

# Review

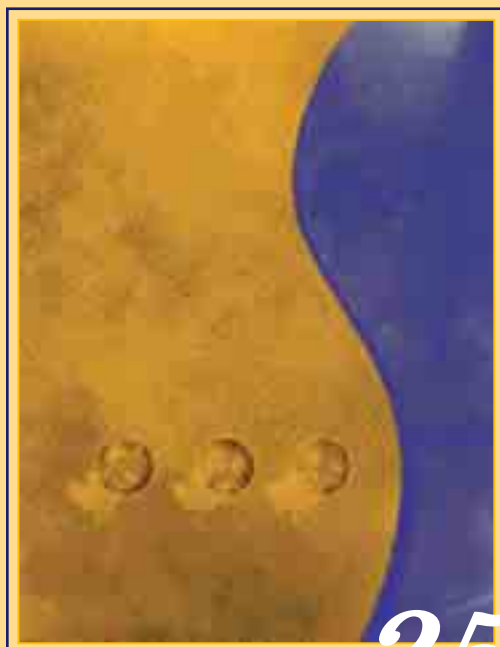
THE NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE

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*25 years*  
of research for a fairer world

## Montage of Memories

Dear readers,

**Welcome to the 25th anniversary edition of the Review.**

As you'll note this issue is filled with comments, fond moments, and insights into NSI's history as well as its future. We are grateful to former and current board members and staff – individuals who have worked overtime to ensure that the NSI goal of *research for a fairer world* was kept within sight – for providing us with this compendium.

In this edition we want to share our history and remembrances, but we also want to underscore the beginning of a new quarter century in this, a new millenium. And so, we are taking this opportunity to not only thank all of you for 'being there' at various points in various ways, but to also launch a fresh, new look for our biannual publication.

The Review's new design is intended to reflect NSI's goal of building a fairer world through research which advances different and varied perspectives and promotes North-South equity in international cooperation.

We hope you like The Review's new look as well as enjoy the snippets and the memories included in this edition.

**Happy 25th,**

*Lois L. Ross*  
Managing Editor

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# Introduction

► CLYDE SANGER

*Come now, let's admit it!...*

Which of us wouldn't wish to be 25 all over again? It's a wonderful age. Nimble of body and mind; jaunty and self-confident; listening to our elders with detachment and sometimes an amount of scepticism; loving the world and yet aching to start changing it for the better. And it's a fair description of The North-South Institute today. It is still lean, and hungry for work. Like any 25-year-old, it has had a few knocks, and has learnt from them.

**T**he half-spoken aim of this anniversary number was to get, well, 25 contributors who have been on the Board or staff and who can broadly represent the different periods of the Institute, the different backgrounds on the Board and the different programs. We have exceeded that number, but there are still many gaps in this mosaic of memories. For example, Gerry Helleiner has mentioned the Donner Foundation's crucial role in providing start-up funds for three years – but let's remember Gerry Wright, then its vice-president, who was the Institute's champion at Donner. And when Bernard Wood went on his exploratory trips across Canada and abroad, good friends helped him reach the right people – David Pollock, for instance, who was then with the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and knew all the development brass in Washington. Those friends of the Institute who did good things for NSI and are not mentioned here by name, please forgive us. We have been particularly fortunate in the number of senior politicians who, when not in Parliament, have served on the Board: Robert Stanfield and Paul Martin for many years, Marc Lalonde, Iona Campagnolo, Joe Clark and Ed Broadbent.

A group of another particular background – the CUSO mafia – is well represented in these memoirs. Surprisingly, for this worldly bunch, at least three of them recall being "awe-struck" (Sharon Capeling-Alakija) at the august company in which they found themselves. "Holy cow!" exclaims Rieky Stuart, while Mardele Harland compared Board meetings to a graduate seminar. But they soon found everyone had their metaphorical sleeves rolled up, dealing with the eternal problem of finances. It's a subject lightly touched on here, by the two presidents, Maureen O'Neil and Roy Culpeper, as well as by Gerry Helleiner and Bob White, who emphasize the importance of funding an independent voice.

Another mafia – perhaps we should call it a network – is the Manitoba RED Secretariat, mentioned by two of its members (John Loxley and John McCallum) as well as embracing Roy Culpeper himself; and their links to Gerry Helleiner and to Tanzania. All these connections have helped collegiality and good Board-staff relations.

A stalwart pair, Margie Biggs followed in 1986 by Ann Weston, have between them kept trade policy issues in the forefront from the very start.

At least four staff members – Roger Ehrhardt, Gerry Schmitz, Joanna Kerr and Andrew Clark – describe some special projects, while Max Brem summons up from a dozen years back the impatience any editor feels at the persnickety ways of researchers who disregard deadlines. Gail Anglin makes up for this with her encomium on the epic qualities of researchers, while Margaret Fulton offers praise for their challenge to accepted economic disruption such as structural adjustment. In lighter heart, Richard Harmston remembers the bureaucratic kerfuffle over the infant Institute's naming, Tim Brodhead the lasting lure of a typewriter over early computers, and Alison Van Rooy celebrates the rich, if sometimes odd, variety of her colleagues.

