

January 14, 2005

Dear Colleagues and Associate Members,

It is a bit late to send this 2004 fall newsletter but it has been quite a busy time for RHOMA in recent months, mainly with its decisions to launch a web site for our Association and to embark on a campaign to defend the idea of a professional foreign service. Both decisions have made big demands on our time and I would like to report especially on these two questions.

## **A Professional Canadian Foreign Service**

As many of you who have e-mail are now aware, RHOMA last December sent a letter expressing its deep concern about the future of the Canadian Foreign Service. The letter was addressed to the four Government Ministers we thought had a direct interest in, and responsibility for the Service i.e. Pierre Pettigrew (Foreign Affairs), Jim Peterson (International Trade), Judy Sgro (Citizenship and Immigration) and Aileen Carroll (International Cooperation). Essentially the letter stated that a number of recent developments had led us to the conclusion that the Canadian Foreign Service was being dismantled. Amongst these developments, we cited the split of DFAIT as well as recent announcements by Foreign Affairs that it will conduct a lateral entry exercise into the Foreign Service at both the FS-2 and (EX) FS levels and that it was opening up in 2005-06 no less than 37 Heads of Mission positions to the Public Service at large. We also expressed our concern that the recruitment process of Foreign Service officers had deteriorated seriously since the late 90s and that their conditions of employment lagged significantly in comparison with their equivalents in the Public Service and their colleagues in other diplomatic services.

It is only after consultations with a large number of members that the Directing Group decided something had to be done if RHOMA's objective "to promote the maintenance of a strong professional Foreign Service" was to be taken seriously. We decided to follow through on our letter to the four Ministers and especially to present our views to the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Our request to that effect has been well received and we expect to be able to make our case with the Parliamentary Committee when it examines the legislation already tabled in the House to establish formally the new Department of International Trade and/or when it considers the Government report on the International Policy Review. In addition, we contacted the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Canadian Council of Chief Executives both of which had already expressed doubts about the DFAIT split. I want to underline, however, that RHOMA's concern goes much beyond DFAIT's partition and that our main preoccupation is to ensure that the Canadian Foreign Service continues to operate as a professional cadre of diplomats.

## **RHOMA Web Site**

The Directing Group is quite excited about a new project that has been underway

for a few months and is now near to fruition. After a good deal of discussion, we decided to proceed with exploring the possibilities of establishing a RHOMA web site. An informal working group under the leadership of Brian Buckley developed some criteria for the contents of a possible site and entered into a contract with a local expert for the provision of the technical expertise required for the design and set up of a site. The Directing Group gave its final approval to the working group's proposal at its December 2004 meeting and I am pleased to report that our RHOMA web site should be up and running soon.

The site, which will of course be bilingual, will include pages with information about RHOMA and its objectives, a calendar of events, RHOMA News and notes on activities in the National Capital Region, a listing of links to other web sites of interest to members and an e-mail address contact point. It will also eventually include a page which will provide members and others with an interest in Canada's place in the world with convenient access to relevant and timely material on the subject, and also a Policy Forum page, intended to provide a location where the views of interested members on current policy issues might be posted, as well as to publicize such policy positions as RHOMA itself may adopt. We will notify members as to the final launch date and will also provide more information about the technical requirements for submissions to be posted on the site. I would like to extend a huge vote of thanks to Brian for getting this project off the ground and to Debra Hulley of the PAFSO Office for her invaluable advice and support. I would like to thank also Dilys Buckley-Jones who has kindly agreed to take over the responsibility for the web site.

## **RHOMA Directory 2005**

You will find attached the latest RHOMA Directory which lists now 271 Members and 66 Associate members. We would also like to draw to your attention that the Directory includes 217 e-mail addresses and that RHOMA is using the e-mail more frequently. RHOMA as an association still does not have an e-mail address but we find this informal mode of communications easiest when used one way by us for informing the membership of certain types of events such as our Third Wednesday speakers and also the death of our members. Please review your listing in the Directory and notify RHOMA of any changes.

## **New Members**

RHOMA had the pleasure of greeting 12 new members since our last letter. These new members are: Raymond Chrétien, Nicholas Etheridge, Ben Pflanz, Michel de Salaberry, Mark Romoff, Brian Schumacher, Roger Simmons, Dennis Snider, David Stockwell, Christopher Thompson, Otch Von Finckenstein, and Doug Waddell. A special word of welcome to each one of them.

## **Membership of the Directing Group**

I would like to extend special thanks to Brian Buckley and Marius Bujold who have left the Directing Group last month at the end of their three year term. Both have contributed greatly to the maturing of RHOMA as an informal but growing association. Fortunately, we are pleased to welcome Tom Delworth and Jacques Roy who have both kindly accepted to join the Directing Group.

## **In Memoriam**

I regret to have to report the death of four of our members since our last newsletter: Willard (Bill) Pybus, George Kidd, Benjamin Rogers and Ronald MacLean. RHOMA extends its condolences to their family.

## **A Member Suggestion**

Arthur Menzies has proposed that members be asked to submit a brief resume of their career as well as any significant activities since retirement to be kept on file here in RHOMA. The resumes could be used to respond to the frequent enquiries we receive from the media about career details of RHOMA members but also in preparation of obituaries. We believe the idea is a practical one and we would like to invite those members who wish to do so to send their own version in writing to RHOMA at 412-47 rue Clarence Street, Ottawa, ON Canada K1N 9K1.

Best regards,

Marc Faguy  
President, Directing Group

Encl.

Directing Group: Dilys Buckley-Jones, Tom Delworth, Dwight Fulford, John Noble, William Ross, Jacques Roy, Terry Sheehan, Janet Zukowsky