of a Greenpeace Dropout: The Makings of a Sensible Environmentalist*, Moore describes his own 15 year odyssey during the organization's early years after which he describes why he left the organization after being one of its more visible and vocal leaders. Based upon his own background and his scientific education, he began to find himself at odds with what he perceived to be the group's anti-business and anti-human agenda. Citing the organization's opposition to the use of chlorine in modern industrial manufacturing, Moore believes the organization is now working on issues it can't possibly win which will only serve to sabotage future efforts for working debates over more

worthy environmental issues.

“They want to ban chlorine,” he said. “How can you ban a chemical that's got its own place (atom #13) on the periodic table?” As over 11 Billion Kilos of chlorine are produced and sold each year to manufacture thousands, if not millions of different chloride based products, Moore said Greenpeace has to be more realistic if it wants to appeal to the common sense of ordinary Canadians.

During his presentation, Moore described his vision for a sustainable world based on a more sensible, science-based approach required to properly deal with the environment's growing problems. Apart from their reliance upon assorted bumper-sticker sound-bites tailored for 20 second media spots, the former Greenpeace director has harsh words for politicians who lack intellectual rigor while they pander to the crowd. Citing ongoing discussions about Greenpeace and its ferocious opposition to British Columbia's logging policies; Moore continued to denounce the environmental movement's reliance upon its self-serving positions which does a lot to raise its media profile but does little to promote any kind of reasonable discussion about the local economy and its links to its immediate environment.

“As an environmentalist, it's crazy to oppose the exploitation of our forests,” he said. “If forests are properly managed, wood becomes a renewable source of both energy and building material.”

Other salient points include Moore's assertion that hydro-electric projects should be encouraged wherever possible.

“It's hard to believe Greenpeace has already

managed to stop over 200 different hydro projects, leaving the way open for more coal-fired electricity plants,” said Moore.

Apart from Hydro projects, and notwithstanding the recent nuclear plant disaster in Japan, Moore said the world has very few options except to build more nuclear power plants if there is to be any possible hope of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

While he said there was no shortage of new and applicable ideas, Moore again denounced the political establishment at every level for

Even as the world is already failing to face up to the challenge of feeding the planet's growing population, he questions Greenpeace and other organization's who refuse to acknowledge the obvious benefits of industrialized and mechanized farming. As far as Moore is concerned, one of the root causes behind the third world's ongoing poverty is sustenance farming where up to 80% of the population is actively engaged in agriculture as opposed to modern farms where less than 10% of the population works to grow its own food. While

Moore described his vision for a sustainable world based on a more sensible, science-based approach required to properly deal with the environment's growing problems.

lacking imagination, intellectual rigor and the courage to implement obvious working solutions required to solve the obvious problems which affect the world's working environment.

“Geo-thermal energy is a far more important resource than wind and solar energy combined,” he said. “Apart from proper insulation, this is the future and within a few years, we could easily reduce our fossil fuel consumption to a bare minimum but there's no political will to make it happen.”

When Moore began to describe the Greenpeace opposition to GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) as a “crime against humanity,” he really got the crowd's attention.

more than a few social elements are affected by a third world approach to agriculture, women are truly left barefoot and pregnant in primitive kitchens because sustenance farming provides few options for any other kind of life.

While Greenpeace continues to use good intentions and a collective concern about the environment to collect millions of dollars through its well planned and well orchestrated abilities to capture the headlines, Moore believes the green movement now requires far more reason and logic than any kind of media driven hysteria designed to reap big checks for yet another tax deductible charity organization called Greenpeace.

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Paying for Democracy

The revolutions taking place across Arabian North Africa are astounding for the rapidity with which they overthrew longstanding dictatorships and the confusion they provoked in Western governments. The US, UK, France and Germany had to decide when and how they would abandon the leaders they had backed for decades, and in the case of Libya the first coalition of the willing since the 1991 Gulf war was created to pound Gaddafi's forces into retreat to allow the rebels to retain Benghazi.

Revolutions are messy from an economic standpoint as well. The flow of Libyan oil that kept the regime in power will remain a trickle because nearly all the foreign workers have fled, taking their expertise with them. The tourism sector in Egypt, a critical source of foreign currency, is unlikely to begin its recovery until presidential elections this fall produce a leader to make the rounds of Western capitals and restore confidence that a civilian government is once again in control. Yemen had a barely functioning national economy to start with, and Tunisia was even more dependent on tourism than Egypt. Unsustainable subsidies for basic foodstuffs and fuel allowed wages to remain low, and the mercantilist middle class invested their money abroad for safekeeping. In short, we should not discuss "rebuilding" these nations' economies, but rather, how to create viable economies from scratch.

The "we" doing the work this time should not be Western nations, nor their institutions like the IMF and the World Bank. Intervention by these powers, whether political economic, will only be interpreted by the Arab street as the exchange of a home grown dictatorship for a restitution of domination by the modern inheritors of the imperialist empires which preceded them. This is the Arab world's moment to behave like mature nations and build their own structures to secure their future.

First, how about an Arabian version of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank? Let's call it the PAB, for Pan-Arabian



One has to be careful when we discuss what democracy means in the Arab world. The American-style constitution and institutions impressed upon Iraq in the aftermath of the second Gulf war are probably not what is going to be adopted by these nations in the post-revolutionary era.

