

# The Communicator

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*In this issue:*

- ❖ Editors Thoughts
- ❖ The language turmoil
- ❖ Life in South Africa
- ❖ Citizen Article by  
Andrew Cohen
- ❖ Life in Dubai
- ❖ B.Y.'s short stories
- ❖ Buck's Beauties
- ❖ Final Comps



[Typex on the web](#)

*Note: Ctrl + Click to activate all links (as above) to the web*

## ***Editors Thoughts***

***By David Smith***

Looking at this photo above has me shaking my head somewhat when I think of today's technologies. This ain't no gigabyte MP3 player. But that was then and this is now and for those of us of an advancing age, we have to go with the flow and accept that cell phones, MP3's, multi megapixel digital cameras, blue tooth and Wi-Fi hot-spots are all are part of today's world – whether we want it or not. I for one love all these new toys. Watching an old re-run of "The Waltons" (my life before DFAIT) made me realize just how far we have come. It's pretty hard to argue that cell phones don't make life easier although when I have to listen to Joe Schmuck in my local supermarket calling his wife to discuss which brand of peanut butter to purchase I have to wonder about such things.

Life as we knew it has come and gone. Frankly, who would want to return to using the crypto equipment of those days? What I do think has gone by the wayside however is that folks forget we were a group of specially trained individuals who could take a certain pride in being able to produce coded messages using a multitude of methods. Each time we advanced to a new type of cryptology, it was to make our job easier. Anyone who doubts that should think back to the days of book cypher when you were handed a full page of text at the end of the day knowing the hours it would take to turn it into coded text. Typex came along and voila, we speeded things up considerably. Then we proceeded down the road with names such as Noreen, Rockex, BID 610 and 770 and each time our working lives became easier and the workload decreased as a result. OCAMS and NOCAMS made it possible to communicate with all missions at once – no more telex transmissions to New Delhi where it would take two minutes to receive an "answerback". Yup, been there, done that and nope, I for one don't want to do it anymore. But you have to admit – it did give us a sense of pride other groups couldn't understand or appreciate. Life was good and I for one am happy to have been part of it. I hope you were as well.

*The Language Turmoil*  
*By Buck Arbuckle*

Being unilingual except for a few unsavory phrases in several languages, I was running the gauntlet of the government's language initiative and found myself facing several formidable challenges. I would either become somewhat more bilingual than the few phrases that the clergy doesn't know, or I stood little chance of being promoted to prime minister. Apprehensively, I elected to take language training. Though I had spent four years in Paris, I had worked that post in English. But surely some of that language experience had stuck to me and perhaps, just perhaps, I could absorb enough formal training to pave my way to the Prime Ministership. I also realized that I had no real talent for deciphering different languages.

After weeks of immersion with negligible progress, it was officially recognized I had no ear for languages. All I could do is sit among the other students and envy their progress. I finally abdicated and returned to my office, a confirmed unilingual, where everything seemed to be going fairly well. Meetings I attended were all in English and my lack of a French vocabulary never left me at a loss for words. Nevertheless, unrest was brewing, an undercurrent of which I was unaware.

Unbeknownst to me a complaint was lodged with the Language Commissioner that I was an unacceptable presence in my then current unilingual state. The sitting Language Commissioner, Keith Spicer, had his desk piled high with other complaints requiring investigation so there was an inherent delay of months before any action could be taken. However, finally an investigation was directed toward my office after which reports had to be written. More delays. After an exorbitant expenditure of time, the completed report reached the department with courtesy copy to me. It was signed by Keith Spicer himself. His observations were that my office was "functionally bilingual and there seemed no apparent reason why any single position should be designated bilingual". This common sense statement seemed to fly in the face of the government policy of the day but it defused whatever discord there was in the office.

P.S. Needless to say I am now an avid fan of Keith Spicer's column in the Ottawa Citizen which he writes in English from his home in Paris.

