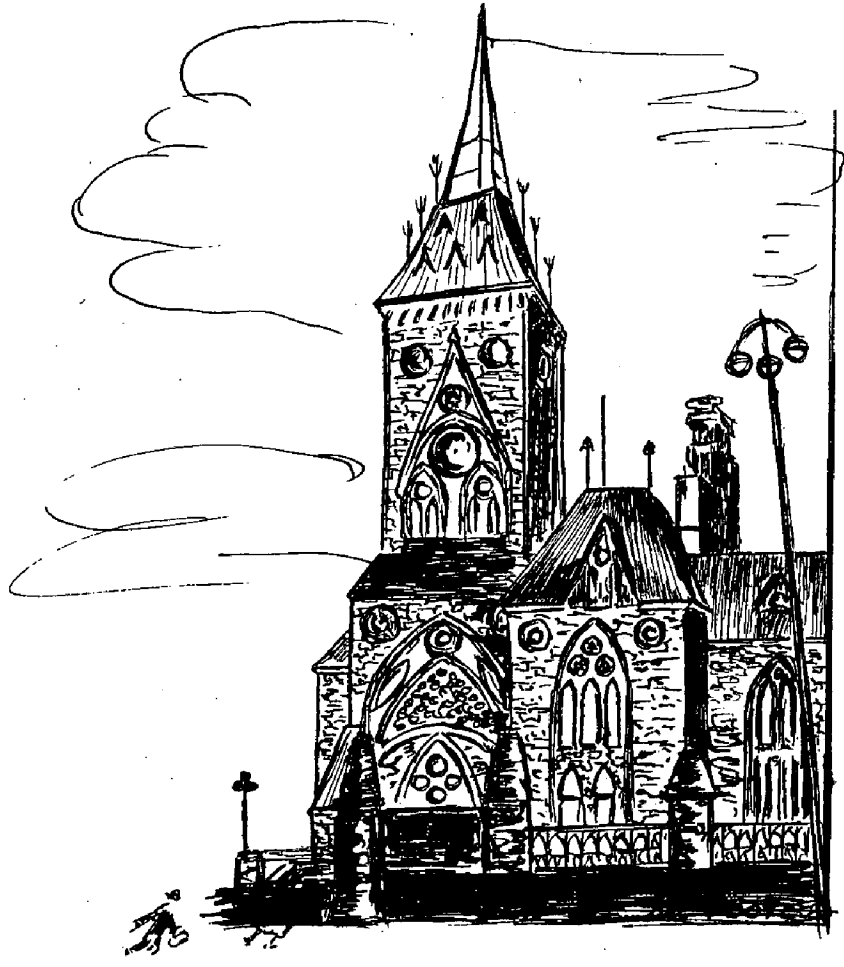


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Externally Yours

CLASSIFICATION: Highly Personal



"Externally Yours"

DECEMBER 1954.

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Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures
OTTAWA

APR 17 1985

RETURN TO DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY
RETOURNER A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE DU MINISTERE

I send my very best wishes for the New Year to all the readers of our scintillating and satirical "house organ"; especially to those who contribute to it, and those who allow themselves to be used as a source of material for it.

L. Pearson

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 was 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

officers as I collected autographs for my memos. By flattering an officer's stenographer, I found, she might be induced to keep my memo on the top of his in-basket until he signed it in sheer despair, in order to get at the work piled beneath it. A series of enquiries from a registry clerk might do more than a rainbow of tags and stickers to convince a man that someone was waiting for the file he had before him. A straight finesse might be attempted, once enough experience had been gained; pretending that I thought he had already seen my memo and sent it on, I could casually ask which division he expected it to have reached by now.

Gradually I found my attitude towards some parts of the work changing. At first, I read avidly all the secret documents I could find, and jealously hid them from the sight of non-official passers-by. Then sophistication set in, and I tossed them about in a more blasé manner. A series of breathless escapes from the domestic spies of D.L.2, though, showed that respect, if no longer breathless interest, would be advisable for the secret tags and the lobster-colored folders.

I was quickly fascinated by the Department's social order. The Under-Secretary might greet one as a friend; a man who had joined the Department a year ago was likely to exploit to the full his almost microscopic superiority in being an F.S.O.1 temporary instead of an F.S.O.1 probationary. I joined in the rejoicing when an F.S.O.1 temporary was publicly humiliated; while he was standing secure in his superiority at a reception, an Asian diplomat asked him if he was a student at Ottawa university.

