

# C-FAR NEWSLETTER

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## No Wonder The World Thinks We're Boring

"An Ekos poll taken right after 9/11 found 71% of Canadians agreeing that Canadian and American 'values' were identical or 'mostly the same,' and 65% felt we had a closer sense of 'shared values' after *al-Qaida* struck. ... By last year, the **Pew Research Centre's** study on Global Attitudes revealed an alarming rise of anti-Americanism around the world, even among traditional allies of the U.S. ... The survey said as much about Canadians as it did about Americans. We were, for instance, the only Western nation in which a majority (53%) described Americans as 'rude.' ... Although we still gave a 59% favourable rating to the U.S., we were scarcely less critical of communist China, which 58% of us viewed favourably(!). Better yet, although only 26% of Americans believed that their country was well-liked around the world, the survey notes: 'Canadians stand out for their nearly universal belief (94%) that other nations have a positive view of Canada.'" (**C-News**, September 10, 2006)

## Because They Can

"The feds wrote off \$258,181 that was stolen from the **Mounties'** training academy canteen shop in Regina. ... But **RCMP Sgt. Brad Kaeding** was puzzled why the stolen funds were listed as a loss in government accounts, since the canteen store is run privately and independently from the **RCMP**. The thief was an employee of the store, not the **RCMP**. ... The government's public accounts documents also reveal \$49,855 in fraudulent overtime claims at **Agriculture Canada**, a \$119,399 theft of personal income tax refunds at the **Canada Revenue Agency** and a loss of \$122,640 in public money at the **Canadian International Development Agency** for 'misappropriation of programme funds' managed overseas." (**Toronto Sun**, October 8, 2006) Meanwhile, "Canada's federal politicians spend more than \$33 million a year on travel allowances that largely pay their fares to Ottawa and around their ridings. That total includes both **MPs** and senators. The average expense bill filed by an **MP** topped \$86,000 last year. ... Unlike ministers and senior bureaucrats, **MPs** aren't required to publicly disclose details of their travel expenses. Each member is allowed travel points equivalent to 64 round trips to and from their riding, some of which are transferable to family members [a perk extended to same sex partners!] **Canadian Taxpayers Federation** federal director **John Williamson** said it's absurd in the wake of the **Liberal** sponsorship scandal that politicians aren't required to detail those travel expenditures for public scrutiny. [A] detailed and public performance audit on **MPs'** office budgets has not been done for 15 years." (**Ottawa Sun**, October 8, 2006) Canada's latest (as of Sept 25) budget surplus -- \$13.2-billion.

## The Spy Who Sued Me

Russian spies **Yelena Olshanskaya** (aka **Laurie Brodie**, aka **Elena Miller**) and husband **Dimitriy Olshanskiy** (aka **Ian Lambert**) arrived in Canada in the early 90s and established their *bona fides* by assuming the names of Canadian children who had died at birth. One way or another, their own marriage broke down and both became involved with Canadian citizens. The pair's cover was blown and the two were deported to Russia in June 1996 under a security certificate. That should have been an end of it, but, six months later, Ms. Olshanskaya married her Canadian love interest, Dr. **Peter Miller**. He "applied to sponsor his wife as a member of the family class. She swore in an affidavit that she would never spy again. ... Although their [long-distance] marriage was found to be legitimate, an immigration officer ruled in 2001 that Ms. Miller was inadmissible on security grounds because of her past employment with the **Russian Foreign Intelligence Service**, known as **SVR**. A **Federal**

**Court** judge recently upheld the decision. [It, therefore, comes as no very great shock to learn that Ms. Olshanskaya or Brodie or Miller] is suing Canada's immigration department for refusing to allow her to return here as a landed immigrant. ... The **Russian Foreign Intelligence Service** sends intelligence officers abroad to collect political, economic, scientific, technological, and military information, according to notes in the Federal Court file. **Sergio Karas**, an immigration lawyer, said it is 'ludicrous' for an applicant who misrepresented her identity to apply for residency and, then, to sue when the file is subject to delays. 'Security background screening for citizens of Russia and the former **USSR** is generally lengthy, due to concerns about security and criminality, and more so in a case where the applicant has already been deported from Canada,' he said." (**Globe and Mail**, October 4, 2006)

## Sometimes A Cigar Isn't Just A Cigar

It was inevitable: "Manitoba's largest landlord -- **Globe General Agencies** -- has sent a letter to all of its tenants immediately banning smoking for all new tenants in their 5,000 suites in about 60 apartment buildings in Winnipeg. Newcomers will not be allowed to smoke in their [own] suites or on their balconies. 'We've redesigned our leases asking new tenants if they smoke,' said Winnipeg-based **Globe** president **Richard Morantz**. 'If they do, they're not accepted for tenancy.' The new rules do not affect smokers already living in **Globe** properties ... 'We didn't want them to feel threatened.' The company wants to be progressive and follow the no-smoking trend, he said." (**National Post**, September 6, 2006) Funny how nobody ever wants to be progressive and leave people alone to do what they choose.