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From your editor

Every once in a while I come across a website which is of interest to those of us who worked in the crypto trade. This is one I think a number of you will find worth surfing. Press Ctrl + Click to activate the link below or cut and paste into your browser. Enjoy

[A site for CM's eyes](#)

## Life in South Africa

By Rob Bareham

***Readers please note: this article was submitted in May of 2008 and Rob informs me it is now a bit dated. Zuma is now the president of course and the world is watching with interest as events unfold***

I have received emails from several friends overseas who have asked me about the riots in the news. Here are the uncensored facts which your readers may be interested in. The riots are black-on-black at the moment and for the black citizens of South Africa, the end result is positive, unlike what the international press is reporting.

When the ANC came into power in 1994, it switched off the lethal high voltage fences which acted as a border to keep the blacks from crossing into the country from Mozambique and Zimbabwe. These borders used to be patrolled continuously by the army should anyone manage to get through alive. Electrocuting bodies were often left for days where they fell as a deterrent to those that wished to try it. (Remember, this is Africa where bullets, not a culture to be law abiding historically kept the peace) This new black ANC government thought that it was inhumane to fellow Africans to use lethal force to keep them out of the country so they switched the power on the fences off and almost eliminated the army patrols. This made for good media for the new black government. At the same time they also eliminated capital punishment which resulted in South Africa having one of the highest murder rates in the world.

Now the immigration department cannot keep up with the deportations. Deportation here is a joke. The illegals are collected and put on the train back home, and they usually return within less than a week. On our TV news in the evening, we have seen pictures of hundreds (no I am not exaggerating) of Africans crawling under the non-electrified barbed wire and into RSA every night. It is estimated that there are approximately 8 million illegal immigrants in the country at the moment, which is about 20% of the population. They are mostly from Zimbabwe, Somali, Mozambique, The Congo, Nigeria and Kenya.

It is against the law to hire an illegal immigrant so there is not much for most of them to do here except crime and illegal jobs. They live in the black townships among the local blacks, prey on the local blacks and take menial labour jobs from builders etc at less than half the minimum wage, jobs that the local unskilled blacks used to get.

South Africa is making a yeoman's effort to educate its citizens, create employment, enhance its medical system and generally improve the lives for its indigenous population. Much of these efforts are nullified by the crime, most of it from these desperately poor illegal immigrants. After every school break we hear stories of many schools being stripped of everything of value, right down to the electrical fittings, public hospitals ask patients to bring in their own bedding as theirs is routinely stolen, theft and violent crime, especially in the black areas is a national problem.

Therefore, the local blacks have had enough and are turning against these foreigners in a very violent way. The incidence of illegals coming in every night has almost stopped since these riots commenced two weeks ago. Personally I think that that is a very good thing for the country although it is happening in a very African (non European) way.

The problem is caused by the ANC government failing to keep the lethal fence switched on and patrolling the border properly. They know that they screwed up but cannot admit to it so instead they blame their own citizens for the problem which is good international press for them. They send our cops and army in to stop the rioting but of course, the cops and soldiers are not really motivated to stop it, they have all been affected by the crime from the illegal immigrants too.

Yes, it is a mini revolution that is taking place. The president (Thabo Mbeki) is scheduled to be replaced shortly and at the moment, his most likely replacement is a Zulu (rival tribe) named Jacob Zuma. Zuma is currently under investigation for corruption and fraud by Mbeki's (from the Xhosa tribe) special white collar police force called the Scorpions. Strangely though, the ANC government is now trying to disband the Scorpions as they have arrested too many of their senior parliamentarians for fraud and corruption.

This young democratic country is only 14 years old, has one of the world's strongest constitutions for human rights and personal freedom and is still finding its way but what a great ride it has been so far to experience it first hand.

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Editors Note: The following is reprinted with Andrew Cohen's permission

## Wandering in a poetic fog

BY ANDREW COHEN, CITIZEN SPECIAL MARCH 18, 2009 10:01 AM

It has been a long, cold season of discontent for Canada in the world. Uncertain of our place, we continue to wander about in a poetic fog.

After three years in office, the Conservatives haven't set out where they want to take Canada. As they have sounded no grand theme at home, they have embraced no projet de société abroad worthy of a country of our history, geography and demography.

