



Hustak
Madeleine Parent

Page 18



Presser
**Gems from the
 2012 Budget**

Page 15



Labrecque
**Oz Bijoux: Cherchez
 la Femme**

Page 22

Ensemble et libres Together and free

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

18 MAI 2012 • VOL. 5, NO 2

THE BILINGUAL JOURNAL OF REFLECTION, OPINION AND THE ARTS • LE JOURNAL BILINGUE DE RÉFLEXION, D'OPINIONS ET DES ARTS

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

La malaise de la France

There's Hope, It's Not Over Yet

French Voters Look To Crucial Post-Presidential Legislative Vote

Julien Balkany



info@themetropolitain.ca

French voters expressed themselves at the polls democratically choosing alternation in electing Francois Hollande as President. With only the second Socialist Party president in French history, France risks once again experiencing the errors and hesitations of Socialist power at the helm. The U-turn of the last Socialist President, Francois Mitterrand, from socialist economic policy to one of austerity comes to mind.

Even prior to taking office Hollande explained in a media appearance that the

Continued on page 11



Les victimes, en haut à gauche: Arieh et Gabriel Sandler. Bas à gauche: Rabbi Jonathan Sandler, père de Arieh et Gabriel, et Miriam Monsonogo.

Amb. Freddy Eytan



info@themetropolitain.ca

La sauvage tuerie de Toulouse ne peut être oubliée, elle sera longtemps ancrée dans tous les esprits en France comme en Israël. Hélas, labarbarie qui a frappé la "ville rose" s'inscrit dans une page sombre et peu glorieuse de la République. Loin d'être un fait divers local ou communautaire, la tragédie de Toulouse a franchi les frontières de l'Hexagone. Elle s'inscrit dans une vague anti-juive et anti-israélienne qui se propage à travers les continents. L'Europe des islamistes redévoit le berceau de la haine du peuple élu.

Durant ces dernières décennies, la France a connu de nombreux actes antisémites graves et

spectaculaires. Rappelons pour mémoire les attentats contre la synagogue de la rue Copernic, et contre le restaurant Goldenberg, rue des Rosiers ; le meurtre crapuleux d'Ilan Halimi ou les profanations des cimetières juifs en Alsace, à Carpentras, et récemment à Nice. Cependant, la tuerie de Toulouse demeure la plus cruelle car le tueur a choisi sa cible. Il a tué lâchement et avec un sang froid effroyable des enfants juifs marchant paisiblement vers le chemin de l'école. Ce salaud a même osé filmer la terrible scène pour la diffuser ensuite sur al Jazera, la célèbre chaîne manipulée par les Frères Musulmans. Seules des bêtes humaines ou des nazis se conduisent de la sorte!

Mohamed Merah n'était pas un enfant de chœur, ni un petit caïd, ni même un marginal désemparé exclu de la société française

commentent de le décrire son avocat, ses « fans », et le tristement célèbre intellectuel, Tariq Ramadan. Non ! Merah était un assassin professionnel, un criminel monstrueux parfaitement lucide de ses actes. Un fanatique religieux islamiste qui cultivait "avec plaisir" la haine des Juifs. Comment ne pas faire le rapprochement avec le lavage de cerveau quotidien des imams salafistes dans les mosquées, dans les écoles coraniques, et les sites internet, ces "cavaliers d'Allah" au grand galop, et sabre à la main, déterminés à décapiter les infidèles et à chasser les Juifs! Comment ne pas être scandalisé par la désinformation dans les medias, le choix d'un vocabulaire impropre et incorrect. Comment ne pas s'indigner devant un ouvrage vendu à plusieurs millions d'exemplaires, consacré à la

Suite à la page 11

The Future of Syria

Dr Rouba Al-Fattal Eckelaert, Ph.D.



al-fattal@themetropolitain.ca

In February the Russia Federation and the People's Republic of China lay their cards on the table. They vetoed a UN Security Council draft resolution on the Arab League's Plan for resolving the Syrian crisis which calls for President Bashar al-Assad to hand power to his vice-president, proposes the formation of a unity government, and holding free parliamentary elections within two months. Both China and Russia are putting

their money on Mr. Assad, betting that he can overcome both the political opposition movement and growing rebel forces spreading across his country if he is given enough time.

Indeed, the actions of both nations contradict their stance in 2005 which approved the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, which allows the international community to intervene peacefully or militarily in cases where a government commits genocide, crimes against humanity, grave and systematic war crimes, or ethnic cleansing against its own people. Currently, they both insist that Mr. Assad is fighting armed rebel groups and Al-Qaida, that both the regime and the opposition groups are equally responsible for the escalating violence in the

country, and that the crisis can be solved through peaceful negotiations between Assad and the opposition.

Strategic interests in the region as well as the fear of domestic uprisings within Russia and China are explanations behind the two countries positions. Although Russia might still change its views on international intervention in Syria once President Putin secures his position in power, it remains unclear if China is willing to change its mind in that issue. At the same time, one must not overestimate the zeal of Western actors to intervene in the Syrian case (especially militarily) because there are growing

Continued on page 14

Greece Again? by Robert Elman - page 17

Titanic, the Movie Sequel coming soon to Quebec, by Boyd Crowder - page 5

One of North America's largest and most dependable suppliers of steel foundation products.

Pipe and Piling Supplies' high quality stocks include:

- Wide-flange Beams
- Spiral Pipe
- Bearing Pile Beams
- Piling Pipe
- Sheet Piling
- Concrete Piles

Pipe & Piling offers competitive pricing and quality pre- and post-sale expertise. It's twelve sales and stocking facilities are available to serve you across North America in:

Vancouver 604-942-6311	Edmonton 780-955-0501	Calgary 403-236-1332	Toronto 416-201-8189	Montreal 514-879-9008	Halifax 902-835-6158
Washington 253-939-4700	Nebraska 402-896-9611	Kansas 1-800-874-3720	Illinois 1-800-874-3720	Michigan 1-800-874-3720	Pennsylvania 1-800-874-3720



Pipe & Piling Supplies Ltd.

www.pipe-piling.com

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

Ensemble et Libres ~ Together and Free

Édifice Hermès, Tour A, Suite 155, 1470 rue Peel,
Montréal, QC, Canada, H3A 1T1

Tel: 514-759-8541

Fax: 514-759-8544

e-mail: info@themetropolitain.ca

Rédacteur en chef et Éditeur
Beryl P. Wajzman

Senior Editor
Alan Hustak

Contributing Editor
Brigitte B. Garceau

Managing Editor
Dan Delmar

Rédacteur-adjoint principal
Daniel Laprès

Coordonnateur, Affaires internationales
Leonard Dykler (Paris)

Copy & Translations
Mike Medeiros

Photojournaliste
Robert J. Galbraith

Editorial Artwork
Roy Piperberg, Melissa K. Wheeler

Ventes et Marketing
Genevieve Maclean, Joseph Mardini

IT Director
Valeri Prudnikov

Webmestre
François Charbonneau

Editorial staff

Alidor Aucoin, Louise Labrecque, Pierre K. Malouf, Robert Presser, P.A. Sévigny, Sharman Yarnell, Robert Elman, David T. Jones, Mischa Popoff, David Solway

Editorial contributors

Rouba Al-Fattal, Alain-Michel Ayache, Germain Belzile, Jean-Charles Chebat, Duff Conacher, Esther Delisle, Graham Dodds, Daniel Dufort, Robert Elman, Fred Eytan, Patrick C. Gagnon, Julius Grey, Rudyard Griffiths, Nancy Hinton, George Jonas, Barbara Kay, David Kilgour, Rémi Landry, Marc Lebus, Lewis W. Mackenzie, Timothy Mak, Annette Paquet, John Parisella, Andrei Piontkovsky, Daniel Romano, Michael Ross, Francis Tourigny, Thomas R. Velk, Hubert Villeneuve, Albert A. Zhily

Strategic Counsel

Charles S. Coffey

Letters and Submissions

The Métropolitain encourages letters and submissions from our readers in both official languages. SVP envoyer vos textes à:

submissions@themetropolitain.ca

Disclaimer

All materials accepted for publication may be subject to editing. *The Métropolitain* aims to meet the need for original and unconventional thought and opinion on local, national and international affairs. The opinions and views expressed by the contributors to *The Métropolitain* are strictly their own and do not necessarily represent those of the ownership, its advisors, members or editors. *The Métropolitain* does not accept responsibility for the views expressed in any letter, article or comment that appears in these pages. It does accept responsibility for giving these submissions the chance to appear. No reproduction is permitted without prior written permission from the Publisher or Deputy Publisher. Any and all reproductions must clearly credit the specific issue, article and author as they originally appeared in *The Métropolitain*.



David T. Jones

jones@themetropolitain.ca

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."

LA PATRIE

Puzzling Over the Quebec Student "Strike"

Washington, DC - Following the elements of Quebec's student "strike" during the past 11 weeks has been somewhat equivalent to a TV mini-series, but while sputtering along, it leaves a Washington commentator with a number of observations.

First, it is really not over money. The amount of tuition increase over five (or seven) years is trivial in real terms. Various, it has been characterized as a latte a day (or a bottle of designer water) in total price. Rather it appears symbolic, even akin to the precursor-stimulus for the American Revolutionary War of a tax on tea. The tax was trivial; the tea remained very inexpensive. The point (and both American colonists and their British overlords recognized the point) was the right of the British to impose such a tax without what the colonists deemed to be appropriate political representation and/or consultation on taxation.

Thus it matters not, other than as a debating point by those opposed to the strike, that the tuition increase would, even when fully implemented, leave Quebecers paying the lowest tuition for a university education in North America.

Nor was the counter argument by the strikers that the Quiet Revolution committed to making university free other than another debating point. Proposing that university should be free in five years is more a red herring with the dimensions of a crimson whale than a serious argument. In most countries where university education is "free" e.g. (China, Japan, Russia, France, Germany, Scandinavia), the competition for entry is ruthless/relentless from pre-school. For Quebec, however, there is no legacy of "examination hell" and "examination mamas" (or students committing suicide



because their academic results precluded university training with failure a family disgrace). Indeed, Quebecer interest in advanced education is hardly commensurate with price.

According to a study by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario only 30 percent of Quebec's youth go on to post-secondary—20 points lower than those in Atlantic Canada. Could participation be low because costs are so trivial that university education isn't valued?

Indeed, the students with the most difficult areas of study (engineering, science, business) and consequently the greatest prospective financial return on their investment wanted to study but were prevented by the strikers.

Rather the strike is another manifestation, dare one say metastasis, of the "Occupy whatever" movement that had its media moments last year. The counterpoint is that the Quebec government projects the appearance of

being terrified over the prospect of enforcing the law and reestablishing social order. Officials pretzel themselves into absurd rationales when denying that blocking access to buildings and classrooms and intimidating students from entering buildings is not illegal because there was no violence. And who would the officials have blamed if students had pushed through the cordons of strikers, demanding access to classrooms and educators? Having read the stories of individual Canadians arrested while attempting to safeguard their homes or property, it isn't hard to imagine that students would have been charged with disturbing the peace or comparable inanity.

It is the refusal—by now perhaps the absolute inability—of Canadian security to protect the rights of those attempting to exercise their rights that is the most disconcerting. We have seen it earlier with idiosyncratic instances of security forces refusing to disperse

demonstrators protesting prospective speakers, e.g., Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu prevented from speaking at Concordia. Indeed, Canadian security seems unable to prevent riotous assaults whether they be the G-8 Toronto Summit or the Vancouver Stanley Cup finale.

We have come a long way as societies from circumstances in which the "Riot Act" could be read to an unruly crowd—and failure to depart within an hour could result in a death penalty. In Canada the Riot Act has been incorporated into the Criminal Code in a modified form. Unlike the original British Riot Act, the Criminal Code requires the assembled people to disperse within 30 minutes. It provides for life imprisonment should the proclamation be ignored. Although the Riot Act reportedly was read in June 2011 to the Vancouver rioters, effects appear to have been minimal.

The point is not trivial. Polls repeatedly indicated Quebecers rejected violence and the "black bloc" demonstrators. Their desires, however, are ignored by security forces and the government that seems to believe turning the other cheek is a political tactic rather than a religious injunction.

Regardless of the ultimate resolution of the strike, one can be sure that demonstrators of every ilk have learned how to extort the government; their fear of inflicting violence is greater than the pain of enduring it.

I, on the other hand, recall the comment attributed to then French Prime Minister Georges Pompidou when observing the 1968 Chicago riots said, "A society that cannot defend itself will not survive." His wife then acerbically added, "Nor does it deserve to."



Le Groupe
Parlementaire

The
Parliamentary
Group



Deb Grey



Val Meredith



John Nunziata



Lorne Nystrom



Patrick Gagnon

The Parliamentary Group

400-200 Elgin Street

Ottawa, Canada K2P 1L5

613.860.0043

www.parliamentarygroup.com

The Parliamentary Group assists with regulatory, governmental and legislative advocacy issues. Our pan-Canadian government relations and lobbying firm helps clients navigate the often confusing corridors of government with a comprehensive range of services.



Pierre Brassard

info@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

Partie 4 de 4

Gérald Larose et la marge la plus extrême

Un ami de très longue date de Gérald Larose, le défunt syndicaliste de la CSN Michel Chartrand (1916-2010), qui n'a jamais laissé planer ses doutes sur son petit catéchisme « antisioniste » a eu une influence significative sur Gérald Larose. Laissons les calembours populistes au personnage Chartrand, mais n'oublions pas les propos peu raisonnables qui nous éloignent substantiellement de son côté « humaniste chrétien », surtout quand il est question du Moyen-Orient. Revenons sur une déclaration que ne renieraient pas aujourd'hui les organisations palestiniennes extrémistes. Lors d'un retour du Moyen-Orient en 1972, Michel Chartrand déclara que les Palestiniens du groupe Septembre Noir qui ont pris part à la prise d'otages d'athlètes israéliens lors des Jeux Olympiques à Munich en Allemagne étaient, et je cite, « des héros » (Fernand Foisy, Michel Chartrand, les dires d'un homme de parole, Lanctôt-éditeur, 1997, p.334). Sans commentaire.

À la lumière de la trajectoire de Larose (et de ses amitiés singulières), nous pouvons creuser comme élément complémentaire à notre information les organisations syndicales qui ont tant marqué l'ex-leader syndical. Pour les observateurs intéressés par l'antisionisme absolu, la CSN est sans contredit un syndicat porteur de ce défi car traversé par une posture « antisioniste » depuis au moins 1975. J'ose tout de suite affirmer ceci. Je ne désire pas dénigrer les syndicats qui font œuvre utile pour la défense des droits des travailleurs. Je désire simplement rappeler que les syndicats qui manquent à leurs devoirs de pragmatisme et de pondération autant dans leurs légitimes revendications que dans leurs mandats initiaux peuvent causer du tort au mouvement syndical québécois.

Un fait très récent nous révèle ce fil d'Ariane douteux qui manque à la pondération syndicale: le prurit « antisioniste » qui sévit à la Centrale CSN. Cette organisation n'a-t-elle pas bien servi le 6 août 2006 les intérêts de sympathisants du Hezbollah quand eu lieu cette fameuse manifestation anti-israélienne à Montréal dans laquelle on pouvait voir côte-à-côte des partisans du Hezbollah avec un service d'ordre de la CSN, le tout dans une ambiance nettement « antisioniste » ?