Bank. The PAB should be funded by recovering the \$70 billion in wealth accumulated by Hosni Mubarak over 30 years, the \$30-40 billion collected by Gaddafi, and untold other tens of billions amassed by smaller tyrants. Saudi Arabia could be called upon to contribute matching funds, like a wealthy donor capping off a charitable campaign. The PAB could probably begin operating with a total funding base of \$200 billion, which would go very far in the Arab world. Note that I am not suggesting that all the money

recovered from Mubarak should be returned to Egyptians, nor Gaddafi's funds to Libyans, mostly because these funds were skimmed off cash taken in from foreign aid, hard currency income from Western nations, and payments demanded from multinationals operating within their borders. The PAB would be mandated to fund infrastructure development projects and the creation of modern institutions of government in countries that don't have any, like national banks similar to the Bank of Canada or the Federal Reserve.

These sovereign financial institutions would, in turn, direct free market reforms within their respective nations.

The time has also come for a new international forum for Arab diplomatic exchange to replace the current Arab League, which is ineffective and generally ignored on the wider diplomatic stage. A poll taken among Egyptians several weeks ago indicated that over half of them would like to see the creation of an Islamic caliphate covering the entire region. Rather than a religious institution, why not a democratically elected pan-Arabian parliament along the lines of the European parliament? This institution would allow Arab nations to develop a forum in which legitimate representatives of each state can debate issues of regional interest and force the rest of the world to take notice of their concerns. Arabia should seek to attract respect for more than just its dominance in oil and the influence wielded by OPEC. If the region fails to act together to address the problems left unresolved by the treaties signed in Paris in 1919, then they will merely condemn themselves to another century of performance below their potential.

One has to be careful when we discuss what democracy means in the Arab world. The American-style constitution and institutions impressed upon Iraq in the aftermath of the second Gulf war are probably not what is going to be adopted by these nations in the post-revolutionary era. Where the West has to be clear is that these states must be peaceful and embrace international cooperation even though internally they may operate with less freedom than more mature democracies. It took 70 years for the US democracy to evolve from the elitist approach of the early Federalists to the emancipation of Lincoln's Republicans. As Joe Biden said in 2004 when discussing Iraqi democracy, "they need a system where everyone has a seat at the table and a piece of the pie." The crafters of the region's new constitutions should heed that advice.



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L'apartheid culturel de Pauline Marois

En octobre de 2007, j'ai écrit dans « Une question de préjudice » au sujet du projet de loi sur l'identité québécoise de Pauline Marois et du PQ que « Pauline Marois ne semble pas comprendre la fureur provoquée par la proposition du projet de loi sur l'identité québécoise du Parti québécois de limiter l'accès à la citoyenneté, l'ascension à la fonction politique et même le droit de grief devant l'Assemblée nationale à moins que les nouveaux arrivants au Québec aient une connaissance « adéquate » du français. Essayons d'apporter une clarté à sa compréhension. Mme Marois, la fureur surgit parce que c'est une question de préjudice! C'est outrageux dans une société démocratique. »

The years have not brought any more degree of reason to her thinking. Her speech this past weekend to the PQ convention was not just outrageous, it was supremacist. She is bringing French supremacy to the same low estate as white supremacy was in the worst days of civil rights abuses. Indeed her proposals would amount to cultural apartheid.



Not only did she again raise the spectre of restrictive Quebec citizenship, she then layered that with limiting access of Francophone and allophone students to English CEGEPs and promising to use the notwithstanding clause if anyone had the temerity to invoke the protection

of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Furthermore, she promises legislation that would force courts to interpret laws through a prism of "Quebec values" including the primacy of French. Marois speaks of all this as mirroring the aspirations of a free

people. Yet her proposals would do nothing more than imprison that people in a ghetto of exclusionary rule.

Marois and her genre are prisoners of a past created by their own lies. The lies that the descendants of an imperial power

européenne ont une supériorité morale au-dessus de ceux d'une autre et au-dessus de tous les autres. Ils n'ont pas changé, mais les Québécois ont changé. Les francophones, les anglophones et les allophones forment maintenant une société civile ensemble. Les enfants jouent ensemble, ils apprennent ensemble, nous travaillons tous ensemble, et dans les beaux festivals de Montréal nous fêtons ensemble. Les vieux murs de division tombent partout dans nos vies quotidiennes. Ils tombent tout comme le mur de Berlin a tombé.

Les jeunes francophones adorent compétitionner sur un terrain de jeu continental, et les jeunes anglophones et allophones sont majoritairement bilingues. Il y a présentement une urgence féroce de montrer la nouvelle réalité du Québec à Marois. Un message doit être proclamé de façon claire et directe : « Assez, c'est assez! Enough! It's enough! » Le moment où les nationalistes peuvent mettre un groupe contre les autres est terminé. Marois vit dans le passé obscur des anciennes solitudes. Le reste du Québec se régale au soleil des possibilités de demain.

Marois provides not only a rationale for intolerance, but would institutionalize it beyond anything we've seen before. She would create two classes of citizenship, one for those non-francophones already here and another for newcomers, and this represents just the sort of divisions and discords that we are fighting abroad and trying to come to terms with at home. It does not matter whether the call for separatism is based on religion or colour or language. It still comes down to prejudice. And you can't build a free society on bigotry.

In all her criticisms of Canada she ignores one reality. That reality is that Canada is a country that reflects the basic organizing principles of civilized nations. Laws of universal application that respect, with equitable treatment, the rights of every single individual. No citizen is excluded from the moral or material bounty of this land based on accidents of birth. Whether those accidents be geographic, religious or linguistic. The linguistic and cultural policies of the federal government, however cumbersome, are at their heart inclusive and expansionary of rights. Marois' proposals are quite the opposite.

There is a fierce urgency in our land today. As fierce, though not yet as vicious, as when Martin Luther King, Jr. first uttered these words. It is time to rise up as one people and meet the challenge of the fierce urgency of now!



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New palliative care unit facility

Plans to convert the church of St. Raphael the Archangel in Outremont into a 12-bed palliative care unit and day centre have moved into high gear. The church on Lajoie Ave. opposite the Sanctuaire apartment complex, served an English-speaking congregation for almost eight decades until it closed in June 2008.

