



**Duhaime**

Le monde a changé

Page 3



**Cotler**

Tory omnibus crime bill will produce more crime, and less justice

Page 6



**Eytan**

Les « cavaliers d'Allah » au grand galop !

Page 15

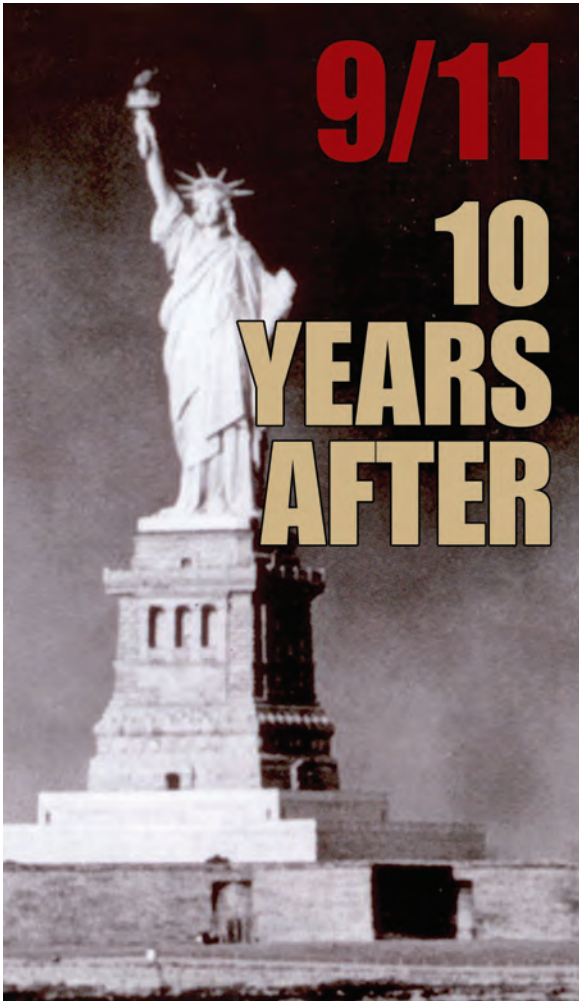
Ensemble et libres Together and free

# THE METROPOLITAIN

26 OCTOBRE 2011 • VOL. 4, NO 5

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

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA



**9/11**  
**10**  
**YEARS**  
**AFTER**

*Why it still matters...*

**DUHAIME**  
Le monde a changé .....p3

**WAJSMAN**  
To revive our courage to loathe.....p7

**JONES**  
Remembering 9/11.....p8

**FRANK**  
Memories from a Times reporter.....p9

**BIRNS**  
Images from UPI photographer.....p10

**EYTAN**  
Les « cavaliers d'Allah » au grand galop...p15

**PRESSER**  
The lingering costs of 9/11 .....p16



The "occupiers" of Place Victoria in Montreal put a Guy Fawkes mask over the face on the statue of Queen Victoria and stuck the nationalist Patriotes flag in her arm. What that has to do with Wall Street no one is quite sure.

## Occupy what?

**Beryl Wajzman**  
Editeur et Rédacteur en chef  
wajzman@themetropolitain.ca



**O**k, everybody gets it. Economic disparity between the wealthy and the workers is expanding at a faster rate than at any time in the post war period. We have seen the destruction of a free and fair market by rapacious corporate chieftains. But why occupy Wall St.? The problems do not lie in Wall St. or Bay St.

and certainly not in Place Victoria.

If these protestors really understood the markets, they would know that the stock exchanges are the great equalizers. No you can't beat the markets. But if you understand them, then a relatively small amount of money, properly invested, can produce a healthy supplementary income. People should pay as much attention to that as they do to sports.

The real problems lie in our capitals. Over-regulation that stifles industrial growth and under-legislation that does not

address the real problems. For example, the lauded Dodd-Frank bill that is some 2000 plus pages does not even touch on the issues that allowed the Lehman collapse to happen. Does not restrict the ETFs that control trading and destroy the individual investor. And does not forbid the kind of exotic instruments that led to the sub-prime debacle. What these protestors, no matter how good their intentions, do not know about the real causes and effects could fill volumes.

Continued on page 4



3<sup>e</sup> item  
GRATUIT!  
3<sup>e</sup> item à prix égal ou inférieur est gratuit

jean bleu

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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*.



**Éric Duhaime**

info@themetropolitain.ca

Éric Duhaime possède près de 20 ans d'expérience comme conseiller politique à Ottawa et à Québec et comme consultant international en développement démocratique. Il est co-fondateur du Réseau Liberté-Québec.

**LA PATRIE**

## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

# LE MONDE A CHANGÉ

Où étiez-vous à 10h38 le 11 septembre 2001? On s'en souvient tous. J'étais dans mon bureau dans l'édifice du Centre du Parlement canadien à Ottawa. Quelques minutes plus tard, la sécurité faisait évacuer le building. On courait sur la rue Wellington, en panique, devant la Tour de la Paix, comme si un avion allait nous tomber aussi sur la tête.

Ce n'est pas les deux tours du World Trade Center de New York qu'Al-Qaïda a attaquées ce jour-là, mais plutôt notre démocratie, nos valeurs et notre mode de vie occidental. Cette véritable déclaration de guerre bouleversera chacun de nos parcours.

### FINI LA NAIVETÉ

Sur la scène politique canadienne et québécoise, le 11 septembre marquera la fin de l'hégémonie du multiculturalisme et contribuera à déclencher la crise des accommodements raisonnables quelques années plus tard.

Personnellement, cette catastrophe m'interpela au point de concentrer mon attention sur le monde arabo-musulman et même d'y habiter quelques années afin de contribuer à la démocratisation de la dernière grande civilisation de notre planète à ne pas vivre en démocratie.

Pour d'autres, le réveil sera encore plus brutal. À titre d'exemple, un ami conseiller politique d'un important ministre du gouvernement canadien au moment des attentats historiques, en arrivera non seulement à quitter sa famille politique du Parti libéral du Canada mais à la combattre avec l'enthousiasme du récent converti comme plusieurs autres néo-conservateurs.

Le 11 septembre nous fera prendre conscience de la menace de l'islam radical. Il nous a guéris de notre grande naïveté à l'égard du monde arabo-musulman. Convaincus que le modèle démocratique libéral poursuivrait sa grande marche dans toutes les régions du monde, nous découvrons avec effroi que des radicaux aspiraient plutôt à le soumettre à un régime totalitaire au nom de l'Islam.

### LEÇONS APPRISSES

Si on se scandalise judicieusement aujourd'hui devant une enseignante de Jonquière qui manque de jugement au point de faire porter le voile islamique à ses élèves dans un cours d'éthique et de culture religieuse, c'est notamment grâce à cette prise de conscience.

Mise à part la complaisance d'une certaine gauche avec

avec les jeunes progressistes et autres réformateurs démocratiques, avec tous les dissidents aux régimes despotiques de la région qui alimentent l'extrémisme islamique.

Le 11 septembre marquera aussi le début de grossières et coûteuses erreurs. Pressée d'agir et de riposter, l'Amérique blessée se lancera, avec ses alliés traditionnels, dans des guerres inefficaces au Moyen-Orient et imposera, ici, des mesures de sécurités parfois excessives. L'incapacité fréquente

## Le 11 septembre nous fera prendre conscience de la menace de l'islam radical. Il nous a guéris de notre grande naïveté à l'égard du monde arabo-musulman.

l'islamisme, les événements malheureux dont nous commémorons aujourd'hui le dixième anniversaire nous solidariserons aussi avec les femmes brimées et abusées dans le monde arabo-musulman, avec les gays et lesbiennes systématiquement discriminés ou même exécutés, avec les coptes, les juifs ou les chrétiens qui sont sur la ligne de front,

de distinguer les musulmans des islamistes témoignera également de notre ignorance des réalités du monde musulman.

Faut croire que le 11 septembre n'a pas encore fini de bouleverser le monde et que nous avons encore des leçons à tirer de ce douloureux traumatisme.



Ideas before identities.  
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN

OCCUPY WHAT? CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Their frustration with lack of jobs and a contracting economy is understandable, particularly when corporations are sitting on historically high cash reserves. But the protesters need to understand that the reason the corporations are not expanding is that they don't know what new regulations they are going to get hit with next. Nothing good can come out of a 2000 page bill. The protesters want more government intervention. What they should be protesting for is for government to get out of the way.

This year's Lehman, the Euro debt crisis, was not caused by markets or the private sector. It was caused by the avarice of politicians to acquire more power and control over people. The Eurozone is a leviathan that does not work. Government is no longer the solution. It is the problem. And the protesters should be in our political capitols not our financial ones, pressing

elected officials to get us back to the service state not the control state.

But to bring the protests to Canada is truly meaningless. There are no specific systemic issues. There was no failure of regulation as there was in the States with the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act that led directly to the excesses of the Lehman era. That was a responsible piece of regulation. Naturally it was repealed. Under President Clinton no less. As a friend of ours said, if there is an earthquake whose epicenter is in New York City, one doesn't send search and rescue crews to Montreal.

How can we be frustrated with the players in a Canadian banking system that abided by the rules and adhered to a solid national regulatory system that kept it out of trouble in 2008 with the implosion of the U.S. economy? Canada's Federal

government pleaded with the Big 6 of Canadian banking to take its bailout money, but they were greeted with a resounding "Why?"

Are the "Occupy Montreal" protesters railing against the top 1% of taxpayers within the rest of Canada who continue to support Quebec social benefits which they themselves do not enjoy, such as subsidized day care and parental leave? Or is it against the 1% of income earners in Quebec who continue to send almost half of every dollar they earn either West to Ottawa or East to Quebec City. Maybe that 1% has every bit as much to complain about as the remaining 99%.

The "occupy" movement is putting its energies against the wrong enemy. It is a disproportionate response to an abstraction that does not exist.

ALAN HUSTAK PHOTOS



More food than is needed has been donated to the soup kitchen on the site. Surplus food has been donated to food banks.



"Liberation isn't the work of one person. Freedom is a collective effort, if you are going to change the system, it's a collective thing. It takes work."





# The case against transparency

## Public inquires may not be in the public interest

**B**uilding one kilometre of road in Quebec costs 37 per cent more than it does in the rest of Canada; in urban areas like Montreal, the gap is wider at 46 per cent, according to statistics from Transport Canada. The numbers speak for themselves. Zero per cent of Quebecers believe that public money is being spent responsibly on infrastructure 100 per cent of the time. The question is: Where is our money going? Despite all this Premier Charest was right not to bow to pressures for a public inquiry. And here's why.

Proponents of these inquiries typically use variations of the same argument: Transparency. We have the right to know. Populist politicians in opposition are quick to demand transparency because it's an easy way to curry favour with voters who feel excluded from the political process and increasingly suspicious, rightfully so, that some of their hard-earned money is being stolen.

Positioning a leader with the goal of successfully arguing against transparency is a challenge so daunting that it's almost not worth engaging opponents in that argument to begin with. Charest is in a lose-lose situation; call an inquiry and expose potentially damning evidence of malfeasance reaching into one of the government's largest Ministries, or appear as if he's hiding that same malfeasance from the population.

The Premier has been flirting with a notion that, on the surface, seems incredibly elitist. He would never say it in such blunt terms, but transparency isn't always a good thing. Occasionally, the public should not have the right to know. And almost always, commissions of inquiry turn into commissions of inquisition as former Premier Landry once famously quipped.

It's difficult to reconcile my training as a truth-seeking journalist with my belief that the general population does not have an adequate understanding of the workings of government and law to objectively weigh all the salacious information that would result from a public inquiry. I believe this to be particularly true in Quebec, where voters are highly emotional; we elect Members of Parliament who have never visited their ridings and are anxious to vote for political parties that don't even exist yet.

The trouble with these inquiries is that they quickly degenerate into costly sideshows, with few rules, little consideration for the rule of law and the destruction of innocent reputations through demonization by association. This was the case during former Judge John Gomery's inquiry into the "Sponsorship Scandal," and there is no reason to believe a construction inquiry would be any different.

These commissions cost tens of million of dollars; Gomery spent almost as much on his as the federal government spent on

the Sponsorship program he was charged with investigating. In the end, former Treasury Board Resident Reg Alcock admitted that \$80 million had been spent to find \$13 million.

Charges that resulted from the Sponsorship file were the result of separate investigative work by police forces and treated like any other case inside of the traditional justice system. This begs the question: What on earth was the point? Was it all just a spectacle, orchestrated by a Prime Minister desperate to seem proactive - and perhaps, to deflect from his own bad press concerning his business interests - and a media equally desperate for a dramatic narrative?

In arguing against transparency - at least for now, until more hard evidence is gathered, charges are laid and suspects are convicted in a court of law - I am undoubtedly going to get flack from others in the truth-seeking business. But there is one lesser-

court of law, a similar comment could provoke a mistrial. In Gomery's kangaroo court, it had no bearing on the proceedings. Indeed a federal court found Gomery guilty of bias against Chertien.