Avec toutes ces taches noires, nous percevons maintenant différemment la trame de l'antijudaïsme chrétien primaire qui ne s'arrête pas avec l'arrivée de la Révolution tranquille et du Concile Vatican II. Cette trame se poursuivra quelques temps et s'épuisera lentement par la suite. Mais l'arrivée au Québec de l'antisionisme absolu dans les années 70, particulièrement parmi la « nouvelle élite progressiste » émergente, propulsera

un nouveau sentier tout aussi radical, mais où des zones plus lucides, moins crispées n'affecteront pas entièrement son déploiement. Les observateurs avisés vous le diront. L'antisionisme absolu n'a pas contaminé l'ensemble du camp « progressiste » au Québec. Seulement sa marge la plus extrême.

Une étrange cécité frappe les chercheurs universitaires de langue française sur l'antisémitisme, l'antijudaïsme et l'antisionisme. Comment expliquer le peu de ressources disponibles et l'absence de manuscrits qui font autorité sur le plan académique pour comprendre l'époque moderne. Les années 30 et 40 sont assez bien documentées sur l'antisémitisme et l'antijudaïsme chrétien, mais depuis la Révolution tranquille n'y a-t-il pas matière à creuser ces thématiques (en plus de l'antisionisme absolu) puisque Larose nous révèle par ses textes des années 70 et d'aujourd'hui un corpus synthétique saisissant ?

Au Québec, il faudra un jour sortir du ronron de l'idéologie moutonnaire. Nous devons affronter ces faux raisonnements qui nous dictent qu'on ne doit apercevoir dans les universités québécoises francophones la thématique de l'étude de l'antisémitisme contemporain qu'à travers le prisme de son unique origine historique, à savoir la « droite », le « conservatisme », « l'extrême droite », le « fascisme ». Il faudra aussi un jour étudier l'antisionisme absolu qui se manifeste bel et bien ici (sa genèse reste à faire). Les activistes « antisionistes » de la semaine de « l'apartheid israélien » dans certains campus universitaires québécois ne nous le confirmeront-ils pas de manière emblématique ? Soyons donc à l'écoute de cette réalité et réfléchissons à de possibles modèles d'intelligibilité et d'analyse qui s'éloignent de l'esprit démagogique des laudateurs qui sévissent parfois dans le monde académique.

Sur un autre plan qui complète finalement ce panorama, notons un aspect qui nous distingue au Québec. Nous observons ici la présence d'un antisionisme absolu chez les catholiques. J'y reconnais les défauts et les travers d'une haine intellectualisée fort exécutable. Disons-le avec soulagement : ce n'est pas une majorité. Par contre une chose m'étonne. L'antisionisme absolu est nettement visible et plus facilement discernable aujourd'hui chez une partie non-négligeable et peu pragmatique de « catholiques de gauche » par rapport aux « catholiques de droite ». Comment l'expliquer sinon par le langage émotif binaire, extrêmement simpliste sur « l'opprimé » et « l'opresseur », qui trouve son origine dans un réflexe gauchiste échevelé fort peu sympathique et raisonnable.

À la lumière de l'intelligence qui s'avère, parfois, hélas, impuissante dans une discussion argumentative sur le sionisme, gardons précieusement cet héritage plein de sagesse et ne perdons pas de vue cette sentence face aux démagogues. Les idées excessives donnent des gens généralement excessifs.

La fascinante trajectoire intellectuelle de Gérald Larose comme objet d'étude doit nous interpeller à l'aune de notre démocratie libérale pluraliste délibérative. Cette recherche s'avère importante pour notre mémoire collective. Cerner ce vieux fond affectivo-imaginaire judéophobe nous aide à mieux affronter la complexité des hommes jetés dans la modernité. Faisons donc face avec maturité aux préjugés pathologiques qui s'incrument dans l'histoire du Québec.

Toute dérive passée oblige à faire un sérieux examen moral. C'est même un devoir civique. Dure leçon. Dur apprentissage. Exercice pédagogique fortifiant et salutaire pour l'exercice de la liberté de conscience. Demeurons par contre réaliste sur ses effets sur les hommes. Le manque de jugement peut toujours se dérober à notre conscience. À 20 ans, 30 ans, comme à 65 ans. Mais cela se travaille. Restons ouverts, sensibles et lucides à cette exigeante probité. Notre époque moderne qui doute beaucoup en entretenant une forme de relativisme moral m'oblige aussi à le dire brutalement : le mot effort moral n'est pas immoral. C'est même un puissant ressort, une saine rébellion contre l'indolence qui peut nous atteindre si nous n'y prenons pas garde.

Restons ouverts aux questionnements que nous pose cette traversée dans l'histoire des idées radicales au Québec. Les idées inscrites dans la réalité n'ont-elles pas toujours des conséquences ? Heureusement, diront certains, que les idées des hommes peuvent aussi évoluer.

Parfaire notre compréhension critique de l'histoire des « nouvelles et anciennes radicalités » (et de ses mécanismes structurants), n'est-elle pas pour commencer la meilleure façon d'inoculer un antidote à l'intolérable intolérance ?

Disons-le sans complaisance mais néanmoins avec nuance. Gérald Larose qui a étudié la théologie catholique n'emploierait plus aujourd'hui ce langage religieux qui a de toute évidence nourri l'antisémitisme depuis des siècles. Soyons donc respectueux avec lui et savourons son évolution. Mais il est permis de penser qu'une partie méconnue du cursus de Larose a réussi à nous démontrer que dans un seul corps, une même personne et un seul esprit, l'on peut facilement passer comme « catholique de gauche » d'un radicalisme à un autre dans les textes.



Ideas before identities.
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

Titanic, the Movie Sequel coming soon to Quebec

On the 100th anniversary of the the sinking of the Titanic, the evocation of that event brings to mind a suitable metaphor for where we seem to be headed, as western societies in general, and Quebec society in particular.

Look around and take stock at where we are.

Over 40% of Quebecers do not pay any income tax.

For the remaining 60% who do, what do we get for our hard earned money?

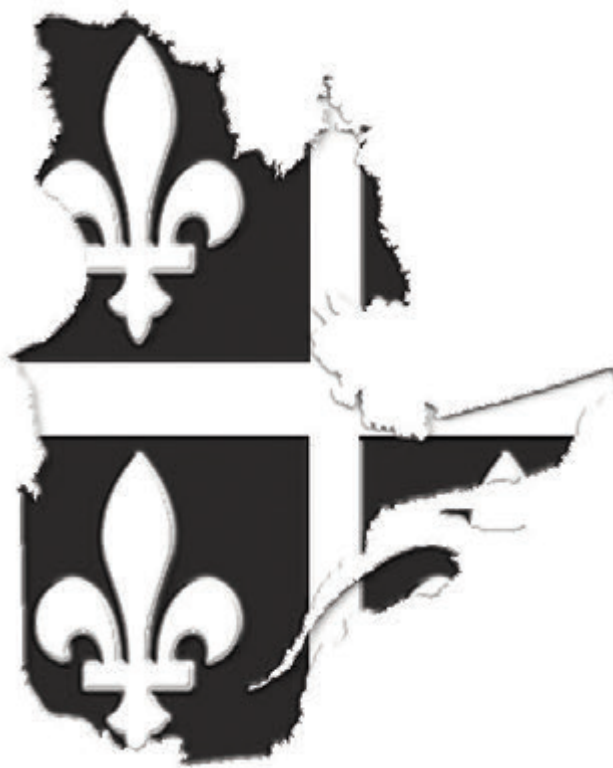
A health care system stretched to the limits. Crumbling roads and bridges. An outdated infrastructure which cannot meet the demands being placed on it. (Decarie expressway any time after 2pm?) Rising taxes (pst at 9.5% and rising?). The highest taxed jurisdiction in North America. And oh yes. Students who benefit from subsidized education who demand that the government (ie you and me) do more. By the way, has anyone stopped to think how many of them leave our province after receiving a subsidized education, after having concluded that it's madness to start out in a place where they would be taxed to the hilt?

Now comes the good part.

Our health care system occupies more than 40% of our provincial budget, and this after transfer payments from those "terrible" people in Ottawa. Listen up Pauline Marois. The baby boomers are going to be making increasingly larger demands upon the health care system as time goes by. The generation "X" and generation "Y" people are fewer in number than the baby boomers. Think inverted pyramid. How are they going to support the coming increased demands? How much higher can taxes be raised? The answer is that the coming demands won't be able to supported by the generations X and Y which follow the baby boomers. Something is going to have to give. Think Greece.

So what is the answer.

For starters, it's time for our leaders to report for duty, grab the helm of the ship and get serious about prioritizing our spending. Cut programs which however desirable in a perfect world, are unaffordable and not priorities. Why is it that at election time, politicians always seem to promise the moon and the sky--irrespective of the added burden to the deficit and the



debt? It's clearly cynical attempts at vote buying. I have yet to meet a person who is not in favour of a program if he or she does not have to pay for it.

Next: give businesses even more added incentives so that they will expand their businesses, hire more people currently on UIC and turn people who would otherwise be takers from the public treasury into contributing taxpayers.

Next, why not tie welfare payments to the able bodied to their willingness to re-train themselves, so that instead of taking money from the treasury, they retrain themselves to find work and become contributing taxpayers? (I can just hear all the handwringing and gasping as I write this). But why not INCREASE the payments to people who are able and willing to

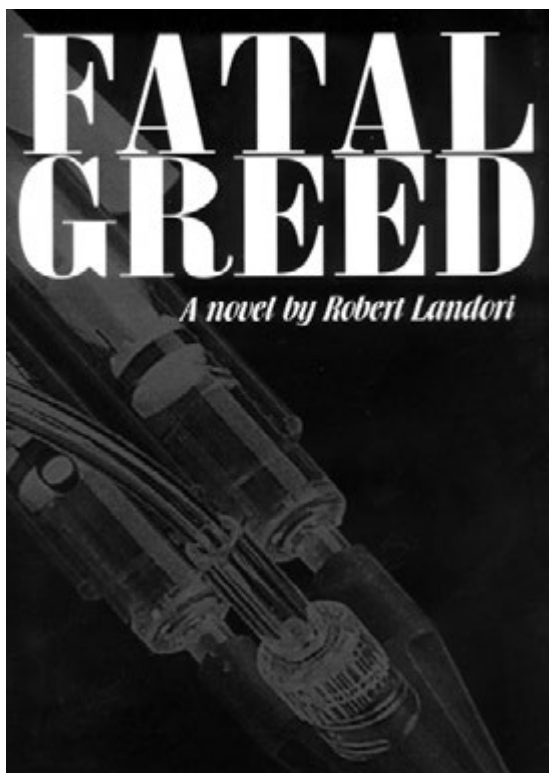
It's time for our leaders to report for duty, grab the helm of the ship and get serious about prioritizing our spending. Cut programs which however desirable in a perfect world, are unaffordable and not priorities.

help themselves by looking to be retrained. You would think the general response would be positive and that within a period of time, a good many will leave the public safety net. And for those who are able but unwilling: reduce their payments after a process that deals with them fairly. The message will sink in slowly but surely.

Finally, why not means test the need for government aid right across the board? A case in point: universal \$7 per day daycare. Is there any reason why 2 professionals should benefit from subsidized daycare? Madness.

Controversial? Sure. But in life, there are the poets and the realists. Government can't do everything and we're heading for a huge collision. What we've seen going on in Europe is coming here. It's just a matter of time.

Let's just hope that we're not governend by a ship of fools and that our politicians will rise to the occasion to make the tough decisions which have to be made. Otherwise, it's a matter of time before the ship hits the fan, or should I say, the iceberg.



Mutant Mad Cow Disease in Toronto. Murder in Palm Beach.
The arcana of Bermuda offshore banking. Ex-CIA and Mossad men desperate to seize a weapon of mass destruction from Al-Qaeda, off the Caymans, on the morning of 9/11. *Oh, and love.* What more could you ask for in this hard-cover thriller by Robert Landori. Get it at Chapters/Indigo, or order an author-signed copy from the publisher.

Dear Studio 9, please rush me _____ author-signed copies of Fatal Greed at \$39.00 each (including tax and postage). My cheque is enclosed.
Or, I choose to pay by Visa Mastercard Amex (please circle one)

Mail or fax to: 514-937-8765

Card number exp / /

Name

Address

City/Postal Code/Prov.-State

Studio 9, 9 Parkside Place, Montreal, QC, Canada H3H 1A7 Phone orders: 514-934-5433

Raymond Beshro

info@themetropolitain.ca

Raymond Beshro is a Montreal urban planner

Equitable and Responsible

A proposal for proper public transit funding

The public consultation currently underway on the financing of public transit (PT) will draw out specialists on new methods and sources of funding, and will generate recommendations for the Transport Commission of the MMC (Montreal Metropolitan Community). This article seeks to bring to the forefront the notions of equity and responsibility in the allocation of public funds, more specifically for the funding and development of West-bound PT projects.

Montreal's Greater Southwest (Sud-Ouest borough, Verdun, LaSalle, and Lachine) is the sector of the Island of Montreal through which the Saint-Jacques escarpment, the Lachine Canal and the Aqueduct Canal all traverse. Another large neighbourhood, typically referred to as the West-End (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Hampstead, Côte-St-Luc and Montreal West) sits just north of the Greater Southwest. The presence of the Turcot interchange makes it the MMC's central transportation hub. Furthermore, it's the main entrance to Montreal, whether it be by plane or by car. Tens of thousands of residents from the West Island, the West Shore (Montérégie Ouest) and the North and South shores commute daily to and through the sector.

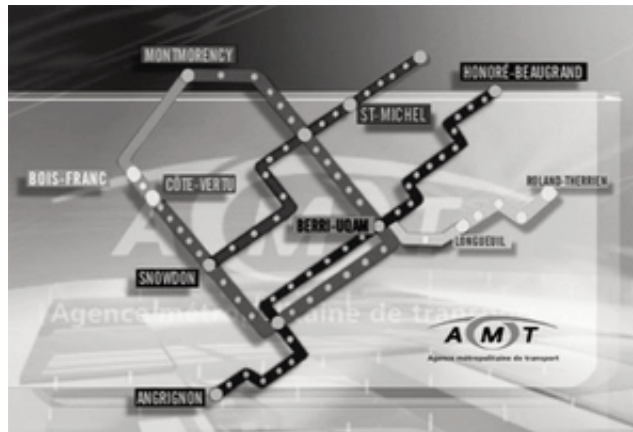
INADEQUATE TRANSIT FOR THE WEST

The City of Montreal's Transport Plan was adopted in 2008 and it heavily favours PT projects on axes due North, South and East of downtown, over any measures that could effectively improve the PT offering for communities to the West, some of which are quite densely populated.

Montreal's vision became the canvas for MMC's Metropolitan Plan, and both bodies do not seem preoccupied by equity and by cost-effective increases in modal share for PT as they neglect our communities to the West. Two examples support this assertion.

1. The current vision favours a subway extension in proximity to the Saint-Hubert airport, omitting to plan for an extension towards Trudeau airport. Both sites are equidistant from downtown with the corridor leading to Dorval having a substantially higher population and employment density.

2. The first phase of the new Tramway, riding parallel to the subway, will increase the PT offering for existing users and tourists rather than drawing in new users, living or working in central neighbourhoods that are currently underserved.