Bernie Wood, in preparing his contribution, bravely consulted the 1975 Prospectus – no doubt a joint effort of himself and Gerry Helleiner – to gauge how far NSI has matched the basic precepts set down there. One sentence leaps from those pages: "It must not be partisan or predictable in its findings and opinions; its credibility will have to be built upon a reputation for solid and objective analysis." Well phrased, and well met, to judge from several Board members' statements. Fulfilling this and other precepts – "public explanation" more than information, real participation of business, universities, NGOs, trade unions – remains (in Bernard's words) "a ferociously tall order and it has always required both discipline and creativity for the NSI to make maximum strategic impact with limited resources." But at 25 it seems, from these memoirs, that the Institute can stand proud and tall.

CLYDE SANGER was Director of Communications at The North-South Institute from 1989 to 1996, but his involvement dates to NSI's earliest days. He has also worked in CIDA, IDRC and the Commonwealth Secretariat. He is Canada correspondent for The Economist and author of several books on international affairs.

Governments and the international community have for several years been engaged in a vigorous debate on ways to ensure equitable prosperity for all, responding to widespread unease among many about the pace and effects of global economic integration, the process that has come to be known as globalization. Globalization has the potential to bring tremendous benefits to all countries and peoples.

**A**t the same time, the rapid pace of economic and social change throws up many challenges for policy-makers. In this environment, there is an urgent need for sound, well-reasoned analysis and advice to help advance policies which secure the benefits of globalization and avoid the dangers.

In its 25 years of service to Canada and the international community, The North-South Institute has played a critical role in providing intellectual leadership on issues related to global growth, development and poverty reduction. This has helped to increase public knowledge and to encourage healthy and reasoned debate on international issues.

I recall in particular the four groundbreaking field studies on the effectiveness of Canadian aid in Bangladesh, Haiti, Senegal and Tanzania during my days as a member of the NSI Board of Directors. These studies were critical in linking the theoretical and the practical issues and in improving our understanding of conditions on the ground.

More recently, The North-South Institute has made an important contribution to the debate on Third World debt. As Minister of Finance, I have benefited from the

Institute's research into the debt burden on the poorest, notably the study on *Reducing the Debt of the Poorest: Challenges and Opportunities*. The advice given during the frequent consultations between the Department of Finance and the Institute has also helped inform Canada's approach to relieving the debt burdens of the world's poorest countries and to making our Canadian Debt Initiative a success.

The Institute has also played an important leadership role in the global dialogue on ways to ensure that policies for economic success take appropriate account of the human dimension. This included a focus on mitigating the effects of financial crises on the most vulnerable, and on ensuring that the benefits of economic reforms are broadly and equitably distributed. In this way, the Institute has made an important contribution to the development of a sound public policy approach to the wide range of challenges associated with globalization.

*We wish the Institute continuing success in the future.*

PAUL MARTIN was on the Board of NSI from 1976 to 1989. He has been federal Finance Minister since 1993.



## -Review-

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## BERNARD WOOD

The basic analysis of that remarkable founding group, chaired by Gerry Helleiner, stands up surprisingly well, with just enough “period touches” to remind us that it was a long time ago. The reflections that this re-reading triggers are mixed.

The overall diagnosis of the situation in 1975 of developing countries could be read as depressingly familiar today: “In spite of impressive progress on many fronts, [there are] widening gaps between and within countries, and growing numbers of people in absolute poverty.” Pertinent also today, though cutting-edge then, is the understanding the Institute expressed that aid programs could only ever be one part of the needed engagement by a country like Canada.

Behind these familiar echoes, however, there are some distinctly different notes. In the mid-1970s, faced with the oil-shock and the demands for “North-South dialogue”, we seemed to expect that much could change through a combination of economic bargaining power, ‘Third World’ solidarity and political negotiations. Clearly, the last two legs of the stool have proved unreliable. So, as predicted, has the appeal of conscience, although it has made important progress in the area of human rights. Growing bargaining power has provided a base for quite strong ties of interdependence among some developing countries, while others seem more marginalized than ever.

*When Roy Culpeper invited me to set down some thoughts for this 25th anniversary, I felt a need to take some bearings. First, I did a spot (and positive) check on the Institute’s filing system, by asking for a copy of the original 1975 Prospectus for the organization. Then I re-read it – not so much, after all this time, to compare performance against plans, but more to test our original plans against the way the world has moved over this quarter-century.*

The Prospectus underlined the complexity of Canada’s situation, and its high stakes in North-South issues. These have endured, indeed deepened, with the further diversity in Canada’s own population and its linkages with developing countries, while co-existing uneasily with a further concentration of North American relationships, and an implicit retrenchment of Canada’s foreign policy contributions and aspirations. The 1975 Prospectus was able to point to “a [Canadian] development assistance budget now greater than that of Britain”, and a potential North-South role to match. But in 2000 Canada’s ODA flows amounted to less than 40 per cent of the British contribution, while Britain has established a global leadership role on both aid quality and non-development issues such as globalization.