In case they forgot, Canada is the world's second-largest country, one of its largest economies and one of its oldest democracies, a member of every major international club. It is a repository of natural resources and a tribune of pluralism, tolerance and moderation.

What to do with all this? We don't really know.

We change foreign ministers (four in the last three years) as if it didn't matter. We mount a campaign for our historic non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, belatedly, which will probably fail for the first time. We sustain an honourable (if struggling) commitment in Afghanistan and wince when our leading soldier speaks truth to power, telling us his tired army cannot sustain this battle beyond 2011.

The country's malaise plays out most dramatically in the Department of Foreign Affairs, once the aristocracy of the bureaucracy. It has become forlorn and listless, a pale shadow of its former self.

If money means love, you might conclude that the government doesn't much like the diplomats. As Michelle Collins reports this week in Embassy, after examining official estimates, the department's budget fell by 18 per cent in 2008-09. It is expected to fall further in the next two years.

When you lose almost a fifth of your funding in one year, you have to start slashing. So we are getting out of public diplomacy when we should be embracing it, as Daryl Copeland, a thoughtful diplomat, argues in his fine book, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: Rethinking International Relations*. We are abandoning scholarships and cultural programs. We are reducing or closing missions. And we are not developing ideas.

The department has been intimidated. Ambassadors are afraid to speak to journalists. In fact, they are not even allowed to write letters to the editor of local newspapers without Ottawa's approval.

This is happening as Foreign Affairs celebrates the 100th anniversary of its founding. What could be a grand opportunity to celebrate what was once the world's finest foreign service, which helped create the post-war institutions, has been largely wasted.

The department holds academic conferences, where earnest scholars speak to each other, and doesn't invite the media. Then again, when it comes to promoting its accomplishments (such as the influential "responsibility to protect" doctrine) and engaging Canadians, it's clueless.

Curiously, in a building that is named after Lester Pearson and displays (poorly) his Nobel Peace Prize, the department has still not found a way to mount a permanent exhibition on Pearson's legacy.

This is our greatest diplomat, but, oh, Lester Pearson was a Liberal, don't you know?

In some areas of foreign policy, the government has been creative. It is concentrating our foreign aid among fewer countries for greater

effectiveness. It has increased defence spending. It has taken a serious part in rebuilding Afghanistan. And it wants to create a democracy institute.

But this is fitful, incremental foreign policy without an overarching theme. And that's why Canadians are looking beyond their government and imagining the world in their own way.

A recent example is the citizen's dialogue called "Canada's World," which has issued a provocative report envisioning Canada as a role model in five strategic areas: advocate of a green economy; exemplar of multiculturalism; reformer of international institutions; innovator of technology; and promoter of equality and human development.

Not everything works here, though the dialogue makes some useful and innovative suggestions. But the idea was to turn to ordinary Canadians -- not the experts -- and ask them to create a new narrative for our foreign policy. They did.

The people's dialogue is driven by the spirited Shauna Sylvester of Vancouver, a seasoned social activist. She developed the idea, raised the money and brought it to life, a remarkable achievement. "I am out to find Canada on a map," she writes. "It used to be there ... but ... it comes and goes and no one seems to take notice."

So she, and people like Laura Archer, the nurse from Montreal who was kidnapped and released last week in Sudan, go out and do things on their own. So do the thousands of students enrolling in a myriad of new international programs in our universities and joining a proliferating number of international non-governmental organizations, many in the developing world.

Thankfully, Canadians are running ahead of their government in imagining Canada in the world.

They aren't prepared to wait any longer for the country that dares not raise its voice.

Andrew Cohen is the author of *Extraordinary Canadians: Lester Pearson*.