His inquiry was essentially an investigation into the federal government's uninhibited spending on pro-Canada propaganda before the 1995 referendum and the abuses of advertising firms who obtained government contracts to help convince Quebecers to love their country. If the head of l'Unité anticollusion, Jacques Duchesneau, is accurate in his recent assertions, a public inquiry would draw links from members of the Mafia to construction companies, engineering firms and the Transport Ministry. This is an issue that is considerably more serious than the "Sponsorship Scandal." It needs to be handled delicately and with a level of tact

**Robert Lafrenière, head of l'Unité permanente anticorruption (UPAC) and Duchesneau's superior, stated recently that a public inquiry would jeopardize ongoing investigations and urged the public to be patient while police do their work.**

known yet fundamental concept in journalism that is being overlooked in the debate over public inquiries: The Filter.

Journalists are charged with conveying important information to the public. But how do we choose what information to broadcast (I receive roughly 200 communiqués daily)? Our training, in theory of course, helps us to develop a filtering mechanism which separates the bona fide news from the slander, the spin and the insinuation.

Gomery's commission gave reporters license to discard their filters. Since witnesses were free to speak their minds without consequence, the media quickly reported on what was said daily. The commission legitimized what would, in any other setting, be considered hearsay. Yes, there was a healthy amount of truth being spoken, but there were also lies, slander, innuendo, gossip and plenty of utter nonsense - like when Gomery described former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien as "small-town cheap." In a real

and sophistication that a televised spectacle simply cannot provide.

Robert Lafrenière, head of l'Unité permanente anticorruption (UPAC) and Duchesneau's superior, stated recently that a public inquiry would jeopardize ongoing investigations and urged the public to be patient while police do their work. Duchesneau has said that he favours a hybrid public inquiry, where sensitive witnesses could testify behind closed doors, avoiding possible intimidation or contamination from those who would seek to derail the inquiry.

Both are signaling that good police work is being done and it will eventually bear fruit. It isn't very exciting to watch, nor does it satisfy those craving transparency, but the Charest government's handling of the corruption crisis appears to be as close to responsible as it can get under the circumstances. The courts are anything but expedient, but they are fairer than the court of public opinion.



**Ideas before identities.  
Justice before orthodoxy.**

**THE MÉTROPOLITAIN**



**The Hon. Irwin Cotler**

info@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

# Tory omnibus crime bill will produce more crime, and less justice

**T**he Conservative's omnibus crime bill will result, sadly, in more crime, less justice. There are six principal problems with the legislation.

First, even before the legislation was tabled there was a serious problem of prison overcrowding, with some provinces reporting prisons at 200% capacity. We know overcrowding leads to more crime within prisons, and more crime outside

prisons. The US Supreme Court has found overcrowding of 137% can constitute cruel and unusual punishment. This legislation will only exacerbate the problem.

Second, there is the question of costs. Not only have the costs not been disclosed, but in fact the Parliamentary Budget Officer costed one of the bills alone at \$5 billion. Canadians and Parliament have a right to full disclosure and accountability.

**Evidence demonstrates that the use of mandatory minimum sentences – such as would be expanded in this legislation – do not deter crime, have a differential and discriminatory impact on vulnerable groups, and unduly circumscribe judicial and prosecutorial discretion.**

Third, there is a need for consultation with our provincial and territorial counterparts, who will bear the burden of costs at the expense of services, and that will address the issue of crime prevention and not just crime and punishment.

Fourth, bundling nine major pieces of legislation in one omnibus bill will not allow for sufficient and differentiated Parliamentary discussion and debate – let alone oversight. This will serve to undermine the Parliamentary process. If you ask the Canadian people if they are in favour of protecting victims and safe streets, of course the answer is yes. The question is how you achieve it. This bill will not achieve it; it will only serve to make things worse.

Fifth, the omnibus bill is about principles and priorities – at its core it is about values. If you go ahead and spend unnecessary billions of dollars on building unnecessary prisons while crime is receding, that means do you not invest those billions of dollars on a social justice agenda, on childcare, on health care, on crime prevention, on seniors, on social housing. So at the end of the day we'll probably – as a result of this bill – have more crime and less justice.

Finally, evidence demonstrates that the use of mandatory minimum sentences – such as would be expanded in this legislation – do not deter crime, have a differential and discriminatory impact on vulnerable groups, and unduly circumscribe judicial and prosecutorial discretion. Indeed, even US Conservatives now regard it as a failed policy that has caused the prison population to skyrocket, while creating expensive mega-jails that effectively become factories of crime.

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

5375 Paré ave., suite 140 Montréal, Québec H4P-1P7 T:514.735.5888 F:514.735.1378

**Beryl Wajzman**Éditeur et Rédacteur en chef  
wajzman@themetropolitain.ca

## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

# To revive our courage to loathe

No, this is not another essay about the abomination of the modern theocratic kamikazes of the Middle East and why we must remember 9/11 because of them. Enough has been written about that. Legitimacy or condemnation, applause or denunciation, they seem to all assume a single phenomenon at issue: killing for a cause, strategic murder. However, they sadly miss the point. These are very different activities indeed. A new manifestation of an old evil was loosed upon the world that day 10 years ago.

Today's terror of Islamic fundamentalism is not the modernist version of the mid-20th century politics of assassination. This is not about the killing of particular people thought to be guilty of particular acts. This terror is random murder and thuggery. It is meant to impose tyranny on the minds of all people and exact submission through fear. It is not ended because Bin Laden was killed nor because of the high hopes arriving out of the "Arab Spring." Too many of the latter's leaders have ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and other extremist organizations. And that is true in Egypt, and Tunisia and even in Libya where the current operational chief of the TNC was thrown out of the United States for being a high level operative of a deadly Islamist group.

9/11 was a radical transformation of the practice of political violence characterized by the targeting of unknown victims innocent of any act that we saw too often over the decades aimed at Israel. Nine-eleven signaled that that small frontline nation in the family of the free would not be the lone target. Indeed, Canada is the only western country on Bin Laden's original hit list that has not yet been attacked. Yet as Robert Frank points out in his excellent article in this issue, 24 Canadians were killed in the Towers, including eight Quebecers. The deep moral and political significance of 9/11 will continue to affect all aspects of the lives of our current generation. This is not an overstatement.

Albert Camus wrote in *The Just Assassins*, "Even in destruction, there is a right way and a wrong way -- and there are limits." The Islamists know no limits.

9/11 obliterated forever the tenuous line, more honoured in the breach than in reality, between people who could and people who could not be attacked. It had been the political equivalent of the line between combatants and non-combatants. The very word terrorist

may be inapplicable for the perpetrators and their fellow travellers that followed. As we devised a new vocabulary for horror after the Holocaust so perhaps we may need to devise a new vocabulary to reflect the brutal elimination of even notional post-war values of civilization that we witnessed on that day.

From New York to New Delhi the obliteration of this line is the critical feature of contemporary terrorism and a chief characteristic in our very real "clash of civilizations." The heirs of the 9/11 killers have emptied the category of the innocent. They claim butchery as their right, slaughter as their legacy.

Assassination is often futile as a means and vile as an end. But we do judge assassins, to some degree, by their victims. When the targets are Hitler-like agents of oppression and cruelty we may even praise the assassin's work. It is at least possible to be a "just assassin". The assassin fights a limited war; he aims at known individuals and seeks specific political and social changes. "Just terrorism", in today's post 9/11 world, is an oxymoron.

Today's Islamist terror has only one unmistakable message regardless of its public claims. Random murder to indulge an uncontrollable bloodlust. And Western leaders need to better understand this. There is no official program to deal with, as even President Obama found out after his spurned overtures to Iran at the beginning of his administration. The line that marks off agents of the state from civilians, officials from ordinary citizens, is critically important. Once it has been crossed, there is no further line to draw, no stopping place beyond which people can feel safe. Today we are witnessing the ultimate lawlessness with no compromise possible. That very message of no compromise is a key component in the psychological armament of terror that accompanies the physical destructive act itself. It is a paralysis of the rational. Kill the spirit, then kill the body.

Yet the Islamists operate today in a permissive atmosphere. Despite the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, we still see statesmen rush about to make bargains. Journalists and academics construct elaborate apologies on their behalf. The undeniable is denied and the indefensible is defended.

It is said in some quarters that today's butchery is nothing new. They are acting as revolutionaries and as nationalists have always

acted. This is demonstrably false. It is said that these terrorists are the inevitable product of hardship and oppression, which is also false since so many come from backgrounds of privilege, as many of the 9/11 killers did and indeed of extreme wealth as in Bin Laden's case.

We are losing our sense of the historical past. We are falling into an age of ignorance that erases all institutional memory and moral distinctions. Many say that random murder is an effective political strategy — the terrorist will win the day. This is most frightening of all for it is less a recognition of reality (witness Churchill and Britain in WWII) than an indictment of the cowardice and complacency of current culture.

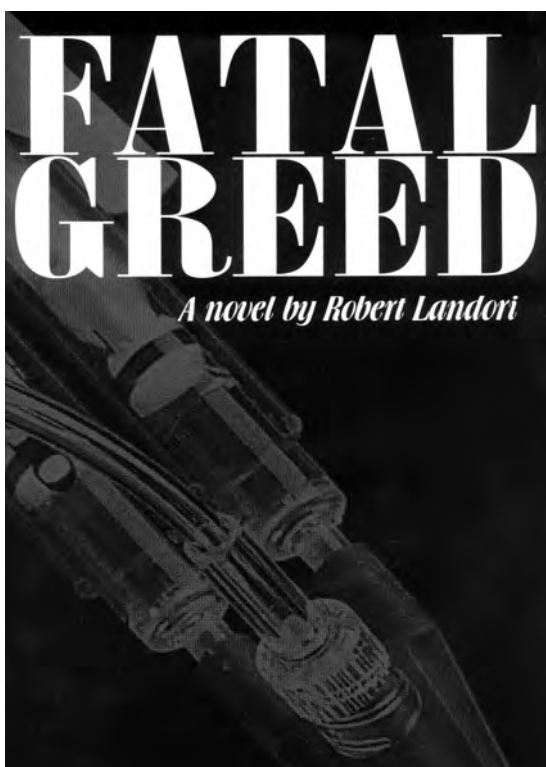
Trotsky once said that "The revolution must have its code of honour." Maybe it once had. Previous revolutionaries were not necessarily good or gentle people but they realized there were limits on political action. Everything was not permissible for a very practical reason. To quote Trotsky again, the revolution should not be "... loathed by the whole human race."

In our world today, radical movements have been taken over by autocratic and theocratic thugs and fanatics. To deal with them, all the aspects of an advanced security apparatus are necessary, obviously balanced against the need to protect individual liberties. We cannot mirror that which we seek to destroy. That would give our enemies the victory.

But none of this will be enough unless we can also restore a collective sense of outrage at the vileness of the perpetrators. Just as they utterly disregard the sanctity of the lives of children and innocents, so we must refuse to afford them the normal considerations granted to card-carrying members of the human race when we pursue them in battle.

We must stop being confused, frightened, defensive, and merely weakly indignant. It is these new barbarians who have completely and consciously rejected the old codes. To be sure, those codes were nothing more than the most meager and minimal standards of political decency.

But reasserting minimal standards would, at this time in history, already be a great advance for civilization. The least we must do is to marshal our resolve to revive the courage to loathe. It is only the first step to victory, but victory there will be.



**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**

## Sid Birns

info@themetropolitain.ca

Ex-New Yorker, now Montrealer, veteran of Omaha Beach, and postwar NY-based staff photographer for UPI, photojournalist Sid Birns shares his thoughts and images as we commemorate the 10th anniversary of the shock and tragedy that was 9/11.

## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER



The building of the World Trade Center (Twin Towers) started in 1968 and was completed in 1973. One hundred ten stories tall, the spires could be seen from all parts of the city and were visible for an easy twenty five plus miles when flying into any of the New York-serving airports.

The Twin Towers became an icon of New York City as well as a symbol of pride to the city dwellers themselves. In their simplicity, they were a unique statement for their times. Going straight up to a height of 1360 feet, made of steel, glass and concrete steel reinforced floors, they were controversial right from the start but ultimately were adopted as the landmark we now sadly remember.

September 11th, 2001, like its predecessor (December 7th, 1941-the bombing of Pearl Harbor), will go down in infamy and has changed the way we view the world and the world views us, not only as Americans but as free people everywhere.