The Agence de la santé et des services sociaux has given its approval to the project, architectural plans are being finalized, and the campaign to raise the necessary funds to administer the centre for the dying is expected to be launched shortly. Representatives of the fabrique and those involved in the project obtained Cardinal Jean Claude Turcotte's approval during a meeting with him in April, and a public information meeting to brief the neighbourhood about the plan was held April 12 at the Wilderton Community Centre.

"This project is a grassroots project, initiated by the fabrique and by parishioners who were loyal to Father Jerry Sinel's original vision," said Tanya Choquette, a former parish warden. Sinel was the parish priest for 18 years. He was the last Roman Catholic Chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital where he ministered to dying cancer patients, and about 10 years ago tried to get a similar project off the ground. "When



Left to right: Domenic Chiovitti, Vice President - Marie-Michèle Del Balso (BOD) - (behind Dom & Marie-Michèle) Me. Sergio Famularo (BOD) - Cardinal Turcotte - Tanya Choquette, Director - (behind me) Marco Ottoni, Treasurer and Msgr Sean Harty SRI.

he died in 2007, the archbishop was going to shut us down," said Choquette. By then the number of parishioners had dwindled to fewer than 50, and the building needed \$1-million in repairs. "We didn't know what was going to happen to the church or to the parish. We couldn't let the place go down. So we approached the archdiocese for permission to convert it

into a palliative care centre for terminal patients." The day care unit will be the first of its kind in Montreal, a place where patients will be able to come to terms with their own mortality, consult their doctors, do art therapy, or see a psychiatrist. Church warden Jim Sullivan, who is also a doctor at St. Mary's, says the hospital will probably provide professional support, but that

the two-level palliative care centre will operate as an independent, non-denominational institution.

A non-profit corporate body, St. Raphael Palliative Care Residence Inc, with Justine Farley, who runs the palliative care unit at St. Mary's Hospital, as president, has been set up to raise the \$7-million needed to remodel the church and to administer

the hospice. Because it is a non-denominational venture, and as such, there will be an area for meditation, but no formal chapel. The Quebec government is expected to contribute about \$800,000 towards the operating costs. The city has issued a demolition permit in March paving the way for the rectory to be torn down. Work is expected to begin the spring of 2012.

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

- George F. Lengvari, Sr.





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A nice way to say 'Thank You'!

While some may think it was nothing more than an evening full of music, a bit of wine and a plate full of spaghetti Bolognese, others would recognize the supper party as the kind of event which pulls a

community together.

"Without all of your efforts," said Michelle Bourget, "...none of this would be possible."

After spending almost 30 years with friends and colleagues fighting the endemic poverty in Montreal's

Sud-Ouest, Bourget's efforts are beginning to pay handsome dividends because hundreds of people who used to come to their door looking for something to eat are now honorably employed, working professionals or even own their own

business.

"Over the years," she said, "I have learned what it takes to manage an operation such as ours and each year, it takes more work, a big effort and more than a few good ideas to raise the kind of money we need to finance this operation."

Two years ago, after massive budget cuts almost forced the food bank to close its doors, a massive re-organization is beginning to show its results. Apart from all the usual work required to run the food bank, its managers reached out to the community and it wasn't long before community leaders began to answer their call, including *Metropolitain* editor Beryl Wajzman's social action network from his Institute for Public Affairs and the Garceau Foundation's Brigitte Garceau a well known Montreal lawyer and activist.

As the president of the district's new Dompark Complex, Nathalie Voland was happy to offer up her



Madelaine Daoust, executive director of La Maison du Partage d'Youville.


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After massive budget cuts almost forced the food bank to close its doors, a massive re-organization is beginning to show its results. Apart from all the usual work required to run the food bank, its managers reached out to the community and it wasn't long before community leaders began to answer their call.

new reception center for the food bank's benefit supper. As an active member of the food bank's board, she said she's proud to be a part of the food bank's organization.

"Sometimes it takes just a moment to offer someone a bit of sympathy and a kind word," she said. "Sometimes that's just enough to give someone the hope they need to build a better life."

During her short speech, Voland said she continues to believe how the district's business community can pull together in order to help make a difference in the lives of the district's poor and their families. Apart from ticket sales, Voland's silent auction helped raise at least \$2000 for the food bank over the evening. If you had the money, you could bid for a

pair of tickets for the opera, a top-of-the-line cookbook, a gourmet dinner for two at the Casino or bits and pieces of custom-made jewelry.

While there's never much you can say about a plate full of spaghetti, there was a lot to say about Marc Antoine D'Aragon and Isabelle Nicolas who performed opera duets between the main meal and dessert. Apart from their charm and their talent, the couple once again reminded their audience how the nice thing about opera is that for a few moments, it's always easy for an opera's audience to believe in the music and the magic of love.

As far as La Maison du Partage is concerned, that kind of magic is a daily feature of life inside the Center Street food bank.



Don Cherry and hockey pornography

Montreal Canadiens fans were horrified on March 8 when the seemingly lifeless body of a young star, Max Pacioretty, laid on the Bell Centre ice for minutes before being carried away on a stretcher by paramedics. Pacioretty wasn't just a victim of an overzealous defenceman looking to intimidate his opponents, but a sport culture that tolerates brutal violence and even promotes it.

One of the leading supporters of hockey violence is the CBC's Don Cherry, who expectedly approved of the National Hockey League's decision not to suspend the offender in this case, Zdeno Chara of the Boston Bruins. On a recent edition of his *Coach's Corner* on *Hockey Night in Canada*, Cherry unleashed one of his trademark rants, lambasting everyone from the Canadiens' Geoff Molson to the NHL's corporate sponsors for having the gall to suggest that the league address the epidemic of head injuries in the game.