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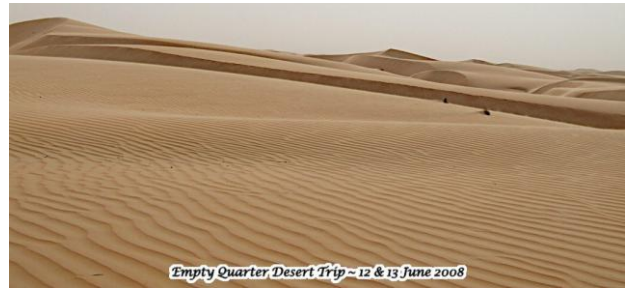
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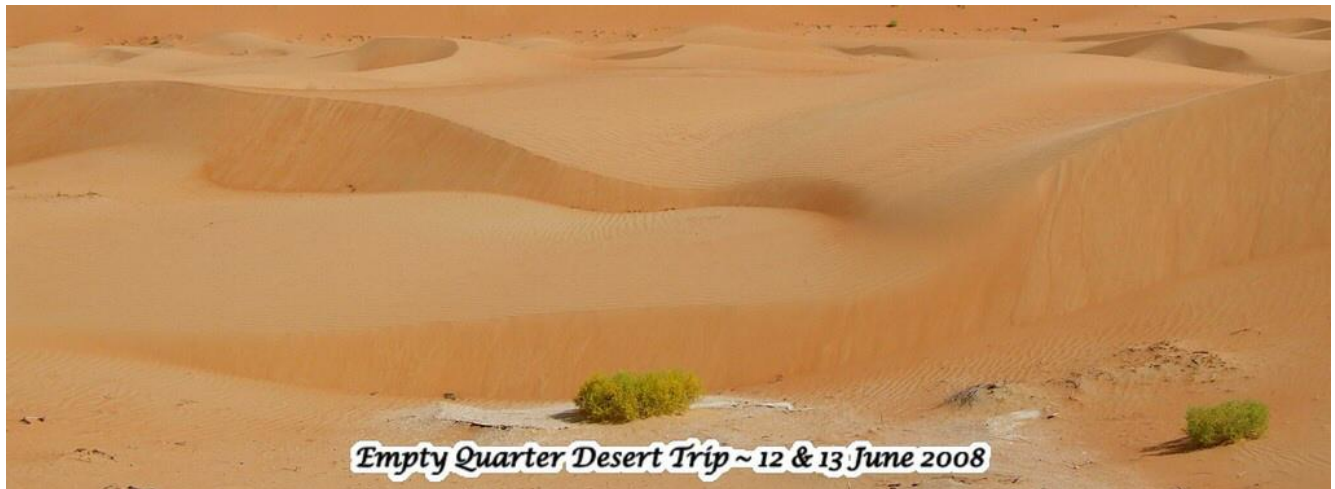
## Life in challenging places – from Bill Neelin's collection of life in Abu Dhabi These scenes bring a cold beer to mind.







In photo on left – L-R: Bill Neelin, Col Roy Forestell (CFA) Ralph Flanigan (MCO)



*More short stovies*

*By Marty Byzewski*

*La Casa Del Whopper*

One time I spent six weeks in Caracas Venezuela on temporary duty. The city was absolutely crazy. Lots of shootings, people driving on the sidewalks, running red lights, and garbage all over the place. I have never seen a place with so much humidity. The third day I was there my battery on my watch and calculator both went it was so bad. But the main thing I will always remember are the soy-bean burgers. Once in awhile I would stop at Burger King on my way from the office. I have to admit that the burgers were fairly good and it almost felt that one was at home in North America but I will always remember the sign outside and I still laugh about it once in a while. *La Casa Del Whopper*. (The Home of the Whopper).