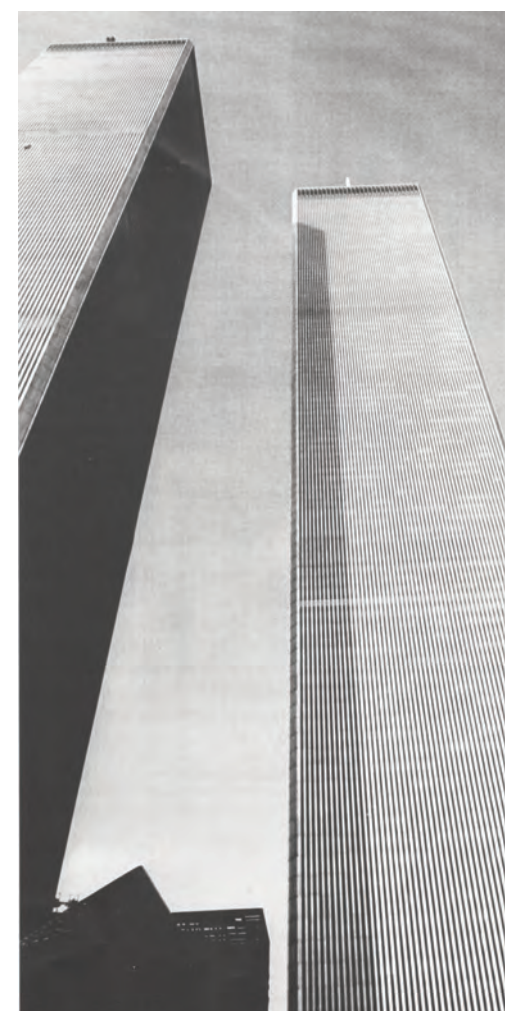
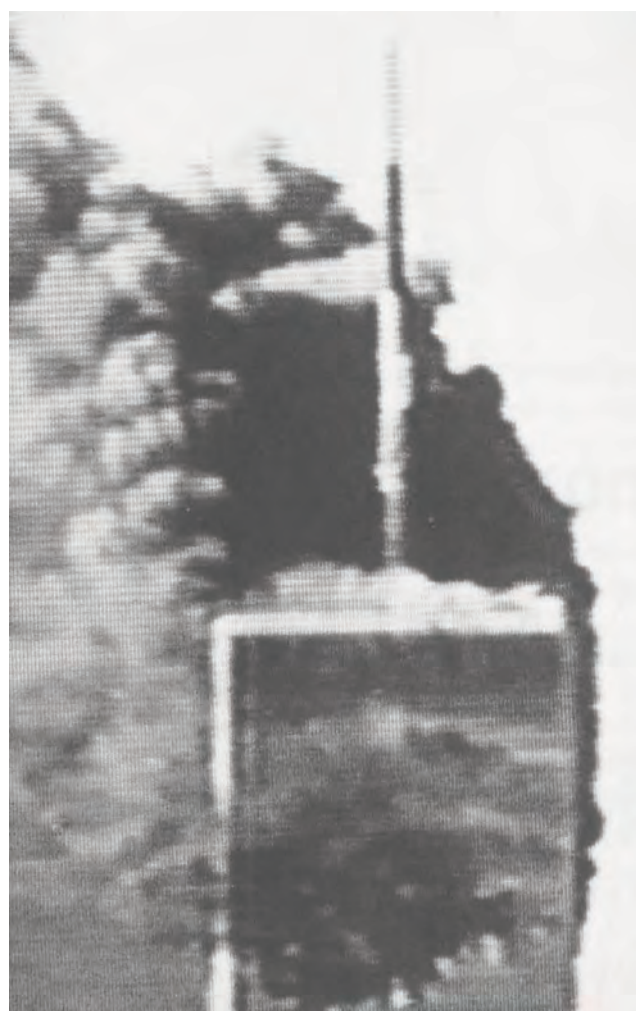
Since the destruction of the Twin Towers, America has closed ranks and become more of a unified country. As the

Japanese Admiral reflected after they bombed Pearl Harbor, "I fear we have awakened a sleeping giant." Then as now, the provoked giant has awoken, and the world is now a far harder place to plan and mount this type of large-scale civilian attack because of the lead that America has taken.

Within fifteen minutes of the first plane crashing into the north tower, the second plane crashed into the south tower. I happened to be watching television at exactly the time the second plane hit the south tower and like many people, I

thought it was a movie. But of course, it was only moments later that we all learned the truth: that war, no matter in what form, had come to the United States.

It has been my good fortune as a photojournalist, to have been privileged to take many photos of the Twin Towers, and hopefully to have them become part of the history of what happened on September 11th, 2001. It is my pleasure and honor to share these images with The Metropolitan and its readers on the 10th anniversary of this terrible event.





## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

Memories from a Times reporter

## ‘I didn’t have to ask ‘why?’’

Montreal authorities had issued warnings, eight Quebecers died

I wasn’t one of the millions whose first reaction was to ask “why?” I already knew the answer.

I had been covering terrorism in Canada for The New York Times for the past two years, part of a team around the world working for investigations editor Steve Engelberg. The New York Times was one of the last newspapers to invest heavily in investigative reporting. Its explanatory reporting on terrorism would eventually earn it another Pulitzer. The newspaper had already been building a file on would-be Algerian terrorists for a year before Ahmed Ressay tried to enter the United States with explosives to blow up Los Angeles airport in 1999. In the wake of Ressay’s bungled bombing, no other news outlet in the world could match the depth of our coverage.

There ought to have been no surprise. The warning signs were already there. Montreal police convened a news conference to highlight a new phenomenon which they dubbed “gangs terrorism.” They had uncovered a group of thugs who were intimidating Montreal’s Algerian community and engaged in theft and other crime. The police criminal intelligence branch told reporters that the Algerians had terrorist links: They were more than petty crooks, but they were not full-blown professional terrorists. Something never before seen was afoot.

Montreal news outlets rewarded that pre-9/11 attempt at openness by branding police as racists who didn’t understand foreigners and poverty. Subsequent events, though, proved that they had identified a new kind of threat, one that had been attempting to cow and co-opt law-abiding members of the Montreal Algerian community.

Canada nonetheless suffered on September 11, 2001 at the hands of murderers who did not care what nationality, faith or gender they robbed of life. They killed 24 Canadians that day, including Quebecers Michael Arczynski, Cynthia Connolly, Colin McArthur, Michel Pelletier, Deborah Lynn Williams and recently married Merideth Ewart & Peter Feidelberg.

American Frank Joseph Doyle, who also perished that day, was married to Kimmie Chedel of St. Sauveur.

After the planes struck, while other newspapers launched counter terrorist diatribes, Steve Engelberg’s direction to The New York Times’ investigative team was to promote understanding. We were to explain who these people were, and why they wanted to do this to us.

The world was not ready, 10 years ago, to hear this message. In many ways, it still isn’t. Most North Americans still view what happened through their own cultural lens. Following the attacks, Jean Chrétien attributed the violence to economic deprivation in the perpetrators’ countries of origin, though we would later find out that most of them came from well-off Saudi Arabia. They were not influenced by the West’s 20th-century wars of materialism. A new ideology was at work here that had nothing to do with economics.

Phil Gibson, former head of communication for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, later described to me in an interview Ottawa’s paralysis in the immediate aftermath. The federal government initially didn’t know how to react publicly to the crimes. Meantime, Parliament Hill was evacuated while the RCMP investigated a suspicious van.

The attacks shattered Canada’s complacent, it-can’t-happen-here isolationism, which has reigned since Sen. Raoul Dandurand told the League of Nations in 1924 that Canadians, protected by three oceans, “live in a fireproof house, far from inflammable materials.”

The New York Times sent me that day to Mirabel Airport, where Vice-President Al Gore and other air travelers had landed after the Federal Aviation Administration closed the United States to all air traffic. I had never seen so many aircraft on the ramp there. The main concourse inside the terminal — usually so empty that you can use it as a bowling alley — was packed wall-to-wall that day with more than a thousand international travelers.

As I glided through the throng, the eerie part was the silence. I had



expected excited pandemonium, as disembarking passengers tried to make alternate travel and accommodation plans and swap information about that day’s attacks. Instead, numb, stony calm etched the faces of the stunned America-bound crowd, their eyes fixed on nothing in particular, a hundred yards away.

RCMP held the passengers aboard the diverted aircraft until they completed hand and sniffer dog inspections of all baggage aboard. Security personnel also isolated two American Airlines jets more than a quarter-mile down the runway from other aircraft.

St. Petersburg resident Wayne Pasco, returning to Miami from a business trip to Zurich, commended the efficiency of the Canadian inspectors. “I don’t think anybody minds. Do I object to excess security? I think that they’re doing great.” Mr. Pasco explained that the pilot of his Swissair flight announced that United States airspace was closed due to the attack on the World Trade Center, and that the aircraft would land in Newfoundland, “but then we managed to work our way here.”

Passengers on other aircraft that landed at Mirabel said that they were not told about the reason for the diversion until after they arrived.

Civic officials scrambled to find accommodation for the stranded air travelers who had arrived during Montreal’s peak travel season. There was nowhere else for them to go: Canada had cancelled all outbound

and Ontario had clearly been temporarily shut. Security was also beefed up at the International Civil Aviation Organization, a large United Nations agency headquartered in Montreal, spokesman Denis Chagnon told me.

There is no television in my office, so I didn’t see imagery of the attacks until that evening. The magnitude of the destruction exceeded all expectation. Ultimately, after exhaustive investigation, authorities were satisfied that the atrocities of September 11, 2001, had no connection to Canada. This reassurance should not give way to complacency, however. Ahmed Ressay was not a violent extremist when he left Algeria. He was radicalized here in Montreal, after he arrived in Canada.

Canada, mercifully, is the only country on Osama bin Laden’s list of targets that has, thus far, been spared an attack. Though hopefully this will remain true, 9/11 showed that no country is immune.

**riosud**  
*Vêtements mode pour la femme d'aujourd'hui*

Alma • Amos • Beloeil • Chicoutimi • Dolbeau • Gatineau • Joliette • La Sarre • Mont-Laurier  
Montréal (Lasalle) • Québec • Rimouski • Rouyn • Shawinigan • Sherbrooke • Sorel  
Ste-Marie • St-Jérôme • Terrebonne • Trois-Rivières • Val d'Or • Valleyfield

Le Nouveau **riosud** Super Magasin  
COHOES VÊTEMENTS • MEUBLES • DÉCOR

MONTREAL 4908, Jean-Talon O. GREENFIELD PARK 4980, Taschereau E. LAVAL 1799, St-Martin O. MONTREAL-NORD 6000, Henri-Bouffard E.

SIÈGE SOCIAL 4810, Jean-Talon O., Suite 203, Montréal (Québec) H4P 2N5 info@riosud.com  
[www.riosud.com](http://www.riosud.com)

## GLOBAL VILLAGE



**David T. Jones**  
info@themetropolitain.ca

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

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

# Remembering 9/11

"Who You Are Is Where You Were When"  
~ Morris Massey

Washington DC - The quotation refers to the events that define you and your generation—life and history altering episodes that are the benchmarks for memory and the iron pole around which your future swings and conditions your thinking. For my parents, it was Pearl Harbor. For me, it was the JFK assassination. For my children (and for me again), it has been 9/11.

Where were you when you heard about...?

My wife and I were in California, firing up our computer in early morning Pacific Coast Time, when we saw that a plane had hit one of the Trade Towers. Our first thought was tragic accident, akin to the 1945 incident in which a B-25 bomber crashed into the Empire State building. But then the 9/11 story, became much, much more. Later we heard that one of our daughters was still attempting to get to work, clambering over fire hoses and circling police barricades, when the second plane hit the second tower. Then she decided that even Jones work ethic might be set aside for the day. She was walking north toward her apartment when the towers collapsed; our family was lucky.

Memory burns brightly—but also fades. It

was years before I no longer awakened in the morning with the image of burning towers the first thought in my mind. Now it is more sporadic—intermittent—but never a day passes without me remembering. Nor does my desire for revenge slacken; I am a better hater than a forgiver. It will not be until every last member of the al-Qaeda movement associated with 9/11 has been "brought to justice"

## It is unfortunate that the exercises in remembrance on September 11, 2011 have been so politicized.

that the page can be turned. Bin Laden is just another name on the long list.

It is unfortunate that the exercises in remembrance on September 11, 2011 have been so politicized. We have remembered each of the 9/11 events differently and wrangled endlessly over the process. With military efficiency, the memorial of

remembrance for the strike against the Pentagon was opened on September 11, 2008; the gravesite of the most senior military officer killed in the attack overlooks the Pentagon from Arlington National Cemetery. On the other hand, the memorial to Flight 93 in Shanksville, PA was dedicated but remains unfinished. Here passengers fought back against the terrorists seeking to crash the

million was raised by 2008. One can anticipate at least \$500 million to cover final construction of a museum to complement the memorial officially dedicated on September 11. The NYC mayor declined to invite religious figures and "first responders" to the formal ceremony (they met separately)—so another dram of bitterness was added to the witches' brew associated with remembrance.

We were traveling on 9/11—and the tour group made no announcement regarding the event—but some televised snippets were locally broadcast. It left for me the sense that we have the national ability to overdo everything—grief mongering being one of our latest affectations.

There could have been another approach. In the Place de la Concorde in Paris there are statues representing prominent cities. When Alsace-Lorraine <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alsace-Lorraine>> was lost to Germany after the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian war, the Strasbourg statue was covered in black mourning crepe on state occasions. This practice did not end until France regained the region following World War I—almost 50 years later. The French attitude was "speak of it never; remember it always."

For me, grim resolution trumps mawkish sentimentality.

"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

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*, and Co-chair, Canadian Friends of a Democratic Iran.

**The Hon. David Kilgour**  
kilgour@themetropolitain.ca



# Ahmadinejad and human dignity

**M**ahmoud Ahmadinejad has told Iranians that Israel's existence is counter to the "dignity" of all nations. What, however, is the condition of dignity across Iran?