"If [Chara] tried to hurt guys, he'd kill 'em at that size (He's 6'9", 255 lbs.). There's no way – you can't give 'em – well, why didn't you give 'em three or four games – you can't give 'em three or four games. Either you give 'em 20 games or you give 'em none!" Cherry said on the CBC. "And how about Via Rail! What a phoney they are, they jumpin' on the bandwagon. And Air Canada, you should be ashamed of yourself! And by the way, where are their corporate headquarters? You know where they are. In Montreal! Should be ashamed of yourself, talkin' like that, jumpin'



on the bandwagon. Sickenin'..." For years, Cherry has been Canada's head cheerleader for hockey violence, subsidized by the Canadian taxpayer.

His collection of *Rock 'em Sock 'em* videos have reached their 22nd volume; essentially, it is a compilation of brutal hits – some legal, some not – set to cheesy rock or techno music, with Cherry's poignant analysis. Viewers may notice a trend: He seems to take special pleasure in players who aren't Anglophone North-Americans being the victims of rough play. Among a few borderline bigoted

incidents, the CBC had to put *Coach's Corner* on a seven-second delay in 2004 after he mocked "French guys and Europeans" for wearing visors on their helmets. Trying to protect your eyesight in an increasingly vicious game...what cowards! He also recently took at shot at Toronto mayor Rob Ford's political opponents, calling them "left-wing pinkos" – a hardly refreshing throwback to the McCarthy era.

After viewing one too many *Rock 'em Sock 'em* videos on YouTube, one could come to the conclusion that it is nothing more than hockey pornography and Cherry himself is a sleazy pornographer (incidentally, it is worth noting that the only genres of film with sequels that often number in the double-digits are either-horror or porn).

Like any pornographer, Cherry removes the purity and substance from the act and renders it into a vulgar display that appeals to our primal instincts. That is what the promoters of hockey violence are afraid to acknowledge; that they simply can't overcome their desire for bloodlust, even if it means ruining the game of hockey and potentially the lives of some players.

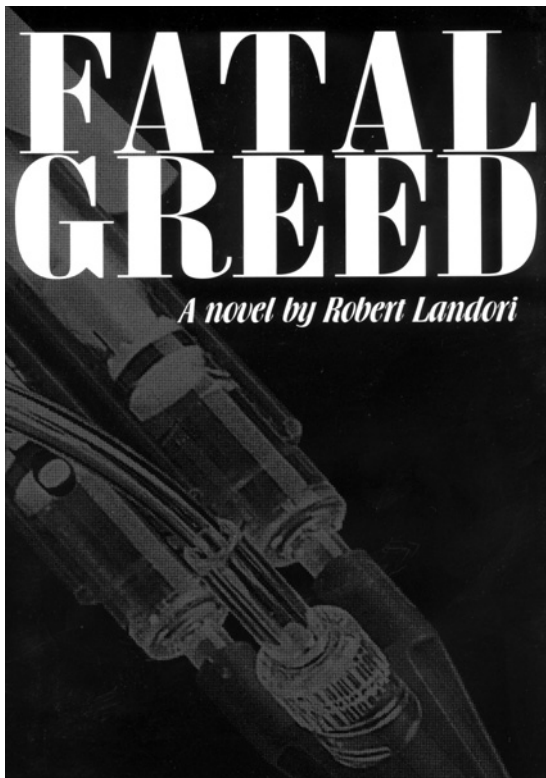
Whether it's headshots like Chara's or one-on-one fist fights that are even more commonplace, the "it's part of the game" argument doesn't hold up. If it was a legitimate part of the game, players wouldn't be penalized for these types of violent gestures. And why is it that other professional sports leagues manage to better control the violent behaviour

of athletes while the NHL (even some of its referees) encourage a more combative and dangerous game?

Perhaps it is simply a question of dollars and cents. Violence sells, for many of the same reasons that sex sells; it appeals to our most basic human instincts. Those of us who are more refined can overcome those primal desires to appreciate a game that requires a high level of skill and finesse. Those of us who aren't just want to see a couple of sweaty men collide, with one – if all goes according to plan – not getting up.

Like porn, these attacks on the ice are titillating because some fans take pleasure in their players humiliating and degrading their opponents. Perhaps these more rabid fans are living vicariously through professional hockey players like Chara, who are the powerful tough-guys they never were. There may not be anything overtly homoerotic about watching one man pummel or severely injure another, but the parallels still exist; the build-up, the dance, the...release.

It would be a shame if NHL hockey became a rubber-necker's sport, like NASCAR, where spectators are more interested in the next injury than the game itself. We should demand better from the Canadian game and from its players. If the league doesn't crack down on vicious headshots, a tragedy could forever tarnish the game. And with players dropping like flies, the question isn't so much if someone will be paralyzed or even killed, but when. Now, that would be a show, I tell ya!