If the Department had become a little too large to be one big happy family, I realized that the homey touch was still there. There were all the clubs, for instance, starting in the morning with the breakfast club, for those with no stoves or with erratic alarm clocks. In the sketching club, a fellow worker might draw a sketch of Picasso-like complexity to adorn your previously blank wall. I understood that there were assorted athletic clubs for those with healthy-minds-in healthy-body complexes left over from school. Undoubtedly the most popular departmental sport, unorganized by any club, was Please Pass the Postings Rumor--a parlor game for innumerable contestants with rules adapted from Button, Button, Who's got the Button, and Pin the Tail on the Donkey.

Perhaps the first few months have not been quite what I expected when I emerged from my university library. No one has asked me what to do about Asia; only in the Film board can there be so few hair-cuts per person. With patience, though, I may become a suave diplomat, wielding immense power. After all, I may reach the rank of F.S.O.2.

F.S.O.1 Probationary.

* * *

PLENTY BACKWARD NATION

(The following letter was received in the Information Division)

To the:B.C.,
Department of External Affairs, October 14, 1954.

About 20 years ago I took up a Homesite Land Lease near....
.....B.C. about one mile from the Highway. I have occupied this Lease and paid yearly Rentals and Taxes ever since. The road to this property is horrible.

Last year I tried again to get some help from the P.W.D. but again No funds said he the Maintenance Engineer at Victoria, B.C.

Would there be a little left over out of the 25 Millions Canada had earmarked for Aid for Backward Nations to put the Maintainer a few hours on this Road as this is plenty Backward Nation around here.

LETTER FROM VIENTIANE

Dear Friends,

I have had pleasure in reading the articles contributed to "Externally Yours" and thought perhaps some members of the Department might be interested in my reactions to Indo-China.

I will begin by telling you how I happened to come to this part of the world. I was in Tokyo on a two-and-a-half years posting when I was offered the opportunity of working with the Canadians who were to form part of The International Commission for the Supervision and Control of The Truce Treaty in Indo-China.

Although I really enjoyed my year in Japan, I have always had a great desire to travel, so I agreed to go to Indo-China. Distant fields always look greener, but not that I am half-way round the world I find things less rosy than I had expected. However, I am not desperate and will try to depict both the good and the bad aspects of Vientiane.

I left Tokyo on September 8th and flew to Hong Kong. Hong Kong is like a fairy city. Sparkling mountain peaks surrounding this city of many coloured lights left me with a first impression of Royal Courts and diamond necklaces. I was only in Hong Kong for a day and spent a good deal of time in the shops and around the stalls, many of which have British goods for sale.

From Hong Kong to Hanoi is a three hours flight. In Hanoi I was met by one of our colleagues and taken to the Metro-pole Hotel. Hanoi must have been quite a prosperous city in its day. The boulevards, cafés and theatres are all indicative of the energy, money and artistry invested in Indo-China by the French. Today there is nothing but sadness. When I arrived in Hanoi the evacuation was well under way, but even during my four days there, more shops were closed and I was weighted with a feeling of futility.

Laos is 200 miles from Hanoi and Vientiane is on the north shore of the Mehong River, facing Thailand. One of

the pleasing aspects of Vientiane which I will always remember is the extraordinary effect of Avenues lined with great palm trees against the quaint architecture of the houses and pagodas, but somehow or other it's hard to be enthusiastic about aspects when you are hot and ill. The oppressive heat was what really greeted me and it's difficult to enjoy primitive modes of living coupled with numerous varieties of insects.

We all have to sleep under mosquito nets. At first, I felt trapped, but before long I grew to appreciate its assistance in keeping out the bugs which invariably crawl over us.

One morning I was preparing to take a shower (cold water only runs in the taps here and although its coolness is invigorating, its muddiness is discouraging) when I came face to face with a spider which must have been at least six inches in diameter. For a moment I stood paralysed at the sight of such an over-sized insect, but I quickly sharpened enough to evacuate the place. It took me all day to forget the incident, but that very same night when I put the key in the door of the house where I live, I heard a thud-like sound and found a snake. Then I truly wished that I had not yielded to my fancy to see the world. The grasshoppers in Laos measure a good four inches in length and the lizards in my bedroom make me shiver, but I'm told that they eat the insects.