## Stop That Man, Er, Woman!

Remember the old post-9/11 joke? **Bin Laden** entered Canada wearing a *burka* and now we'll never find him. As is often the case with ethnic hot buttons, it's not all that funny: "A male suspect in a major anti-terrorist investigation in Britain escaped capture by allegedly disguising himself as a Muslim woman dressed in a *burka*. **The Times** can reveal. The man, who was wanted in connection with serious terrorist offences, evaded arrest for several days as police searched for him across the country. The fact that a fugitive remained at large after disguising himself in an Islamic dress which covered his face will further fuel the debate sparked by **Jack Straw**, Labour Leader of the **House of Commons**, about the wearing of the veil. [This courageous politician -- and apparently they do exist -- called the veil 'a visible statement of separation' and went on to say he felt uncomfortable in 'face-to-face dealings with people he could not see.' His concern, he said, was that 'wearing the full veil was bound to make better, positive relations between the two communities more difficult.' As for the cross-dressing terror suspect,] details of the man's true identity were circulated to ports and airports to try to prevent him leaving the country. He was eventually caught and is now one of more than 90 suspects in British prisons awaiting trial on terror charges. ... It is the first time that a male suspect has allegedly disguised himself as a Muslim woman in Britain. However, the tactic has been used frequently by Islamist fighters -- including suicide bombers -- in Iraq and Afghanistan. **Abu Musab al-Zarqawi**, the former leader of **al-Qaeda** in Iraq, often dressed in a *burka* to evade American forces hunting him. Counter-terrorist agencies in Britain and Europe have long been concerned about the readiness of male Islamist terrorists to wear female clothing. The issue of people hiding their faces under the *burka*, which covers the whole face, or behind the *niqab*, which exposes only the eyes, has also posed difficulties for banks, immigration authorities and benefit offices. But questions of security have tended to be overruled by the need to maintain good community relations. [And here's why] **Shahid Malik**, Labour MP

for Dewsbury expressed concern that the issue could create unnecessary tension. 'If this is true, then it is the first case of its kind in Britain and an isolated incident. We must not get hysterical about it. There have been many hundreds of cases where robberies have been committed by men wearing women's stockings on their heads — but no one is talking about banning stockings.' (London Times, October 9, 2006)

### Canada's Jewel On The Pacific

It's where the debris meets the sea! "The number of homeless people in Vancouver is projected to nearly triple by the 2010 Olympics because of a lack of affordable housing, warns an advocacy group for low-income residents. [The **Pivot Legal Society**] is predicting an increase in crime, social disorder, drug use and drug dealing unless immediate steps are taken to address the homeless and low-cost housing crisis in the city. ... The number of homeless in Vancouver rose from 628 to 1,291 between 2002 and 2005, according to an official city count. [Numbers that dovetail with a net loss of more than 400 low cost housing units in the hardpan **Downtown Eastside**.]

Many units where people on assistance used to live have been converted to housing for groups such as students or immigrants, who can pay slightly higher rents." (Globe and Mail, September 22, 2006) Gosh, who'd have ever guessed that helping the world's poor and marginalized would hurt our own poor and marginalized?