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Ringuet, cet illustre inconnu

Philippe Panneton, dit Ringuet (nom de sa mère), trifluvien d'origine et ensuite montréalais, écrivain et auteur du roman *Trente arpents* amène une réflexion sur nos origines. Tel un monde oublié, le Dr Panneton illustre avec force et justesse, dans le livre *Un Monde était leur Empire*, notre préhistoire américaine. Dans les manuels, nous nous intéressons en effet beaucoup plus à l'Europe qu'à l'Amérique. Ce fait s'explique aisément et il n'y rien là de quoi s'élever. Nous sommes bien un peu européens malgré notre transplantation il y a quelques siècles en sol québécois. Toutefois, Ringuet estime que nos commettons de ce côté quelques exagérations et que nous traitons ainsi de façon cavalière tout un peuple soit les civilisations qui se sont développées sur notre continent et territoire québécois avant même l'arrivée des blancs. Ces civilisations doivent retenir notre attention, car ce sont des sociétés qui ont connu un niveau de raffinement intéressant et constituent nos racines les plus profondes. En effet, les empires Mayas, la civilisation des Incas et des Mexicains par exemple ont été largement ignorés et Ringuet par ce livre *Un monde était leur Empire*, éclaire notre lanterne. Pour procéder à une juste analyse, il est nécessaire dans un premier temps d'observer Philippe Panneton et l'ensemble de son œuvre et dans un

deuxième temps de réfléchir à notre évolution par l'entremise du livre *Un monde était leur Empire*, et ainsi faire des corrélations avec le "fameux" livre *Trente Arpents*.

Philippe Panneton (1939-1970) a, depuis la publication de *Trente Arpents* chez Flammarion, jeté la pierre de base de la littérature canadienne-française. Tous les manuels et doctrines littéraires s'entendent pour qualifier de remarquable l'œuvre de Philippe Panneton. Une quasi-perfection et pourtant il a fallu beaucoup de temps avant que la critique soit émue. Le personnage d'Eucharistie Moisan, que Ringuet met en scène dans *Trente Arpents* est « terrestre » et « grossier » et selon la critique, ce paysan n'est pas un paysan Canadien-Français, mais un fantôme qui n'existe que dans l'imagination de l'auteur. Or, selon la critique de l'époque, ce n'est pas le portrait exact du paysan, que Ringuet met en scène, mais un grossier matérialiste qui limite ses horizons à ses trente arpents. Il fait de sa terre une religion voire une divinité et la considère non comme un moyen, mais une fin autour de laquelle tout converge : Dieu, femme, enfants et labours de tous. Il s'intéresse qu'à sa terre et uniquement à ce qui est utile pour celle-ci. À ses yeux, la terre est tout, plus que les siens, plus que lui-même. Il voue à ses trente arpents une passion romantique : « J'ignore

ce que pensent de *Trente Arpents* nos braves paysans canadiens. Je doute fort qu'ils y voient la peinture exacte et fidèle de notre classe paysanne au cours des derniers cent ans ». Ce point de vue a de quoi surprendre en 1939 alors que *Trente Arpents* s'attache précisément à donner à son auditoire un véritable ouvrage du terroir canadien-français. Un brave paysan attaché à sa terre, à ses trente arpents de bonne terre de chez nous. Philippe Panneton a écrit là la plus belle et la plus vigoureuse œuvre de la littérature canadienne-française qui fut même mise en onde à la radio à Montréal et Québec. L'œuvre de Philippe Panneton prend alors son essor et il reçoit le premier prix David (ex æquo avec Clément Marchant) en septembre 1942 pour *Trente Arpents*. Ensuite viendra le nouveau livre de Ringuet parue aux Éditions Variétés : *Un monde était leur Empire*, non pas un roman, mais un ouvrage de vulgarisation, un livre illustré de cartes qui traite de la naissance et de la mort des empires que le pays a vu défiler au cours de son histoire. Des empires qui ont compté parmi les plus grands au monde et qui feront de cet ouvrage un livre de référence exceptionnel. Ringuet historien? Oui et non. Il ne délaisse pas le roman et continue à exciter l'imagination par la formidable aventure qu'inspire la quête des hommes venus d'Asie, il y a quelque

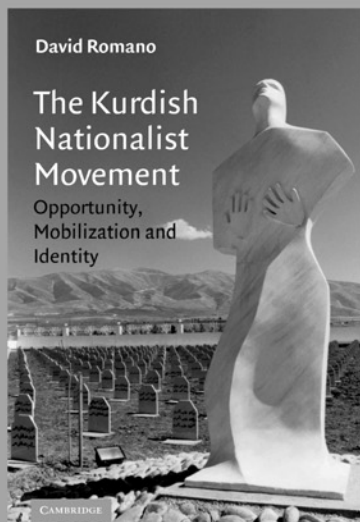
vingt mille an, et qui a édifié des civilisations et dont les vestiges demeurent encore parmi nous.

Avant ces succès, Philippe Panneton publie en collaboration avec le journaliste Louis Francoeur un livre humoristique : *Littératures... à la manière de...* aux Éditions Variétés qui est aussi un hommage plein d'ironie et d'humour spirituel. Ce fut un grand succès de librairie. Ensuite il publie un livre de contes : *l'Héritage* qui demeure un moment fort de notre littérature. En effet, les contes de Ringuet sont d'une si grande richesse poétique qu'il réussit à étoffer par ses parfums la vie ordinaire d'humains misérables.

L'apport intellectuel qu'ajoute toutefois *Un monde était leur Empire* fourni quelque chose de remarquable chez nous. Cet observateur au savoir encyclopédique qu'est le Dr Panneton est un regard à la fois réfléchi et travailleur sur l'évolution de notre peuple « castor en Amérique ». Une grande inspiration qui dépasse l'histoire de ce castor justement pour nous faire entrer de plain-pied dans l'évolution de l'Homme, l'homme américain certes, mais aussi d'une science d'ordre morale, ou les interprétations –et Dieu sait qu'il y a place à la diversité dans ce livre - ne sont pas indifférenciés de la formation des esprits. Évidemment pour l'époque il est audacieux pour Ringuet