The monsoon season has almost ended. It begins in May and lasts until mid-October. Needless to say, during that period, everything smells musty and we have to watch our clothes constantly if we want to keep them free of a thick green fuzz. This fuzz is especially bad for shoes, but I don't find it nearly as disturbing as the bugs.

I think it's time that I turned to the good side of the picture.

The country-side is really lovely and the climate, at this time of year, is very pleasant. It reminds me of July at home. The trees are enormous in size with jade coloured leaves, and the sky seems to have a different blue than in any other part of the world where I have been.

There are a great many fruit-bearing trees -- bananas, cocoanut and papaya. Laos is also noted for its mahogany

wood and soon for the first time I will be seeing that rich wood used as firewood.

The Laotians are said to be very honest, pleasant and incredibly lazy. They are small in stature and the women seem to do the bulk of the work. The native costume worn by the women is a wrap around sort of skirt, medium length with a deep band of glittery material at the bottom. They come in a variety of colours (the skirts I mean) and are worn with a white blouse. The women's hair-dos are rather fascinating. Most of them have long black hair which is combed back and fastened in a bun on the side of their heads.

The rigid way in which we have to live here makes it imperative that we take occasional rests for our energy quickly ebbs away. A few weekends ago I was given permission to visit one of my ex co-workers from the Department, Miss Cécile Fyen, on loan to the Commission from the Canadian Embassy, Paris. I took advantage of the French military plane at the disposal of the members of the Commission and flew to Phnom-Penh where Cécile joined me and together we went to Saigon. From there we went by car to Cap St-Jacques, the riviera of Indo-China. The drive by car gave us an opportunity to see the country-side. The sun set was like a painting of Rembrandt. The silhouettes of the palm trees on the water against a background of crimson red were quite breath taking. Cap St-Jacques is a relaxing spot and after a dip in the China sea, I felt totally rejuvenated and quite happy to return to Vientiane.

There is a job to be done in Vientiane and I brace myself up with the idea of getting it done. All of us seem to share the same troubles and to experience the same difficulty in adjusting to a strange way of life, but it has made me learn to appreciate my own country and I find myself often thinking of our multi-coloured maple leaves which I am looking forward to seeing again. However, I am glad to have had a chance to see Indo-China.

Bernadette Léger.

LETTER FROM HANOI

Hello Everyone,

At last I seem to have some time to send you off a few lines - the stationery has come, and with it, a couple of typewriters, so now no excuse for delay.

Needless to say, it's still rather strange being in this part of the world. So many countries drifted by while I was on the way over - air travel is fun - but it does get one there much too quickly! Anyway, Frank Ballachey and I had a pleasant trip to Delhi. We arrived in Prestwick, flew down to London to do some tropical shopping - and found it was Bank Holiday! I took in a fine play the night I was there - Edith Evans in the new Fry piece - "The Dark is Light Enough". She did it beautifully, of course, and is a wonder to behold. Next morning off for Bombay via Dusseldorf, Rome, Cairo. Dusseldorf looked prosperous and thriving; Rome was wonderful from the air, and we circled about the Vatican and other places, and had great views of St. Peter's.

We had a distinguished passenger on board to Cairo - the French wife of the Agha Kahn. She was Miss France of about 1936, I think - really beautifully turned out. She was joining her husband in Jeddah to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, but I didn't think she was very keen about the whole idea. She was first one off in Cairo, greeted by great mobs of people who bowed low, and said "Good morning, your Highness". The diamonds she wore were certainly the real thing!

Then came the long haul to Bombay - most of the time we were far above cloud other times passing over parts adjacent to what I imagined were the Red Sea, or some other part of Africa - surely the most arid and barren and forsaken land in the world. Bombay airport looked familiar - I took off from there the first time I was going to Delhi. The monsoon was just breaking then, so every little while a great downpour would take place. In the evening we took the domestic flight for Delhi, and after an uneventful flight landed at Delhi's Palam Airport. All the gang were there to greet us - Jack Bryson, Cliff Hughes, Jean Dewan of the Immigration Office staff, so it was a great reunion. Next morning I checked in at the office and spent the rest of the time renewing friendships with the local staff. It was good to see them all again, and I almost wished I was staying there instead of tearing off to this unknown place. The staff produced curry dishes for me, and during the period in Delhi I feasted exclusively on native dishes once more. It was just like old times.