The creation of reserved bus lanes on Notre-Dame West and Saint-Patrick is the only notable measure taken for west-bound transit in recent years. These lanes, open since November 2011, are rarely used by STM buses, but may in fact serve their purpose during the major works of the Turcot Complex reconstruction. Beyond the Saint-Pierre interchange to the west, and beyond highway 15 to the east, the buses still have to compete for lane space with single-occupancy vehicles. The problem remains unresolved for the planned bus lanes in the Turcot Complex as they too will be isolated between the St-Pierre and Turcot interchanges. It's hard to conceive that commuters will abandon their cars if they cannot avoid traffic anyways. Users will only switch over to public transportation when the bus lanes will occupy an entirely dedicated and uninterrupted corridor from Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue all the way to the subway network.

WEST-BOUND RAIL TRANSIT

Quebec's Transport minister has confirmed that the Train de l'Ouest would see the day to improve the transit offering on the commuter train's Rigaud line. Initial projections estimate that the line would handle 9 million annual passages and that the project would cost 876 M\$.

As other needs exist on the west-bound side, two other rail projects are being studied. The airport shuttle will establish a direct link between downtown and Trudeau Airport. The Quebec government recently committed to fund a portion of its construction, to the

benefit of certain travellers, tourists and airport employees. Lachine's tram-train, currently under review, is set to use existing tracks to link the borough to downtown.

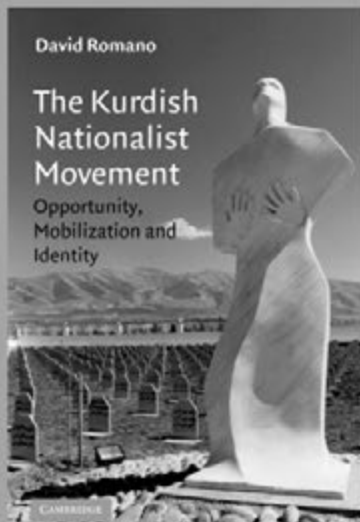
Give or take a few hundred meters, these three transit lines would have the same trajectory. Given that the current consultation deals with PT funding for all of the MMC, it would be most irresponsible to undertake three projects in the same right-of-way, instead of favouring a single and complete rail infrastructure that could service the majority of Greater Montreal's population west of the Decarie. The greatest challenge lies in finding consensus between the various stakeholders, who must set their differences aside and focus on objectives based solely on the public good. This consensus must be reached quickly and a PT link on rail infrastructure servicing the West-End, Lachine, the airport, the West Island and the new Turcot neighbourhood must become the first priority for public transportation investment in the MMC.

FUNDING

The current consultation on PT funding is a worthwhile exercise, provided that we grant priority to and only carry out those projects seeking to increase PT's modal share for trips with destinations or origins are based in existing and well-established communities that are currently underserved. It is unfortunately on this matter that MMC residents should be concerned. The MDP encourages the development of new TOD neighbourhoods (transit-oriented development) as a strategy to limit urban sprawl. As such, public funds favour new households in relatively distant suburbs, where the availability of vacant land allows for a substantial increase in land values, indirectly offsetting a portion of the development costs of PT, an essential component for TODs. This policy undermines residents in the West-End, LaSalle, Lachine and in the West Island communities. These tax-payers based in dense, urban and central neighbourhoods remain neglected. Economic activity in the West is capital on the metropolitan scale, forming the second largest employment hub in Quebec after Montreal's downtown.

Thanks to a well-defined urban planning policy and thanks to a booming real estate market, Montreal's downtown has undergone a positive transformation over the last decade; numerous public and private development projects have strengthened our downtown core. As Mayor Tremblay likes to remind us, our downtown is one of the

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.



www.cambridge.org/us

most populated and dynamic centers in North America. But how was Ville-Marie's renewal funded? Largely by the boroughs and reconstituted municipalities. Our downtown's faring quite well and several other projects are on their way; it is now time to equitably focus resources elsewhere.

First of all, the City of Montreal must institute a balanced fiscal policy with its boroughs, rather than returning meager shares of their own revenues. It must also promote and finance PT projects in other central neighbourhoods. Even if the City of Montreal has neither the resources nor the authority to pilot a west-bound rail transit system by itself, it must respect its obligations towards the boroughs and reconstituted municipalities that fund it. If they had annual budgets that were more reflective of their development and existing tax bases, boroughs and reconstituted municipalities could afford to maintain existing municipal services, which they could not in 2012. They would also have the means to support imminent development and densification, to draw in new investments, to consolidate and maintain existing infrastructure and to better adapt public space PT stops and stations. For many households, these neighbourhoods are more attractive than downtown; accommodating their growth also means supporting the sustainable development objectives contained in the MDP and in the City of Montreal's planning documents.

The biggest project underway is the Train de l'Est and according to the AMT's most recent figures, its development cost per passenger is approximately 121 000\$ (665M\$ ÷ 5500 passengers per day). On the other hand, preliminary figures for the Train de l'Ouest approximate a development cost per passage of 67 000\$ (876M ÷ 13 000 passengers). If the Train de l'Ouest (or any other project in its place) sought to service the communities on its path such as the east of Lachine, the cost per passenger would be even lower. When one also factors in the rapid growth in Vaudreuil-Soulanges, this solution is further justified.

The merits of this project will become most evident once local municipalities, the MMC, the various agencies with jurisdiction on matters of transportation and other stakeholders have sat at the same table to promote a vision based on the public good, on equity and on a cost-effective increase of PT's modal share. The quest for new methods of funding would then become secondary. The sharing of the development cost by the three levels of government should not be problematic, as the cost would only represent a portion of that for the three west-bound rail projects, all while offering a service that is

The biggest project underway is the Train de l'Est and according to the AMT's most recent figures, its development cost per passenger is approximately 121 000\$ (665M\$ ÷ 5500 passengers per day). On the other hand, preliminary figures for the Train de l'Ouest approximate a development cost per passage of 67 000\$ (876M ÷ 13 000 passengers). If the Train de l'Ouest (or any other project in its place) sought to service the communities on its path such as the east of Lachine, the cost per passenger would be even lower. When one also factors in the rapid growth in Vaudreuil-Soulanges, this solution is further justified.

equivalent to that of the three projects put together (Lachine tram-train, Train de l'Ouest, Airport shuttle). Transit users will contribute to the operating costs and the private sector can certainly contribute on various levels. Cancelling certain redundant bus routes and linking the bus network optimally to this new east-west corridor will bring forth new savings, all in the spirit of responsible and equitable investment.

PROTECTING AND SERVICING THE GREATER SOUTHWEST

The Greater Southwest and the West End are home to nearly 400 000 residents, as well as to numerous commercial, institutional and industrial establishments. Its main streets undergoing revitalisation, the Lachine Canal and Lac Saint-Louis make it attractive to newcomers and existing residents alike. The road network is however littered with obstacles (railroads, interchanges, Saint-Jacques escarpment and the Aqueduct Canal) that negatively impact mobility and connectivity between neighbourhoods. The Greater Southwest greatly lacks proper land-use and transportation planning. The high capacity PT project that will eventually service the area and the majority of communities in the western half of the MMC must absolutely be respectful of the existing neighbourhoods on its path, ensuring to preserve and enhance local quality of life by connecting neighbourhoods, through the addition of green spaces and by promoting safety in residential sectors.

The quality of life in the area is quite threatened. Adequate public transit is the most pressing need. Its implementation must not destroy neighbourhood life. An obvious example is the trench or tunnel that will be absolutely necessary to accommodate an increase in train passage frequency at the Westminster and Elmhurst level crossings. The reconstruction of the Turcot Complex brings other

needs to light, but also brings an opportunity to address them, with new transportation corridors and new connections between neighbourhoods. West-End residents remain hopeful that the long awaited completion of Cavendish Boulevard will limit traffic overflow on residential streets. The debate on residential development of the Meadowbrook golf course must also come to an end with a firm commitment by our elected officials to convert it to an eco-territory of regional interest. Meadowbrook's fragile ecosystem will be protected as a result, and the destruction of green space in the Greater Southwest will be slowed, as will the urban heat island effect that plagues it.

CONCLUSIONS

The lack of consensus on the funding and nature of west-bound PT projects is delaying any form of solution. By adequately servicing the West, we would increase public transit's modal share in a manner that is more cost-effective than other projects underway, all while surpassing the sustainable development objectives contained in the MDP and the various planning documents prepared by the City of Montreal.

A single, high-frequency, west-bound PT project on rail infrastructure must be devised and it will service all the target markets of the 3 projects under review, all while respecting existing communities in Greater Southwest and in the West-End. If nothing more than secondary measures, such as reserved bus lanes, can be promised to communities in the West, they must be implemented correctly, meaning that all interchanges along highway 20 and 720 are passed in an entirely dedicated corridor all the way to the subway network.

The matter of funding for public transit must not be treated as cash-hungry quest for new methods of funding. We must rather focus on the review and selection of projects likely to increase PT's modal share for trips in the MMC's territory, and do so with responsible management of public funds. If the City of Montreal can respect its commitment to improve its fiscal policy for its boroughs and reconstituted towns, we will see favorable conditions for the implantation and optimisation of PT.

Public transit will continue to be primarily funded by municipalities, by the Quebec government and by its users. Exploring how the federal government and the private sector can better contribute is certainly worthwhile, but an equitable distribution in the selected investments and establishing priorities based on equity and on cost-benefit analysis will, in my opinion, best address funding issues.

“You will find *true*
SUCCESS in those *efforts*
 that captivate your
heart and soul.
 Belief fuels **PASSION**
 and *passion rarely fails.*”



2000 Peel, Suite 900
 Montréal, Qc H3A 2W5
 (514) 842-8636
 www.canderel.com



Beryl Wajzman

Editeur et Rédacteur en chef
wajzman@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

The urgency for responsible authority

Pause if there is no cause

The story of the abuse and humiliation of Abiner Lema and Stacey-Ann Philip by Montreal police underlines once again how critical it is that this city achieve what I call for in the title to this piece. Responsible authority.

An end must be brought to the aggression demonstrated by too many of our security officials, whether police or STM guards. The stories come in on a weekly basis. Yes, I

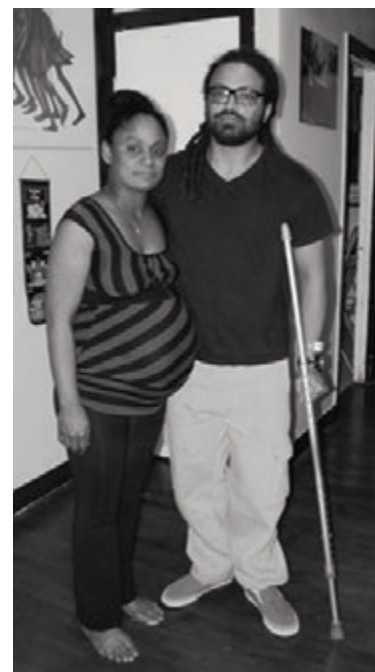
know it is a minority of our security personnel that step out of line. But that minority is in danger of growing into a plurality.

What does responsible mean? It means that our security personnel stop assuming that citizens they detain are guilty of something. Police may have a right to question. But they have a duty not to pre-judge. We are innocent until proven guilty. It seems that our security personnel in

Montreal think everyone is guilty of something, but they just haven't all been caught yet. The attitude is despicable.

Citizens must be dealt with respectfully. And certainly never physically aggressed, humiliated or their person's violated when they pose no physical danger.

The "whys" in the Lema/Philip story are legion. Why didn't the police officers just wait for Ms. Philip



Citizens must be dealt with respectfully. And certainly never physically aggressed, humiliated or their person's violated when they pose no physical danger.

to arrive from a block away before threatening to tow the car because Mr. Lema only had a learner's permit? Why did they consider Mr. Lema calling Ms. Philip, the legal owner of the car, a "hindrance to the legal process" resulting in a \$644 ticket? Why pummel Mr. Lema against the car and on the ground as if he were committing a criminal act? Why pull a pregnant Ms. Philip out of the car and push her against the side of the car stomach-first? Why humiliate her by searching her from the waist up in the middle of NDG's Montclair Ave. to see if she was really pregnant or hiding a concealed weapon? By what right did they enter their home without a warrant scaring the children in the daycare and some of their parents? Section 7 of the Quebec Charter of Rights states "La demeure est inviolable." Haven't the police got a copy?

I have reported on many of these cases. We know that these "hindrance" tickets are just harassment. We advocated for Amal Asmar the victim of another such case of abuse. Finally the police apologized. Mr. Lema and Ms. Philip are owed no less. And, frankly, more.

Police officers who physically aggress citizens who pose no threat and are not in the commission of a felony should be summarily drummed out of the force. As should STM guards for that matter. It is quite enough. But there is another gnawing question in this sad affair. The whole

incident started because an officer in a cruiser decided to punch in the license plate of the car Mr. Lema was driving. Why? Mr. Lema was not speeding. Had not gone through a red light or stop sign. Was not weaving in and out of traffic. And was a perfectly clean-cut looking young man. Yes he had run out on a neighbourhood errand and he only had a learners' permit. Yes he should have had his partner Ms. Philip in the car with him. But this was not an act that required such abuse. So just why did the officer punch in the plate number? Where was the probable or reasonable cause? Was it because he was black? Perhaps that is another aspect of responsibility that our security officers need to be taught. Pause if there is no cause. In other words, don't pull any triggers too quickly.

It is ironic that this terrible incident occurred in the same month that police officers are going through sensitivity courses in how to deal with violent and drunk homeless people. The officers are instructed in patience and never to approach too quickly nor to lay a hand on the homeless person. The paramount rule of the course, as reported on CTV, is to "talk it through." Too bad the officers in the Lema/Philip case didn't get the same instructions.

admona
management

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."

David T. Jones
jones@themetropolitain.ca



Those F-35s

Washington, D.C. - There is one sure way to avoid controversy over cost overruns, misestimates, delivery failures and the like for major military equipment—or any significant item of goods or service.

Don't buy them.

Otherwise, the exercise is problematic. Attempting to get the best item at the best price with assured delivery schedules and guaranteed performance is fraught with difficulty and usually falls short in one or another particular.

After all, anyone who has remodeled a kitchen, bathroom, etc knows the maxim: "It will take twice the money and twice the time that you originally estimated." And building a new home is even more so.

To be sure, F-35s are not remodeled kitchens or even new homes. However, some of the same calculation may apply.

First, do you really, truly need a remodeled kitchen? If all the appliances have failed; if the plumbing is leaking and the electric circuits sparking and tripping circuit breakers when you plug in a coffee pot; if you are putting your foot through rotting floorboards and parts of the ceiling are falling; etc, then your kitchen needs some attention.

But do you need a full remodeling? Can you repair the plumbing leaks and electric circuits (they would have to be done for a remodeling in any event)? Cut out the rotted section of the floor? Replace only the absolutely-must-have appliances (stove, refrigerator). Get along without luxury items such as trash compactors, garbage disposal, microwave, and/or dishwasher. It will not be a House Beautiful kitchen, but you can prepare food without risking ptomaine.