In mid-March, the UN Human Rights Council voted for the first time to appoint a special investigator to monitor Iran's record. The resolution, co-sponsored by governments from every region of the world, passed 22 to 7.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report expressed "serious concern" about Tehran's record: "...increased executions, amputations, arbitrary arrest and detention, unfair trials, and possible torture and ill-treatment of human rights activists, lawyers, journalists and opposition activists." Ban deplored the persecution of Iranian minorities, including Arabs, Armenians, Azeris, Balochs, Christians, Jews, Kurds and Baha'is.

Under Iran's constitution, key members of the government, parliament, judiciary and military must be Shiites, leaving everyone else as inferior, facing harsh treatment whenever they practise their faiths openly. Kurds are barred from teaching the Kurdish language in regional schools. Sunnis must not build mosques in Tehran.

#### Middle East/North Africa Uprisings

Paul Salem, director of the Middle East Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, observed about events in the Middle East and North Africa: "There are new revolutions and heroes to look up to ... and Iran is passé ... Iranian officials, as well as leaders of Iran-backed Hezbollah ... have taken a selective approach to the uprisings, cheering the movements in Egypt and elsewhere as an 'Islamic awakening,' while rebuking unrest in Syria as a plot by Israel and the West."

An opinion piece in the Anatolia Daily (Turkey) by Nir Boms and Shayan Arya noted that Ahmadinejad demands UN intervention for the UK riots, but not for the tragedy continuing across Syria, with a now estimated 2600 civilian protesters killed. They added,

"...Turkey informed a UN Security Council panel that it seized a second cache of weapons that Iran was attempting to deliver to Syria, in breach of the UN arms embargo... Today there are over 2000 political prisoners in jail (in Iran) and the crackdown continues. Since most (are)... activists tracking human rights violations, it is very difficult (tracking) all the prisoners ... Nevertheless one human rights

coalition, 'Iran: All Rights Reserved?', produced a list of nearly 650 prisoners ... sitting in jail while Ahmadinejad goes to give lessons to the UN."

#### Institutionalized Misogyny

In 2010, Amnesty International observed: "(Iran) ...discriminates against women from top to bottom. Women are absent in any of the senior, decision-making posts..."

Neda Agha Soltan became a symbol of Iran's long history, culture and principled people. Her murder by a militia sniper on June 20, 2009 still haunts the world.

Iran's penal laws are contrary to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (not ratified by Iran), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Significantly they also elicit protests from Islamic legal experts – both Shi'ite and Sunni. While most countries are banning the death penalty, Iran still punishes by cutting off tongues, hands and feet, gouging out eyes, and stoning to death.

#### Ahmadinejad Record

Since 2005, Ahmadinejad has outdone most Iranian presidents since 1979 in imprisoning peaceful protesters, torturing prisoners and escalating the execution rate. Karim Sadjadpour also of the Carnegie Endowment asked in the Washington Post some of the tough questions he should face in New York. Here's a sample: "The anti-government protests in Iran on June 15, 2009, were significantly larger than any in the Middle East this year, yet you referred to the protesters as 'dust and dirt'. Do you regret using that term?"

#### Nuclear Weapons

Having concealed its enrichment program for 18 years, Tehran recently announced that it has begun producing nuclear energy. On Sept. 2, extracts from an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report revealed increasing concern about "the possible existence in Iran of past or current undisclosed nuclear related activities involving military related organizations," including " ... the development of a nuclear payload for a missile." Describing its information as "extensive and comprehensive", the agency added that "many member states" had provided evidence.

The UN Security Council has already imposed four rounds of sanctions for its refusal to freeze its enrichment efforts. Six governments are negotiating with Tehran over its nuclear program.

Nuclear proliferation is uniquely troubling because Ahmadinejad threatens Israel with nuclear destruction. Consumed with hatred, the regime could use nuclear weapons.

#### Sanctions

The Canadian Irwin Cotler, chair of the International Responsibility to Protect Coalition (IRPC), warns that Iran is on an "execution binge", a "wholesale assault on the rights of its own people... It now leads the world in per-capita executions, many of which are in secret, taking place after arrests, detentions, beatings, torture, kidnappings, disappearances, and brief trials in which no evidence is presented."

International sanctions must be both enforced and internationalized. Russia and China, which initially supported the UN sanctions resolution, are instead increasing business with Iran. We cannot engage in negotiations with Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment and combat the nuclear threat while simultaneously ignoring, marginalizing and sanitizing its other threats to world peace. In the short term, the most effective thing the international community can do is to enact and enforce tough oil and gas sanctions.

#### Conclusion

The responsible international community should:

- Call for the creation of a special tribunal by the Security Council to deal with atrocities by Tehran officials. This request has already been sent to the 192 member countries of the International Bar Association.

- Urge the U.N. to adopt a resolution regarding the issue of women's and girls' rights in Iran.

In short, we must stand in robust solidarity with the struggle for human dignity everywhere across Iran. Iranians want democracy; with probably the largest street demonstrations in the region, they in fact initiated the democratic revolution in the Middle East in June of 2009.

**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.godomincanrepublic.com](http://www.godomincanrepublic.com)

## Mourad Shalaby

info@themetropolitain.ca

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

# Witnessing the Egyptian revolution

It was nearing Christmas day, 2010. Feeling cold and gloomy in wintery Montreal, I decided to listen to my parents' pleas and spend the holidays with them in Egypt, my country of origin. As a third-year Master's student at McGill University, I had no more courses to attend, my only remaining academic duty being to finish my thesis. So I promptly booked a flight to Cairo, with the intention of spending a quiet and uneventful time with my family in Egypt. Little did I know that I was about to witness something historic and, well, revolutionary.

It all started when Mohamed Bouazizi, a struggling Tunisian street vendor in the small city of Sidi Bouzid, set himself on fire on the 17th of December, 2010, in protest of the confiscation of his wheelbarrow cart of produce, his harassment and humiliation by local police and the local mayor's refusal to meet him afterwards. Much like millions of people in the Arab world, Bouazizi was a poor, struggling and hard-working young man who was simply fed up with his hopelessly impoverished state and his helplessness in the face of local authorities' corruption and cruelty. Bouazizi's individual actions would reverberate in the entire Arab world, igniting the Arab spring revolutions of 2011.

Egypt is the most populated country in the Arab world, and is celebrated by all Arabs as a social and cultural hub. However, like Tunisians, Egyptians have been living in a climate of police brutality, widespread corrup-

tion and little socio-economic opportunity since most of them can remember. Inspired by Bouazizi's ultimate sacrifice, Egyptian youth planned a "day of revolt" for Tuesday January 25, Police day in Egypt, a national holiday. Thousands of protesters gathered in Cairo and other cities throughout Egypt, clashing violently with the State's brutal police apparatus. Most Egyptians, me included, did not really believe that this was a revolution in the making, à la tunisienne, given that in the past our country's brutal riot police had always succeeded in terrorizing protesters and ending demonstrations. The following day, Mubarak's regime kicked-in a nationwide internet shutdown, in an attempt to prevent Egyptian youth from mobilizing through social media outlets. At this point, I started to feel that something serious was about to begin. I was both excited and worried; excited at the prospect of witnessing and joining my fellow Egyptians protest against Mubarak and his regime's 30 year rule of totalitarianism, corruption, injustice and general incompetence. But I was worried by a nagging feeling that the stability that all Egyptians enjoyed, and even took for granted, was about to be disrupted. Despite the internet shutdown, word quickly spread that major, unprecedented demonstrations were going to take place on Friday the 28th, after morning prayers.

It was at this point that I decided to join in with the revolutionaries. Curiosity had gotten the better of me, and I needed to see with my

own eyes how Egyptian youth were going to confront the dreaded riot police in the center of Cairo. It wasn't really my style to throw rocks and put myself in danger by physically facing up to the police, as was the case with many courageous Egyptians. Instead, I was to go to photograph the day's events, given that photography had always been a great passion of mine. So on Friday morning, the 28th of January, my childhood friend Karim, a half-Egyptian, half-French law student, accompanied me to the center of Cairo. It was a very quiet and peaceful Friday morning, which is often the case in Egypt given that Friday is like a Sunday in the western world. But this morning seemed a bit too quiet, and for some reason the expression calm before the storm kept resonating in my head. The only thing that looked odd, and worrying, that morning was the noticeable mobilization of police forces in the streets, who were marching in military fashion towards the bridges of Zamalek Island that lead to Tahrir Square. The police had set up a security perimeter around the Square, forbidding anyone from entering the city's heart. Karim and I planned to go to Zamalek, a bourgeois island near the center of Cairo, and cross the "Qasr-el-Nil (Palace of the Nile)" Bridge into Tahrir Square. But our amateurish and overly simple plan was easily foiled at the entrance of the bridge by a plain-clothed Mokhabarat, or state secret police, who rudely told us to get lost and to take the subway back home, while at the same time freely

allowing westerners to cross the bridge. It is interesting to note that the many westerners and expats living in Cairo took a great interest in the revolution, and even though most of them were hurriedly flown out the country once the hostilities began, many were brave enough to stay put and, as reward, were able to witness a great and historic people's revolution. So Karim and I decided to listen to the obnoxious officer's orders and headed towards the nearest subway station. However, we were certainly not going home. Given that the police had shut down all the metro stations near Tahrir square, we decided to go to the closest one that was still open, hoping that we could reach the square from there by foot. However, as soon as we exited the station, we realized that thousands of other Cairenes had had the same idea as us, and the police had anticipated this. The security forces had devised a simple plan: keep the demonstrators away from Tahrir square and intimidate and disperse the crowds by using rubber bullets and teargas. As a result, Karim and I never actually reached the square that day, as we ended up following our fellow Egyptians around Cairo's downtown streets and their picturesque, turn-of-the-century European architecture. The scenes were dramatic, chaotic and inspiring: Egyptian youth were braving the police perimeters, running, shouting and throwing whatever they could. People were carving up the sidewalk and breaking it into pieces, loading up on rock ammo and firing at the enemy. The streets of

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

- George F. Lengvari, Sr.



LENGVARI & ASSOCIATES INC.

Cairo were filled with teargas fog, making people's eyes red, teary and itchy. Every now and then, the police lines would charge at the protesters, making us all run in fear, but only temporarily. Egyptians stood together, helping the injured and encouraging each other to stand firm and hold their ground. I still vividly remember the inspiring image of the people living in the downtown apartment buildings throwing water, bread and other helpful provisions from their balconies, in support of their fellow Egyptians in the streets confronting our seemingly common enemy: the government.

Another sight I remember vividly was less inspiring and quite sad. Running from the charging police, Karim and I had stumbled into a small square in a very poor area of downtown Cairo. But instead of finding refuge and peace, we found a large police contingent that was armed with shotguns. One policeman started testing his shotgun, firing off a round in the air. As the deafening roar of the blast reverberated around the neighborhood, women started wailing and shouting, cursing at the policeman and urging God to punish him. The policeman felt ashamed and humiliated, and explained that it was not his fault, and that he was simply following orders. But his arguments did not matter to us, and it had become crystal-clear that the police had truly become the people's enemy, not its protector.

The skirmishes continued all day-long and the center of Cairo started to resemble a battlefield. Around sunset, a breaking point was reached. Out of nowhere, the police forces started abandoning their positions, albeit in a very organized and disciplined way. They were not fleeing from the people, but rather 'regrouping'. They simply disappeared. The people celebrated their victory, and stormed the New Democratic Party offices, the headquarters of Mubarak's ruling party. Hundreds of men looted and burnt this symbolic building, and smoke from the fire engulfed all of Central Cairo. At this point, the police had completely vanished from the streets of Cairo, the center of the city was going up in smoke and cellular and internet lines had been cut off. There was an odd sense of chaos and fear coupled with victory and hope. It was a truly confusing day.

That night, Karim and I found refuge at a friend's place on the previously mentioned island of Zamalek. I immediately used his landline telephone to reassure my worry-stricken mother. After that, we walked back towards Tahrir Square, which had been "seized" by the protesters, with no police in sight. However, the Egyptian army had rolled their tanks into the square, much to the delight of most Egyptians, who venerate and adore the armed forces. The Egyptian military is held in high-esteem mostly because of the 1973 Yom Kippur war, when Egyptian forces successfully crossed the Suez Canal, destroying Israel's Barlev line of defence in the then-occupied Sinai region. While the police in Egypt is criticized for its corruption and cruelty, the army is viewed as a genuine and



fair protector of the Egyptian people. That night, Egyptians happily climbed on top of the army's tanks in Tahrir square, playfully joking with the soldiers and chanting "the people and the army are one". When I went to bed that night, I had trouble sleeping, despite being exhausted from the day's ordeals. It all felt so surreal, and from my friend's bedroom in Zamalek I could still hear sporadic gunshots, shouting and other noises you'd never hear on a normal day in Mubarak's excessively stable Egypt.