d'effleurer les vastes problèmes scientifiques que l'on retrouve dans cet ouvrage, mais toutefois utiles pour comprendre l'histoire ancienne. Le Dr Panneton est un littérateur et médecin et il touche aussi par son savoir les questions d'archéologie et d'ethnologie. Dès la page 7, il nous met au parfum de l'histoire des Mayas et des Quichuas pour ensuite nous familiariser avec celle des Mésopotamiens, Égyptiens et Grecs. Il va même plus loin, pour lui, les Américains sont des méconnus et nous leur devons un tribut de réhabilitation. Bien que la France soit notre « mère patrie » et que nous soyons tous fils et filles d'européens, nous devons être avant tout fils et filles de notre sol. C'est ici que ce livre touche des aspects troublants, un peu délicat parce qu'il propose subtilement une base de théorie de pensée nouvelle. Ainsi devons-nous nous mettre à l'école des protos Américains et organiser à l'exemple du Mexique, cette réaction anti-Europe? Cette théorie nouvelle, si on lit entre les lignes, est non seulement basique du panaméricanisme, mais véhicule l'idée de l'hégémonie anglo-saxonne à dissoudre et donc par le fait même tous les rapprochements latins. Ce sont des idées très audacieuses et il est particulièrement intéressant de noter qu'elles seraient audacieuses même de nos jours! Ringuet, visionnaire, était toutefois sensible à toutes ces questions

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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universelles et ainsi en écrivant ce livre, il souhaitait que l'on fasse une place de choix dans l'enseignement de la préhistoire américaine aussi bien qu'au néolithique et le chalcolithique. Toutefois, il y a un paradoxe, une sorte de radicalisme, ce qui ne rend pas très sobre cette idée d'enseignement. En effet, à lire cet ouvrage on se demande si Ringuet n'est pas revenu amer de ses voyages et ses lectures. au point d'en être devenu anti-européen un peu comme Malraux est sorti anarchiste de ses fouilles indochinoises. La question demeure toujours sans réponse à ce jour. Ce qu'on retient est que de Trente arpents à Un monde était leur empire, l'auteur ne perd pas le fil conducteur, soit de nous ramener à nous même sur notre longue route évolutive de nos origines, jusqu'à notre condition de Canadien français. En effet, après avoir offert au lecteur dans les premières pages un tableau des âges généalogiques, même s'il existe là selon certaines recherches des inexactitudes, nous entrons ensuite dans l'esprit qui anime ce livre soit nos origines et notre évolution au sens large et en tant que nation. Donc, en passant par des questions aussi graves que la préhistoire de nos origines, le caractère des religions et les droits de la civilisation, l'auteur émet des hypothèses assises sur des données issues des sciences naturelles et même sur des données telles que la Bible qui met en lumière des révélations sur les traditions de peuples les plus anciens. Ringuet par Un monde était leur empire, mets en lumière le catholique qui prétend être scientifique et matérialiste et nous fait réfléchir sur les idées savantes. L'auteur reconnaît « l'œuvre apaisante, humanitaire, du clergé en Amérique » et il déplore en somme la disparition des religions mexicaines et péruviennes. La pensée maîtresse de Trente Arpents est ainsi respectée dans Un monde était leur Empire soit la terre nourricière, éducatrice de l'humanité. La justesse –et le talent– que Ringuet a mis à mettre en lumière la vie de nos paysans baignant dans une atmosphère lourde, noire, désespérante dans Trente Arpents amène à cette vision évolutive dans

Un monde était leur Empire. Toutefois, Ringuet reconnaît la crainte d'une évolution cyclique (le cercle symbole païen) ne nous enferme en tant que peuple dans un l'isolement de notre Nouveau Monde. C'est pourquoi l'évolution chrétienne ayant pour symbole la croix, étendant ses bras de miséricorde à l'infini est pour Ringuet intimement lié à sa vision personnelle dont nous reconnaissons la mérite littéraire dans Trente Arpents. Certains diront que cette idée est régressive, mais cette question est complexe et donc impossible à exposer ici.

Maintenant, nous en venons aux détails qui justifient ce que nous venons de dire soit que Ringuet par

son œuvre importante s'efforce d'être partial. Surtout dans sa présentation des invasions et de l'installation européenne en Amérique. Il n'est pas tendre envers les conquérants espagnols en affirmant que « la colonisation espagnole a été un long cauchemar sur lequel l'histoire a pris l'injuste parti d'étendre un voile opaque ». Il existe des questions sans réponse, notamment sur la question de cruauté des Espagnols envers les indigènes toutefois à plusieurs endroits dans l'ouvrage, l'auteur condamne l'occupation de l'Amérique par les européens ce qui revient à dire qu'il n'accepte pas le droit de la colonisation. Le portrait est intéressant dans la mesure où il

nous amène à l'Alliance entre Champlain et les Hurons qui seraient en fait la cause certaine d'un empire pour les Français. Ringuet exagère peut-être, mais il n'en demeure pas moins qu'en analysant la neutralité que Champlain a eue envers les Montagnais et tous les Algonquins, qui étaient en somme les voisins des Hurons, on peut se demander si l'auteur a voulu regarder l'idée de nation qu'à la lumière d'une seule lunette.

En conclusion, le livre Un monde était leur empire est très instructif et synthétise la préhistoire américaine d'une façon unique, propre à Ringuet. Bien que radical et même très radical par moment, l'ouvrage puise dans notre société, notre

culture, des rapprochements intéressants et il est quasi impossible en tant que Québécoise de souche, de ne pas lier ce livre au discours de Trente Arpents, livre riche d'émotions, rempli d'amour pour le Québec et qui demeure pour le paysan, rempli de lyrisme et de beauté pour la terre canadienne. Ce charme grandiose de la terre s'allie, à la lecture de l'ouvrage passionnant d'Un monde était leur empire, et la somme des deux devient ainsi une révélation. Cette lecture m'aura permis d'effectuer d'autres lectures intéressantes et une réflexion inachevée sur mes racines québécoises, qui demeurent plus que jamais, une source vive qui va vers la mer.