The third morning an advance party of Indians, Poles and Canadians took off in three Indian Air Force planes. There was great movement at the airport, and we were tired but quite excited. Our first stop was Barrackpore, outside Calcutta. After a pleasant lunch, we clambered back into the planes, and nearly roasted on the tarmac until the pilot got us up well over cloud. Later that afternoon we were over Burma - a vast tract of velvet-green forest with never a sign of human habitation. Something gold glittered in the distance and later the great Buddhist golden temple came into view. It dominates Rangoon. We were greeted at the airport and taken to the best hotel there where we had a very pleasant dinner, and most of us turned in early as there was a 5:30 take-off next morning. The place was quiet and there was really nothing to see except great hordes of rats which swarmed over the sidewalks quite unconcernedly after dark. Next morning we were in Bangkok, in Siam. We didn't have time to get into town, but it looked clean and interesting. Then on to Cambodia - Phnom-Penh, the Capital of the state. We arrived there to find great pomp and circumstance awaiting us - cameras and flashlights, flowers and a guard of honour. We were all assigned cars, and after getting organized purred into town in a great long convoy. We were guarded all the way in by soldiers who faced outwards with their guns trained on the distant fields. All the population had turned out to see us, and we gaped back just as interestedly as they.

We were put in separate hotels, so the Canadians found themselves together. Whenever we stuck our heads out of the window great hordes of people would stare at us from across the street, while below armed guards fiercely protected our little selves. The government was taking no chances with an international gang like ours! That night we were whisked off to a banquet given by the mayor - a fine affair, which we all enjoyed - not even speeches after - just more champagne if you wanted it! Next morning we were taken up the river in the royal yachts to see some agricultural school. The river was wide and muddy, and we found plenty of opportunity for taking pictures. The school was crowded with natives with whom of course we couldn't exchange a word. However, when they brought in great quantities of scotch that broke international barriers and we downed that until they produced a very welcome meal. Then back to the hotel to flake out for a couple of hours - we were all wrecks by then with so much movement, early take-offs and all this wining and dining. That night we went to the King's palace

and had another banquet - a gala affair in a very exotic place. The architecture was typical of the country, a semi-Eurasian and Far Eastern mixture. After the banquet we were trotted over to the entertainment wing where for the next hour or so the King's Royal Cambodian Ballet performed for us. They did a national epic, and a couple of shorter things. There seemed to be no male dancers, just kids about 14. Needless to say they were exquisite - they looked like little dolls and were fabulously dressed in brocades, etc. with the peculiar pointed head-gear. There wasn't much physical action, but a lot of the finger-wiggling business one sees in India. After all this we went to bed for a couple of hours before another of those impossible 5:30 take-offs.

We were soon in Viet-Nam. Looking below, one could see little thatched villages settling around muddy, twisting rivers. The rivers looked peculiarly red from the air, probably on account of the great quantities of mud they contained. In the afternoon we arrived at Hanoi airport. Again, great hordes of people, television cameras, flowers, speeches of welcome and staring Viet-Nameese. We checked into the Metropole Hotel, where we have been since then, and which has since been requisitioned for our use. A CBC correspondent came in to interview the Canadians - about 4 of us, but we were a scruffy and rumped looking lot. Since that time, August 10, we have had a busy and interesting time. Life in the hotel became a lot of fun as we got to know each other. The Indians and Canadians naturally became very friendly, but the Poles are inclined to keep to themselves. Now and again they get in conversation with us, but not too often. They are quite nice once you can get to know them. I tried Russian on them and got along surprisingly well; few of them know any English at all.

Since then, events have moved rapidly. New Army personnel arrived, culminating in the 4 aircraft from the RCAF which blew in. I worked on accommodation for them, and it sure was a headache. We had to double up people in rooms with camp cots, and take over second-class hotels. Some of it was a bit primitive, but luckily most of the army have been posted out to Laos and Cambodia - there, no doubt, things will be much worse! A building was acquired for the Canadian staff - the Burmah-Shell building, a modern affair, which we moved into last week. Here we work with the Army. Our little External Affairs part is slowly but surely taking form, and we don't need to sit on the top of packing cases to bash off telegrams and despatches!