As explained earlier, Zamalek is a posh island neighborhood, once exclusively inhabited by English colonialists. Today, the island is home to rich Egyptians and foreign embassies and residences. For this reason, Zamalek has always had a strong and visible police presence. But on the morning of the 29th of January, there were no policemen in sight. People slowly started to panic: long lines could be seen in front of supermarkets and gas stations, as Egyptians started to stock up and bunker up in their apartments. Worrying rumors started spreading that looting was taking place, and that millions of poor Egyptians living in the slums that surround the capital were planning to pour into the city and steal anything they could from the rich, benefiting from the absence of police and order. I hastily returned to my family's apartment in Nasr City, a suburb some 30 kilometers away from the center. Nasr City is home to many commercial malls, including City Stars, one the biggest malls in all of the Middle East. My apartment building is actually situated right in front of this mall, and so I feared that my street could become a target of

looters. I witnessed worrying images of the neighborhood's inhabitants erecting makeshift walls and defenses in front of our buildings and arming themselves with sticks, rocks and whatever they could find. It seemed as though everyone was bracing for a major attack in our once stable and safe streets.

I monitored the situation from my balcony in the 7th floor of my building. I was very worried, as were most Egyptians. It seemed that we were all waiting for the arrival of an impoverished and angry mob that would invade our streets and steal and loot everything from us and our neighborhood. And so we waited, patiently, anxiously. We could hear some strange, unfamiliar and worrying sounds in the background: gunshots, men yelling, screeching car tires, etc. However, bizarrely, and fortunately, our streets remained quiet and uneventful. The angry mob never came. It seemed that it was all just a big rumor. But suddenly, out of nowhere, we heard a loud roar not too far away. Something was approaching, something big, and so the worrying started again. But to our great surprise, and happiness, it was the army's tanks that were rolling in. The army had taken over the city's security in an attempt to fill the void left by the police, and elite army commandos had taken position in front of the City Stars mall. As the army rolled into the streets of Cairo, my neighborhood's inhabitants victoriously chanted "Allah Akhbar" ( God is Great ) and "the army and the people are one !".

From then on, we all knew that our streets were secure. No looter would dare confront elite army commandos, equipped with night-vision goggles and sophisticated weaponry.

Nonetheless, the neighborhood's youth still insisted on setting up road-blocks and arming themselves, and I joined my neighbors every night with a pull-up bar as my weapon of choice. I guess we all just wanted to have something to do, given that the revolution had disrupted work and school schedules. As a result, our streets were secured by both the army and bored local vigilantes, sometimes producing quite comical situations. I remember one particularly funny memory of a police car driving through my street and going through a thorough inspection from the local vigilantes, as if the world had been turned completely upside down. The people were now policing the police, which could no longer be trusted after their violent behavior during the revolution.

The last souvenir of my witnessing the revolution that I will share with you is a victorious and positive one. On the 11th of February, State media officially announced that Mubarak was finally stepping down, after 18 days of persistent protesting from Egyptians. Seconds later, Cairo, and all of the country I presume, had the biggest party in its history. Literally millions of Egyptians, including myself, poured into the center of Cairo to celebrate our greatest victory. Gigantic speakers mounted on downtown buildings were playing music from Dalida, the Egyptian musical icon of Italian and French descent. Egyptians of all genders, religions, socio-economic statuses and colors were celebrating our common national triumph. A few weeks later, I was back in Montreal, reflecting on a truly memorable, unique and life-changing episode of my life.



## Rouba Al-Fattal

info@themetropolitain.ca

Rouba Al-Fattal is a Canadian of Syrian origin. She is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Institute for International and European Policy at Leuven University (KUL), in Belgium. Previously she has obtained in Canada a B.A. (with Honours) in international politics from McGill University and an advanced M.A. in European politics from Montreal University.

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

# The Myth of Non-Intervention in Syria

The crackdown on Syrian demonstrators continues, despite growing international condemnation of the Syrian government. More than 2000 civilians have been killed and approximately 3000 have been reported missing. But why is the international community not threatening military intervention as it did in the case of Libya?

There has been a myth circulating that in Syria, anyone who calls for outside intervention is likely to be branded as a traitor; any Western threat of military action would therefore hurt the opposition more than the regime. But with the escalation that we have witnessed by the regime against the people up till now, and the continued hesitation of the international community, the demonstrations in Syria might be losing steam soon.

The majority of Syrians know by now that President Bashar al-Assad's argument, that the uprising is the result of foreign meddling, is a fabrication used by the government to excuse its actions. However, the international community has clung to this myth as its

way out of direct intervention. The main reasons why the international community chose not to act is because it is crippled by divisions among its members at the UN Security Council, by an economic crisis that left the most financially well nations of that community unable to stop unrests on their own territories, and by a growing fear of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) taking over power in a "democratic" Syria – as it seems the direction that Egypt is heading.

The economic crisis in the United States and Europe could not have come at a worse time for the Arab world which is going through waves of change and revolutions. At a time when the transatlantic community is facing great insecurities about its financial future, it is hard to imagine that it will consider another military intervention on behalf of the Syrian population – even if it wished to – but more so if it sensed that the end result will be a MB-led Parliament.

As the international community washes its hands from the Syrian

opposition, the remaining option for the Syrian people is to look for support to the Arab League and their Arab neighbours. However, that also seems wishful thinking when the most powerful and richest Arab states are themselves fearful of internal oppositions; when strategically the Iraqi government and Hezbollah in Lebanon do not want to see the Syrian regime tumble at any cost.

Perhaps it is too early to bemoan the Syrian revolution but if the international community does not put its strategic interests aside and come to an agreement on military actions, if the economy of the transatlantic community does to stabilise soon, and if the West stop seeing threat in the MB taking power after a democratic revolution in Syria – then maybe there is hope. Otherwise, sooner than later President Assad and his Alawite military apparatus will succeed in quelling the opposition – repeating with that President Hafez Assad's suppression of the opposition in 1982. And if we have learned anything from history, in a short time this too shall be forgotten and forgiven by the international community.



When only the best is good enough, trust Levinoff

BOUCHERIE  
**Levinoff**

Premium Red Brand Meats. Delivered Directly To Your Home!

8610 8th Ave., St-Michel  
**(514) 725-2405**



2021 Frontenac, Montreal  
**(514) 526-6500**

www.levinoff.com



## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

# Les « cavaliers d'Allah » au grand galop !

Une décennie après les attentats spectaculaires du 11 septembre, la lassitude occidentale à l'égard des « cavaliers d'Allah » encourage le terrorisme et favorise la délégitimation de l'Etat juif. La dernière attaque contre l'ambassade d'Israël au Caire, première délégation diplomatique dans un pays arabe, est un signe grave et inquiétant dans les relations internationales.

La faiblesse des Etats-Unis est une fois encore mise à l'épreuve. Hier, l'ambassade américaine à Téhéran a été saccagée et des diplomates ont été pris en otages, aujourd'hui une ambassade israélienne est prise d'assaut, demain probablement une délégation européenne. Désormais, les ambassades ne sont plus des sanctuaires! Les « fous de Dieu » franchissent au grand galop toutes les frontières, leur combat est infini puisqu'Allah est grand! Leurs actes n'ont aucun rapport avec le conflit avec les Palestiniens et les attentats spectaculaires du 11 septembre perpétrés par Al Qaïda en sont une preuve de vérité absolue.

Concernant la Turquie, depuis que les islamistes ont pris le pouvoir, Ankara a changé de visage et de stratégie. Son gouvernement se radicalise et plonge dans les cultes de Dieu, de la divinité, de l'ancien Empire, et de la personnalité. La Turquie d'Erdogan cherche par tous les moyens de s'imposer comme une puissance régionale et devenir le leader des sunnites au Moyen-Orient. Sa politique anti-israélienne et ses violentes diatribes réussissent à déchaîner les foules. Dans les souks et les bazars d'Istanbul, du Caire, à Gaza et partout ailleurs, le ton monte et les prix politiques flambent. Face aux ébullitions dans le monde arabe et surtout après la chute de Moubarak, le « chemin vers la gloire », vers la rédemption islamiste » est désormais tracé, d'autant plus que l'Iran agit en connivence et l'Amérique de Barack Obama est affaiblie et son leadership laisse à désirer.

Le premier gouvernement Netanyahu a réussi en 1996, à s'accommoder avec son homologue islamiste, Necmettin Erbakan, et a même signé un important accord de coopération militaire et stratégique, au grand dam des pays arabes et de l'Iran. Cependant, le renforcement des extrémistes et des Frères musulmans a réussi à élire un Premier ministre mégalomane et au tempérament fougueux. Depuis qu'il a pris le pouvoir en 2002, Erdogan empoisonne les discours et renverse la vapeur dans les hammams... Il fait agir la marche turque sur l'autre face du piston politique et sa pression prend toujours des mauvais

tours et provoque des sueurs froides...

Tout a débuté par l'échec humiliant de la médiation avec la Syrie, elle a été suivie par l'opération « Plomb durci » dans la bande de Gaza, puis de la flottille et du Marmara, sans oublier l'incident avec Shimon Pérès à Davos et la crise diplomatique avec l'ambassadeur turc. Aujourd'hui, nous devons reconnaître que des maladroites et des bévues ont été commises et sans pallier sa faute, toute excuse de notre part est à rejeter avec mépris. Un Etat se respecte dans la dignité et grâce à sa force de dissuasion.

La Turquie est un immense pays stratégique avec une grande civilisation; charnière entre l'Asie et l'Europe, elle à toujours sa place au sein de la société des nations en dépit d'un passé sombre avec les Allemands, le génocide arménien, les attaques massives contre les Kurdes, et la guerre contre Chypre. Les Ottomans ont régné dans notre région plus de quatre cents ans et leur empreinte est encore ancrée dans notre mémoire. La nouvelle religion islamiste d'Erdogan ne pourra jamais gommer les faits historiques tristement célèbres!

Certes, la Turquie a été le premier pays musulman à reconnaître l'Etat juif, mais aujourd'hui elle aspire à reconstituer à son profit l'ancien Empire ottoman au détriment d'Israël. Ankara devra choisir son camp, mettre un terme au double jeu et cesser d'enflammer la région. Les allocutions belliqueuses d'Erdogan et ses menaces hargneuses et quotidiennes contre Israël ne sont pas prononcées par un Premier ministre démocrate mais rappellent celle d'un dictateur mégalomane, un chef d'Etat voyou comme l'est le président iranien rêvant à reconstituer l'Empire perse.

La compétition entre Ankara et Téhéran, entre les sunnites et les chiïtes pour acquérir l'hégémonie de la région n'est pas nouvelle mais soulignons qu'à l'époque l'Etat juif n'existait pas et Tsahal ne combattait pas dans l'arène. Quant à l'Egypte, le général Tantawi devrait maîtriser ses troupes et respecter le Traité de paix et les lois internationales sinon son pays et avec lui tout le Proche-Orient plongeront dans le chaos primitif, un nouveau tohu-bohu qui sera orchestré par les Frères musulmans dans l'allégresse démoniaque.

Devant cette nouvelle donne géopolitique et face aux menaces omniprésentes, le gouvernement Netanyahu devrait réagir avec la tête froide et ne jamais paniquer, ni non plus

menacer de vengeance ou de représailles inutiles. Jusqu'à ce jour, Netanyahu a bien géré la crise avec Ankara et le Caire mais il doit aussi faire tout de son pouvoir pour apaiser les esprits et éviter l'escalade car chaque incident pourrait mettre le feu aux poudres. Face à toutes les turbulences fermeté et vigilance oblige! La force tranquille et la dissuasion sont mises à l'épreuve.

La puissance de Tsahal et notre foi inébranlable en notre juste cause devraient nous rassurer. Rappelons à nos voisins que notre présence sur la Terre d'Israël est légitime et incontestable! Dans ces moments graves que nous traversons, l'opposition de Tsipi Livni et tous les partis sionistes devraient se réunir pour former un front commun et solidaire et installer sans délai un gouvernement de salut public. Seul dans l'union et en renforçant les rangs que nous gagnerons cette nouvelle bataille contre les « cavaliers d'Allah ».

Les Turcs devraient aussi comprendre que faire partie de l'OTAN, devenir membre de l'Union européenne et du monde occidental est un grand privilège à condition de respecter les règles du jeu, les lois internationales, le bon voisinage, et admettre les contraintes comme les avantages. Cela implique également les Egyptiens, les Jordaniens et surtout les Palestiniens.

Contrairement à la position israélienne, Erdogan et Mahmoud Abbas ont rejeté bizarrement le rapport Palmer qui ont eux mêmes exigé et commandé. Le masque est tombé au moment où cette commission onusienne a dit ses quatre vérités. Elle a reconnu la légalité du blocus maritime dans la bande de Gaza et la défense légitime de Tsahal contre la flottille. Comment utiliser la tribune de l'ONU pour la proclamation de l'Etat palestinien et refuser dans la même veine les conclusions d'un rapport écrit par des délégués des Nations-Unies? C'est absurde et cette approche n'est qu'une logique turque inspirée par le bazar oriental...

Le peuple Turc n'est sans doute pas notre ennemi et nous souhaitons tourner la page et revenir enfin aux relations normales et amicales. Certes, l'honneur est considéré comme une priorité absolue chez eux, mais dans les relations entre les Etats, les intérêts stratégiques et la realpolitik prévalent à tous les salamalecs et les excuses exagérés et hypocrites.



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.