That assessment, however, may also prompt the more basic question: Do you need a kitchen (or a modern(ized) fighter aircraft at all? After all, many individuals live quite comfortably and respectably without kitchens, re the "efficiency" apartments where inhabitants exist with a microwave and a tiny refrigerator. They may prepare breakfasts and lunches—or just eat out consistently depending upon fast food, cafeterias, and/or sponging off

relatives. And for the military analogy, there are quite a number of states without modern fighter jets—or indeed any combat air force at all, e.g. Costa Rica, Iceland, Panama, etc. Or any number of third world African, Asian, Pacific Island states.

But if you believe yourselves deserving of a House Beautiful kitchen (and don't think that an open pit fire in front of your straw hut is sufficient to prepare your family food), then you have a different category of requirement.

And such is the case for Canada in discussing the role of jet fighters as part of its force structure.

Some options. A serious case can be made that Canada has no need for fifth-generation, stealth jet fighters—or any combat fighter. Such a decision would presumably conclude that CF-18s should not be replaced (and perhaps not modernized further), but the RCAF should simply end that mission—just as it has no heavy bombers. You just rely on the USAF for combat air cover.

Likewise, a serious case can be made to continue CF-18 modernization as long as desired. Properly maintained (not inexpensive, by the way), modernization can prolong airframe lifetime to a surprising extent, e.g., Canadian Sea King helicopters which were regarded as ready for replacement 20 years ago are still flying. B-52H models, brought into service in 1962, are projected to have a lifetime past 2045. In both instances, the planes are older than their crews.

And a serious case can be made for purchasing F-35s. In this regard, the current imbroglio over who knew what, when regarding price is more politics than finance. It would be very difficult to identify any/any major weapons procurement ever endorsed by Liberals/NDP. Outside observers do not know the specifics behind the repeated GOC insistence that its price for 65 F-35 was fixed—regardless of what price escalations might occur elsewhere. Ultimately, nobody really knows what a final/final price might be, but it will not be cheap. And, in honesty, with any contract of these dimensions, there will be instances of "waste, fraud, and abuse"—but not surreptitious deposits into numbered Cayman Island bank accounts.

So Canada's decision regarding F-



35s will say much about its intended image for the 21st century. F-35s permit Ottawa to play in the "big" along with other major national military actors. F-35s would

reinforce the global perception after Afghanistan and Libya that Canadian Forces can at least punch at their weight. But if not, Canada can slip comfortably back into its

previous status of fielding forces capable of light peacekeeping while the effort of coping with major foreign policy challenges goes on without them.

RETRO HEAT

Old Cast Iron Radiators



Shafter Bros. Inc
Since 1927

259 Van Horne Avenue
Montreal, Quebec Canada
H2V 1H9
Tel: 514.274.8347
Fax: 514.274.7652
Toll Free: 1.800.361.1778

www.oldecastironradiators.com
www.steamexperts.com



GLOBAL VILLAGE



The Hon. David Kilgour
kilgour@themetropolitain.ca

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

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

Loving enemies

human dignity is ultimately indivisible

The words of Jesus, "Love one another as I have loved you", link explicitly love of God and love of neighbour. The two great commandments, found in both the New Testament and the Torah, complement each other. Similar thoughts are found in the holy books of probably all other spiritual communities, certainly including Tibetan Buddhism.

Consider, for example, something His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, said to about 7000 admirers at the Ottawa civic centre recently. The much-loved Nobel Laureate and honorary Canadian citizen stressed that inner happiness comes from doing acts of compassion to enemies. He mentioned a fellow monk who had been imprisoned for years and abused in a Tibetan prison by

the Chinese party-state. When finally freed and reaching the Dalai Lama, he told His Holiness that he was deeply troubled because he felt himself in danger of losing compassion towards his oppressors.

Jesus also said, "... love your enemies..." (Matthew 5.44). In this context, and bearing in mind BBC news reports that Christians have been

killed last week in both Kano, Nigeria, and Nairobi, Kenya, I thought about the persecution of Christians today. The topic was discussed last week before a packed hall at the synagogue of Rabbi Reuven Bulka in Ottawa.

Like many others in diverse spiritual communities, I've long advocated that adherents of all faiths should defend each other when one is under attack. During the terrible siege of Sarajevo in the '90's, for example, many Edmontonians of Christian and other faiths protested at city hall about the appalling treatment our Muslim brothers and sisters in Bosnia. Later, many of the same diverse group gathered to protest the treatment of Christians in Pakistan. An attack on one faith community often becomes an attack on all of them. Hitler, Stalin and Mao persecuted all religions.

There are free countries of many faith backgrounds today. Paul Marshall, author of books on religion and politics, says Latin America has become one of the most religiously free regions in the world.

The nations of Central Europe have in recent years been largely free from religious persecution, as have many in Africa, and several in Asia.

But a 2011 Pew Forum study on Religion and Public Life (<http://www.pewforum.org/>) estimated that Christians today constitute about 2.1 billion persons, and approximately one-tenth of them are being persecuted in varying degrees by governments or fellow citizens in 131 of the world's independent countries. Another estimate is that approximately 105,000 Christians are murdered yearly because of their faith. In other words, about one Christian is killed every five minutes somewhere on earth.

Open Doors, a Christian organization, issues an annual listing of the worst-offender countries. Here are a few examples:

Saudi Arabia, home to more than one million Christian foreign workers, bans churches and private acts of Christian prayer. The monarchy permits its religious police to raid private Christian services and to bring participants up on charges of blasphemy. Author David Aikman has noted that there is a "steady drumbeat of anti-Christian propagandizing by

Saudi media outlets."

There is rightly much international concern for Baha'i's in Iran because they have no legal rights and many have been murdered by the regime. Aikman reports that Iran is probably second only to China in having the fastest-growing Christian house-church community. Dozens have been arrested and jailed for attempting to worship. The regime has recently sentenced a convert to Christianity to death. (The victim, Yousef Nadarkhani, is a pastor of a group, some of whom are converts. Because of the country's Orwellian penal code, those who seek to leave Islam face the real prospect of death.)

In China the repression of Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong and Uighur Muslims in China has gained worldwide attention. The Beijing party-state has also made an unsuccessful effort to bring the burgeoning Christian population to heel. The State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), which controls all religions in China, manages the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) for Protestants and the "Catholic Patriotic Association", which does not recognize the Pope. The number of Christians attending state-approved churches totals 20-30 million. The remaining estimated 50-75 million Christians belong to unregistered 'house churches'.

In my opinion, the West should use the billions of dollars in aid it gives to offending governments as leverage to stop the persecution of minorities, including spiritual ones.

While the world continues to grapple with the issue of persecution of Christians and other faiths, democratic governments must protect our own religious minorities effectively, including those viewed with suspicion by some, and ensure that all can worship, live and work without fear. Author Ayaan Hirsi Ali observes, "the protection of the freedom of conscience and speech, distinguishes free societies from (those that are) unfree...." Presidential candidate John Kennedy made a similar point in 1960: "An attack on one religion is an attack on all." Human dignity is ultimately indivisible today.



Proud to be Canadian?

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

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

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

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

Make Democracy a Guiding Principle

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

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

Canadian
Coalition
for Democracies

PO Box 72602 - 345 Bloor Street East, Toronto, ON, M4W 3J0, Canada
Tel: 416-963-8998 • Fax: 416-963-3546 • www.CanadianCoalition.com

Amb. Freddy Eytan

info@themetropolitain.ca

**LA MALAISE DE LA FRANCE, SUITE DE LA PAGE 1**

mise en accusation d'Israël, tel quel'ignoble ouvrage de Stéphane Hessel ?! Comment ne pas vomir devant le film et les sketches de Dieudonné? Et comment ne pas se révolter contre une mise en scène télévisée de la mort d'un enfant palestinien sur une chaîne publique française! Cela s'est bien passé en France, dans le pays des droits de l'Homme, de la Liberté, Légalité et Fraternité, celui de la Légion d'honneur.

Soyons clairs ! Mohamed Merah n'est pas un solitaire. Il a été influencé par l'endoctrinement des djihadistes et des antisionistes et ne pouvait agir seul ! Al Qaïda et ses complices lui ont fourni de l'argent et des armes pour tuer des Juifs!

Il existe en France un Mal que nous ne

pouvons plus ignorer ! La maladie de la nouvelle société française n'est plus imaginaire. Elle véhicule ses messages partout, elle est omniprésente et dangereuse ! Le Mal doit être déraciné, éradiqué par tous les moyens et notamment par des lois draconiennes. Sur ce point: zéro compréhension ou tolérance ! La raison d'Etat devrait l'emporter dans toutes les circonstances de ce genre.

Les Juifs se sont intégrés en France, fille aînée de l'Eglise, dans une entente et coexistence avec les chrétiens et les protestants. Ils demeurent fidèles à la République et respectent à la lettre les lois démocratiques. Toutefois, leur seul "pêché", c'est d'aimer à la fois, la France et Israël. C'est naturel! Ce double amour est compréhensif et ne pose pas de problème, car

l'affection que l'on ressent pour son père ne diminue en rien celle que l'on éprouve pour sa mère. Nous formons donc une unique grande famille, unie et solidaire, en dépit des divergences d'opinions.

Contrairement à l'indifférence glaciale de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, qui, cinq jours après l'attentat de la rue Copernic, s'est adressé à la nation, et n'a jamais mis les pieds dans une synagogue durant son septennat, Nicolas Sarkozy, lui, a réagi immédiatement et s'est rendu à plusieurs reprises sur le terrain. Alain Juppé s'est envolé pour Jérusalem et a participé aux obsèques des victimes. Comment ne pas apprécier et saluer de tels gestes sensibles favorisant le dialogue sincère et l'amitié profonde entre les deux peuples.

Nous pouvons effectivement faire confiance aux autorités françaises dans le combat contre l'antisémitisme mais nous ne pouvons pas non plus tourner facilement la page et attendre aveuglement à un miracle. Les Juifs de France ne sont pas des naïfs, des dupes ou des suicidaires! Le devoir des autorités est d'imposer une sécurité absolue coûte que coûte! Pour pouvoir remédier le "Mal français", chaque responsable, chaque éducateur, leader communautaire, religieux, élu régional ou national, rabbin, imam ou prêtre devrait refuser l'amalgame et la récupération politique. Son devoir est de combattre le fléau antijuif avec détermination et sans relâche et rejeter avec mépris l'antisionisme primaire qui a pour but le boycottage et la délégitimation de l'Etat juif.

(Julien Balkany is a French National Assembly candidate to represent French citizens living abroad in the United States and Canada, and New York based co-founder and managing partner of private investment firm, Nanes Balkany Partners.)

Julien Balkany

info@themetropolitain.ca



fiscal state of the nation is worse than previously thought – a convenient position from which to perhaps prepare French voters for a letdown on the costly promised state spending that formed the cornerstone of his campaign.

Regardless of one's political leanings, one can nevertheless appreciate that President Sarkozy led France with courage, energy, convictions, and determination during the worst economic crisis the country has seen since the 1930s. As Europe on the whole continues to grapple with the crisis, with individual countries like Greece and Spain teetering on the brink, and the Eurozone on the whole in less debt compared with other countries around the world including the USA, it's hard to deny that Nicolas Sarkozy's France, despite the challenges it continues to face, weathered the storm better than its neighbors.

Moreover, Sarkozy's Franco-German

partnership with Angela Merkel, and his various international leadership efforts in instances ranging from definitive and swift military action in Libya, France rejoining NATO, to G8 and G20 summits, resulted in France being re-established as a respected voice on the world stage.

For those who respect these values and efforts and remain skeptical of a Socialist presidency and the potential of the party for mobilizing its allies on the hard-left, including greens and communists, there's still another opportunity to ensure that some semblance of balance remains.

In June, French voters both within the country and living abroad will have the opportunity to elect candidates for the National Assembly – the country's federal legislative body. Currently held by Sarkozy's presidential majority. A renewal of that confidence in center-right candidates would allow for control

of government to be kept in their hands and to counterbalance the new, leftist Presidential power.

If this phenomenon occurs, it would be the fourth time in French history that a so-called "cohabitation" has resulted in a balancing of power, with the first two of three historical instances having occurred under France's first Socialist president, Francois Mitterrand.

While Article 8 of the Constitution of the French Republic provides for the President to name a Prime Minister, the parliamentary majority has the power to bring down a government in the event that it disagrees with the choice of Prime Minister. In the past, this provision has resulted in the President appointing the Prime Minister of the majority parliamentary party, as was the case in 1997 when center-right President Jacques Chirac named Socialist Lionel Jospin to the Prime Ministership to preside over a Socialist

majority parliament. A few years later in 2002, voters wiped out the Socialist influence in parliament by voting in a center-right UMP majority.

In 1986, and five years into his first term, Socialist President Francois Mitterrand appointed center-right Prime Minister Jacques Chirac to preside over a newly-elected center-right majority comprised of two major center-right parties. Chirac's presence in that role was apparently so appreciated as a counter-balance to Socialist power in that era that Chirac later went on to become President in his own right.

In both of these instances, one thing stands out: French voters always end up being grateful for the presence of a center-right leadership as a counterbalance to power. And now, with a Francois Hollande Socialist presidency a reality, June's legislative vote represents a crucially important last chance for voters.

AVOCADO MAN

Fresh

"Avocados Are Our Business"



2348 chemin Lucerne, suite 534, Mont Royal, Qc H3R 2J8

514.312.3701 • toll free 1.800.672.8030

www.mravocadoman.com • Email admin@mravocadoman.com



David Kilgour
kilgour@themetropolitain.ca

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

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

China and the West

An Uncomfortable Connection

I admire the people of China greatly, including their often heroic protests against acts of misfeasance by their government. To his credit, the outgoing premier, Wen Jiabao, has spoken often about the necessity for democratic reform. He recently had a major role in blocking the advance of Bo Xilai to the nine-member Standing Committee of the Communist Party. Bo and his mentor, former President Jiang Zemin, have been among the worst offenders in the ongoing persecution of the Falun Gong movement since July, 1999. Bo has been removed from his posts and his wife, Gu Kailai, is under investigation concerning the murder of a British citizen. The next to go will hopefully be Zhou Yongkang, the Party head of security, who worked closely with Zemin and Bo in the persecution of Falun Gong.

The differences real friends of China in open societies everywhere have are with the party-state in Beijing, which is unworthy of the Chinese people and has ruled contrary to their best traditional values since seizing power in 1949. Four major areas of concern at home and internationally today are Maoist governance practices, persecution of religions, state capitalism, and systematic attacks on Internet freedom.

Governance

As a university student, I valued my little red book of Mao Zedong's sayings and naively wanted to believe his then many apologists. A number of books, individuals and visits to China have since opened my eyes, but none more than Mao: The Unknown Story by Jung Chang (author of *Wild Swans*) and Jon Halliday. Their meticulous research has demolished virtually every claim to legitimacy or respect for Mao.

The authors conclude that Mao, holding absolute power over the Chinese people for decades, was "responsible for well over 70 million deaths in peacetime, more than any other twentieth century leader." This places him with Stalin and Hitler among the century's three worst mass murderers of civilians. Yale history professor Timothy Snyder's stunning 2010 book *Bloodlands* explains how and why in "the middle of Europe in the middle of the twentieth century, the Nazi and Soviet regimes murdered some fourteen million people." Jung-Halliday expose Mao's political murders, including the death by starvation of 25-40 million Chinese during his bizarre "Great Leap Forward" between 1959 and 1961. They sum up the regime as of 2006, "Today Mao's portrait and his corpse still dominate Tiananmen Square...The current Communist regime declares itself to be Mao's heir and fiercely perpetuates (his) myth.