### Never Too Big To Be Small

Whoever said, "Politics is show business for ugly people," must have been thinking of Canada. It is inevitable that newcomers will take their cues from earlier immigrant successes, but time and again, what they get is some pampered governor general or chauffeured cabinet minister excoriating Canada as a crucible of racism *always* trying to hold them back. Newcomers are inculcated early and often in the certitude that prospects for success in this new country are directly proportionate to the ability to work "racism" as an emotional thumb screw -- a procedure especially useful when your own misdeeds and/or spending habits threaten to knock you off your tax-encrusted throne. Before **Joe Volpe** had wiped the dust from "all those \$5,400 donations to his leadership campaign from some incredibly generous kids as young as 11, [there were new] allegations that Volpe's campaign in Quebec may have bought **Liberal** memberships in the names of people who knew nothing about it, in some cases because they were dead. Like the kiddie contributors controversy, the latest nose-pincher in the Volpe campaign caused some to speculate that poor ol' Joe would be soon running for nothing but cover. Thankfully, just in time, Volpe has made us see the light. Yesterday, the Toronto **MP** called a press conference to announce that he would be bravely continuing his quest for the Liberal leadership and beyond. The only thing standing between **Joseph Volpe** and the prime minister's office is his Italian heritage. Really. Deftly playing the immigrant card, the **MP** who has been in Canada longer than most Grits have been alive, said 'some' in the **Liberal Party** had warned him that the party 'establishment' would try to deny him the leadership because of his ethnicity, because he is a 'new' Canadian. 'Imagine,' Volpe implored the many insensitive, slack-jawed journalists at the press conference. 'After 51 years in Canada, 25 of them as a card-carrying member of the **Liberal Party**, and 18 of them as a member of **Parliament**, I might not be Canadian enough.' Imagine, indeed. Imagine the Liberal 'establishment' treating as an outsider someone who has also in recent years served in three cabinet portfolios, and was the Liberals' political minister for Ontario. (As one reporter asked Volpe: 'If you're not the *Liberal establishment*, who is?') Lucky for Volpe, this is not the first time a noble Canadian of Italian descent has overcome this ugly reality. Even before Volpe could get to the microphones yesterday, the great **Alfonso Gagliano** weighed in with unqualified sympathy

and support for his former Liberal colleague. ... In response to all the unflattering things the **Gomery Commission** had to say about him, Fonzie has now written a book giving his version of events and -- guess what? -- he was apparently the victim of the same anti-Italian thing as **Joe Volpe**. 'History repeats itself,' Gagliano said in a weekend interview with the National Post to promote his book. 'Whenever an Italian-Canadian tries to go up and succeed in politics, somebody tries to do something to bring him down. When I got to the top,' Gagliano said, 'that's when my troubles began.' (Certainly can't argue with that.) However dreadful it must be for Volpe to have to confront so much bigotry in one party -- his own Liberal party that he wants to lead, for heaven's sakes -- the Fonz's timely intervention appears to have emboldened his fellow Italian-Canadian-Liberal-outside-insider. 'I'm staying in the race to win the leadership and form the next government.'" (Ottawa Sun, September 26, 2006)

### No Infidel Dogs Allowed

When **Shakespeare's Hamlet** spoke of practices "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," he was referring to customs that resonate more powerfully with us when violated than when followed -- the classic example is freedom of speech. Freedom of worship, another once relatively uncomplicated proposition, is proving ever more onerous as we come face to face, so to speak, with veiling, turbans, *hijabs*, multiple or child marriages, honour killings, female circumcision, religiously based weapons exemptions, extremism, terrorism, and, ironically, intolerance for the those who have tolerated much: "For some unknown reason, recent immigrants who are often disastrously unfamiliar with the English language are unnaturally attracted to the job of taxi driver. About 75 percent of the 900 taxi drivers at Minneapolis-St. Paul are Somali Muslims, a group that recently decided to refuse fares to passengers carrying alcohol. That's right. You just endured the indignities of airport security and a nine-hour transatlantic flight and some self-righteous jerk can refuse you a taxi ride because of your duty-free bottle of Irish whiskey. Airport officials are scrambling to find solutions to the problem. They're even considering mounting coloured lights atop taxis who refuse to carry alcohol." (Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, October 4, 2006) Hmm. Coloured lights, or revoking the medallion of cabbies who practise discrimination on religious grounds?

### The 17: Ethnic Rallying Point

Make that 18. The Indo-Canadian Voice (June 10, 2006) moans: "Even as this alleged homegrown terrorism has shocked all Canadians out of their complacency, they are now being bombarded by RIGHT-WING RACIST PROPAGANDA [their emphasis] aimed at destroying multiculturalism. ... Multiculturalism has nothing whatsoever to do with this. ... Let us remember that the alleged plot involved in part the same method FIRST USED by a White Christian -- **TIMOTHY MCVEIGH**. ... A total of 168 people, including innocent children, died and hundreds of others were injured as a result of the Oklahoma City bombing of a federal government building that was carried out using ammonium nitrate fertilizer. ... But, of course, Christians were never blamed for that and no one ever apologized." Don't feel you have to hide your dislike. First, McVeigh was no pioneer, while he was probably inspired by the 1983 truck bombing of the US Marine barracks in Beirut. One earlier such rolling device was delivered by *wagon* to **Wall Street** in 1920. Car/truck bombs were commonplace as Israel was carved out of Palestine and they've been taking lives from Northern Ireland to Sri Lanka ever since. Secondly, no one gave a rat's ass about McVeigh's motives; he was arrested, tried and executed for his crime. No apologists fretted about "root causes" or "marginalization" and no sane person ever wondered whether the vast majority of law abiding Lutherans were supporting international networks of more McVeighs.