## 9/11 - TEN YEARS AFTER

# The lingering costs of 9/11

Looking back on the economic aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center is a difficult process because so much of it involves speculation as to what might have been. How would the US have spent, or better yet, not spent, the one to two trillion dollars required to fund the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq? How much growth has been denied to the developing world because of curtailed investment out of the fear of continued attacks on first world assets abroad? What opportunities have been missed because of travel avoidance in our personal and professional lives? All of these hypothetical and theoretical alternative economic scenarios are challenging to quantify but are worth considering if we are to chart an economic course through what looks to become a decades-long war against international terrorism.

The costs absorbed by New York City in direct and indirect losses have been estimated at \$105 billion. In an interesting coincidence, about the same money has been spent in first-world airports on increased security since that event. Travelers should consider the investment in airline security as well spent. Since 2001, there has been no repeat of the use of an aircraft as a weapon of mass destruction and several attempts to innovate by the terrorists have been detected and foiled. The result, however, was a further loss of convenience to passengers due to restrictions on carry-on items such as large liquid containers. I was recently in Singapore and viewed an art film that focused on the aircraft hijackings of the 1960s and 70s, and several of the events were familiar to me from my childhood. What really struck me is how many of those aircraft were Pan Am, America's premier international carrier of the era. Any rational traveller boarding an overseas flight on Pan Am during that time had to consider that a terrorist event was a potential, though remote possibility. Travellers today complain about the delays and indignity of the airport security clearance process and are concerned about the privacy compromises of advanced passenger information requirements, but once they are through into the gate area few, if any, believe that a hijacking is in their future. Travellers may not like the new system, but it works well, and authorities are trying to improve throughput to minimize the inconvenience.

What we will never know is how large the economic opportunity costs are associated with travel avoidance by air that were not replaced with alternate travel arrangements such as car or train travel; literally, the road not taken. While technology exists today like Skype that allows face to face contact and more sophisticated programs like WebEx and NetMeeting that allow for document exchange, there is no substitute for in-person personal interaction. Humans are still socialized to develop trust and reliance through close personal contact and teleconferences are not a perfect substitute, especially in Asian cultures where repeated face to face meetings are the foundation of sustained long term relationships.

It took three years for air travel to recover to its pre-2001

levels and it has continued to grow since – what we do not know is what air travel would have been in the absence of the 9/11 attacks. The reticence to travel has been most pronounced in the United States where the increases in airport security were the most severe; this is the nation that most needed to grow its economy to fatten the tax base to support the two foreign wars that followed. Economists can calculate the effect of \$80-\$100 foreign oil on economic growth, but creating a speculative model on what growth was lost due to less travel is hard to quantify. Suffice to say that the loss was real, and there are unemployed who would not be had the US enjoyed an alternate history.

its repeal. In 1941, the US was galvanized on a massive scale, men called upon to join the armed forces, women pressed into the workforce to build armaments, those who could not serve compelled to buy war bonds, and all households collected scrap metals, oils, and other materials to be recycled. In the post-2001 era the war was funded via deficit spending that was deepened by another round of tax cuts under Bush. Sacrifice was replaced by entitlement to guns AND butter, the pain of paying the bill passed on to future generations.

The reduced financial capacity of the United States today is coupled with its diminished diplomatic standing in the world, though it remains its greatest military and economic power. The

**International investment was another casualty of 9/11. The developing world was crying out for capital to develop its resources and infrastructure and American and European enterprises were obliging. With the threat of attacks on US assets abroad and those of other nations involved in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, their investment in the developing world outside of the resource sector was slowed.**

International investment was another casualty of 9/11. The developing world was crying out for capital to develop its resources and infrastructure and American and European enterprises were obliging. With the threat of attacks on US assets abroad and those of other nations involved in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, their investment in the developing world outside of the resource sector was slowed. China has stepped in as a major investor around the globe, and is creating partnerships in the developing world, notably in Africa, where they are seen more as a savior than a threat to national sovereignty and are untouched by the unpopular wars.

One cannot ignore the costs of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The difference between the 2001 US war effort and that mobilized after the attack on the Lusitania in 1917 and Pearl Harbor in 1941 was that the modern citizenry was not called upon to sacrifice financially, i.e. "pay as you go" for the war effort. In 1917, the income tax was introduced as a "temporary" war financing measure, and we are all waiting for

current efforts to reduce US budget deficits going forward attempt to repair some of the financial damage. Maybe they will succeed, maybe not. One thing is for sure, they will not restore American leadership. The US is now one of many players at the table, along with the European Union, Russia, China, and the other members of the G20 that have decided to play a greater role on the diplomatic stage like Brazil and Turkey. In the absence of the 9/11 attacks, the answer to the question of how the trillions spent on the wars would have been spent otherwise is simple – they would not have been spent because the US would not have borrowed them from China, and either the deficits would have been smaller or the US political leadership would have been focused on more productive efforts to create wealth, foster investment and concentrate on more positive international diplomatic efforts. Perhaps there would have been no deficits at all as a result. The great thing about alternative historical scenarios is that you get to believe in the best possible outcome, as implausible as it may seem.





# Looking for God in all the right places

I had never imagined a room filled with people who were so different from one another. There was a woman with a head scarf, a man with a chequered scarf around his neck, a woman with a beautiful sari and others with a variety of western clothing. One man with a yellow toga and a shaven head was, I surmised, a Buddhist. They were mingling with one another but they were distant from one another. I began to speak with a young man who declared immediately, "I am a Sikh," and the Buddhist I had already recognized declared, "I am a Buddhist." We knew little about each other. I was soon intrigued by what they shared about their traditions. They were adamant about their traditions. They unquestioningly accepted what they had inherited from the past. I inquired of the Buddhist and the Sikh, "Are we not allowed to question our religious traditions? Do we have to give up thinking when we have found faith?" A short silence followed. The Buddhist was born a Buddhist and would die a Buddhist. The Sikh nodded his approval. I shared: "Doesn't our faith grow when we interact with people who are different from us and how can we forget that we share the same world?" The Buddhist tells us, "We Buddhists withdraw from the world and seek perfection through meditation. We believe in re-incarnation and we return each time to make ourselves better and become more enlightened." The Sikh: "Our Sikh religion is about giving everybody the basic necessities to live as a human being." A young man with a kippah on his head had stood listening: He joined in, "Judaism is all about Tiquin Olan, healing the world, and we say the rest is all commentary."

Now a rather attractive young woman wearing no identifiable religious symbol contributes: "The strength of any religion is its ability to be self-critical. Unless we rethink our faith we will not be able to change the status quo. And the great tragedy of maintaining the status quo is that injustices, the denial of human rights, and any sense of solidarity will remain unquestioned." I interjected: "What about faith? Is there anything we hold in common in faith?"

"The young woman in a soft spoken voice adds: "Faith is important but blind faith leads us nowhere. We need to refocus and reinterpret faith for today. God is no longer discussed except by atheists." We all chuckled at how right she could be. The young Jewish man expressed a thought that caused all of us to stand back for a moment: "Jews and Christians had to rethink a God of Providence after the Shoah, what is usually called the Jewish Holocaust, and to believe in a God in a parallel world to history became impossible and providence was redefined as an affirmation of humanity. Faith is now this world-oriented, not another-worldly orientation as it had been in the past. Now all faiths have to be concerned about humanity and reclaim humanity."

The young woman spoke: Does faith not also require the use of reason; otherwise, faith could be reduced to piety. The Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries requires that faith respect reason; it is not at odds with faith. All religions must be on guard to balance the importance of faith with the use of reason. There was a time when the quest for the certainty of faith was solely in the hands of the authorities. It is important for all people of all religions to recognize the need for ongoing reforming of faith and religion." I looked around and saw in the faces of many that that would require a quantum leap of faith.

I then asked, "What about prayer? Do we need to reinterpret prayer when God is not in a heaven and intervening with humans?" A young man who has been on the periphery of our circle chimed in: "The realization that God is not operating parallel to history demands that religion question the meaning of an interventionist God, a God who answers prayers from a supernatural realm of existence. Those who purport a "spiritual" life are those who now must realize that religion cannot rely on a supernatural God to solve problems in the natural world." Everyone wanted to say something. You just felt it. He continued: "In this context prayer comes from a new awareness and self-understanding and the question that arises is how God comes to us in our new situation. The first discovery

is that God is actively redeeming, reclaiming life in the world and now we have to realize that our secular existence is not of secondary importance. Prayer is our way of contemplation that allows us to look more deeply into what happens in our everyday, ordinary lives, and to learn in our secular experience how God is present and reclaiming, redeeming us. Together, all religious traditions must unite and look to the future in very responsible ways." You could just feel that everyone wanted to agree but most, by their body language, had reservations. It's hard to change overnight.

The group dispersed, we took our seats in the auditorium, and the key-note theologian began her lecture:

"The Spirit of God hovers over us today as the Spirit hovered over creation and created order out of chaos. God is not over and against humanity, we are to become aware of the changes he summons forth in human life. Knowledge of God clarifies the new consciousness created by faith and reflects on its implication for our understanding of the whole of reality. The transcendent mystery takes place in human life, and when we acknowledge this in faith we are led into a new self-understanding and this will radically transform us. To believe that God exists means man is more than man and that human life is orientated towards a gracious future. Prayer is not to place ourselves before two worlds, God's world and ordinary life. Prayer is to lay hold of ordinary life in a new way, a way to reconciliation. Today, perhaps more than ever, we are all offered a faith that allows us to live where we are, deepen our appreciation and understanding of the ordinary things of life, remain in touch with our own religious traditions, and ourselves, to find the deepest meaning of everyday life, to know our faith, live our faith, and appreciate how prayer refocuses us on a God ever-present in the most ordinary of lives, yours and mine."

That day I realized that human experience is the stuff of theological reflection. God is so close to us but are we looking for her/him in the right places?

...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



**Alex Himelfarb**  
info@themetropolitain.ca

Alex Himelfarb is the Director of the Glendon School of Public and International Affairs, at York University and also leads the Centre for Global Challenges.

WWW.THEMETROPOLITAIN.CA

# Tax is not a four letter word

Ironically it is in the anti-tax U.S. that a conversation has erupted on taxes. Warren Buffett and a few other billionaires helped open the door, if only a crack, and President Obama has, finally, made taxing the rich a key means of funding his jobs plan. In the context of all that is happening now on Wall Street and beyond, these now seem like small and belated steps. Bigger things are in the air. But the conversation is now engaged and, judging from the reaction — accusations of class warfare, “no tax” pledges — tax is a proxy for these bigger things.

Here in Canada, no such conversation — only a few brave voices. We continue to reward politicians who avoid the issues — or promise more cuts. But without an honest conversation about tax, we won't be able to face up to our challenges and we will sleepwalk towards a smaller, meaner Canada.

We ought not wait too long. We need that conversation here. We need it now.

For years, we Canadians have watched our neighbours take a much tougher anti-tax stance than anything we have known here. We saw that play out, almost unbelievably, in the recent extension of the Bush tax cuts in the face of trillion-dollar deficits. We were bewildered while watching



the manufactured debt ceiling fight and the eleventh hour agreement to cut government — that is, services — by over a trillion dollars rather than say no to another tax cut for the country's millionaires and billionaires. It was as though our neighbours, always able to reinvent themselves, were now stuck, with the same tune playing over and over again: Tax cuts are the magic cure for all that ails.

In the meantime, evidence to the contrary keeps mounting. Paul Krugman is keeping us informed of the human costs of the endless tax cutting in the U.S. where, in community after community, fire stations are privatized, streetlights dimmed, essential services choked. And all this without any evidence that the years of tax cutting delivered

the promised benefits.

In Canada, we have traditionally had a more benign view of taxes. Like other northern countries, we have always understood that taxes are the price we pay for civilization and for a better future. While there are legitimate disputes regarding how much tax and of what sort we have generally accepted higher taxes as a way of funding public goods and services, redistributing income to avoid the worst excesses of inequality, and shaping the future to the extent we can.

But in Canadian politics another story has been unfolding. In the last federal election, all the parties seemed to be competing for the austerity and low tax crown. Apart from a minor skirmish on corporate taxes, nobody wanted to be seen as a

tax and spender. In Toronto, the mayor won on the promise of tax cuts and an end to the gravy train (if it can ever be found). In the recent Ontario election, we heard our own version of no tax pledges. The Conservatives promised deep cuts. The Liberals promised no increases. And the NDP promised tax breaks for families and small businesses, offset somewhat by higher corporate taxes. Shortly before that, BC said no to the HST. And one wonders what precedent this tax referendum creates. Federally the government is continuing a decade of reduced taxes — even though we are still running deficits and even as the gap between the rich and the rest grows.

It has by now become a political truism that any politician would have to be nuts to propose tax increases to Canadians. But polling from both Environics and Ekos shows that Canadians, while averse to tax hikes, continue to value what our taxes buy. Then what's the problem here?

## The Last Free Lunch

The late-70s are a good place to start to understand this shift in attitudes. Then and throughout the eighties, neoliberalism — free market ideology — took full bloom in the aftermath of the serious economic stagnation of the time.

The solution, according to neoliberals, was to let the market do its work and get government out of the way. The best way to do that: cut off their revenues, cut taxes. As Milton Friedman, chief architect of this U.S. neoliberalism, liked to put it, when governments try to solve a problem they almost invariably make it worse. Progress would come not from our collective efforts to build a better society — there is no society, said Thatcher — but from pursuit of our individual interests in the market. So began three decades of an unrelenting assault on government.