Hanoi is rather an attractive city. I didn't think so when I first arrived here, but after having walked around a lot of it I've changed my mind. It is a dying city now; the

French are pulling out and the services one by one are folding up. Likewise the shops. Some have been selling out, others are packing up and moving off to Hai-Phong or to Saigon. The city is in a great state of flux; every morning hordes of people go by the hotel with their worldly goods on rickety carts. The airport evacuates 2500 refugees every day; most of them are going to Saigon, so that city must have more than enough of these unfortunate people.

Prices are high; a small bar of Lux soap costs 36 cents; for instance. Jeanne Brazeau who was here said her hair-do's and all that were obsolescent and expensive. There is nothing at all here to buy, luckily, so most of us have spent almost nothing. The architecture is a mixture of French feeling and Chinese; it has a distinctive grace all its own, and is reflected in the many attractive private homes in the residential districts. They are bungalow-affairs with high shuttered windows and ceiling fans blowing in every room. Right next to us is one of the main shopping streets. There isn't much left there now except a few military tailors, some wine shops and a few book-stores (all French). There are several sidewalk cafeterias, where French Foreign Legion chaps sit and have the odd beer. There is now only one cinema, showing very old and second-rate French films. The place is apparently dirty and flea-ridden and none of us have gone. There are a couple of tired night-clubs but the prices are fantastic. One or two of us have tried it once and have not gone back. There is, however, plenty of time to walk around and to study a bit of French in the evenings. French is the language spoken here; one wonders what will happen after October 10 when the Viet-Minh government takes over. Probably it will take some time before French dies out, if at all. So I read away at some irregular verbs and try them out on the long-suffering hotel staff. The Indians don't speak much French so everyone now is getting used to our sign language or French-English sentences.

Situated in the centre of the city, not far away, is a small lake. There is a pagoda in the middle with a little temple at the other end of the lake. That end branches off into the bazaars and the more colourful, oriental part of the city. Bazaars are frequent and there are hundreds of little sidewalk stalls selling fly-ridden food, or bad spectacles, etc. I don't find the people at all attractive. They are small; the women have a horrible habit of blacking their teeth so that all you can see is a gaping, black hole. The Chinese who are here, though, are very attractive - the girls are slender, have beautiful complexions and are cleanly attired.

We had the tail end of a hurricane a couple of weeks ago; the wind blew and howled, our shutters rattled, and next day the streets were littered with broken branches and other debris. The Red River became higher and they piled sand-bags at low spots. So all of this is very new and rather exciting. I wonder what two years here will bring forth. Anyway, I'll try to keep you up to date, and let you know what's going on in this part of the world.

So long for now - As ever -

(Sgd.) Frank Finnie.

CLINICAL NOTES FROM DICTATION

Anxiety Neurosis

Each comma, hyphen, stop's dictated
Until you're almost pixilated.
Perhaps you should explain you speak
A little English, and though weak
Your grammar is, perhaps,
You know that proper names have caps.

Delayed Reaction

At five to five he buzzes through
And says there's lots of work to do.
At seven-ten, with aching head,
Dishevelled, tired, unwashed, unfed,
You hurry in and put it down,
Rewarded with an absent frown.
More likely, though, that he's gone home
And left you typing there alone.

Unnatural Birth

Poor Mr. X! We feel for you,
A woman knows what you go through.
And bringing forth is so much pain,
We wish you'd save yourself the strain,
Retiring to oh so much better
A nursing home to have your letter,
And there with nurses sympathetic
Give birth beneath an anaesthetic!

The Girl with the Notebook.

BOAS FESTAS, AMIGOS!

I, too, have had my swim on Christmas Day, have watched the leaves of the Royal palm arch overhead and have felt the heat beat in upon me.

When I flew in to Rio de Janeiro, it was two weeks before Christmas. A time to be together - with friends - preferably in one's own home. The Brazilian cost of living made an apartment unthinkable and I went to hunt for a room with a Canadian friend from the Embassy who spoke Portuguese. At least, I thought she did!

The second place we visited was an apartment on Avenida Atlantica, the street that follows Copacabana beach for so many blocks. The room had heavy dark furniture, a small verandah door instead of a window and the boom of the surf outside was enticing. We understood there would be three girls in the apartment and felt that living with "Cariocas" would help us to learn the Portuguese language and might provide opportunities for meeting Brazilians. I moved from the hotel the afternoon of December 24.

ADAGIO

When I arrived the apartment seemed to be full of people - an elderly lady flitting back and forth across the living-room, a fat young man in bathing trunks, a cadaverous young man in the kitchen, two or three girls including Annamaria my land-lady.

