

# Random selection could decide Parliamentary representatives

We have by now been blessed - and more to come - with half a score of reports on the new Constitution of Canada: the Campeau and the Allere ones from Quebec, the interim one of Silipo from Ontario, the Beaudoin-Edwards one from Ottawa, the one from the Committee of 22, ...

They are interesting and expensive endeavors; they offer all kinds of useful suggestions and they overlook one obvious point.

They basically suggest different ways of distributing power between the provinces and Ottawa, but none seems to be willing to consider that maybe we could also do well without some of the provinces.

Actually one unofficial report, prepared by a feminist movement and titled "Equality Eve," has suggested that maybe we could do quite well without the provinces. But the report has been ignored by the media.

Let us step for a moment into another arena.

Some weeks ago, the cabinets of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia held

a joint meeting to discuss the elimination of trade barriers between the provinces (yes, in 1991 we still have trade barriers within Canada!).

Forty seven ministers lowered their brows on the issue. They made some headway, but they refused to recognize the obvious: who can afford THREE provincial governments to run the business of some two million people ... half the population of Metro Toronto?

To solve the tragic economic plight of the Atlantic Provinces the first logical step is to streamline the government structure, eg.: to merge the three (four, if we include Newfoundland) provinces into one.

There simply is no justification, except for a dubious historical one, for three-four structures to run the life of such a small number of people.

Our constitutional experts, while they contribute to the well-being of the only growth-industry of Canada - the Constitution - are avoiding the fact that Canadians are over-governed and that, from



Another View  
by Carlo Testa

an economic point of view, we cannot afford to have one-tenth of the population involved in well-meaning but unproductive activity.

It is obviously difficult, for any group of people, to realize that they themselves are a critical part of the problem, or even the problem itself. So politicians look all over the scenery and fail to see that their own existence - and that of the civil servants who complement them - should be the first item on the reform agenda.

Talking about the Constitution,

another issue comes to mind: the selection process we use for choosing our leaders. The Canadian election system produces some strange results. Bob Rae, who has recently complained about the opposition of the business sector to his "democratically elected government," conveniently forgets that his Party received a scant 33 per cent of the votes of Ontarians, and effectively (considering those who did not vote) represents some 20-25 per cent of the people eligible to vote. What a mandate, what a "representative" government!

In Ottawa, the Conservatives run the country with less than 40 per cent of the votes of Canadians.

At the riding level, the situation is not much different: we can count on the fingers of one hand the number of MPs, MPPs or councillors who represent the majority of the electorate.

But there is another line of thought. The political system has evolved from assigning power "by divine right" (kings), to "by

birth (aristocrat), to those who have money, to those "elected" by the citizens. Another idea should be considered, actually an old one.

Most politicians like to tell us they are fulfilling a "duty" in some case it may even be true. But all Canadians can be called to fulfill a public duty, that is on juries. Why then not extend the "jury" concept to political life?

Nowadays citizens are mostly as knowledgeable as the politicians and often more so. Why not make serving in Ottawa, Queen's Park or the local council a matter of random selection? Pay the person selected a generous salary and severance pay and get rid of the whole business of elections which anyhow result in skewed representation? It would be cheaper, and more fair.

At least we would not have somebody "elected" in some funny convention by some 1,500 people claiming the top job of the country.

There is more to Constitution than reallocating power and ministerial chairs.

## Community Focus

### Herald's Zaire correspondent files his first story

To the Editor: Colin Gibson

Greetings from Aba, Zaire. My name is Andrew Isaak and I'm working in Zaire, Africa, on a 3-month assignment with a Christian Mission Agency called African Inland Mission. I talked to one of your reporters (Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot) before I left about a month ago.

I had hoped to send you a monthly report on how I was doing and to keep you posted on my work project. It looks like this letter will arrive near the end of June (the plane only comes once a week). I can perhaps get another article off for July and then when I return in late August I can have a wrap-up interview. I will hopefully have some good photographs to publish too.

Although I guess it's your decision, it would be kind of neat if I could be put down as the Herald's Zaire Foreign Correspondent. Anyhow ... here's my thoughts after being in Africa for a month.

By ANDREW ISAAK

Herald Zaire Correspondent

It's rather humid as I spend Father's Day across the world in Central Africa. I've been in Aba, Zaire for the past three weeks working for the Christian Mission Agency, African Inland Mission.

To get on the same wavelength and to teach everybody a little geography let's have everybody

take down their globes, atlas or encyclopedia and look up Zaire ... it's okay, I'll wait ...