The book, *The Party*, was published in 2010



by Richard McGregor, former China bureau chief for the *Financial Times*. It documents the continuing role of the Party and its grip on the government, courts, media and military. Among its observations:

- "Top leaders adhere to Marxism in their public statements, even as they depend on a ruthless private sector to create jobs. The Party preaches equality, while presiding over incomes as unequal as anywhere in Asia" (Perhaps you noticed that among the hand-picked delegates at the recent National People's Congress were 61 billionaires.)

- "...the three pillars of (the Party) survival strategy (are): control of personnel, propaganda and the People's Liberation Army...(It) has eradicated or emasculated political rivals; eliminated the autonomy of the courts and press; restricted religion and civil society; denigrated rival versions of nationhood; centralized political power; established extensive networks of security police; and dispatched dissidents to labour camps."

- "The communists rode to power on popular revulsion against corruption but have become riddled by the same cancer themselves...Since 1982, about 80 per cent of the 130,000 to 190,000 officials disciplined annually for malfeasance ...received only a

warning. Only 6 per cent were criminally prosecuted, and of them only 3 per cent went to jail."

Persecution of Religions

In mid-2006, Canadian lawyer David Matas and I were asked to report independently on allegations that peaceful Falun Gong practitioners were being killed for their vital organs. To our dismay, we located 52 kinds of evidence that a new crime against humanity was occurring across China on a large scale, which continues today. You can access our revised report in 18 languages at <http://organharvestinvestigation.net/> or our 2009 book, *Bloody Harvest*, which is available in Mandarin and English.

International gathering of Falun Gong practitioners

Matas and I have since travelled as volunteers to more than 40 national capitals, meeting with Falun Gong practitioners who managed to leave both forced labour camps across China and the country itself, citizens, legislators, government ministers, academics and journalists in a campaign to persuade the party-state to cease a barbaric national and international commerce. I understand that Wen Jiabao has recently called on the party-state to cease the persecution.

The piece concludes that the persecution of

Falun Gong, Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims and other spiritual communities continues across China and that "All people of faith and their governments must let the party-state know continuously that they decry its tactics of persecution and intimidation against ... spiritual communities."

If experts are correct that, apart from Falun Gong whose numbers were 70-90 million by the government's own estimate before the persecution began in 1999, 200-300 million Chinese now practise religion--mostly Buddhists or Daoists, with estimates of Christians varying from 50-100 million--the need for residents of open societies and their governments to 'blame and shame' the party-state has probably never been greater.

State Capitalism

Manufacturing remains the lifeblood of most prosperous economies. Western and other economies have watched myriad manufacturing jobs at home and elsewhere disappear because investors outside China felt they could make greater profits there, where an 'anything-goes' and 'workers-and-the-natural-environment-be-damned' export model prevails. A report on state capitalism in the January 21, 2012, issue of the *Economist* makes a number of points

about the Chinese model:

- State capitalism, going back to Japan in the 1950s and Germany in the 1870s, sees itself as an alternative to liberal capitalism by fusing the power of government with capitalism through such mechanisms as listing government-owned companies on international stock markets. The Chinese party-state is the largest shareholder in the country's 150 largest companies and directs thousands of others. The heads of the 50 or so leading companies have encrypted telephones on their desks, providing a link to the Party's high command. It also has cells in most companies in the private sector.

- A culture of corruption permeates China's economy today, with Transparency International ranking it far down its list at 75th place on its perceived corruption index for 2011. The Economist quotes a central bank of China estimate that between the mid-1990s and 2008 some 16,000-18,000 Chinese officials and executives of state-owned companies "made off with a total of \$123 billion." The piece concludes, "By turning companies into organs of the government, state capitalism simultaneously concentrate power and corrupts it."

Premier Wen Jiabao, China's senior economic official, said on March 14, "The reform in China has come to a critical stage. Without the success of political structural reform, it is impossible for us to fully institute economic structural reform. The gains we have made... may be lost, new problems that have cropped up in China's society cannot be fundamentally resolved and such (a) historical tragedy as the Cultural Revolution may happen again." Wen added courageously in a radio broadcast across China that the state-controlled banks are a "monopoly" that must be broken.

As Martin Wolf noted in the Financial Times (March 21), "getting from an investment rate of 50 per cent of gross domestic product to one of 35 per cent, without a deep recession... requires an offsetting surge in consumption. China has no easy way to engineer such a surge, which is why its response to the crisis has been still higher investment. In addition, China has come to rely heavily on investment in property construction: over the past 13 years investment in housing has grown at an average annual rate of 26 per cent. Such growth will not continue."

Concerning the housing bubble in parts of China, I recently noticed a news item in the Financial Times. In the coastal city of

Wenzhou, luxury apartments are to be built for as much as 70,000 Yuan (\$11,000) a square metre, which is about twice the annual income of the average resident. To finance a 150 square metre apartment would consume every penny of a typical resident's income for 350 years. In my opinion, that bubble is going to burst soon.

Abuse of Internet

Rebecca MacKinnon worked for CNN in Beijing from 1992 to 2001. Her book, *Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle for Internet Freedom*, published this year is in part about empowering the oppressed and disaffected among two billion Internet users worldwide. Here are three of her points of relevance to China:

- Western companies have helped to legitimize what she terms "networked authori-

Governments of open societies and their private sectors should examine why they are supporting the violation of so many universal values in order to increase trade and business with China.

tarianism" in which their networks become the paid extensions of China's party-state power, with most failing to accept responsibility to the public interest in any way by helping the regime to create and enforce its "great firewall".

- Google stopped censoring its Chinese search engine, Google.cn, and moved it out of China in March, 2010 in response to attacks on its G-mail service from computers with military grade sophistication located within China. Later in the year, Google's CEO, Eric Schmidt, and Jared Cohen wrote quite correctly, "Democratic governments have an obligation to join together while also respecting the power of the private and nonprofit sectors to bring about change."

- In China today, an estimated five million of China's 500 million Internet users are able to evade censorship screens in cyberspace. Until this number can grow to a critical mass large enough that truthful information can become known generally by the Chinese people, party-state censorship will be able to maintain a 'gilded cage' around the country. Three of the

best censorship circumvention tools are FreeGate, Ultrasurf and DynaWeb; open society governments and civil society organizations should support them all.

Many know that the working conditions at Foxconn in China, where so many Apple products are manufactured, were so bad that in 2010 a number of employees killed themselves by jumping from the roof of one of its buildings. Both Apple and Foxconn have recently promised to improve, but how many other manufacturers across China continue to treat employees inhumanly?

Chrystia Freeland, editor of Thomson Reuters Digital, asks timely questions. She refers to Daron Acemoglu, an MIT economist, who asserts that China's rulers have been until now been able to deliver strong economic growth without loosening political and social

controls. Technology, which could only be developed in open societies, is today a factor in preserving authoritarianism in China.

Conclusion

Governments of open societies and their private sectors should examine why they are supporting the violation of so many universal values in order to increase trade and business with China. For years, this has resulted mostly in our jobs being outsourced to China and continuous increases in our bi-lateral trade deficits. Do those in our business communities so overinvested in China feel no responsibility to the employment needs of fellow citizens? Are the rest of us too focused on access to inexpensive consumer goods and essentially ignoring the human, social and natural environment costs paid by Chinese nationals to produce them?

Peter Navarro, a professor at the University of California, asserts that consumer markets worldwide have been "conquered" by China largely through cheating. For its trading partners, Navarro has various proposals

intended to ensure that trade becomes fair. Specifically, he says all trading nations should:

- define currency manipulation as an illegal export subsidy and add it to other subsidies when calculating anti-dumping and countervail penalties;
- respect intellectual property; adopt and enforce health, safety and environmental regulations consistent with international norms;
- ban the use of forced labour effectively-not merely on paper as now- and provide decent wages and working conditions for all;
- adopt "zero-tolerance" for anyone selling or distributing pirated or counterfeit goods; and
- apply provisions for protection of the natural environment in all trade agreements in order to reverse the 'race to the environmental bottom' in China and elsewhere.

Peter Navarro

The 2010 Report to Congress of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Commission noted that the American trade deficit in goods with China in the first eight months of 2011 was \$173.4 billion, with the total cumulative deficit in goods with China since it joined the World Trade Organization in 2001 now exceeding \$1.76 trillion. The Commission judges that the value for the yuan is between 20-40 percent lower than what it would otherwise be if it were allowed by the Chinese government to respond to market forces.

The party-state in Beijing is currently making major political changes in its senior personnel. Those appointed should seek dignity for all Chinese if they wish to achieve sustainable prosperity at home. The current roles in Burma/Myanmar, Iran, Syria, Nepal, North Korea, Sudan, Taiwan, Zimbabwe and elsewhere will also require significant change if the new government's goal is to build international harmony with justice for all nations.

The people of China want the same things as the rest of us: respect, education, safety and security, good jobs, the rule of law, democratic governance and a sustainable natural environment.

If the party-state ends its violations of human dignity at home and abroad and begins to treat all members of the human family in a transparent and equitable way, the new century can bring harmony for China and the world.

COLCOFIN Inc.

Personal Investment Management • 514-932-2600

1368, av Greene, Westmount, QC H3Z 2B1



Dr Rouba Al-Fattal Eeckelaert, Ph.D.
al-fattal@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

THE FUTURE OF SYRIA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

concerns among these actors that any intervention in Syria might lead to unknown if not catastrophic results that would affect the region as a whole.

Therefore, the latest developments within the UN Security Council toward the Syrian dossier as well as Western hesitation in intensifying its intervention have left the door wide open for different scenarios which could lead to vastly different outcomes in the future.

The first scenario involves stepping up targeted sanctions against the government. These strong measures include: freezing of the assets of the Syrian Central Bank and individuals associated with the Assad regime, travel bans on the Assad family and those who support the regime, oil boycotts, and prohibitions on exports of equipment to Syria, including software, thus limiting the Assad regime in monitoring telephone and Internet communications. The main objective of these sanctions is to isolate the regime and turn the Syrian business class against Assad.

The longer the Syrian crisis persists the worse the outcomes will be. Domestically we are looking at deeper sectarian rifts and civil descent, followed by civil war and a country sliding into a failed state status.

The second scenario involves setting up a 'Friends of Syria' (FOS) package that would provide a formal recognition of the main opposition umbrella group, the Syrian National Council (SNC), and bolster it with moral and/or financial support. The first meeting of the FOS took place in Tunisia in February 2012, and accepted the SNC as a legitimate

representative of Syrians seeking peaceful democratic change, but it fell short of giving it exclusive recognition. Still, the importance of this initiative lies in its ability to unify the Syrian opposition which is a vital step towards the success of the revolution. In this case, Turkey, the US, and the EU need to play the supervisory role.

The third scenario is focused on providing a corridor through which international bodies such as the Red Cross can convey humanitarian aid. The FOS group demanded that the Syrian regime immediately permit humanitarian agencies to deliver vital relief goods and services to civilians affected by the violence, but the intervention falls short of providing military protection to these agencies or the affected population.

The fourth scenario is based on establishing a no-fly-zone, similar to the situation in Libya, and sending a peacekeeping mission (provided and overseen by either the Arab League or the international community). The no-fly-zone could be limited or it could also be accompanied by targeted destruction of Syria's air defenses, although this is much harder to do in Syria than in Libya - with the former having more sophisticated weaponry and stronger international allies.

The fifth scenario includes training and equipping the Free Syrian Army (FSA). This could lead to a military coup d'état especially if highly ranked military officers start to defect. The problem with this option is opposition forces remain small and fragmented - with some allegedly having links with Al-Qaeda. And there have been disturbing reports of extremists who have infiltrated the opposition groups while groups linked to Al-Qaeda in Iraq have been extending their reach into Syria. Another major concern is the uncertainty surrounding the chemical weapons sites in Syria that would become extremely vulnerable should Assad lose his hold on power. Hence, securing these chemical sites before arming the FSA and knowing exactly who is being armed is a major issue.

The sixth scenario involves militarization of the conflict with full-scale international military intervention, as in the case of Libya.

Although this option can be carried out with or without Russia's and China's approval at the UNSC, it might lead to a dangerous and chaotic path with unclear consequences. Western states realise they cannot take the same measures they took in Libya. For one, Syria has four times the population of Libya and one-tenth the landscape. Also, the fighting is largely urban, meaning air power would be less effective against Syrian tanks and more likely to cause civilian casualties. It's also widely believed that Syria has a larger and better-equipped military than Libya. In addition, NATO naval military bases lay directly across the Mediterranean from Libya, making the operation more feasible. In addition, the dangers of an internationalisation of the conflict are too great, with Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and possibly China standing with Syria against NATO and Israel. This intervention is also likely to require putting boots on the ground that could lead to problems encountered already in Iraq and Afghanistan. Another concern is if Assad would turn his chemical weapons against his own people in order to retain power. This is another good reason for trying to accelerate his departure and turn the military, his allies and the business community against him.

The seventh scenario focuses on mediated talks between Mr. Assad and the opposition. Although few of the opposition groups as well as Russia are calling for this option the concessions given so far by Mr. Assad seem to be too little and too late to satisfy the demands of the protesters. Because of the unremitting nature of the regime's repression, any discussion of a negotiated settlement that leaves Assad in power until the end of his presidential term in 2014 is not only a waste of time, but it could also lead to a protracted civil war. That said, seeing the difficulty of securing a military intervention in the near future and in order to stop the bloodshed in the country, a face-saving departure package would need to be put in place for Assad - as it was for Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh - and every effort must be made to persuade him to leave power as soon as possible. But who should broker these talks? As the Arab League appears to be divided on its position towards the Assad and the UN lacking any political muscle with the Russian and Chinese pro-Assad position, this role is best left for a person with particular experience in brokering peacekeeping deals. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was recently appointed the joint United Nations-Arab League envoy on the Syrian crisis with a mandate to bring an end to the violence and promote a peaceful political solution.

One thing is for sure, the longer the Syrian crisis persists the worse the outcomes will be. Domestically we are looking at deeper sectarian rifts and civil descent, followed by civil

Harwell
emballage • packaging
For the complete package / pour un emballage complet

mousse / foam

specialite / specialty

presentoirs / displays

boites / cartons

Solutions.....

Les Emballages HARWELL Packaging Inc.
845A Rue Tecumseh, Dollard Des Ormeaux, QC H9R 4T8
tel: 514-693-3643 fax: 514-694-6798
www.harwell.ca



Gems from the 2012 Budget

So far, Canadians are an easy lot to distract. The big budget lead item was the gradual increase in the age of eligibility for Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from 65 to 67 by 2023. The provinces accused the federal government of downloading since their governments will step in to support those seniors who cannot afford to lose the extra two years of federal payments. Ageing baby-boomers were upset by the change, since most had taken retirement support at 65 as an unchangeable right regardless of the fiscal ability of the government to support it.

After the OAS/GIS headliner, what came next? One of the top items covered by the mainstream news media was the government's intention to discontinue issuing pennies and to round transactions up or down to the nearest five cents to compensate. This was a simpler issue to fixate on than the changes to the environmental review process for new resource projects or stricter rules governing the expense reporting of certain types of charitable organizations. The pre-budget rumors of spending cuts similar to those of Paul Martin's 1995 budget fizzled to \$5 billion in cuts over three years to the discretionary \$80 billion in federal spending. For those expecting a more conservative budget, they were certainly disappointed, while there is quiet relief among more progressive Canadians who were probably expecting much more of a right-wing realignment of priorities. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said so himself, indicating that he must have done a good job if both the left and the right are expressing disappointment.