On Christmas Eve I attended my first midnight mass in Brazil in the famous old church of Nossa Senhora da Gloria. We presented a more sober-looking group than the Brazilian women, so festively chic were their hats. High up in a little balcony the violins played solemnly then gaily. White flowers were massed at the altar and spread around the church. After the service we walked carefully down the steep cobblestone road to look for a community taxi.

In the early hours, while it was yet dark, Canadians from the Embassy or on scholarship joined in a *reveillon* and thought of home - Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

Through the courtesy of a Canadian, I was included in a Christmas luncheon party at the home of the U.K. Chargé d'Affaires. We had been invited to come and have a swim before

lunch. Somehow in the water one forgot the heat and remembered the friends from External Affairs who had written about their Christmas swims. I felt like a Roman.

The group invited for lunch was mainly British. A few gathered around a piano and tried out the familiar carols. Their white dresses softened the heat of the room. Outside someone was talking of India, someone knew someone who knew someone. We were all being frightfully, frightfully - and I felt as if I were in the wings of a Noel Coward play.

The main course for Christmas lunch included large mounds of rice, surrounded by shrimps in a special sauce. On top of the rice were little slivers of turkey. A reminder?

ANDANTE CANTABILE

Brazilians do not celebrate Christmas as we do, but I had thought perhaps, for my second Christmas in Rio, we could have a Canadian Christmas. I had a brave paper tree, tinned Canadian fruit pudding and a French demi-tasse coffee cup for the friends with whom I shared an apartment. I explained how we liked to decorate our trees and when we opened our presents. There was a strange air of waiting and unease. The little tree stood in fancy trappings on the sideboard but no one seem to care.

Many well brought up young Brazilian ladies attended the convent school of Notre Dame de la Sion. Through a cousin, we were all invited to the midnight mass there on Christmas Eve. I shall never forget the golden glow from the altar in the chapel where so many candles were lit, nor the girlish voices singing. Two Canadian Nuns had been with this school for over forty years. I had met them previously when they came in to our Embassy to enquire about passports. They had come to Brazil before there was any need of a passport. I felt their work must have been inspiring in such a place.

As we came home from Midnight mass the velvety black surrounded us, circlets of pearly lights surrounded the still-awake bays in the city, a breeze touched the tops of the palm trees and a new moon was in the sky. I thought of Bethlehem and wondered if palm trees waved when Christ was born.

On Christmas Day I was told that my Brazilian friends had lost a very close relative. My cup was put with great acclaim in the china cupboard, among the better cups. I noticed that it was

twice as big as the little cups that had served me such hot delicious coffee whenever a friend came to call. Denuded of its gifts the tree stood forlorn and I put it away.

Outside my window I could see, on the high Corcovado peak, the statue of Christ, that is visible from almost every point in Rio de Janeiro. "Deus e brasileiro", the Brazilians confide. Somehow in Rio I felt it was true.

SCHERZO

The third year I was in Brazil I obtained an apartment of my own, complete with Brazilian maid, and Christmas in Rio in 1947 in my home was to be a real Canadian affair. I had more puddings and Christmas cakes from Canada. I knew that if you set a match to Canadian rye, it would flame into Yuletide brightness. A friend from the American Embassy arranged for me to get a turkey from the Argentine. I had my guests in mind, friends who were away from home, whether home were Canada, the United States or Sweden.

My maid and I consulted about the turkey, cookbook in hand. Neither of us had ever roasted one before. Evidently roasting pans are little known in Brazil, and what my maid went out to look for was too costly for a one-time venture. The day before Christmas we bravely decided to bake the bird in a cookie pan with an inch high side.

There are several things I shall always remember about that Christmas. Every time I opened the kitchen door, the maid was mopping up turkey fat from the tile floor. Neither her smiling face nor her wooden clogs seemed to mind the flood. The water supply did not give out until the swimmers had showered and the dishes had been washed. Truly, a present of a miracle!

When we had had our meal and it came to the time for the toasts, we first drank a toast to "The King". Then I asked a Brazilian friend to toast the President. Her face got as red as fire and she refused. However, she did toast her country and we all drank thankfully. The U.S. President was toasted and then we called out to the Swedish lad at a far-off table. Puzzled, he said "The King? What King? Oh, the King!"

