

MESSAGE DU SOUS-SECRETAIRE D'ETAT AUX
AFFAIRES EXTERIEURES

Ce premier Jour de l'An à la direction du ministère me fournit une excellente occasion d'offrir mes vœux à tous les lecteurs d'"Externally Yours".

Nous sommes 1,615 fonctionnaires dispersés aux quatre coins de la terre. D'enneigé à Moscou et à Ottawa, le 1er janvier 1955 sera tropical à Phnom Penh et à Cuba. Les seuls liens qui nous unissent tous en temps normal tiennent de l'intérêt que nous portons à notre travail et du revenu que nous en tirons. L'époque des Fêtes n'est pas un temps normal cependant; le message du Nouveau-né de Bethléem résonne avec plus de profondeur que de coutume et nous rapproche davantage les uns des autres.

Dans cette chaude et accueillante atmosphère du Jour de l'An je tiens à vous remercier tous et chacun de vous en particulier de votre coopération quotidienne mais diverse, et à vous offrir mes meilleurs vœux de Bonne et Heureuse Année.

"Happy New Year to All"

Jules Lévesque

F.S.O. I (PROBATIONERY)

At last I pried myself loose from a post-graduate school; no more cloistered life for me, but a chance to run the world in a modest way. I would soon become one of the happy few who guide Canada's foreign policy.

Full of Harold Nicolson and French films on Diplomacy in the era of the Congress of Vienna, I set off for Ottawa and the glamour of a life in the diplomatic corps. Friends and family gave me the usual useful advice--what to do about Asia, how often to get a haircut.

I expected Canada's young diplomats to be well-dressed, witty, intelligent young men of distinction. I remember the first I met. Wearing a gaily-checked suit, he stretched out on an old sofa in his room in the East block, peering through a thick haze of cigarette smoke at a sheaf of newspaper clippings propped on his stomach. I am not sure whether I was more startled then or one bleak, hang-overish Monday morning several weeks later when an ambassador in black coat and striped pants, flanked by two benedalled and braided naval aides, was grandly ushered into my office by mistake.

The first two days were a flurry of prodding and poking, physical and mental, by doctors, division heads, D.L.2 and D.C.O.'s, while those of us starting at the same time clung together in terror. You'll enjoy the Department, they all said, but we knew they were secretly looking for some last minute way of keeping us out. Finally, though, we were released to our divisions and to the University of the East block.

The "University", doubtless designed to prevent our feeling too homesick for our colleges, succeeded almost too well. At its thrice weekly lectures (with an optional evening series by the Film board on how to be a movie magnate) we slipped into our old ways. Within minutes we would find ourselves treating division heads with the graceful condescension normally used on professors by their senior students in seminar discussions. They looked as though they could have loved us more.

More was to be learned in my assigned division, how to write departmental prose, for instance. Behind many an apparently lucid sentence lurked a cleverly concealed ambiguity. I learned rapidly that in the Department's grammar, a double affirmative may easily make a negative, in a letter on a touchy subject. The sort of subtlety and guile employed in an earlier age of diplomacy to learn state secrets now had to be turned on other