There are a few nuggets in the budget, however, that deserve closer scrutiny by the public. Their effects will only become clear over time and so far the coverage they are getting is not on par with their importance. What follows is an analysis of three of these "sleeper" initiatives.

The changes to the declaration limits for the 24 and 48 hour trips outside the country is going to have a massive long-term effect on the Canadian retail market, and the media is not giving them the coverage they are due. Seventy percent of Canadians live within an hour's drive from the US border and if a family of four makes a weekend trip south they can bring back \$800 each, which means \$3200 for the entire car. Now, \$800 per person means that they can bring back big-ticket items like a stove, dishwasher, bed, flat screen TV or a myriad of other items that were previously out of reach for weekend shoppers. If a family of four is planning to furnish a new home, there is no limit to the number of \$3200 trips they can make in order to save thousands of dollars over shopping in Canada. Remember that even if pricing is roughly equivalent with the Canadian and US Dollars at par, they immediately save the tax, which is 15% if you are a Quebec resident.

The effect of these changes will be devastating for large and small Canadian retailers alike. Target has just announced plans to roll out stores across Canada. If there is a Target within 20 minutes of a Canadian border crossing, why bother? Canadian



buyers now have an incredible incentive to continue to frequent the US locations for the lower USD pricing as well as the tax savings. Even with the 24-hour exemption increase to \$200 per person, the same family can make a simple overnight trip and stock up on smaller items for their combined \$800 declaration. If they can find a Motel 6 or Best Western for \$59.00 per night and hold their dinner to \$40.00 at Friendly's, the cost for their mini-vacation is still less than the Canadian tax on \$800 of purchases. There are US retail taxes, of course, but consumers can do the paperwork to claim them back on larger purchases and even if they absorb those taxes they are at roughly half of Canadian levels. Big-box retailers who were eyeing expansion in Canada are probably freezing or scaling back those plans until changes in Canadian cross border shopping behavior becomes clear.

The federal government has argued that it has merely harmonized the Canadian rules with those that US citizens enjoy when they return home. This may be true, but Canadian retailers still lack the economies of scale of their US cousins and certain duties still exist on goods not covered by free-trade agreements. Even Wal-Mart does not offer its Canadian customers the pricing levels enjoyed by US consumers on many of their goods – just ask the Montreal shoppers who continue to patronize the Plattsburg Wal-Mart location.

The new rules come into effect on June 1st, just in time for the summer holiday driving season. Expect two immediate developments: first, the Canadian Retail Council will fire its lobbyists in Ottawa since they have failed miserably to defend their interests, and two, the Canadian Border Services Agency will lobby the government for more agents to deal with the crush of new shoppers coming home with overloaded vehicles. The government said that these changes would streamline operations at the border – the reality will be anything but.

A second pick for a closer review is the \$300 million dedicated for investment in water treatment facilities at First

Nation's reserves. The program has the potential for abuse and scandal way beyond the sum of money involved. The government is feeling sensitive over the living conditions on reserves and has taken a page from the third-world development model and decided that providing clean water would be a great place to start improving the situation. The governance structure for managing these investments will be critical to both getting real value for money as well as avoiding political disaster. The temptation for contractors without water or wastewater experience but currently working for band councils to rebrand themselves as experts will be enormous. If large international contractors like Suez, Veolia or even our own SNC Lavalin want to get in on the bidding, the incentive to court the reserve politicians with favours will be significant. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs may want to run the program itself with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, but native politicians will probably reject the interference. The key question will be who gets to spend the money, and who will provide oversight. Previous programs aimed at improving the living conditions of Canada's native peoples have turned out badly and this one has the potential to fail to deliver on its objective and ruin a few political careers in the process.

Finally, the government's plan to refund \$130 million to immigration applicants who filed before 2008 and re-focus the immigration process on skill profiling is going to revolutionize the Canadian workforce. Immigration and Citizenship Canada is being mandated to "clean house" and start spending its time on identifying and processing foreign workers who have the skills Canada really needs. Employers will also be allowed to cherry-pick workers abroad and fast track them for approval to come to Canada. The government will also end the farce of enabling the use of short-term foreign workers for seasonal work in areas of high unemployment. To further reduce chronic regional unemployment, workers will be given incentives to leave where they are and go to areas that actually have jobs! For Canada, this is radical stuff.

Economists have often lamented that Canada's official unemployment figures masked major regional disparities in the unemployment rate and did little to highlight skills shortages in key areas of economic development, like the resource sector. In one budget, the government is proposing concrete measures to address these long-term problems simultaneously. It will cost very little, and has the potential to reduce our unemployment rate, unlock productivity gains to match our US neighbors, and bring a whole wave of talented people to our country. Ten years from now we will be toasting this initiative yet we are treating it as an asterisk today.

Go back and read the coverage from the day after the budget now that you have considered these three initiatives. In retrospect, did the penny really deserve so much attention? As I said, Canadians are easily distracted from the more substantive issues at hand.



Robert Frank

frank@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

Too frail to fail

A look at seniors' residence failures

Businesses fail all the time. It's called creative destruction, and it's one of the things that North America responds to exceedingly well. That makes our economy more dynamic than Europe, where bankruptcy is still thought of as a moral failure, the way that adultery is thought of here.

In contrast, North American insolvency is usually a stigma-free way to liberate capital. It lets those who have gone bankrupt quickly pick up the pieces and move on.

It's a straightforward process usually left to commerce and the courts. So it's rare to see government get involved, as it did four years ago when the world's financial system teetered on the brink of the abyss. "Too big to fail" became the watchword for state intervention unprecedented in the history of the planet.

The justification, of course, was that it would have cost far more not to intervene. It's too soon to judge whether that was brilliant, though, or simply apocalypse later, since the financial aftershocks reverberate to this day.

So it's worth taking a look, closer to home, at

what might be the tip of another big iceberg, meandering its way toward the good ship SS Old Age.

The failures of two suburban Montreal seniors residences at first seemed just a local story, as unpaid bills mounted, bailiffs showed up and owners petitioned for the protection of the courts.

Scratch the surface, though, and you find a string of similar reports elsewhere in Canada: Troubled seniors residences that seem only of local concern—that is, until you discover that many they share the same cast of owners and operators.

From there, it's easy to discover that the ownership web of many seniors residences is, in turn, securitized by large investment firms in Toronto and elsewhere. Collectively, they are worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Investors buy thousand-dollar shares in real estate funds, hoping to achieve a much higher return than what they can earn on today's pathetic interest rates on bonds.

So far, so good. Private investment makes

capital available to build the seniors residences that today's baby boomers will soon need—and it allocates resources more efficiently than any government could.

The risk is capitalism's natural cycle of boom and bust. Dollard des Ormeaux mayor Ed Janiszewski astutely attributed the seniors residence failures in his town to excessively exuberant investors who, several years ago, built more facilities than are currently needed, leading to a vacancy rate that is commercially unsustainable.

Meanwhile, the financial firms that securitize investments in what they term "assisted living facilities" market them as "residential investments".

Not so fast. As Liberty Assisted Living's string of insolvencies has illustrated, eldercare facilities are much more than a roof over seniors' heads. When our apartment building owner goes bankrupt, most of us can still buy groceries and feed, clean and dress ourselves, as well as see to our own medical needs. The same can't be said of seniors who depend—

sometimes 24-hours-a-day—on the care of others.

Château Dollard and Château Royal are the proverbial canaries in the coal mine. To be sure, court appointed receivers Éric St. Amour and Benoît Clouâtre have, commendably, spared no effort to ensure that the needs of vulnerable residents are seen to.

However, a series of massive failures of securitized seniors residences, along the lines of the 2008 mortgage-backed securities crisis, would instantly outstrip private industry's ability to cope. Too frail to fail, seniors' needs would suddenly be thrust onto the state.

Government policymakers ought therefore to cast a wary eye on the increasing securitization of old age facilities. They need to carefully assess the possible unplanned liability that taxpayers could face from a large-scale set of failures and encourage the investment community to make provisions to cushion such a collapse. The potential human cost to a rapidly growing proportion of the voting population would otherwise be too great a risk to bear.

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

- George F. Lengvari, Sr.



LENGVARI & ASSOCIATES INC.

Robert Elman is Sr. Wealth Advisor
and Associate Portfolio Mgr at
Scotia McLeod

Robert Elman
info@themetropolitain.ca



Greece again?

It has been two years and a snit, since I wrote about Greece, and the rest of the PIIGS.

Well it's difficult to leave well enough alone.

Question: How can a five foot 7 inch Greek exit from a six ft deep hole that is built on quicksand? Answer: You can't.

This hole with quicksand is the Greek living under the austerity rules of the ECB.

You get out of the hole by growing taller. Only through economic expansion can the impossible become the possible.

But how do you teach those who love to dig holes, that you won't any longer put a shovel in their hand. Aye! That's the rub

Europe is faced with a dilemma of massive proportions.

Turn off the monetary tap and Greece will have no choice but to begin printing Drachmas. Devaluation will occur immediately and the savings will disappear, prices will skyrocket and the salaries will have to increase dramatically to compensate for the loss of purchasing power etc, etc,

Greece, which will owe the ECB about \$400 bln. Euros will be unable to pay or will have to pay in newly printed Drachmas. Ka ching.

Other European nations fearing the worst will experience a run on their banks, which may be forced to close, for some period. This will only heighten the tension and the ensuing chaos.

There will be an election in June and, it seems almost for certain that the leftists will win hands down, as they challenge the might and will of Merkel and the rest of the ECB gang.

They will win because, to give in to the austere measures imposed upon them, in order to obtain funding, only deepens the hole, and destroys the already thin fabric of hope.

So what can be done? ECB would love to stop enabling the Greeks, but are afraid of the contagion that might follow, so they will keep Greece around and will soften their stand. They will provide the necessary money and allow for some growth to enter the picture. But they will have to carry a big stick and a prayer book.

3^e item
GRATUIT!
3^e item a prix égal ou inférieur est gratuit

jean bleu



Madeleine Parent

Madeleine Parent was a diminutive but fearless union organizer, labour leader and community activist who devoted her life to improving the cause of working women and to the creation of uniquely Canadian labour unions. Parent, who was 93 when she died recently helped to create the Canadian Textile and Chemical Workers Union, organized women in Ontario, was active in the Fédération des femmes du Québec, fought for abortion on demand in the 1950s, and championed the rights of aboriginal women.

"Madeleine was a bit forgotten," said Monique Simard, a former president of the Confédération des syndicats nationaux, "But she is best defined through the brand of unionism with which she was identified for more than 50 years: struggling, committed, never opportunistic, determined, stubborn and courageous....she always pushed the limits at her own risk and was prepared to take the consequences of her actions."

Madeline Parent, the only daughter in a well-to-do family, was born in Montreal, Nov 11, 1918. She was sent to the Villa Maria convent school, where even as a youngster she was disturbed by the inequity between the privileged nuns and the students and the working women who cooked and scrubbed floors at the convent. She continued her education at Trafalgar School for Girls and in 1937 enrolled at McGill.

A caption under her graduation picture was prophetic: "Give up what perished long ago, and let us love the living." Parent obtained her arts degree in 1940 and went to work teaching English to French-speaking garment workers. She went to work as a secretary for The Montreal Trades and Labour Council, and soon became preoccupied with union activity.

She was influenced by Léa Roback a free-thinking Communist and activist. She and Roback organized workers in the six Montreal Cotton Dominion Textile Mills, and in 1946 they took part in strikes at mills in Valleyfield and Lachute



"I don't think any party would want me," she once said. "I am a very argumentative member."

which led to the first collective agreement with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Denounced as a heretic by the Roman Catholic Church for her union activities in and harassed as a Communist by Quebec's Premier, Maurice Duplessis, Parent was required to carry her birth certificate with her to counter rumours that she had been smuggled into Canada during the Second World War on a Russian submarine. She was arrested for her activism and

in 1948 convicted of seditious conspiracy. She never spent any time in jail. The Quebec Appeal Court ordered a new trial, and her case dragged on for seven years until a judge refused to tolerate any more delays. Always self-assured, Ms. Parent never doubted that women would one day win their struggle for equality. "I believe young women of all origins and circumstances will, in their own way, continue the struggle against long standing injustices, building coalitions with their sisters around the world and with men who care. They will overcome," she said in a speech 60 years ago.

In 1968 Parent moved to Ontario. There she campaigned for pay equity for women, and fought against U.S. dominated labour unions in Canada. She sat on the steering committee of the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women and contributed to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. In her 80's she was one of the 60,000 protesters who marched against the North American Free Trade Agreement at the 2001 Quebec Summit, and was a vehement critic of U.S. Involvement in Iraq. Although she supported the principle of Quebec sovereignty and endorsed Pauline Marois bid for the leadership of the Parti Québécois in 2007 Parent was never a card carrying member of any political party.

"I don't think any party would want me," she once said. "I am a very argumentative member."

McGill university honoured her in 2001 with a seminar in her name.

Parent was twice married, first in 1941 to Val Bjarnason, a student from British Columbia, and then in 1952 to union organizer Kent Rowley, who died in 1978.

They had no children.

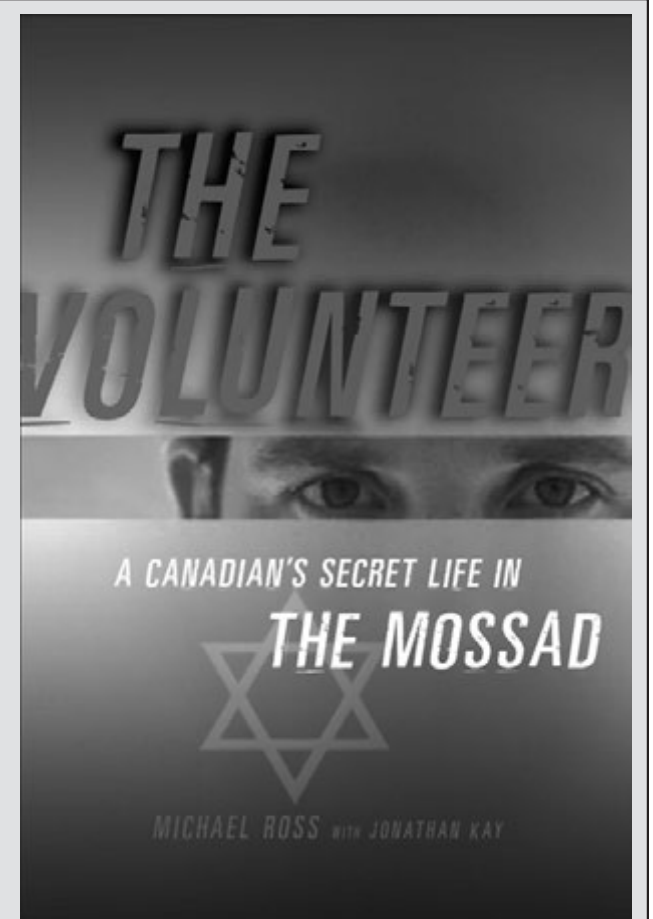
"Every time we thought of starting a family, something more pressing came up," she once told a reporter, "Another strike, another cause, another negotiating session."