No fancy theories here about how tax cuts automatically create jobs. The sales pitch was simple and it was perfect politics: tax cuts would be so beneficial to the economy that they would pay for themselves. Tax cuts are free — the last free lunch.

This notion that taxes are somehow separate from the services and goods they buy is now part of political culture. I am reminded of two images that capture the zero tax spirit of the Tea Party and the continuing search for a free lunch. The first is a now famous video of a Tea

Partier holding a sign demanding that the government keep its hands off “my medicare”. More recently another protest photo shows a group of anti-taxers with a sign that reads “Cut Taxes, Not Defense”. Whether one favours “guns” or “butter”, taxes apparently have nothing to do with it.

Hugh MacKenzie, a research associate at the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, has written for years about how this separation of taxes from the services they buy has distorted the conversation in Canada as well. One way that the idea of tax cuts as a free good is maintained is through the false promise that only waste and inefficiency will be cut. No politician, no party, favours waste and inefficiency and every government tries to reduce both — but tax cuts on the promise of ending the gravy train almost never find enough gravy.

The constant assault on government waste and the parliamentary time spent on the scandal of the day themselves have enduring costs; they erode the public's trust in one of our most powerful tools for managing change and shaping the future — our own government.

Of course deference or blind trust is dangerous — governments must be kept in check by a vigilant citizenry, independent judiciary, and if we are lucky, effective media.

But the absence of trust is equally dangerous. It makes it hard for us to act in our own best interests. Most Canadians do know that the teachers and firefighters, the police and health care workers, the roads and bridges and traffic lights, the help when we are down or temporarily out of work, the child and elderly benefits we receive are all paid for through taxes. But, we are still reluctant to pay those taxes. We will always say no to taxes if we believe government is inefficient and wasteful or incompetent or worse.

We are falling into what game theorists call a social trap. Even when we know that cooperating with others would serve our collective interests, absent trust, we go off on our own. The absence of trust limits our ability to act collectively and imagine new possibilities. It takes the future away from us and hands it to “the market”. No trust. No taxes. Trapped.

This growing distrust is of course not just a result of concerns about waste or efficiency or even ethics — it

## 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.oldcastironradiators.com  
www.steamexperts.com



is much bigger than that. Perhaps it is the result of the increasing centralization and remoteness of government. Perhaps it is the result of the explosion in access to information, the increased anonymity of urban life, all this nurtured in a culture of individualism and consumerism. Perhaps too it is a result of the increasing authoritarianism of government, especially after 9/11. But it is no doubt fueled dangerously by this almost constant assault on the very idea of government.

In the 80 s, governments knew that they had to reinvent themselves for the information age as problems seemed to be more complex, unfamiliar and conflictual, when the pace of change was accelerating, and citizens wanted greater ownership over their public services. This was a time when the talk in Ottawa, and Washington and London, for example, was less bureaucracy, fewer rules, more flexibility to tailor services to changing and diverse needs – and more steering, looking at the big emerging issues, and less rowing. This reinvention was not going to be easy or smooth.

In fact, it never happened. It ran crashing headlong into distrust and has never quite recovered. Mistrust of government and a preoccupation with waste led not only to cuts but also, and at the same time, to expensive layers of control and oversight that made government no more accountable or transparent but certainly more risk averse and inefficient and therefore less worthy of our trust – a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Greater transparency was supposed to be part of the solution but things haven't worked out that way. In fact, our obsession with uncovering waste may blind us to the big issues. So, even as we know more than we could ever want about how officials spend on travel and hospitality, government seems more opaque than ever – with almost no debate, for example, on the cuts to the GST which took over \$13 Billion annually out of government revenue, or almost no information on the costs of the Omnibus Crime Bill or how it is supposed to make us safer rather than just meaner. That is not real transparency. Trust continues to decline.

And so, next door, we see President Obama, in speech after speech, gamely trying to remind his listeners of government's positive role in pursuing justice, security and prosperity. He is trying to break out of the trap and that is a tough road. We all know from our personal



experience that trust is easier to break than to rebuild.

#### The Inequality Trap

As we cut taxes and make them less progressive, the costs of the free lunch accumulate. While the most obvious signs may be longer wait times, potholes, and crumbling bridges, more insidious and worrisome is the inevitable rise in inequality.

The Conference Board is the latest to sound the warning that inequality is on the rise here – and fast. As the British researcher Richard Wilkinson has documented, extreme inequality – in particular, the growing gap between a few very rich and the rest – is corrosive and costly. It diverts capital, stifles demand, deprives us of the talent we need – and erodes trust and undermines democracy. It also eventually turns us against each other – the gated community only a physical manifestation of a deeper divide.

Inequality feeds and is fed by divisive and fear based-politics, what the writer Benjamin DeMott calls “junk politics”, a politics which has contempt for evidence and experts, plays to both our fear and vanity, and divides us into hard and fast moral categories – villains and heroes, criminals and victims, hard-working tax payers and free-loaders, job creators and the rest.

When the middle rungs of the ladder disappear, when the gap between top and bottom becomes too great, feelings of superiority and inferiority almost inevitably follow. Many at the top come to believe that they deserve all they have, that they are the ones who create the jobs and keep the economy running. The very successful too often forget how much they owe to others, including earlier generations more ready than we to sacrifice and pay taxes. I have always been struck by how most of us believe in luck unless we become successful. Then luck suddenly has nothing to do with it. In extremely unequal societies the rich, believing

## We continue to reward politicians who avoid the issues – or promise more cuts. But without an honest conversation about tax, we won't be able to face up to our challenges and we will sleepwalk towards a smaller, meaner Canada.

that they truly are the job creators, will often exert all of their considerable influence in the fight against paying more taxes and they have been very successful.

At the other end, if the rungs of the ladder seem too far apart to climb, then those at the bottom will wonder why they should participate at all. If we think that others will exploit the system or consistently turn it to their advantage, if we believe the game is unfair, we will not want to play. If the game is rigged, why participate, why vote, why pay taxes?

In the fifties when Canadians were far more willing to pay taxes – and vote – most thought of themselves or at least their families as on the way up. With extreme inequality, aspiration is blunted and replaced by fatalistic grumbling or hopelessness and opting out – or acting out.

#### Choices For The Future

Perhaps of all the reasons that tax has become a four-letter word, this idea of blunted aspirations is key. The baby boomers, who still hold considerable sway, especially in government, seem today more interested in holding on to what they have than in building something new. And for the first time in generations, Canadians worry that the young will not have things as good as we did. Taxes are, among other things, an investment in the future. How much harder is that to sell when people believe they are managing personal and collective decline? Without aspiration, without hope, many will want to keep all they can for themselves and their families to get through the day.

Of course we are not there yet. Canada remains more equal than our neighbours and we still have extraordinary assets and great promise. Many provincial governments have resisted the call for more cuts. But we certainly cannot afford complacently to wait much longer as the bills for our free lunch pile up: growing inequality, sagging productivity, deteriorating environment. We

cannot build a future out of desire for more of the same and in the same way. And we cannot build a future on the belief that it does not belong to us – that it belongs to the market.

For too long those of us in public policy have got it wrong. Even the most compassionate among us argued that we have to get the economy right first, that we would look at social and environmental issues later when we could “afford” to. But surely it's now clear that we cannot get our economy right if we don't treat society, democracy and environment as central. We cannot afford to do otherwise. We will not retake the future until we change the conversation and that has to begin with a commitment to greater equality and fairness, to jobs and opportunities for the many and not wealth for the few, to dignity for all those who fall out of the market in tough times or cannot get in through no fault of their own, and a concerted effort to combat poverty and its extraordinary costs to us all.

The future will need a more innovative Canada, a more productive Canada, a more confident Canada – but none of that will happen without a more just and equal Canada.

#### Breaking Out

We have to be smart about taxes and we will all have to carry some of the burden. The consensus among economists was that cutting the GST was a mistake and the majority of them would also defend the HST. And sooner or later we are going to have to put a price on carbon to share the costs of a new economic and energy paradigm. But a good place to start is to ask the rich to step up. When it comes to taxes, it is smart to be progressive, to ask the rich to pay a bit more for that lunch that none of us is getting for free, and to ask those who do greatest damage to the commons to pay more for its preservation.

There is no systematic evidence that tax cuts are the road to

economic growth or that tax cuts to corporations or the rich produce jobs. Our love affair with low taxes is based on unproved assumptions about the benefits and no accounting of the costs.

It is time to make some hard choices about the Canada we want, about what services we see as essential, about how much inequality we are prepared to tolerate, about our willingness to take back the future.

Already we seem to be tiring of the fairytale. Voter turnout is a sign that we are not inspired by the leadership we are getting.

What we are seeing right now in the U.S. and spreading to Canada is quite remarkable. People, mostly young, but also across the generations have decided not to wait for their politicians to lead. All great change starts outside of conventional politics and now the “other 99 percent” are saying no to more of the same on Wall Street, at the Tar Sands, and beyond. They are saying that the economy and the environment are being wrecked by a powerful few and it is not right that the rest have to pay the freight – and they are demanding better.

Some critics are wondering aloud what specifically the other 99% want, but they are not writing a political platform. They are telling stories of people left out, of debts too big to handle, of lost jobs, bad jobs and stagnant incomes, of family hardship and no helping hand. They are saying a lot of things. That maybe we have it all wrong. That they no longer believe the promises.

No one knows where all this will all go and what its impact will be except that it creates an opportunity, overdue, to change the conversation. Much will depend on leaders across every sector of our society joining that conversation.

We always get more from our political leaders when we demand more, including, I suppose, more taxes. And we always get the government we deserve and the future we are willing to make and pay for.



**Pierre Brassard**

info@themetropolitain.ca

Partie 1 de 3

# Gérald Larose: parcours d'un catholique de gauche

L'actuelle chef du Parti Québécois Pauline Marois fait appel au service de M. Gérald Larose du Conseil de la souveraineté du Québec pour mousser le projet souverainiste avec la tenue d'états généraux. Connaît-on vraiment ce monsieur ?

Il en est d'un homme léger comme d'un vase vide; il se laisse facilement prendre par les oreilles

(Proverbe grec, Démophile, Sentences, VI siècle av J-C.)

\*\*\*

Ce texte vise à décrire de manière critique un courant au sein de l'Église catholique au Québec : les « catholiques de gauche ». Il n'est pas à proprement parler une contribution à la recherche universitaire sur la petite histoire des « catholiques de gauche ». Il tente plutôt de circonscrire certains épisodes qui paraissent significatifs sur l'un d'entre eux qui nous dirige inmanquablement vers une réflexion sur l'antisémitisme, l'antijudaïsme chrétien et l'antisionisme absolu.

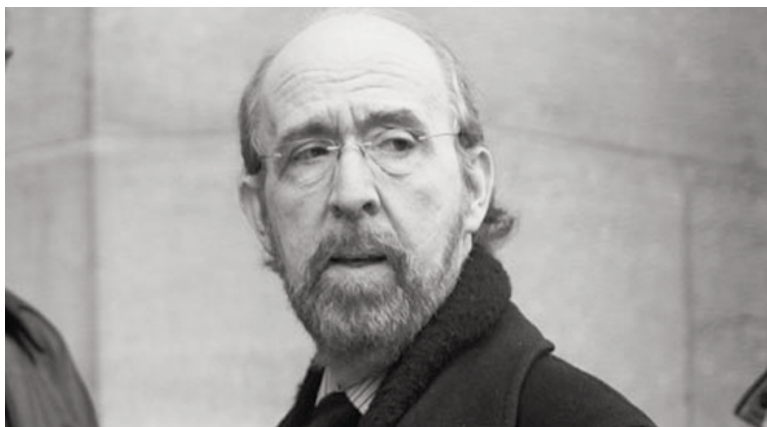
Il y a eu peu d'attention de la part des historiens et des chercheurs chevronnés qui sont venus creuser ce sillon. Une malheureuse incapacité d'analyse nous paralyse sur ces sujets sensibles. Également sur les « catholiques de gauche ». La présence de ces catholiques qui sont en osmose avec la « doxa progressiste » peuvent irriter les esprits libres qui cherchent à revoir certaines idées préconçues, surtout depuis la Révolution tranquille. Le temps qui s'écoule nous permet de mieux dégager les inflexions, les évolutions et les parcours d'acteurs qui ont

façonné depuis longtemps notre société québécoise. Ce bref retour en arrière auquel je vous convie nous permet de dévoiler, à partir d'un écrit mémorable, une étrange hybridation qui marque de manière significatif l'histoire des idées radicales au Québec.

Pour mener à terme cette entreprise, une figure emblématique intervient. Cette figure synthétise parfaitement les dérives et les tensions inhérentes au sein de cette mouvance « gauchiste catholique » québécoise. L'ancien syndicaliste Gérald Larose qui était prêtre catholique rédemptoriste bien avant son militantisme syndical est une personnalité qui nous en apprend davantage. Une courte incursion de ses anciens écrits nous permet d'y poser un jalon manquant à l'histoire du Québec moderne. Une précision s'impose. Il n'est pas question ici de prendre en défaut l'ex-prêtre. Il incombe plutôt de mettre en lumière un article public qui est une partie de notre histoire que l'on aurait tort d'évacuer complètement du paysage historiographique. J'espère me faire comprendre et me faire pardonner en évoquant cette triste période. Surtout par ceux qui sont dans le déni.