The environment for the Institute as an organization has also changed. The Economic Council of Canada has been terminated; and new, loose networks of research collaboration are a growing pattern. With becoming modesty, the 1975 Prospectus looked to the lessons we might take from sister institutions abroad: the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in Britain and the Overseas Development Council (ODC) in the United States. Since then, both of these have undergone major changes in fortune. ODI thrives, more dependent on governmental and multilateral work, but still respectably independent in its analyses. Lamentably, ODC closed its doors some months ago, falling into the chasm between the huge research, policy and philanthropic capacity spread across American society, and the seeming impotence of the American system to generate and support a national vision and program on international development.

I can testify that, in Canada, managing the evolution of this kind of body was certainly a constant test for its staff, Board and supporters in the first half of its life. No doubt it has been every bit as difficult in the past dozen years. It often feels like thankless as well as endless work; but this is an occasion to thank – and encourage – all those who have kept the Institute alive, growing and responding to changing needs and opportunities over these years.

BERNARD WOOD was Executive Director of NSI from its founding in 1976 to early 1989. He directed the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security until 1992, when he moved to Paris to work with the Development Assistance Committee of OECD.



## GERRY HELLEINER

When a small number of enthusiasts gathered in 1975-76 to discuss, as it seemed at the time, the somewhat wild possibility of an independent Canadian research institution focusing upon relationships with the developing countries, few of us dreamed that, 25 years later, we would be able to celebrate its first quarter-century with such pride. The North-South Institute's competence and credibility are now recognized around the world.

What united the small groups that originally met, with supportive seed-funding from the Donner Canadian Foundation, to discuss the possibility of such an institute – in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax – was the conviction that events in developing countries mattered to Canadians and, conversely, that Canadians' behaviour could affect, for good or ill, events overseas.

The early planners and Board members certainly did not see alike on all matters relating to development or development-related policies. They included business people, trade union leaders, civil servants and academics – typically, but by no means universally, with some work experience overseas. By nature, most of them had strong views on many topics. Some, including the first Board chairman, Arnold Smith, felt it their duty to remind colleagues regularly of their position on important issues. (In his case, the Board could expect one extended lecture per year on the vexed question of appropriate voting systems for the United Nations. Oddly, by today's standards, he did not feel it so necessary to analyze those in the World Bank or International Monetary Fund.)

What made The North-South Institute able to function effectively was the unanimous agreement among founders and early Board members that the research staff was to have complete independence in their work and that the Board was not to take responsibility for the results. Had the Board been required to approve all of the Institute's output, it would have meant "game over" at an early stage. Even with the agreed precautions, in its early years the NSI Board lost a textile union leader who felt he could not remain associated with a body so critical of Northern protectionism against developing country garment exports. Another keen intending Board member was ordered not to join by his private bank employer who evidently feared what was to emanate from the fledgling institution. (Other banks, much later, had better foresight.) Of course, Board members have debated,

sometimes with great vigour, the appropriateness of alternative research agenda; and they must continue to do so.

An independent research institution must also be free of undue influence from its funders, particularly in the NSI case from the Government of Canada. On this, too, the founders and early Board members were unanimous. Critical to its early and continuing success was, and is, the existence of a significant base of unconditional core-funding. Without it, the Institute could not set its own research agenda. All its friends – and they now are legion – must pray that funders will always understand that, without a substantial degree of financial independence, The North-South Institute has no *raison d'être*.

Congratulations on North-South's independent 25<sup>th</sup>! Warmest wishes for the next 25.

GERRY HELLEINER was Professor of Economics at the University of Toronto. Deputy Chair of the Board from 1976 to 1991, he was then chair until November 1992.

## RICHARD HARMSTON

What's in a name? Sometimes, it's a storm in a teacup – as it was when the NSI was bursting from the bud of an idea into the flower of an institution.

The original name selected by the founders under Gerry Helleiner's leadership, was the *International Development Institute*. It was simple, straight forward, and paralleled the names of the Overseas Development Council in the United States and the Overseas Development Institute in Britain. It also had the Canadian advantage of an acronym that worked in English and French – IDI, to encompass *l'Institut de développement internationale*. The only pause for some of us was the risk of some wag (remember, this was the mid-1970s) terming it the IDI Amin Institute.

Nevertheless, Jim Holmes, our lawyer, prepared for incorporation. He sent the papers to the relevant ministry, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (CCA). We expected no problems; Jim had done this many times before. However, to our surprise, CCA rejected our name. They claimed it would get confused with the government's Canadian International Development Agency. We thought differently, that "international development" should not be reserved for government, but the die was cast. To argue against the ministry would, at least, delay incorporation.