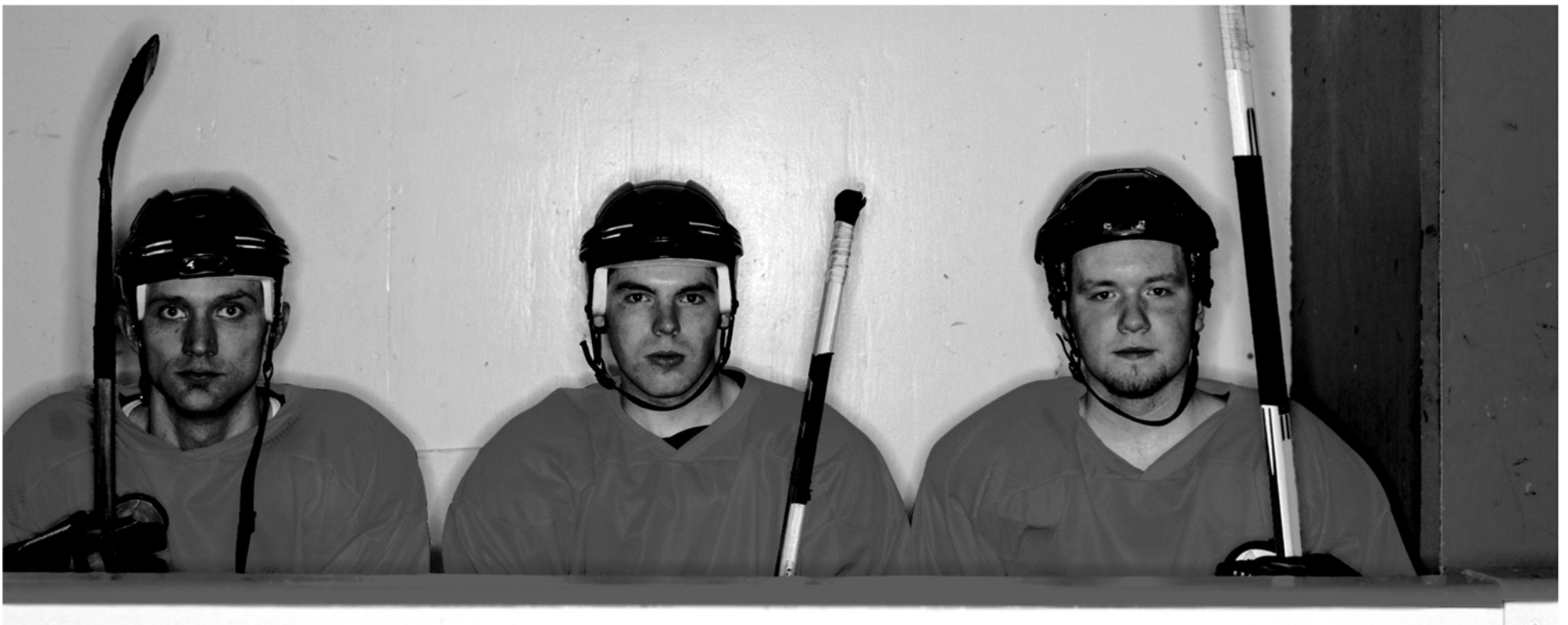
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An Irish Tale

In *Polly Of Bridgewater Farm -- An Unknown Irish Story* (Cabbagetown Press Limited. Toronto. Ontario. 2009) Catherine Fleming McKenty offers a refreshing look at her own family's life in Ireland and their eventual coming to Montreal and settling in Toronto.

In the author's note McKenty sets the tone: "When I was growing up, few people talked about the million people who died of hunger and disease in the Great Famine. In 2002, thanks to Robert Funston, Florence and Seamus Corey, I set foot at long last on the Fleming farm, on the old coach road near Dromore, nine miles from Omagh in Co. Tyrone. To my amazement the old whitewashed stone house was still there. As I was leaving the farm, walking alone down the lane, I heard voices talking. It was suddenly clear to me that these were voices from the past, as though an invisible curtain had been pulled aside for a brief moment. I had to find out what these voices were saying. This book is the result."

Those who became acquainted with Ireland through the writings of the McCourt brothers, those of Frank in *Angela's Ashes*, 'Tis or *The Teacher Man* or Malachi's in *A Monk Swimming* are now offered a different genre that of dialogue. You can hear the Irish lilt in many of the phrases used by McKenty and if someone were to read it out loud to you would hear Irish expressions come alive as if the person were standing in the room with you. McKenty develops the narrative with a flare so that you want to follow Polly as her own personality grows from a twelve year old standing at Bonsecours Market in Montreal to see her brother become four-time mayor of Toronto.

Here is but one brief example of McKenty's ease with the English language. "She heard a rustle of footsteps in the grass. It was her mother, come to find her, "It's safe to come home now, Polly," she called gaily. "Mrs. McAlister has fallen fast asleep. William has brought in a fresh pail of milk, and cleaned up the spill, and we are going to tell Mrs. M that she dreamed the whole thing." Jane was laughing like a young girl, cheeks blooming, eyes dancing. Polly has seldom seen her mother look prettier."

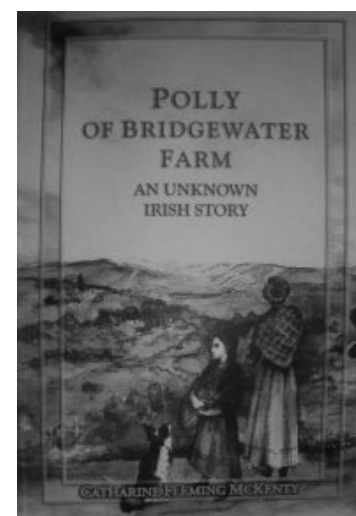
The book is great reading even if

you were to have absolutely no interest in reading about someone else's family. The book is McKenty's gift to the Flemings, an untold story until now, and a masterful interpretation of how her family can serve as an example of so many Irish families who came to Canada as a country of refuge and opportunity. You won't be disappointed. You will be able to experience the

very pleasure of reading a well constructed and extremely well presented inner look at a present-day Montrealer's family history.