The village of Aba is in the north-east corner, right on the Sudan border. In fact, if I look out my bedroom window I can see the hills of Sudan and from my front porch are the plains of Zaire.

Most of the country is rain forest and since it is the rainy season, it is very lush and green right now. Last night, I watched one of the most amazing thunderstorms I've ever seen. (No, there's no Star Trek ... The Next Generation over here to amuse people in the evening). Since there are no lights in the evening (except for my flashlight) the stars are incredible to watch too.

There are two languages spoken in this part of Zaire: French and Bengala. Now, my French schooling only goes as far as Grade 8 (a big mistake to not have taken more which I plan to fix this fall at university) and my Bengala was non-existent before coming here. It's a slow process but I'm slowly picking up words here and there.

Only the missionaries here speak English so they do a lot of translating for me. The Zairen people are extremely friendly



Andrew Isaak

and usually when they realize I don't speak their language they help me with the Bengala greetings.

For instance ... one greeting when you meet someone goes like this: (first you shake hands) then you say "Mbote!" which literally means "Greetings." Then they might respond "Mbote Mingi" which means "Greetings Many!" If you want the official phonetics of the word, you'll have to talk to me when I get back.

Anyhow, I'll now try and describe the work I'm doing here.

African Inland Mission is involved with the planting of Christian churches in African countries. They are also involved with

various forms of development work. Zaire is one of the poorest countries in the world with most people only making a couple of dollars a day.

This month is the hardest for people here because it is between the growing seasons and there is very little to eat. I'm expecting my biggest culture shock to happen when I arrive back in Canada and find supermarkets filled with food. Another problem here is the need to find clean drinking water.

The hospital on the mission station now gets all its water from either rain water buckets or it is carried from a small river about a kilometre away. I am here to help complete the Aba Hospital Water Project.

The Aba Hospital Water Project is sponsored in part by CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). This project will bring clean groundwater pumped from a well to the hospital. The pump will be powered by 28 solar panels. (There's no lack of sun down here!) These panels will produce electricity from the sun's rays and run an electric pump. The water will go to a 4 metre diameter by 3 m high brick water tank on top of a large hill (which is half completed by yesterday). From here, the water is piped to the various hospital buildings (maternity, pharmacy, operating

room) and also to some outside water dispensers.

I'm getting a real test of my engineering abilities here as I find some of the parts not fitting or working as they should. There's no Canadian Tire I can run off to for extra parts. One has to learn to work with what you have and what you can find. (Yeah ... just like McGyver).

It's a very different culture over here and it is hard to get used to it. I certainly miss home and my attempts at picking up CBC Radio International have failed (so I still don't know who won the Stanley Cup!).

Mail is very slow in coming here because the plane only arrives once a week, perhaps twice if there is a passenger to deliver.

We travel around the area in a 4-wheel drive Land Rover. Now, I thought the roads in Kenya were bad but the roads here are an adventure in themselves. If they're not washed out or overgrown, they are riddled with potholes. Driving around here is not for the people with weak stomachs.

Well, there you have it ... examples of what living in Zaire is like. There is much more to learn and many more photographs to take. I hope to send another article in a month and update you on the water project and perhaps teach you more Bengala.



Fun for youngsters of all ages

## Canada Day in the Glen

CANADA DAY, MONDAY, JULY 1, 1991  
UNITY

### ONSTAGE

- 12:00-12:45 - Parade
- 12:45-1:00 - Opening Ceremonies
- 1:00-1:15 - Acton Citizens Band
- 1:15-1:50 - Pine Valley Squares
- 1:50-2:20 - Gymnastics
- 2:20-2:50 - Dance Music
- 2:50-3:50 - Games
- 3:50-4:00 - Pet Show Awards
- 4:00-4:45 - Don Ablett
- 5:30-7:00 - Teen DJ
- 8:00-9:30 - Glen Band
- 9:30 - Bonfire

### OFFSTAGE

- 1:00 - Seniors Tea Room, Glen Williams Town Hall
- 1:00 - Children's Play Area
- Facepainting
- Sandbox
- Fishpond
- Clay Table
- Paint Table
- 1:15-1:45 - Magician
- 1:15-1:40 - Tikwandoo
- 3:00 - Pet Show
- 3:00 - Adult Bingo
- Glen Williams Town Hall
- 4:00-4:30 - Magician

### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

- Breakfast in the Ball Park - Mini Golf - Pizza Eating
- 10:00 Ball Game - Falcon - Crafts - Historical Society Tour
- Food Booths - Sub Eating