



Pour en savoir davantage: un nouveau livre

Les thèmes explorés dans la récente série sur le Nouvel ordre économique présentée au Centre interculturel Strathearn se retrouvent maintenant dans un nouveau livre.

Shooting the Hippo: Death by Deficit and Other Canadian Myths, par Linda McQuaig et publié par Viking, expose les mythes avec lesquels les politiciens et les médias bombardent les Canadiens depuis quelques années.

Voici quelques faits marquants de son livre:

- L'establishment financier canadien est «très désireux de peindre le portrait de la situation du Canada vis à vis la dette comme étant plus précaire qu'elle ne l'est vraiment,» rapporte-t-elle.
- John Crow, ancien gouverneur de la Banque du Canada et Michael Wilson, ministre des finances du gouvernement Mulroney, sont devenus obsédés par l'inflation au point qu'ils ne travaillaient plus à la contrôler. Ils ont dévié le rôle initial de la Banque du Canada qui était de «créer un équilibre entre le contrôle de l'inflation et la stimulation de la croissance économique» pour se concentrer, au grand bénéfice de l'élite du monde des affaires, sur l'élimination de l'inflation. Gordon Thiessen, le successeur de M. Crow poursuit le même but. — C.R.



So when you hear business types moaning about being over-taxed, Brown advised, they are outright lying. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has concluded that among the 20 industrialized nations belonging to it, "we rank 16th or 17th in level of taxes... Canada also places 18th of those 20 nations in per-capita spending on social services," he noted.

The series of Monday-evening talks, which finished April 3, was organized by the Milton-Park Citizens' Committee, Results and Alternatives.

Lance Evoy, coordinator at the Institute for Management and Development at Concordia University, told the same session that while "the sense of community is being destroyed" by many of the larger social trends, despair is not the appropriate response.

One dynamic way to mobilize communities and return control

of economic development to the people it affects directly is through the formation of community economic-development centres, Evoy said: "People are yearning to recreate their community, their neighbourhood."

A successful example of this active approach is the Montreal Community Loan Fund, Evoy recounted, which was established in 1990. It has grown to \$400,000 in assets, which are used to furnish revolving loans. The money fosters small-business start-ups and social housing. The community-administered Fund, among whose investors are Aldo Shoes Inc., has "not lost a cent" on a loan to date, Evoy said.

Pierre-Yves Crémieux, a professor in the department of economic sciences at l'Université du Québec à Montréal, said current unemployment levels in the range of 10 per cent threaten to cause "the destruction of the social fabric of the province and of the country."

And he condemned the false deficit-cutting ideology — increasingly prevalent and being used in government circles — which portrays those on unemployment insurance and welfare as people who "can choose to work but chose not to work, to collect" assistance.

Higher-than-justifiable interest rates, the monetary policy which very efficiently keeps unemployment high, doesn't serve ordinary Canadians, Brown noted. But it serves the wealthy just fine.

The reluctance by Ottawa to impose a fair tax system lies at the heart of the problem, he said. In one particularly shocking example, for many years now, wealthy corporations have been able to buy luxury box seats at the Skydome in Toronto, spread those fancy tickets around among its owners, executives and friends — and then write the whole expense off on their taxes. And this while ordinary Canadians suffer and the social safety net continues to be torn to shreds. ♦

Chronique Logement

Par ARNOLD BENNETT

Quelques renseignements importants pour les locataires ce printemps.

Cette année, la Régie du Logement permet des hausses de loyer de 0 à 1.5 % selon le genre de système de chauffage utilisé. De plus, la plupart des blocs appartements à Montréal ont bénéficié d'une réduction de taxe, ayant un effet à la baisse sur les loyers (entre 0 et 1 %). La seule exception est pour les propriétaires ayant effectué des réparations majeures depuis avril 1994.

Pour refuser une hausse de loyer, veuillez envoyer au propriétaire une lettre recommandée dans le mois suivant l'avis d'augmentation.

Le public a maintenant accès au système informatisé de la Régie du logement. Avant de louer un nouvel appartement, vous devriez regarder l'adresse de l'appartement et le nom du propriétaire pour connaître le genre de problème que vous pourriez vous rencontrer. Si vous avez des questions, vous pouvez rejoindre la Régie du lundi au vendredi de 9 heures à 21 heures au 488-0412 ou au 990-0190.



Photo: Martin Nixon

Things Tenants Should Know This Spring

This year the Régie du logement is allowing increases of 0 to 1.5 % depending on heating system type. However, most apartment buildings in Montreal got tax reductions this year, making the allowable rent increases even lower (0 to 1 %). The only exceptions are landlords who did major repairs since April 1, 1994.

To refuse an increase send the landlord a registered letter within 1 month of his notice.

The Régie du logement computer files are now accessible to the public. Before deciding to rent a new apartment you should look up the address of the building and the name of the landlord to see what kind of problems you'll be getting into.

The Housing Hotline is open Monday to Friday 9 am to 9 pm at 488-0412 or 990-0190.

Housing Chronicle

By ARNOLD BENNETT

Fascinating new book provides more facts, figures and insight

Many of the themes explored in the recent New Economic Order series at the Strathearn Intercultural Centre have now been expanded and elaborated in a new and eye-opening book.

Shooting the Hippo: Death by Deficit and Other Canadian Myths, by Linda McQuaig and published by Viking, performs a public service of the first order; it explodes many of the myths Canadians have been bombarded with in recent years by politicians and the mainstream media.

Here are some of the highlights of her most recent work:

- The Canadian financial establishment is "anxious to portray Canada's debt situation as more precarious than it is," she reports.
- John Crow, former governor of the Bank of Canada and Michael Wilson, finance minister in the Mulroney government, became obsessed with controlling inflation to the point of working to eliminate it altogether. They narrowed the role of the Bank of Canada, which had been "to strike a balance between controlling inflation and encouraging economic growth." The Bank instead altered course to focus solely on eliminating inflation, to the dramatic benefit of the business elite. Gordon Thiessen, Crow's successor, pursues the same single-minded goal. — C.R.