We regrouped and proposed the name of North-South Institute, capturing what was then a new term for the world development scene. This time, however, Jim and I went personally to see the CCA official who held sway on our case. We didn't want to risk another rejection-by-mail. With some pride, we presented the name. The official knitted his brow, paused, then said, "North South, eh? What's this outfit all about? The American Civil War?"

Jim and I swallowed hard, restrained our instant reactions to this bureaucrat's world view and called for time. We offered to bring him evidence that this was an emerging term of some note to describe international development. He reluctantly agreed, and we withdrew to strengthen our case.

In the next few days we gathered a mass of references to justify the relevance of the name-on-trial. Jim compiled a dossier an inch thick, including references from the United Nations and Pierre Trudeau, the official's ultimate boss. Off went the dossier and back came the approval. We had weathered the crisis and The North-South Institute was born. With such weighty beginnings, history is made.

RICHARD HARMSTON was on the Executive Committee of the NSI Board from 1976 to November 1990. He was then executive director of CCIC and is now executive director of the South Asia Partnership in Ottawa.

## MARGIE BIGGS

I was the first researcher whom Bernard hired. I was a graduate student at Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, specializing in international development, particularly related to international trade. There was an advertisement for this newly formed institute, set up to study many of the same issues – and I applied. At the time NSI was merely an idea – two or three small offices sublet from IDRC at 60 Queen Street, with just Bernard and Claire Paulin. My thesis topic happened to be an area identified as one of the pillars of the Institute's research agenda. So I was hired, despite the fact Bernie disliked the way I wore a scarf, in Diana Keaton 1970s style, in my hair.

One by one the new recruits arrived – Roger Ehrhardt, and then Randy Spence was hired as the senior economist to provide leadership to the research staff. We were all pretty young, and totally committed to looking at Canada's relations with the Third World in a

different way and to providing a new perspective somewhere between the media and academia, the private sector and public sector, some sort of neutral and independent space to analyze and provide information on Canada's relations with the developing world. The early days were focused on commodity trade, debt issues, trade and tariff issues, and the important work around Canada's development assistance programs in different countries. The Rio conference and the writing around the New International Economic Order provided a policy framework for the early issues the Institute needed to look at. Our first publication, *North-South Encounter*, was an anthology of our first perspectives on these key public policy issues.

We were passionate about our work, not just because we thought we were making an important contribution to international, but also because it was important for Canada. We strived to make our work credible and relevant. We also had to communicate our findings in a way that got home to Canadians. That's where our work on the costs of protectionism came into play; it was an economic issue for Canada as well as for the Third World. It grabbed attention.

The Board was inspiring. Gerry Helleiner supported us with intellectual rigour and shining integrity. However, they weren't all development experts. Others from the trade unions like Don Taylor, the business community like Paul Martin or the faith community like Father Bill Ryan brought a blend of diversity and experience. What pulled them together was not so much that they agreed on the individual issues, but the need for a independent centre that would provide an informed and independent perspective on these issues and fill the void in public discussion. Bernard, meanwhile, provided a special leadership, a visionary with communication skills.

Being part of creating something important was exciting, a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

MARGIE BIGGS was NSI's first researcher, managing the trade and adjustment program from 1976 to 1986, when she moved to the Privy Council Office. She is now Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Investment Programs, in HRDC.



## ROGER YOUNG

I first heard about The North-South Institute from Gerry Helleiner while I was living and working in Nairobi in 1976. I thought at the time that this was just what Canada needed: an independent think-tank with policy influence on development issues.

On my return to Canada a few years later, I was invited to join the staff of the Institute. I took some time in making up my mind, until I heard that Bernard Wood had had Rideau Street, a main thoroughfare in downtown Ottawa, closed to accommodate the desks for the office in a heritage building that had once housed nuns. I wondered, then if I was going to join a prudish organization – or one with real influence.

The early days of the Institute were highly exciting and ambitious. Arnold Smith, the gracious Chair of the Board, ensured that a diversity of views would be heard and that a civil and constructive dialogue took place. Bernard Wood pushed us to do things we all thought impossible. His only mistake was buying Italian technology for our first word processor. Sometimes it would take three days to get one page ready for the printer!

Hélène Cameron and Claire Paulin somehow managed to ensure it all did get done – and even had time to organize the annual summer picnics in the Gatineau. Margie Biggs sweated every detail on international trade policy, while the other Roger – Roger Ehrhardt – kept an even keel over development assistance policy research.

In retrospect, I guess I would sum up those early years as highly energetic, a sense of purpose mixed with a real feeling that we did have influence (were we naïve?) and an enjoyable time, working as a team.

**ROGER YOUNG** was a senior researcher at NSI, in charge of the development assistance evaluation program, until October 1988. Previously he had worked for IDRC in Ottawa and Nairobi. He now lives on Vancouver Island, and is a consulting economist with special interests in Bangladesh and Tanzania.