### ***How big is BIG!!! Billionaire in Belgrade.***

Well I believe that everyone has had a dream of being a millionaire. I hate to brag but it happened to me not once but twice. The first time I was in Brazil I exchanged a \$100.00 U.S. bill and received over a million Cruzeiros back. I was so proud. A millionaire and sadly only enough for the weekend. Talk about inflation. The second time lightning struck I was in Warsaw Poland and I received 1.5 Million Zlotys for my hard earned cash. This lasted me only one visit at the local casino where I promptly became a pauper by Warsaw standards. But nothing was to prepare me for the next logical step up. Billionaire. Well I have to admit it did happen. I was on an installation in Belgrade where the mother of all inflation had struck. There was a United Nations embargo on the country because of Croatia and everything was in tight supply. Of course the governments answer was to print-print-print money with of course nothing backing it up. Inflation was changing by the hour. People were buying everything in sight because by the time the day had progressed their money would have lost 1000 %. It was a real joke. Cash registers in the local stores had a bunch of zero's pasted on the end of the window of their cash registers. People payed with stacks of money which no one really counted. I believe they were measuring the amounts to calculate totals. The government then decided to get tricky and instead of printing a million dinar note they jumped to a billion dinar note. Of course this saved you from having to stack 1000 million dinar notes in each bundle. What great thinking. Now you only had to handle one note. Yes, they actually printed a 500,000,000,000 Dinar note, yes count the zeros kiddies. A 500 Billion Dinar note. Just think of walking into a store and asking for change for a 500,000,000,000 note. Sorry just ran out of change this morning. Well somebody finally came to their senses and one day the government decided to tie their currency to the German mark. Hello One Dinar to the German Mark. Now people were left with a bunch of currency good only for wallpaper. I left the city after paying my hotel bill in U.S. Cash and bringing home one 500,000,000,000 bill and a billion dinar bill. Guess what? I'm still a billionaire to this day.

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### **The Warsaw Concerto**

*By Buck Arbuckle*

Pierre Elliott Trudeau was prime minister when it happened, not because he was prime minister but during his tenure as prime minister. The event was massive labour unrest in Poland which brought that country to a stand-still. The resulting strike completely disrupted communications in the country and severed our circuits to the Embassy. This of course set off the alarm bells in Ottawa and I was asked

what I was going to do about it. As it happened, I didn't feel competent to offer a viable solution to a crippling, nation-wide strike in far off Poland.

The usual short-term solution for us in such circumstances would have been to designate a member of the embassy staff as a diplomatic courier and have him fly in and out to exchange dispatches with a nearby Canadian Embassy. However, even the airlines were severely restricted and anything that was flying was heavily booked, thus couriers seemed a non-starter. I ventured that we were moving to install a radio circuit between Warsaw and one of our nearby embassies at a cost of \$100,000, a figure I pulled out of the air. Now we had already made firm commitments and our capital budget was running on empty. As it happened, just a few hours later Prime Minister Trudeau was questioned by the press about what the government was doing to re-establish communications with our Warsaw Embassy. Surprisingly, Trudeau remarked that they were going to set up a radio circuit at a cost of \$100,000. We didn't haggle with the department over a formal authority; we went shopping, bought the necessary equipment including antennas. Next we sought a means of transport, but with few flights in and out of Warsaw, we seemed hamstrung.

Fortunately a Polish airliner was parked at Uplands airport preparing for the return trip to Warsaw. Our inquiry about loading a consignment of radio equipment on board was rejected as the aircraft was fully booked. Fine, we said, but the aircraft stays here till our shipment is on board. After a little diplomatic sparring and a severely delayed flight, room was found for our diplomatic shipment complete with accompanying courier, and away it went.

Our Technician/courier, Mr. Bill Shadforth would not only be the escort but would also be responsible for the installation. Everything seemed to go well until the antenna was being erected on the roof of the embassy. Some mishap left the technician suffering a minor injury and he was subsequently relegated to the job of supervising local staff who finished the job. And so, within a remarkably short time from conception to installation, our first diplomatic radio link was operational, thanks to a very competent technical staff.

It was always gratifying that irrespective of the diversity of the assignment; the end was always accomplished with minimal delay by technicians eager for a new challenge. In this vein I should like to continue. As our varied accomplishments became known, I was plagued by so-called consultants offering to guide and direct our division in areas of security and forward planning. It was always my pleasure to emphasize that our staff were experts in those areas and we could probably teach the consultants a few tricks.

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## The Indo-Chinese Conference - Geneva

By Buck Arbuckle

While on posting to Paris in the mid 1950s I was called to the international Indo-Chinese conference in Geneva, along with John Dolan, Jerry Spenard and various and sundry other delegates. The conference was held in the United Nations complex but our telecommunications activities were set up, as we were, in the first class hotel, The Hotel de la Paix, on the shores of the beautiful Lac de Geneve.