In the market I had found a very real but very small tree. This had been my Christmas tree and it put out tentative branches

during the next year and stayed behind with friends when I left Brazil.

ALLEGRO NON TROPPO

My last Christmas in Brazil was spent with friends in the country.

To go to the country in Brazil one should go by train, for it is by train that you see sleepy little towns, have an opportunity to buy stalk after stalk of little bananas, the *banana doro* which are the tastiest of all, and packets of small cheeses which are eaten with the heavy guava paste that makes one of the best desserts in the world.

On Christmas Eve in the afternoon a large fir tree, freshly cut from a nearby wood, arrived at the house. In the evening we trimmed it. So full it was of green branches and life that it needed little decoration.

Out in the kitchen we cleaned a duck by oil lamp, peering into the shadows until almost all the duck seemed to be outside his frame. Then we sat and talked of other Christmases and of how it had been in Europe as a child or in Canada. At midnight we yielded to a tradition other than our own and opened our presents.

Christmas Day we welcomed friends and enjoyed the duck, but it was hot and I longed for the refreshing cold of a Canadian Christmas.

My spirit had turned northward and I was soon to follow.

Allison Hardy.

ON THE BUST

One of our Missions in the United States received a letter from a gentleman enquiring about customs regulations with regard to a Marble Bust which his daughter wished to take into Canada. A reply to the gentleman was dictated by one of our colleagues. The reply contained the following paragraph:-

"Your daughter may, however, adopt one of two alternatives.

- (a) Have her bust crated and shipped to Montreal in bond pending authority from the Collector of Customs in Ottawa for its duty free entry as personal property or a wedding gift; or
- (b) Pay the duty and taxes at the border and then submit a claim for refund."

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"99999-40"

O sing a song of Registry!
A pocket full of sighs,
Bring forward slips, transmittal slips,
Telegrams and "Why's"
Togoland now filed by 'V'
When t'used to be by 'Y'?"

O may I never live to see
An atom bomb hit Registry;
There'd surely be a lot of fuss
In classifying active dust.

FILE

JDS.

DIPLOMATIC DILEMMAS

(A Question and Answer column conducted for the benefit of departmental personnel by the Deputy Assistant Under-Secretary for Protocol Liaison (2))

Question: I am the junior officer in this small post and my stenographer has to do the accounts, information, films, library, consular and administrative work as well as make the coffee, look after the cigarette and liquor money and do the Ambassador's wife's shopping. Consequently she is seldom free to do anything for me. If it is not possible for you to supply us with an additional stenographer, can you suggest any way in which I can get the work done which I have already written in long hand and which will soon be anachronistic.

STALE MATE

Answer: Your question shows a complete lack of ingenuity. Why not make the coffee, look after the cigarette and liquor money and do the Ambassador's wife's shopping yourself, while your stenographer catches up with the typing? If you think that your adroitness does not extend to coffee-making, shopping and accounting you might feel disposed to take a course in typing. A number of our young officers who can type, have assured us that, in the service, their ability to type has proved to be an invaluable accomplishment.

Question: I am a stenographer Grade IIA. When I left Ottawa my shorthand speed was 80 words per minute and my typing speed 60 words per minute. Since I have been at this mission, my duties have included, keeping the accounts, acting as librarian and film librarian, custodian of cigarettes and liquor, making tea and coffee as well as personal shopper for the wife of the Ambassador. Although I quite enjoy these pastimes I am afraid I will soon loose my efficiency as a stenographer. Can you do anything to help me in this predicament?

PRETTY PASS.

Answer: It was a pleasure to receive your query and to learn that you are enjoying your work abroad. Any steno who is so keen on her job that she is willing to undertake any kind of work for the Department as well as retaining interest in her stenographic qualifications, is bound to succeed. I should advise you to go to a business college for a refresher course in shorthand typing.

Question: While I was on special duty at the recent Paris Conference, I broke my upper plate on a piece of French pastry. The cost of the meal was a proper item on my expense account. However, my claim for reimbursement for repairing the plate was turned down. I think this is unfair, since the meal is properly the concern of the Canadian Government and French pastry is something I have had to contend with only because I was sent abroad. Do you think I could submit a claim for repairs to my plate as a dislocation claim.

CHAMPING.

Answer: I am sorry but the relevant regulations have no teeth in them.