## HUGH WINSOR

When Gerry Helleiner was running the Economic Research Bureau at the University College of Dar es Salaam in the late 1960s, I was kicking around the Tanzanian Ministry of Information and Tourism as a CUSO volunteer. My job was to try to improve the quality of the regional information officers' network, with the hope of eventually turning their efforts into a news agency.

Presumably it was because I had gained some understanding of communications problems facing developing countries (without discovering many solutions) during our time together in Dar that Gerry with Bernard Wood asked me to join the board of this new institute.

I was by then a member of the Parliamentary Bureau of *The Globe and Mail*, and I hesitated to accept as I saw a potential conflict with my day job. So we struck a deal that I could not be expected to write or broadcast anything about the NSI flowing from my membership on its Board. But I would advise Bernard and his crew about some tricks of the trade that might be used to tease a largely insular and introspective Canadian media into paying more attention to Third World issues.

One of these tricks that he used successfully was to release our annual ODA report card on an otherwise dead news day between Christmas and New Year.

Our success, I argued, would be measurable on the day we made it onto Page One of *The Globe and Mail*, not by bullying the editors but because the information we produced was so important they couldn't ignore it. That first happened when Margaret Biggs' landmark trade study showed how Canadian consumers were being hurt – higher prices and less choice – by our textile quotas for Third World producers.

A second marker of our success would be when the media came unbidden to NSI for briefings, rather than when we tried to foist our wisdom onto them. And that first happened when Pierre Trudeau decided to attend the Cancun Summit in 1981 of world leaders on global economic disparities, and journalists who were to accompany him descended on the Institute for background.

From then on, the NSI became accepted as the go-to authority on development issues for the Canadian media.

**HUGH WINSOR** has been an editorial writer and columnist with *The Globe and Mail* since 1969. He was a Board member from 1976 to 1990.

## LEWIS PERINBAM

Canada's international development effort owes much to The North-South Institute, notably to Gerry Helleiner who inspired its creation and who attracted talented and able people like Bernard Wood, Maureen O'Neil and Roy Culpeper to manage its affairs. They fashioned a forum to harness the intellectual resources and the idealism of Canadians to influence Canada's policies in international development.

From early on CIDA recognized the potential value of an independent agency to promote informed discussion on development issues, to undertake research in this area and to explore new ideas. It responded with a financial commitment of \$5 million on the basis of \$1 million annually for five years. Credit for this is due in large measure to the then Minister for External Affairs, the late Mark MacGuigan. He was quick to appreciate the value of this initiative and the vision to recognize that The North-South Institute would enhance Canada's stature in international development and be a source of independent thinking that would be of immense value to the Government, and to CIDA in particular. The 25-year record of the Institute is testimony to the rightness of his decision.

Today it enjoys widespread respect and credibility, nationally and internationally. It is a source of pride as well as of strength and vitality to Canada. I wish it continued success in the service of our country and in the cause of international development.

LEWIS PERINBAM was CIDA Vice-President for Special Programs for many years. He now works at the Commonwealth of Learning in Vancouver.

## ROGER EHRHARDT

In the early 1980s, NSI undertook a comprehensive country-based review of Canada's official development assistance, which eventually culminated in published country studies on Tanzania (Roger Young), Haiti (Phillip English), Sénégal (Réal Lavergne) and Bangladesh (Roger Ehrhardt). In thinking of this period and of the work our team accomplished, four separate events come swiftly to mind.

- ▶ The hours (indeed, days!) that Réal Lavergne and I spent in CIDA's central registry, reviewing files and collecting project information on CIDA's activities in these and other countries – in some cases going back to the late 1950s. (At the time this was the first

complete listing of CIDA's activities in these countries. Today, at least in theory, this sort of information should be available with a few clicks of a mouse!)

- ▶ As a relatively young researcher on my way to Bangladesh in late 1981 reviewing the information I had collected from files, from interviews within and outside CIDA, and from the books and articles I had read in my preparations. Filled with anticipation at the chance to check the facts and test the theories on the ground...and wondering what lay ahead.
- ▶ The days we spent as a team, along with Bernard Wood, reviewing our draft reports, challenging each other's views, revising and re-writing the final documents. (In retrospect, I believe that this 'peer review' played a critical part in improving the studies although, at the time, I remember coming home intellectually exhausted from the sessions in which I had to defend my conclusions against the critiques of my colleagues.)
- ▶ And, finally, when the first two studies – on Bangladesh and Tanzania – were published in the summer of 1983, a sense of accomplishment. We had completed the most comprehensive review ever of Canada's ODA program – a claim still valid today! While it is difficult to judge the impact of the studies nearly 20 years later, it is arguable that, with their focus on poverty reduction and on the importance of concentrating aid efforts on the poorer segments of society, these studies remain consistent with much of the current development rhetoric.

ROGER EHRHARDT joined NSI in 1977 and was team coordinator of the four country studies. He left in 1983 and is now director-general, International Financial Institutions division at CIDA.