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.



Mischa Popoff is a freelance political writer with a bachelor's degree in history.

Mischa Popoff
popoff@themetropolitain.ca



Bring back garbage!

Until someone proves that sorting trash into recyclables and compostables actually helps my family, my community, or society at large, I am no longer doing it. You heard right. I'm bringing back garbage!

Remember when it wasn't an indictable offence to throw things away? Trash all went into a bin and the garbage man took it all away to the landfill. Why did this stop? Has anyone done a cost/benefit analysis on the various forms of recycling and composting we're forced to adhere to?

The City of Ottawa spent \$8 million last year to collect 55,000 tonnes of organic waste in its green-bin program. This might seem like a substantial amount of compost material to keep out of the landfill, but the fact is that after some rather messy handling it will yield just 18,000 tonnes of actual compost which contains a miniscule amount of usable nitrogen fertilizer that the city could have purchased for less than \$7,000. See what I mean? The numbers don't even come close to adding up.

Besides, guess what? All this organic waste will decompose in a landfill. Our mountains of trash are constantly shrinking all on their own.

Recycling empty bottles used to make sense. But recycling facilities have become disgusting, festering places. Recycling aluminum cans might make sense. I say "might!" What I'd like is for someone to prove that to me. Anyone?

And please, spare me all the Mother Earth garbage. Unless something makes economic sense there's a good chance it's harder on the environment.

The steel industry decided to recycle metal all on its own without any government involvement. It pays to crush cars because there's so much weight. So, by that same token, it probably makes sense to continue recycling aluminum.

But can someone please tell me why we're recycling plastic? A barrel of oil is cheap. Think how many pop bottles and plastic bags you'd have to recycle to equal just a single barrel of oil. Until someone proves it's cheaper to recycle plastic – and no one's ever bothered to even try – let's forget about it.

Mother Nature buried quintillions of tons of ancient forests to create



the oil fields we tap into today. So why worry about burying a few million plastic bags and bottles every year? All the recycled plastic in the world won't amount to so much as a drop in the bucket compared to

what's trapped below the earth's surface.

Oh sure, I can already hear someone chiming in about the piles of plastic floating in the oceans. But take a guess at what caused that

problem: recycling! And you heard it here first.

As long as plastic bags, bottles and old toys go straight into a landfill where they're buried and crushed under the weight of more

garbage and dirt, there's little likelihood they'll make their way to the ocean. It's the vain attempt to recycle plastic – an essentially worthless material that has a tendency to escape when transported and stored outdoors – that results in plastic finding its way into the world's waterways.

Then there's paper. Like the steel industry, the paper industry long ago decided there was economic value in recycling paper, but only in large quantities. Very large. And have you had a look at all the beetle-kill across the west? You know... the thousands of acres of forests that Greenpeace wouldn't let us cut down? Better to have cut those trees down for pulp, used them a few times for paper, and then safely disposed of them in landfills. Instead they pose a massive fire hazard across British Columbia.

So please... stop recycling! Save the oceans, the forests and the world. Most of all, save your time and tax money. Just throw your garbage where it belongs, in the garbage.



If we build it, they will come.

Magil Construction prides itself on its reputation for excellence. Its expertise has been perfected on projects of every conceivable size and complexity. Delivering a project on-time and on-budget has been fundamental to Magil's success.

Founded in 1953 by architect Louis B. Magil, the company specialized in residential construction. It has since expanded into commercial, industrial and institutional construction valued in billions of dollars.

MAGIL

www.magil.com



Dr Rouba Al-Fattal Eeckelaert, Ph.D.
al-fattal@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

Honest talk and mutual respect can make our health services tolerable

“**B**ring a pillow, a lunch box, and a book to read for your next visit”. This was my gynecologist’s advice to me recently when I complained about waiting three hours to see her despite making an appointment beforehand.

Having spent the last five years in Belgium doing doctoral research before returning to Quebec, I did not realize that going to the doctor nowadays is as challenging as going camping. As I was waiting in my silence for three hours, looking around me at the grim faces of the other tired expectant mothers, I could not help but think about how the natives of this country must have waited for hours to see the only doctor in the village.

During the period of my settling at the clinic, my mind wandered back to an experience I had while still residing in Belgium when my husband, a Belgian, got so upset for waiting only twenty minutes at the hospital, apparently an occurrence which is unprecedented. I truly wonder what he would have done if he had been in my shoes, eight months pregnant, glued to the chair at the Polyclinique of l’Île-des-Soeurs (Nun’s Island), waiting for three hours, not having had lunch since I expected to be back home in an hour.

I wish this was a personal experience of no systemic significance; unfortunately, for Quebecers this is a common phenomenon. After sharing my experience with others, I realized that each one of my family members and my male and female friends has had a similar story to share from the past year alone. What shocked me is that when I asked them about what they did about it, they all answered with a defeated shrug, “What can we do about it, we shut up and waited”. I was then told that if they would have complained the nurses would become very rude to them. Some even feared their retaliation, like what happened to me when the secretary decided to allow two women who came after me to go before me just to humiliate and to teach me a lesson in compliance.

At this point, however, I understand why the nurse, the secretary and my obstetrician were so annoyed about my inquiry: “Why do we bother making appointments if we have to wait three hours for our turn anyway, could not I just make an appointment and come a couple of hours later?” At first, I thought they did not understand my question but instead thought I was attacking them, but I now realize I was swimming against the current by questioning the system and by not accepting my fate like everyone else in that room.

The reader might ask why I stay with this clinic or with this doctor despite these problems. The reason is simply I have no other



choice. For one, it is the clinic of my community where I reside; and from what I have been told by others I do not think it is any better in other clinics across Montreal, where most medical secretaries seem overly stressed and aggressive toward patients. Besides, when I returned from Belgium I was already four months pregnant, and many considered me very lucky to even find a doctor who will accept me without a six-month waiting period.

So far, all we hear from our politicians is that the medical system of Canada is broken; we cannot do anything because the federal government is not giving enough funds; there is mismanagement of resources at the provincial level; we need to privatize our clinics; and there is a shortage of doctors.

It is true that these problems do exist and perhaps to fix Canada’s medical situation all these issues need to be addressed, but realistically it is impossible – at least not without changing our complete medical and political culture towards universal healthcare which is unlikely to happen in the near future. Therefore, what I am suggesting is to break the problem into smaller manageable pieces, and from there see what we can do together as citizens and as medical staff (doctors, nurses, secretaries, and administration) to improve the situation locally.

Doctors with years of experience who know that they spend more than fifteen minutes with each patient should not double book. But since it is the secretary who books, not the doctor, the secretary needs to understand this. It is not so much the doctor’s fault, but from my experience there was a shift in blame between the

secretary and the doctor, where the secretary told me to talk to the doctor and the doctor rightfully said talk to my secretary. When a doctor, like mine, supposedly starts at seven in the morning to see patients who are scheduled every fifteen minutes, if then she/he is an hour late to come to work that already sets everyone an hour later. Now, combine that with having most patients taking five minutes more than the fifteen minutes, by midday each patient will have to wait two and a half hours extra for his/her turn.

Assuming that for unforeseeable reasons the doctor was called for an emergency at the hospital, transparency then is the key to deal with patients. The secretary here has to directly inform patients of the delay and how long it is expected to be. This allows patients to make an informed decision such as: reschedule their appointments, go for a walk if it is needed for their blood circulation, to go back home if they live close by, to pick their children from daycare if that is needed, to grab something to eat if they have not yet, or to go back a couple of hours to work if they had taken an hour only for this visit.

Time is relative. While a doctor performing an operation at the hospital does not notice the time passing - or does not even want to be aware of the time to remain relaxed - a patient who is waiting that same period feels the time passing very slowly to the point that the waiting becomes an aggravating experience that pollutes his/her mood and causes him/her stress. So, it is important to have a staff at the clinics who are aware of this problem, and who are trained in dealing with stress and with

people at a humanitarian level.

The local medical administration needs to provide civic-medical-education to both patients and the medical staff. Both groups need to have mutual respect for each other’s time. The notion that some doctors have of “my time is more precious than yours” should no longer be tolerated or accepted. For example, when one of my family members made an appointment and went to Verdun Radiology Clinic, he was asked to wait an hour and a half for the doctor. However, ironically, when another family member was fifteen minutes late for her appointment they told her that they can’t accept her and that she needs to reschedule for a month later because, according to the secretary who was in charge at the time, she “should have respect for the doctor’s time”.

Another technical solution is to digitalize all patients’ files. In Belgium, for instance, all hospitals and clinics use special software to store patients’ information in a central system (including blood tests and medical history) in order to be accessed by various doctors/hospitals who deal with the same patient on different issues. Currently, every time we go to a different doctor for a medical issue in a different hospital or clinic, we either have to have a copy at hand of our laboratory results which is not always possible to obtain, or we need to take another test by that specific hospital/clinic. I was indeed shocked to notice that at my clinic in Nun’s Island they do not have that system and that all information is stored still in paper files.

Although some family members warned me not to publish this article until I give birth to avoid problems at the Polyclinic (which is a reflection on part of the problem and the culture of fear between patients-doctors in which we live), I believe in open communication and participatory democracy as a solution to our social problems. True, I was not pleased with the condescending manner I was treated with at the clinic by the secretary and the nurse. And I also did not appreciate the doctor’s suggestion to “just forget about what happened and focus on the baby”, nor her analysis that because I’m “a woman and pregnant and passing prenatal depression” I was more sensitive to waiting for three hours. But my sex, mood, and hormones are not what triggered writing this article. It is all the problems that I observed around me about our medical system (especially since I had more than enough time at the clinic to reflect on them), and believing that we can do something about these issues is what triggered me to write this piece with the hope that it will reach our decision-makers and medical administrators.



Neil McKenty 1924-2012

Broadcaster, author, and former Jesuit

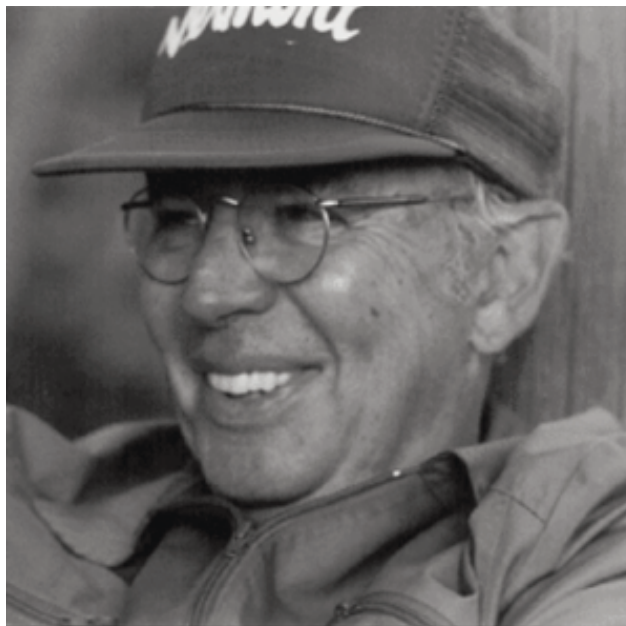
Neil McKenty liked to argue for the hell of it and he made a career doing it.

The irreverent Jesuit who left the priesthood and went on to become the cornerstone of Montreal talk radio died Saturday morning at the age of 87. During his 14 years as a CJAD telephone talk show host in the 70's and 80's he brought a degree of civility to the charged political atmosphere in province after the election of the Parti Quebecois in 1976, and in the referendum that followed. In its heyday, his program, *Exchange*, attracted as many as 85,000 listeners or more than a quarter of the city's English-speaking audience. He later did a television talk show, *McKenty Live* for three years.

While he was in his element behind the microphone, McKenty, however, wasn't happy being a public figure. He quit his radio show at the peak of his career in 1985 to finish a biography, *In the Stillness Dancing*, about an obscure Benedictine monk, John Main who was influenced by oriental religions and started a Christian meditation movement. McKenty then bared his own soul in a no-holds barred courageous autobiography, *The Inside Story*, in which he revealed, among other things that he was bipolar, was a recovering alcoholic who contemplated suicide and that he never took his priestly vows of celibacy seriously.

"There were two Neils," said his long-time friend, Jim Reed. "The one who needed an image of himself, and the other who loathed the image that others had of him. He was a super, super guy, but he was distracted by the pain of living. He had no use for hypocrisy. He wanted to be real."

Neil McKenty was born in Peterborough, Ont. on Dec. 31, 1924 and grew up in Hastings. His father, who ran a hardware store was an alcoholic who preached a hard religious line. McKenty and his younger brother were educated by Jesuits at Regiopolis College in Kingston. As a teenager, McKenty worked as a stringer for the Peterborough Examiner. He took his B.A. at St. Michael's College in Toronto before entering the Society of Jesus as a novice in 1944. He was ordained in 1957. He worked in New York as a summer relief editor on *America*, the Jesuit review and



spent time in London. He returned to study history at the University of Toronto where as his doctoral thesis, he wrote a biography of Ontario Premier Mitch Hepburn. Influenced by Fulton Sheen, a popular U.S. clergyman who had his own television program arts McKenty went on to take a communications arts degree in 1964 from the University of Michigan. It was during a visit to Rome that McKenty began to have serious misgivings about the institutional church. He described it as "a bloated structure, top heavy with oppressive authority." By 1969, he made a decision to leave the priesthood. "When it came to preaching, I had a lot going for me," he explained in his autobiography but he was unable to reconcile the fact that the words the congregation heard, while theologically sound, did not jibe with my feelings about those words in my heart. The ball did not go smack into the glove."

After leaving the Jesuits McKenty worked in Toronto for Red Foster Foundation for the intellectually handicapped and helped organize the first Special Olympics held in Quebec. In

1972, he was hired by CJAD in Montreal to do talk radio. As he saw it, his primary purpose was serve as a moderator and give listeners an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with each other. Sidney Margles, the station's former director of information and public affairs said McKenty was hired for his questioning mind. "Because of his Jesuit background, the depth of his knowledge was most attractive. He was intelligent, a natural communicator, a seasoned analyst, impressive and well spoken," Margles said. "He had one hell of a good head on his shoulders." McKenty said one of his proudest moments on air was getting Brian Mulroney to take questions from listeners after Mulroney said he wouldn't. "His refusing to take calls on a radio talk show made as much sense as going into a television studio and refusing to turn on the lights," said McKenty, "The *Toronto Star* got wind of it, and on the morning of the show, put the story on its front page. By the time Mulroney arrived at CJAD the station was packed with reporters, Mulroney was in a rage and proceeded to excoriate me for causing him political embarrassment. (But he was an astute politician, so he squared his shoulders, adopted a thin smile, went on the air, and answered the callers questions."

Although McKenty abandoned the priesthood, he embraced an ecumenical approach to spiritual discipline. He kept a blog, and had a regular column in the *Senior Times*, *Pit Stop*. He continued to rail against the Vatican. He deplored what he considered to be the second-class treatment of women by the institutional church and he found it odd that while a married Anglican could become a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, a Catholic married man could not. His last column, published in the May edition of the *Senior Times*, challenged the church to take a more nuanced approach to its teachings about homosexuality. McKenty wrote that while the church teaching on the profound significance of sex is correct, its interpretation of ancient scripture are in need of correction. McKenty wrote that he did not believe in a God who would condemn a person to an eternity in hell for a single, unrepented moment of deliberate sexual pleasure.