If you are of Irish descent you will quickly identify with your own roots and wonder about your own family roots. If you are not Irish reading about Polly of Bridgewater Farm will offer you an entry into your Irish neighbour's history and

considering the fact that twenty to thirty percent of French-speaking Quebecers have Irish blood running through their veins it may serve as a lesson as to how much all cultures share a deep seeded need to understand each other. The book presently is being read in approximately fifteen Catholic and Protestant school in Northern Ireland as a way to understanding.



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“Take a Back Seat Schwartz’s, Toronto Has You Beat! And the Perfect Wine with Smoked Meat”

As a Montrealer transplanted to Toronto since 1984 I had long given up the illusory search for a decent bagel or a smoked meat sandwich in Hogtown. Strangely enough and in somewhat of an unpatriotic fashion (from a Montreal perspective) I have developed a fondness for peameal bacon sandwiches on a bun. Fairmont and St. Viateur have the Montreal-Toronto bagel contest locked up. Try as I may there are no comparable bagels in Toronto with that wonderful, smokiness and dense sweetness Fairmont and St. Viateur can deliver. But hold on Montrealers... Toronto bagels are not bread in a circle or Kaiser Rolls. There are some fairly interesting bagels such as Haymish Bakery’s light and fluffys and St. Urbain’s attempts at Montreal style bagels but when in Montreal I’ll bundle up six dozen Fairmonter’s and head back to the airport/train station and purr with contentment in Toronto as each little round treasure is removed from the freezer and popped into the toaster. Pure heaven.

But it is no longer true that smoked meat in Toronto can’t live up to the high palace of smoked meat... Schwartz’s. There have been some decent attempts in Toronto for sure but more along the Ben Ash, Ben’s, Delly Boys second tier stream of things. Now Montreal you’ve been topped by Caplansky’s Deli... dare I say superior to Schwartz’s. Sensual chunks of meat, perfectly sliced, spiced and textured with homemade mustards that just may leave Schwartz’s in the dust. I say this bravely hoping I do not have the fate of Danish cartoonists. And yes, don’t panic as they have Cott Black Cherry Cola!

While Schwartz’s is pretty raw, or “authentic” if you like, Caplansky’s (356 College Street) is 1950’s homey, relaxing, mellow and there is Zane Caplansky himself working in the kitchen, clearing tables and chatting up customers. Zane hand makes his smoked meat with tender loving care. He started off with humble beginnings doling out his smoked meat at The Monarch Tavern in Toronto in less than chic surroundings but the foodie underground loved it and propelled him with tremendous press to the more sedate College Street location where

he has been for the last year and a half doling out thousands of pounds of smoked meat serving close to 500 people a day. And what inspired Zane to embark on his smoked meat journey? Schwartz’s.....!!! There are the usual lean, medium and fatty categories of smoked meat and all sorts of yummy stuff on the menu in fact a more expansive menu than Schwartz’s.

Now that I can relax as I have found a little piece of smoked meat heaven in Toronto I can equally relax as a wine critic saying I have found a red wine that matches the spicy dusky beautiful slices of Caplansky’s smoked meat. If Toronto is so unsophisticated why is there no wine at Schwartz’s? In any case and not to digress I took 3 of my own wines and Zane took his house

wine out and we tasted all four with a platter of fatty smoked meat with rye bread and homemade (I think Schwartz’s has some industrial mass produced mustard?) mustard on the side. All 4 wines were highly rated on their own but can they stand up to smoked meat with its heaviness and spiciness? The wines involved in this tasting were;

1. Dalton Vineyards, Shiraz 2009, Israel, Galilee Region (Kosher), 15% alcohol, LCBO 217349 \$19.95. (Not available at SAQ).

2. Muscedere Vineyards, 2008 Syrah, Lake Erie North Shore VQA, Harrow, Ontario, 13% alcohol \$40. (Not available at SAQ. Only 40 cases produced so you must order directly from winery).

3. Bodegas Los Aljibes, Selectus,

Spain, VINO de la Tierra de Castilla, 2005, 14% alcohol, \$53.83 (Available only to Opimian Society Members which is a wine club headquartered in Montreal).

4. Peninsula Ridge Estate Winery, 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, Ontario, VQA Niagara, 12.5% alcohol \$12.75 LCBO 598748 (Not available in SAQ so order direct from the winery).

The 2009 Dalton Syrah from Israel not only held up to the brash smoked meat but complimented it and the smoked meat returned the favour by making the wine last forever on the palate. A gem of a wine. It is rare that a wine food pairing can so dramatically improve the dining experience. The two Canadian wines stood up well to the smoked meat but faltered when mustard was added to the mix. The

Spanish wine, rated a stellar 93 by Robert Parker was absolutely decimated and humiliated by the smoked meat.

The conclusions to be drawn here are that Montrealers can’t be so smug about its smoked meat reputation and the international wine community might want to consider paying attention to the emerging Israeli wine industry which like Caplansky’s won’t be flying under the international radar screen much longer. So I can laugh a bit as Montrealer’s pile a case of Dalton Syrah in their cars on the 401 back to Montreal no doubt passing thousands of Montreal bagels heading back to Toronto. Give Toronto a couple of decades and they just may figure out how to win the bagel war. Long live international trade.

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