## TIM BRODHEAD

A vignette from a lowly researcher in the early days of computerization. Back in 1983, when Brent Herbert-Copley, Anne-Marie Lambert and I began our study of Canadian NGOs [*published as the book Bridges of Hope*], the Institute was powered by the IBM Selectric, whose quiet hum filled the tiny cubicles in which researchers worked.

Technology arrived in the form of a Brother E-44, a machine with a window the size of a postage stamp, that allowed the writer to see three lines of text before they were imprinted on specially-coated paper (and which faded with alarming speed). Needless to say, this



piece of equipment did not unseat the Selectric as the technology of choice at the Institute. The revolution only arrived with the advent of the Tandy 100 a little later and, over the protests of Bernard Wood and other techno-sceptics, the first tentative steps were made toward a bright new “paperless” future.

It is hard now to imagine the Institute without its desktops, but it is even harder to imagine it without paper. As the Zen proverb says, “Before enlightenment: chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment: chop wood, carry water.”

**TIM BRODHEAD** is president of the McConnell Foundation in Montreal. Previously he was chief executive officer of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation. He was the principal author of the study of NGOs, *Bridges of Hope*, and was a Board member from 1992 to 1996.

## MAXWELL BREM

I came to NSI in the fall of 1983 on the eve of the Mulroney years in Ottawa. The Institute had more than half a decade of policy research under its belt before my arrival. It was slowly acquiring a name in policy circles and among some journalists as a credible source of comment and analysis.

Within the stone walls of 185 Rideau Street drafts of manuscripts were lying about in various stages of development, on subjects ranging from North-South drug trafficking to Third World agriculture, from bilateral aid studies (Bangladesh, Haiti, Senegal, Tanzania) to international financial reform. This was in the days before personal computers, when the office “word process operator”, though a relatively junior employee, was a kingpin of sorts when it came to production. (Later the task fell to a queenpin, the much loved Anne Chevalier.)

In the opinion of the staff and frustrated external consultants, however, there was a serious bottleneck – and it lay in the vicinity of Bernard Wood’s corner office. Bernard, as director, was loathe to release reports that fell below his exacting standards. This suspicion was confirmed by none other than Bob Miller, of the Parliamentary Centre, whom Bernard had commissioned early in 1983 to conduct a “self-assessment” of the Institute. “Find a professional editor and give him the authority to get this stuff out,” went one of Bob’s recommendations. Shrewd man that he is, Bernard hired me.

It was my first experience editing the work of quasi-academic policy researchers; and, for the most part, it was the first experience of theirs being edited. But the alchemy worked, and before long a veritable Niagara of research reports, briefing papers and monographs landed on the street. I was pleased to be present during that part of the 1980s when the Institute published the *Review/Outlook*, annual predecessor of the *Canadian Development Report*, and when it launched the first public commentaries by a new voice on the policy research scene, one Roy Culpeper.

**MAXWELL BREM** worked at NSI from December 1983 to October 1988 as the first director of communications and senior editor/writer. He is now Director of External Relations in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University, Toronto.

## MARGARET FULTON

When I joined the Board in the early 1980s, it seemed to me that the Institute’s perspective was then informed, if not by a controlling colonial mentality, then at least by a generous patronizing and paternal one. Concepts of “sustainable development” and “trickle-down economics” unfortunately permeated the thinking. It did not seem to occur to most members at my first Board meeting that sustainable development was an oxymoron. Primarily, it meant westernized industrial development imposed on rural communities, which would only exploit, not solve, their social needs. Similarly, “trickle-down economics” would do nothing to alleviate the grinding poverty experienced by the majority of women and children around the globe.

It was not too surprising, then, when we came to an agenda item to examine the research of Margaret Biggs, which dealt with the conditions influencing the lives of women in Third World countries, that Robert Stanfield was moved to comment that, if we were to start discussing women, we had better break for dinner and get a drink into us first! In another context, the concept of “gender equality” was not then familiar to many of those who had accepted that economic reforms and structural adjustment programs perpetrated in the 1980s by the World Bank, IMF, UN agencies and global corporations would, by themselves, solve the social problems engulfing most women and children.

To their great credit, it was the research teams of The North-South Institute who first challenged the kind of financial policies that were having such an adverse

impact on the living standards of so many people. As more women like Doris Anderson joined the Board and younger men like Gerry Helleiner increased their influence on it, the Institute's perspective on gender issues, global governance and responsible business practices broadened and deepened to embrace a more holistic views of the lives of Third World inhabitants. Any review of the working papers and publications issuing from the Institute confirm the quality of the research that put it on the leading edge of informed debate on international issues. These achievements, despite reduced budgets, make The North-South Institute one of Canada's most valuable research centres. I served on the Board for nearly ten years. I am proud to have been a part of its 25-year history.

MARGARET FULTON was President of Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax. She was a NSI Board member from February 1983 to November 1990.

## MARDELE HARLAND

It was the early 1980s, at a Canadian Council for International Cooperation annual general meeting somewhere in rural Ontario, when Bernard Wood, one of the guest speakers, invited me to join The North-South Institute board. "Why me?" I blurted out. "I'm not important – just an NGO person from Saskatchewan!"