He leaves his wife of 40 years, the former Ontario government speechwriter, Catherine Fleming Turnbull, with whom he wrote *Skiing Legends and the Laurentian Lodge Club*.

...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?

Citoyens Anti Gouvernement Envahissant

CAGE

Citizens Against Government Encroachment

www.cagecanada.ca



Oz Bijoux: Cherchez la Femme

C'est l'histoire d'une petite bijouterie de quartier. Le spectacle quotidien des commerçants, celui des gens de la rue. J'écris cet article par solidarité à tous les artistes, qui travaillent durement, et souvent sans reconnaissance digne de ce nom. Le printemps est revenu sur Saint-Denis. Une rue pas comme les autres. Nous sommes à Montréal. Le parfum des lilas n'a pas encore envahi la ville. Mais ça s'en vient...

Il y a tout d'abord cette femme, propriétaire de la bijouterie, en qui se retrouvent toutes les femmes. C'est avant tout une sentimentale, une artiste, on l'imagine d'abord intellectuelle à Paris (peut-être l'a-t-elle été); puis, il y a autre chose, il y a plus : tous ces bijoux, là, partout, flamboyants, immenses, épousant tout l'espace. En effet, pénétrer à l'intérieur de chez OZ Bijoux, c'est presque du bovarysme. On transperce l'indifférence générale pour imaginer le vrai mystère de la femme à travers ces pièces multi-facettes, uniques au monde. Difficile de ne pas céder, un tant soit peu, à l'attrance des métaux, sculptés d'or rose, blanc, jaune, avec des perles (beaucoup de perles), et de pierres précieuses. C'est un peu comme un spectacle : Goethe parlait de l'enfant, qui y est comme la femme, lorsque celle-ci cède aux voix secrètes, notamment à l'appel de cette voix inaudible à tous, sauf à elle-même. En effet, à l'intérieur de chaque être humain existe une région obscure, faite de rêves et de besoins inassouvis, parce qu'inassouissables. De cette manière, dans sa vision absolutiste, Goethe a révélé qu'ainsi, la femme, livrée à elle-même, ne peut satisfaire ses élans que dans la mort. L'enfant, comme la femme, entend cette voix : celle de la mort. Son père, fendant l'air sur son cheval, et emporté par les mouvements de sa propre vie, n'entend rien. C'est le thème du Roi des aulnes, célèbre classique de Goethe, et dont les bijoux de chez OZ n'échappent pas, tant ceux-ci sont exceptionnels, fantastiques, étonnants, ciselés comme à l'extrême limite de toutes les limites; à la fois simples et complexes, reflets de « la vie multiforme, absurde et passionnante », pour reprendre les mots du poète. En somme, impossible d'y demeurer indifférents, vous aussi serez happés par ces passionnantes collections. Vous aussi, aurez envie de toucher, de cerner comme un cœur, ce diamant extraordinaire. Somme toute, tout cela est assez évanescant, et bien que je n'y sois pas allée depuis des jours, j'y pense souvent, et surtout à ce qui anime l'artiste, tandis qu'il crée ses œuvres, ce qui se passe lorsque lui-même devient le prolongement de l'objet; sent-il alors un grand bonheur l'envahir ? Comment lui vient l'inspiration : un souffle venu de l'intérieur ? Vous serez nombreux également à vous poser ces questions, car tant de



OZ Bijoux

médiocrité effraie dans ce monde que devant la beauté, la vraie beauté, nous sommes consternés, nous cherchons à comprendre d'où cela vient exactement; nous ne voulons pas que la réalité nous échappe. Ainsi, l'art précise les contours de nos actions, se heurte aux questionnements de la vie, et finalement souffre à notre place. D'une certaine manière, voilà tout le travail de l'artiste : susciter l'imagination, sauver l'Homme de la médiocrité, et recréer symboliquement la femme d'aujourd'hui, à travers toutes celles d'hier, et celles qui hantent, à jamais, les pages de nos romans, de nos souvenirs, de nos rendez-vous manqués, et portent en cela nos plus grandes espérances, pour un monde meilleur.

Les fées parlent

Mais il y a autre chose : la fidélité de la clientèle de OZ Bijoux, qui ne se dément pas, et cela depuis plus de 25 ans. Avant tout, elle se compose de femmes, d'artistes, de futurs mariés, de poètes, des collectionneurs. Puis, elle se décline en gens de la rue, des passants, qui ne cessent de témoigner son appréciation au sujet des œuvres, toutes plus belles les unes

que les autres ! En effet, difficile de résister, de choisir, ... « mon mari, ça fait quatre fois que je l'épouse », raconte une cliente verbomotrice, un tantinet excentrique, trop heureuse de recevoir chaque fois la bague de ses rêves. « Ça vous paraît comique ? Vous ne me croyez pas ? », ajoute-t-elle, avant d'exhiber ses mains remplies des bagues glorieuses. On ne peut s'empêcher de la regarder droit dans les yeux. À quoi bon demander pourquoi ... Explique-t-on la magie ! De plus, ces rencontres ont lieu à l'occasion de lancements, de vernissages, organisés directement dans l'atelier de la bijouterie, afin de partager des anecdotes savoureuses, des impressions, et des commentaires sur les toutes dernières créations. Ainsi, il vient des gens de partout; outre les journalistes, il y a beaucoup d'amis, de parents, des inconditionnels. C'est également l'occasion, pour ceux aimant les bijoux OZ, de faire connaissance, de fraterniser, de se retrouver; ce n'est pas un univers entièrement féminin, c'est avant tout un lieu de passage, un refuge urbain de beauté pour tous les gens aimant les œuvres d'art. Ainsi, toutes sortes de milieux différents se retrouvent liés, en parallèle ; de cette manière, une place concrète à l'art urbain s'invente, également de par une sorte de tendresse dans les échanges, parce que tous ceux et celles possédant un bijou OZ a une petite histoire personnelle à raconter, et fait ainsi partie de la famille. Oui, cela est nécessaire, parce que tout change; la ville n'est plus la même. Par exemple, face à la porte d'entrée de la bijouterie, et cela depuis presque deux ans, tous les samedis après-midi, -beau temps mauvais temps-, il y a des manifestants qui font le pied de grue sur le trottoir. Et cela, parce qu'à la boutique d'à côté, on vend des chaussures fabriquées en Israël. Oui, oui, on parle d'apartheid, en 2012, en pleine rue St-Denis, et cela au meilleur moment de la semaine pour les commerçants montréalais. On pourrait en rire, bien sûr, si au moins c'était drôle. Or, ce n'est pas une scène de théâtre de rue, ou un mauvais vaudeville. Les PAJUS (Palestiniens et Juifs Unis) parlent même du projet, à plus long terme, d'épurer la rue St-Denis, de tous produits de marque israélienne, allant jusqu'à déborder devant sa devanture, qui est située, comme pour faire exprès, dans un demi-sous-sol. Ainsi, plus personne, ou presque, n'entre maintenant dans la bijouterie, notamment les samedis, entre 13 heures et 15 heures. Allez-y faire un tour, et vous comprendrez bien le sentiment d'oppression : il arrive de se sentir comme un animal coincé, explique la propriétaire, lasse de toute cette histoire. Ce n'est pas en vain qu'au plus fort de la tempête, elle a senti le découragement, puis la colère monter, avec sa petite équipe constituée de créateurs allumés travail-

lant à l'atelier: « c'est ma plus belle clientèle que je perds, tous les samedis après-midis, à cause d'eux », résume-t-elle. En effet, ces jours-là, se sont les promenades des couples, ceux qui font les boutiques, les amants main dans la main, ceux qui ont tout leur temps, ceux qui vont se marier, et viennent la voir pour choisir un bijou très spécial. Bref, à voir sa mine déconfite, on aurait envie de la prendre dans ses bras et l'embrasser !

Pourquoi je vous écris tout cela ? Parce que OZ Bijoux est un joyau de nos quartiers. C'est plus qu'une simple bijouterie, c'est un lieu unique en son genre à Montréal. Ce doux commerce ressemble au bonheur. C'est un espace nécessaire à notre œuvre urbaine, à toutes et à tous, un lieu culturel riche de beauté, de personnalité, d'art, de simplicité, dans un dosage subtil de pudeur et de témérité : la boutique se divise en deux, avec l'atelier tout au fond, ce qui invite aux conseils et aux confidences. En effet, choisir un bijou relève de l'intime; c'est une voix singulière, en même temps que porteuse d'un morceau d'universel. Bref, ce qui se passe actuellement sur la rue St-Denis, à Montréal, est plus qu'une tentative d'énervement, mais bel et bien une aliénation de la liberté, de la dignité, et de la liberté de commerce. Le désir également de dire que les humains, en général, rêvent mal la vie et qu'il arrive trop souvent que chacun soit attrapé par les mêmes leurres; en somme, c'est un bonheur, un tout petit bonheur dont je vous parle, mais voyez ce qui arrive lorsque chacun, chacune, avec le cœur, l'esprit et la lucidité – ce qui n'exclut pas d'être traversés par le doute – ne résistent pas devant l'orgueil du pouvoir, de ces arrivistes prêts à tout, même s'il faille pour cela nuire à la liberté de commerce de toute une rue, définition indirecte de la saga actuelle. Pourtant, le printemps revient, et les lilas refléussent toujours. La vie est plus forte : tout le monde sait de quoi je parle. Le poids de la beauté, c'est surtout cela qu'il ne faut pas oublier, investit tout. Je ne parle pas de militantisme, ni de politique. J'adore les artistes : ce sont des gens merveilleux ! Allez visiter ceux de chez OZ Bijoux, c'est un devoir citoyen, assurément, mais également l'histoire d'une révolte. Ne soyez pas surpris d'y voir la transcription de la femme, échappée, comme pour nous montrer des brèches, pour mieux nous faire pénétrer son univers, véritable archéologie des métaux. En effet, le discours chez OZ Bijoux est intraduisible pour l'œil ordinaire. Au bout du travail des fouilles, il y a toujours l'imaginaire, qui aura enfin le droit de passage. Ainsi, OZ, on l'épelle, on l'explique par ses richesses étalées, fascinantes, ardentes, romantiques, inoubliables. Vous aussi serez conquis, conquises, éternellement.



The Rif Lover/L'Amante Du Rif

Great films take a bit of time to digest and I am still digesting "The RIF Lover" (Amante du Rif) a Moroccan/Belgium/French production shot in Morocco in the RIF mountain range. The impression left by director Narjiss Nejjar is a rich portrait of Morocco desperately trying to escape from an anti-feminist, tribal and patriarchal society with a nasty undercurrent of Muslim fundamentalism way far off in the edge of the film. The disapproving burka clad women appearing in the early stages of the film like a ghost shaking her head disapprovingly at the behaviour of Aya and her best friend Raida dancing to "western" music must be a comment by director Nejjar. We also hear riffs of Bizet's Carmen from a video that Aya watches in a transfixed state. A hint of an impending tragedy?

We first meet Aya in a dark room smoking a cigarette half her face in shadow the other in light and the story flashes back 7 years prior to happier times with teens Aya and Raida playing on the roof of Aya's house in a small Moroccan sea side town. The beautiful blue sky and the giggles of Aya and Raida are of short duration as Aya's brother, seen riding around in a luxury black SUV with a group of thugs, pimps Aya off to his hashish exporting boss and ruling warlord in the area for a small plot of land where he can grow his own cannabis. The pimping brother feels no remorse so low is his regard for women whether they be his sister or not. We are left in an ambivalent mood as to whether Aya welcomes her raunchy encounter with the warlord. Although not so clear it would appear Raida is also pimped off to the warlord yet no one in Aya's family actively condemns this behaviour. Aya's mother prefers to take Aya to a clinic to have an artificial hymen inserted as without virginity upon marriage "a Moroccan woman is useless". A sarcastic if not sad comment on Morocco by director Nejjar where hymens are available for 24 hours, 48 hours or on a permanent basis and credit cards are accepted as in the film the "hymen is everything". The divide between brother and criminal is non-existent. All men are bearded and wearing sunglasses and equally evil. Are Moroccan men in a Taliban inspired assault on feminist rights? Is there no difference between Afghanistan and Morocco in terms of their treatment of women?

Another comment by director Nejjar seems to be the absence of the traditional "leader" in the family as Aya's remembrance of her father is some figment of the imagination who works the fishing boats in Spain and irregularly sends money back home. This places Aya's mother in charge of the family who silently endures the pimp off of Aya and only the mother gains her dignity near the conclusion of the film where



she savagely criticizes Aya's pimping brother and tosses him out of the house. The other brother leaves to join his mythical father on the fishing boats of Spain. The Rif area of Morocco may be beautiful but it is poor driving its inhabitants out of their country or to crime like her pimping brother who says, "How do you think we get by...selling seashells?". We see hashish being packaged for sale up in the mountains. It's a big business in the area. It is clear that Aya recognizes her mother is a prisoner in a male dominated rural society when she tells her, "I don't want to live like you in the dark like you have been shut off." Aya's mother is fixated on marrying her off to a cousin hence the absolute necessity for an artificial hymen. About the only connection to any sort of reality by Aya's mother is when she states, "I never liked your father." She also throws the pimping brother out of the house criticizing his lack of manly behaviour and decency.

Suddenly on the road to meet the cousin her mother proposes that she marries Aya is pursued by the warlord who pops Aya's hymen again but gives her a ring. Aya is then strangely before a magistrate and then thrown in prison. This event breaks the flow of the movie. Intentionally done or poor editing? In prison Aya meets a cast of memorable and quirky characters, lesbians treated as criminals, a woman who had an affair that led her general husband to throw her into prison like a chattel, all victims of an anti-feminist and anti-libertarian Moroccan society. An inmate remarks, "It's crazy how many love bastards." I reflect on the opening segment of the movie where Aya sings, "Love is a rebellious bird. It has never known the law."

The movie ends in a fantasy of inmates all dancing to Carmen with their tough prison guard supporting this creative rebellion by having all inmates stamp their hand on posters which are delivered to the corrupt warden who

treats the inmates like his personal harem. Aya is eventually discharged from prison and although her mother portrayed, by Nadia Niazi,

delivers a tremendous performance, we gasp in frustration as she informs Aya that her brother is returning from the fishing boats with a bridegroom for Aya. Moroccan society does not understand women and in fact the movie continually repeats the message that Moroccan society disdains them by their horrific treatment of women. The Thelma and Louise conclusion and the end of Aya portrays Morocco beyond repair...a society that imprisons its women, condones their rapes and drives them to their death. However the tiny ray of hope is that this film exposes the inner rot of a country. A wound either heals or it becomes infected.

Solid acting by the entire cast here. Wonderful shots of Moroccan village life and countryside. Not uplifting and in fact damn depressing but as with so many non USA movies thought provoking. (L'Amante du Rif/The RIF Lover, Director Narjiss Nejjar, France/Morocco/Belgium, 95 Minutes)


Dominican Republic
 Has it all

Come join us
The Dominican Republic
is a surprising place
that will delight even
the most experienced traveler.

For more information on this tropical paradise visit
www.godominicanrepublic.com



LE CHÂTEAU

Sold exclusively in Le Château stores and on [lechateau.com](https://www.lechateau.com)