Question: A few days ago the Head of Chancery returned to me my draft of a dispatch to the Department completely changed. In the margin was a request that I let him know whether, by his corrections, he had changed the sense of it. Should I conclude that in the Department the style of a communication is more important than the contents?

FOWLER.

Answer: The Head of Chancery is well aware, as you will learn in time, that despatches are, as those *objets d'art*, cherished because they hit one's fancy but soon put away forever. It is more important to be pleasing than practical.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS RECREATION ORGANIZATION

Winter has arrived in Ottawa a little earlier this year than it did in 1954. The snow on Parliament Hill and the familiar winter sound of scraping snow shovels has turned our thoughts to winter pastimes.

Bowling continues to be one of our most popular activities and competition for the Pearson trophy is keen. At the present time the scores of the two leading teams stand at 40 points and 39 points. The team captains are Roger Sauriol, Helen Larkin, Vern Campbell, Gerry Goudie, Don Ager, Eric Mead, Fred Smith, Esther McGoff, Rolly Paquette, Gary McSorley, Elsie McNal and Mardie Peden, so choose your favourite and place your bets!

Plans are well under way for our seasonal Christmas-New Year party. It will be held on December 30th in the Coliseum, where we held our very successful Spring dance. This winter party is bound to be another success for, once again, Guy Beaudry is Chairman of arrangements. Guy is planning a floor show. If there are any outstanding musicians, clowns, or dancers in the Department who happen to be abroad, let them apply immediately for home leave. (Those who know only Russian dances needn't apply. I understand that in the office of the Assistant Under-Secretaries there is a famous Russian dancer!)

Since the commencement of another sketching class, conducted by Mrs. R.E. Sturgeon, more and more profile doodles are to be seen on routing slips and canteen serviettes. In class the students sketch one another but outside the class anyone may be a victim.

We had hoped to have another cribbage tournament, but I have been informed that all our best crib players are in E. & O. and Finance Divisions where even noon hours these days are devoted to estimates, so the cribbage tournament has been postponed.

At one of our recent meetings we discussed the question of recreational facilities for the members of the staff who have nobly volunteered to work in Indo-China. It was decided that our funds would stretch to providing a few games for our friends in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Henry Walker consented to undertake the purchasing operation and a game of scrabble and two packs of cards have been sent by - *gift plane* - to each of the three groups. We hope they will reach their destination in time for Christmas.

Our first meeting in 1955 will be devoted to making plans for broomball, sleigh rides, skating parties and, for the indoor types theatre nights and bridge parties.

Best wishes for a Happy 1955 from the E.A.R.O.

H.M. Larkin.

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT

On October 17, 1954, Mr. and Mrs. J.L. McGovern of the Canadian Consulate General, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. were having a friendly game of cribbage. As soon as Mr. McGovern had the deal, he managed by luck (or could it have been sleight of hand?) to deal himself the Jack of Spades, the 5 of clubs, the 5 of diamonds and the 5 of hearts, together with a seven and an eight. Mrs. McGovern, quite unaware of her husband's good luck, obligingly cut the 5 of spades, which enabled her spouse to score the crib players' dream count of 29 points. Mr. McGovern won the game, but it should be noted that, even after holding a top score hand, he did not manage to skunk his opponent.

On December 1st, 1954, Miss Esther McGoff was having a friendly game of crib with a friend in Ottawa. Her friend dealt to Miss McGoff 3 fives and a jack and turned up the other five- (no sleight of hand here.)

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

From Paris - Miss Fran Gagnon
- Miss Joan Galligan

From Moscow - Miss Pearl Hussey
- Mr. and Mrs. D. MacKinnon

From Brussels - Miss Simone Routier

From Lima - Mr. E. Vaillancourt

BIRTHS

<i>Agnes, Jennifer Mary</i> - daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Agnes, born in Ottawa on November 4, 1954.	<i>Matheson, Ronald James</i> - Son of Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Matheson, born in Ottawa on December 4, 1954.
<i>Hutchingame, May Catherine</i> - daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James P. Hutchingame, born in The Hague, October 4, 1954.	<i>Pearson, Hilary Marion</i> - daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G.A.H. Pearson, born in Paris on October 4, 1954.

MARRIAGES

Nixon, Miss Ethel - Married on November 13, 1954 to Mr. Arthur Russell, at Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa.

RETIRING

Mr. W.J. Duchastel, Vice-Consul, Paris Embassy.

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