My first NSI board meeting at a posh club somewhere in Hull confirmed my impression that important people sat on that board. I remembered being awed at being in the presence of Arnold Smith, Hugh Winsor, Doris Anderson, Margaret Fulton, Gerry Helleiner, Robert Stanfield, Marc Lalonde and many, many more experienced and thoughtful people from different walks of life right across the country. I remember thinking that the Institute had to be doing important and interesting work to attract such impressive volunteers and staff.

At first, Board meetings tended to be discussions of current international topics and staff research, rather like a graduate seminar but a whole lot more interesting. Later, the Board began to behave more like the governing boards I was used to. It was a cliché during my CUSO cooperant days overseas that we gained more than we gave. It was nevertheless true, and I would say the same for my North-South Institute experience.

Other people will, I'm sure, give numerous examples of the impressive contributions of The North-South Institute during the past 25 years. In terms of the Canadian international development NGO community

during the 1980s when I was active, the Institute played an important role in deepening our understanding of critical issues such as structural adjustment, and our understanding of our own role and practice in the groundbreaking 1988 study *Bridges of Hope*.

May The North-South Institute survive and thrive for the next 25 years!

MARDELE HARLAND was a Board Member from October 1984 to November 1992, and chair of its Nominating Committee. She was also executive director of the Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation.

## BETH HADDON

When I think about my time on the board of North-South, I feel a rush of pride and appreciation for what a distinctly Canadian experience it was. It seems to me to have been an idea ahead of its time; an idea which attracted a commitment from some of the outstanding citizens of the day.

To me, the Institute was very much in the tradition of Pearsonian internationalism. North-South recognized early on – thanks to the wisdom and foresight of its founders – that the great challenge of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries would be the gap between rich nations and poor nations. North-South recognized the looming spectre of globalization and saw the need to chronicle and document that unfolding story; to demonstrate with solid reasoning and research the dangerous implications for the planet and to highlight the potential for positive change.

The ideas and discussions that flourished around The North-South boardroom table in the 1980s and early 1990s were prescient. During the debates about priorities and strategies North-South was attuned to many of the great issues of our time – Third World debt, the emerging importance of climate change and the environment, the meaning of the end of the Cold War, the looming AIDS crisis and the global refugee crisis.

North-South symbolizes what many of us deem to be a Canadian attribute: the capacity to look beyond our borders to a larger world and offer well-thought-out, impartial and pragmatic solutions to the challenges of our time. It made me proud to be Canadian.

BETH HADDON was on the Board from November 1988 until leaving for a CBC post in Toronto in 1989. She is now managing director of programming at TV Ontario.

## MAUREEN O'NEIL

Neither of those things had been very evident in the work of North-South up to 1989. They were a bit slow. There was a Cabinet directive in 1976 that all Canadian policy should reflect an analysis of the differential impact on men and women, and in 1978-80 CIDA took its first, not very successful, steps in that direction. That was followed by the systematic work done in CIDA by Elizabeth McAllister.

But at North-South it remained a very economic agenda: trade, aid, international finance dominated. Those are all important questions and remain so.

But we all carry what our interests and professional work have been – and human rights and the place of women in development were important issues for me. So I

brought Gerry Schmitz in to write on human rights, and I hired Joanna Kerr who first worked on the conference in Toronto that we did with the U of T. law school. It had the incredibly long title, “Linking hands for changing laws – women’s rights as human rights around the world”.

The other thing I set out to do was much more mundane. This was to see that North-South adopted an understandable budgeting process.

We were then on a bit of a downward slide, and it was absolutely essential to ensure stable financing.

We were applying for new funding and actually got it increased, although it was a difficult moment.

How did my views on development change? I became more sophisticated about the importance of financial reform in developing countries. I concluded we would not see progress if the combination continued in many places of massive suppression of freedom of expression with an economic model that would not lead to growth. Yet Roy’s work on five sub-Saharan countries helped disprove the assumptions that structural adjustment would have a dramatic impact. This kind of work made everybody much more humble.

On the other hand, because the structural adjustment programs caused so much disruption, I think they were also a precipitating factor in breaking the hold of quite authoritarian governments. That’s the up-side of it. It is not all bleak in Africa, for example. Also in Latin America, the banks’ over-enthusiasm in recycling petrodollars, and the huge mess that governments made of the management of that debt contributed to the peoples’ disillusionment with authoritarian governments.

My time at North-South also confirmed for me the importance of arm’s-length policy research organizations, not only interacting with government, but equally with the public, through letters to the editor, newspaper articles, books and discussions with NGOs, offering evidence-based and thoughtful work. Key journalists have recognized the importance of North-South as a place to go for information based on solid analysis. The book that Anne Weston wrote at the time of the “Canada and the World” review was a good contribution to debate, and what is in it remains true today. I also learnt that you have to take a very long view, and be boringly repetitive in saying things at every opportunity, over and over again. Hopefully, eventually you will be heard.