\*\*\*

Au Québec, nous avons des « catholiques de gauche » qui interviennent dans les débats publics. De toutes sortes et de toutes sensibilités. Il faut en convenir, cette petite mouvance participe à l'élaboration d'une « hétérodoxie québécoise » et se permet même à l'occasion des outrances. Une constante s'observe cependant. Elle ne fait pas l'objet d'attention critique et de



mise en perspective suffisante. Gérald Larose, une des personnalités de cette mouvance, a marqué la « conscience sociale » du Québec moderne non sans susciter de sérieuses interrogations. Le texte qui suit nous aidera à mieux élucider les travers énigmatiques d'un héritage historique discordant qui n'est pas familier.

Il est d'abord important de présenter Gérald Larose.

Né en 1945 à Ham-Nord (région des Bois-Francs), Larose est le septième d'une famille catholique de onze enfants. Il a été travailleur social au CLSC d'Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, spécialisé en organisation communautaire. Il a aussi été tour à tour président de son syndicat local, responsable provincial des CLSC pour la Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux, responsable de l'information au Conseil central du Montréal-métropolitain, puis président dudit Conseil de 1979 à 1982 avant d'être élu premier vice-président de la CSN en juin 1982 et président le 17 septembre

1983. Il a été président de la Centrale des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN) de 1983 à 1999. Il est actuellement professeur invité à l'École de travail social de l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) et président du Conseil de la souveraineté du Québec. Selon son ex-collègue syndicaliste Michel Rioux, Larose « impose un leadership extrêmement fort non seulement à l'intérieur de la CSN, mais aussi dans l'ensemble de la société québécoise ».

\*\*\*

Sur le plan idéologique, Gérald Larose a un cheminement intellectuel bien personnel. Il annonce les tumultes complexes des écroulements sociaux, religieux et politiques vécus depuis la Révolution tranquille. Les historiens sont peu bavards à son sujet. Grâce à quelques écrits moins connus du public, nous avons la chance de mieux connaître un pan moins idyllique de sa pensée. L'esquisse que je propose nous donnera une vue plus riche, plus contrastée et moins complaisante chez

un homme qui a modelé pendant longtemps les « luttes syndicales, sociales et populaires ». Un voyage à travers son itinéraire idéologique devait s'écrire. Au-delà des choses généralement admises et convenues sur lui qui relève d'un « conformisme poussif », il y a un épisode de sa vie publique des années 70 qui mérite un détour.

Avec le bref intermède de sa vie religieuse au sein des rédemptoristes - qui a été pour lui une véritable école de formation intellectuelle et théologique - nous avons la chance d'interroger son militantisme qui l'a amené à changer d'orientation. Dirigeons nous vers une organisation qui a structuré fortement notre illustre personnage.

Ce n'est pour personne un secret de Polichinelle. C'est bien le syndicalisme de la Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux qui « révélera » la véritable vocation de Gérald Larose. Il retrouvera au sein de la CSN la forme organisationnelle qui l'aidera à structurer son action sociale et ses propres convictions idéologiques. Il est permis toutefois d'explorer plus minutieusement son statut et ses paroles bien avant son arrimage dans l'appareil syndical de la CSN pour retrouver les prémisses d'un segment qui pose des questions peu abordées dans le landerneau québécois. Ce segment n'est pas lumineux dans ce cas-ci. Distinguons le subtil de l'épais, faisons la part des choses et nuanceons dans son contexte. Mais ne restons pas insensibles à une recherche de la vérité sur les hommes. Disons les choses autrement. Mesurons à sa juste valeur les implications d'une parole pamphlétaire de M. Larose qui puise sa source tout à la fois chez les « catholiques de gauche » et plus globalement dans une culture de gauche, propice là aussi comme ailleurs, disons-le franchement, aux excès de toutes sortes.

Les transformations vécues lors de la Révolution tranquille n'ont pas seulement laissé des fractures, mais aussi des persistances saugrenues qui se sont déployées bien au-delà de son projet initial. Un regard nouveau avec la lecture d'un texte de Larose nous ouvre cette brèche. De brefs moments de dérives s'affirment. L'ex-prêtre et ex-leader syndical qui fascine encore les milieux de gauche n'a pas donné d'autocritique satisfaisante pour la postérité sur ce texte public. Laissera-t-il en jachère une période turbulente de sa vie publique sans un minimum d'éclairage pour les générations futures? Une contribution incombe de faire jaillir à la mémoire l'inavouable.

## 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.

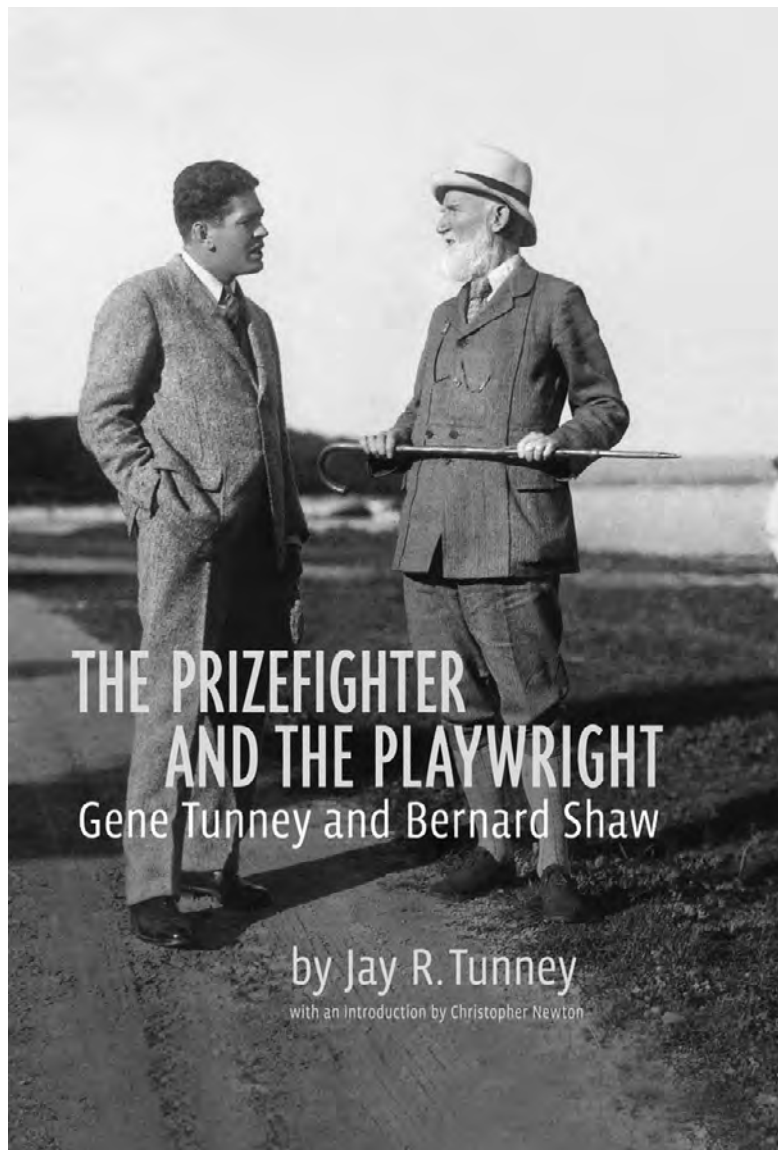


Byron Toben is interim president of the Montreal Press Club

**Byron Toben**  
toben@themetropolitain.ca

**ARTS & STYLE**

# Of prizefighting and playwrighting



champion.

Of their long philosophical talks about existence, Gene considered it a personal Doctoral education by the leading public intellectual of the early 20th century. Polly became deathly ill during their stay on Brioni. Shaw, the professed atheist, prayed together with Gene for her recovery in a chapel.

Her seemingly miraculous recovery is a high point in the book.

This book is a love story, a portrait of the times, a metaphor of a struggle through adversity and best of all, a darn good read.

Jay Tunney




## 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.

 **CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS  
[www.cambridge.org/us](http://www.cambridge.org/us)

On September 22, 1927, the most famous battle in boxing history took place in Chicago. Gene Tunney, the quiet, literary heavyweight, defended the world championship he had won one year before from Jack Dempsey, the “Manassa Mauler,” who had held it for 10 years. This was the fight with the famous “long count” controversy played over many times today on YouTube. It was the first over \$2 million dollar gate in entertainment history (\$22 million in today’s money), seen live by 125,000 people (no TV in those days).

On the 84th anniversary of that moment, Gene’s son, journalist Jay Tunney, visited Montreal recently to promote his book, *The Prizefighter and The Playwright*, about his father’s post boxing close relationship with the great playwright George Bernard Shaw.

Jay was a special guest at a mini-benefit for our own CineGael Irish Film Society and also had a

Montreal book launch sponsored by the Montreal Press Club. He presented photos and anecdotes not publicly known until now.

Gene as a youth had worked as a lumberjack for a Canadian company. Years later, as a successful businessman, he was on the board of the *Globe and Mail*.

The book recounts the marriage of this poor Irish immigrant stevedore’s son to Polly Lauder, the shy society grand niece of Andrew Carnegie. The engagement, somewhat like the recent Kate and William publicity, drove them to Europe to be married in Rome and honeymoon on the “in” island of Brioni.

They were joined there by G. Bernard Shaw and his wife Charlotte. Shaw, the Nobel winner for literature, was partial to Gene, seeing him as the real life incarnation of Cashel Byron, a fictional character created by Shaw some 50 years earlier. Cashel Byron was a literary gent who became a boxing



## 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](http://www.magil.com)

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

## Pipe and Piling Supplies' high quality stocks include:

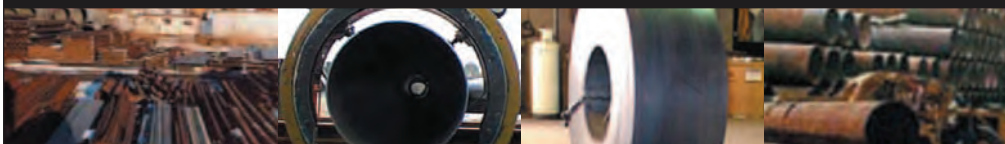
- Wide-flange Beams
- Spiral Pipe
- Bearing Pile Beams
- Piling Pipe
- Sheet Piling
- Concrete Piles



**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](http://www.pipe-piling.com)



# Angst and anning: an awry comedy

Colleen Curran's *True Nature*, which opened the Centaur 's Theatre season, is really an academic lecture about Mary Anning, the obscure 19th century fossil hunter, disguised as a play.

It is also a sophomoric variation on an increasingly familiar theme involving neurotic baby-boomers torn between romantic commitment and a career. *True Nature* appears to have grown out of a series of focus groups that came up with a cross-section of characters designed to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. So you have Anna, the earnest, feminist academic who is fascinated by Anning, the Victorian "princess of paleontol-

ogist?"

The cast, for the most part, is capable. Leni Parker carries the role of Anna with intelligence and conviction. Bruce Dinsmore is miscast as her Jewish boyfriend. Michel Perron as Simon, the gay neighbour, fields some of the best lines. Felicia Shulman is delightfully over the top as the ever-keetching Mimi. Mary Harvey doesn't really have much to do except bounce around on an exercise ball. The production is, however, stylish with a couple of wryly amusing scenes and dashes of visual flair, especially a scene in which the ghosts of Mary Anning haunt Mitch. Director Amanda Kellock has a solid grip on

**The cast, for the most part, is capable. Leni Parker carries the role of Anna with intelligence and conviction.**

ogy" who discovered the first Plesiosaur and who incidentally, was the inspiration for the tongue-twister, "She sells sea shells by the sea shore."

Then there's Mitch, Anna's clueless but sincere love interest; Simon, the stereotypically gay confident; Mimi, Mitch's brassy Jewish sister, and Robin, Anna's unmarried friend to whom the stork comes knocking just as she thinks she's over the hill. The personal lives of this extended family are occasionally funny but strangely disconnected, the dialogue for the most part banal. Curran propels the action mechanically according to the conventions of a romantic comedy. In this case, a spat over whether Anna should accept a six month fellowship to pick fossils in England is enough to threaten the budding romance. Who would have thought such a simple decision in the age of instant communication and video-chat could sustain a plot and cause so much

the slippery material. James Lavoie's set is something of a miracle when you consider it accommodates about a dozen scene changes in a play that runs for almost two hours without an intermission, scenes that include three different apartment settings, a lecture hall, a museum, a beach scene, a hockey game at the Bell Centre, not to mention the cliffs of Lyme Regis in Dorset.

The question though, remains. Why did the Centaur choose such a disappointing season opener? Was it in response to the Women's Caucus of the Playwrights Guild of Canada who last year complained Canadian theatres weren't producing enough plays by Canadian female playwrights in Canada. Curran is a local playwright, but *True Nature* is not the best argument in favour of affirmative action. A play about Mary Anning? Now, that might be something for Curran to consider.

*True Nature* is at the Centaur until Nov. 6.



# 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



# LE CHÂTEAU

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