The conference droned on through December and was recessed for Christmas, but we stayed on for any telecommunications eventuality, whether or no. There was hardly another guest in this straight laced hotel over the holiday and we were left with little to do but feel homesick. We gathered in one of our rooms on the first floor where, outside our door, a perimeter promenade overlooked the main entrance foyer, reception area and the concierge's desk. We had plenty of booze and were enjoying a community drink when there was a knock at the door. There stood a hotel porter with a large parcel on a gleaming silver tray. He spoke stiffly saying "Parcel from Canada, sir", laid it on a table and quickly exited. Puzzled, we gazed at the brown papered package with various markings resembling postmarks and finally opened it, to find it fully packed with carefully crafted snowballs and a note "Merry Christmas from Canada". Evidently the hotel didn't want us to feel homesick.

We took the box and its contents out onto the perimeter promenade and looked down. There the concierge, porters, head waiter, etc., were all staring up at us laughing. We quickly took a couple of snowballs each and threw them at the pranksters. They were quick to scoop up what snow they could and fire it back. Thus for the only time in our careers we had a full fledged snowball fight in the elegant foyer of a first class hotel. But soon the snow ran out, everything was wet and the combat was over. The hotel staff quickly cleaned up the mess and, one by one, joined us for a drink in the room before returning to their normal duties.

Beats me how the hotel staff could precipitate such a ruckus one minute and display a thoroughly disciplined formal format the next. But that's the Swiss.

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We have mail – an email from Joe MacPherson, Feb 23, 2008

Hi David: I read some of your written works in the URL's you sent me, and frankly I am BLOWN AWAY. You are an exceptional writer, very easy to read, great content. I suspect that if George was in Delhi with Kit Carson he was there before me. Probably the best two friends I had in the

Department were Ross Hogg (who I still fondly refer to as Uncle Ross - and whom I communicate with fairly regularly AND that utter technical genius Stan Dabrowski). While Ross is very much alive and still working in Ottawa, Stan passed on a few years ago. Even the passage of family members did not bring a tear to my eye, but the passing of the Big Polish genius certainly did. I became very close to Stan and Kaye (who he affectionately referred to as EMA). Stan and I hung-out a lot in Delhi because we were both HAMS (radio and otherwise). We both hung out with a Swiss ham Walter Baumann (until recently, Consular officer for the Swiss embassy in Mulhouse, France). A Polish commercial attache at the Polish embassy - Lucian Morcenak (spelling ?) who was desperate to become a ham but who was persona non grata with our High Commission grown-ups. The security people were convinced he was a Polish agent but discovered many years later that they had mistaken him for someone else. So much for old DL2. Lucien was very nearly killed in a car accident when Stan was in Beirut but eventually got his ham licence. When they transferred the broken body of Lucian from a MidEastAirways plane in Beirut, to a LOT airliner, Stan got to visit with Lucian for a few minutes. I wish I had a dollar for each work of the many memos I had to write when Lucian visited my residence. Stan had to do the same. Another tale from yesteryear, David. You must be beginning to doubt me by now?

Ross served with Kit Carson (in Karachi, I believe), and told me some incredible stores about him. Ross and I polished-off more than a few Irish Coffees when we were posted to Washington. I ought to still be in a WashDC or Maryland jail considering all the times between 3 and 5 in the morning I drove home PISSED from Ross's place. David, you may never fully appreciate what a wonderful service you, and George, are doing for me and our former colleagues. I congratulate you, and all those who help you with this, for keeping the MEMORIES ALIVE. To a far lesser extent, I am involved in a very minor way in trying to put together a list of Radio Inspection and other employees in the days immediately after I left External for DOC. Forever in your debt, David for the - sometimes emotional trip down memory lane.

Joe

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***Final Comps "In memoriam" – 2009***

***Members and friends of the CM/EL community to whom we have said goodbye***

Fely Tumamao, spouse of Denis Lacombe May 6, 2009



Roger Bergeron May 16, 2009