

servant of a great trading nation, because he understood the filaments connecting international economics with domestic wellbeing. More generally, he thought of economics as part of the equipment of a complete diplomat in contemporary times – and that is intrinsic to the legacy he bequeathed to the Department. I venture to guess that it is an inheritance that has never been of greater importance than it is today, when so many countries are suffering painfully from the ravages of unemployment and inflation combined and when the international economic system seems to have become so ramshackle and to be in such need of radical repair.

#### Intelligence community

About the role he played in the Canadian intelligence community, I feel less competent to speak. I was a nominal member of that community for a little more than a year when I was an Assistant Under-Secretary of State and had among the divisions for which I was responsible the division that dealt with intelligence and security. But it is not an easy community to enter, and I felt that it

never fully accepted me. That is one reason for my diffidence in discussing Norman Robertson's role in the community. Another is that that would require me to assess his handling of the Gouzenko affair and his continuing relations with the RCMP, both of which tasks are beyond me. But, in spite of these reasons for diffidence, there are a few simple points I should like to make. Although Norman Robertson was deeply involved in the work of the intelligence community, there was never any possibility of his being subdued by it, of his taking on its colouring as his habitual guise. His interests were far too wide, his responsibilities were far too various, for that. He was never under any temptation, for example, to forget that the foreign news printed in the *New York Times* might be of far greater significance than intelligence secured by the most subtle and secret means. Above all, he never wore the Mona Lisa smile of those who always seem to be saying: "I have information that you haven't, and so I mustn't be questioned". I have seen that enigmatic, self-satisfied smile on the face of John Foster Dulles,

## Commemorating Norman Robertson

To honour the memory of Norman Robertson, on February 18, 1978, the Governor General held a round-table discussion. Excerpts of remarks by some of his colleagues dealing with his role as an administrator, his influence generally and his views on national unity follow:

JOHN HOLMES: When I was very green to the Department [1943-44] ... I saw all the papers coming through. I controlled the flow, and I must say that I had the impression then of a man superbly in control of the whole Department, of all foreign policy – practically all the policy of the Canadian Government. There was his desk, of course, which everybody commented on. My impression was he was in complete control of that untidy desk. He knew where everything was.

One of the things he taught me ... was a sort of creative delay. People would come storming up and say: "What has happened to that memorandum I put on his desk on Thursday? Nothing's been done about it." And I would say: "Well, I'll try to put it on top of the pile." It would go back – he knew exactly where it was, it was intended to be there – and a week or so later you knew why he'd put it there because the action was impulsive and it would go away.

MARCEL CADIEUX: ... if I may say a word about that, it is that one of the things that terrified him when he went away is that some of those who were acting, who wanted to show their great efficiency, proceeded to empty the basket. He used to say that any time he went away it took him months to sort of retrieve things and to get back to the precarious equilibrium that he wanted to maintain. That's why I don't go along with the view that here was a fellow who was overwhelmed and confused. ... Basically, when I try to account for what many people interpret as lack of interest in administration, I think he had the feeling that, in the end, the essential thing that an Under-Secretary or a senior official must do is achieve a useful *rapport* with those who have power. That, if you achieve that, then the question of how you manage to get enough officers and enough money for travel takes care of itself. ... Keep your eye on the main thing and never mind, then the rest will fall in place.

ED RITCHIE: It's not the organization chart; it's the use of the talents that are at your disposal, and the application of them for the needs of the Government, which Norman did so effectively.