MAUREEN O’NEIL was President of NSI from 1989 to 1995. She is now President of the International Development Research Centre.

*Defining the key themes that development policy ought to take into consideration for me meant coming to grips with the place of women in development and also with human rights.*

1989 - 1995

## GERALD SCHMITZ

A decade ago, at the urging of Maureen O'Neil and Roy Culppeper, I agreed to take a two-year leave from my parliamentary job to come to NSI to establish a new program on human rights and democratic governance. The Institute demonstrated timely foresight in recognizing the significance of these issues, then barely on the radar of many in the development community. Credit CIDA, too, because it started with a contracted think-piece I wrote for them in collaboration with David Gillies. I recall wrapping up discussions on a final draft in a restaurant that burned down that night. Fortunately, this was not to be a bad omen! David, currently at CIDA, joined the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (now renamed Rights and Democracy) – itself the offspring of a parliamentary recommendation – and this made possible the publication of what became the book *The Challenge of Democratic Development*.

Looking back on the wonderfully collegial, stimulating environment of those rewarding years, I feel privileged. There were some unexpected challenges, too. I remember once having to fill in as the featured speaker at an annual board meeting dinner, while suffering from a horrible cold. I hope the only thing I communicated was a few ideas!

I applaud the Institute for continuing to develop innovative and thought-provoking research programs, building a body of work that is invaluable, not only to policy analysts, but to anyone who shares its vision of a fairer world for all. Congratulations on reaching 25, and may the next 25 be even better!

GERRY SCHMITZ works in the Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, in the Political and Social Affairs Division. During a two-year leave he worked at NSI to launch a program on human rights and democratic governance.

## JOANNA KERR

Situated above that wonderful Italian gelato shop, The North-South Institute was home to me for eight fascinating years. From intense corridor discussions about “whether gender really matters” to the lighter moments of wit and banter with my dear colleagues, my memories of the Institute are both rich and fond.

In my early years I had the privilege of working with renowned women's rights activists and scholars for the Linking Hands Conference, the outputs of which we transformed into a best-selling book – in just eight months, too – so that *Ours by Right: Women's Rights as Human Rights* (Zed Books, 1993) could be disseminated at the UN World Conference on Human Rights.

Later on, while interviewing young women factory workers in China on the effects of market reforms (1992-95), it became very clear how important paid work is to these women. Despite their harshest labour conditions, this was an escape from a worse hardship of farming under the patriarchal thumb of their fathers back in the rural areas.

Of course, my most proud memory relates to the establishment of the Gender and Economic Reforms in Africa program – an action research initiative supporting African researchers and activists to analyze and influence economic policies from a gender perspective. Now successfully in its second phase (and in the safe hands of Third World Network-Africa in Accra, Ghana), this program is seen both as a model for its methodology and governance structure, as well as its vision for economic justice for women in Africa.

JOANNA KERR was in charge of NSI's program on human rights from 1992 to 2000. She is now executive director of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and based in Toronto.

## ANDREW CLARK

An initiative of The North-South Institute, with which I was really pleased to be associated, was the compilation of the Statistical Annex in the first two issues, in 1997 and 1998, of the *Canadian Development Report*. The annex is a statistical snapshot, taken once a year, of Canada's relations with developing countries. It provides the basic data on the main areas of this relationship, including Canadian aid flows, trade and financial flows and immigration data, covering even the flow of visitors and location of embassies. Thus one can look up in a moment the state of Canada's relationship with, say, Colombia or Sri Lanka.

Modelled on the statistical appendices of the *World Bank's World Development Report* and the UNDP's *Human Development Report* the annex brings together information that is publicly available but spread in diverse sources, and presents them in a series of user-friendly tables. Unlike the World Bank and UNDP tables, however, The North-South Institute's version also offer a page-long explanation and analysis of each table, and what the data may imply for Canada's relations with developing countries. Pulling the data together can have some startling results, and show an incoherence in overall policy. For example, the tariffs collected in 1996 off imports from India, at \$56.6 million, exceeded Canadian bilateral aid of \$51.7 million. More egregiously, the tariffs collected from Indonesian goods amounted to \$48.2 million, while our bilateral aid to that country was only \$23.3 million.

I believe the production of the Statistical Annex is an excellent example of one of the main *raisons d'être* of The North-South Institute – the bringing into focus and promotion of better understanding of Canada's relations with developing countries.

ANDREW CLARK was in charge of NSI's development aid effectiveness program from 1990 until 1996. He is now a Senior Policy Adviser in the Strategic Planning Division of CIDA's policy branch.

## ALISON VAN ROOY

In celebrating the Institute's 25 years, I think we ought also to celebrate the kinds of people who have helped the Institute make its mark. Others have commented on the profundity of its output (of which there is a notable amount), but someone ought really also to comment on the varieties of its members.

There's the opera-loving President, for example, who sang Leonard Cohen songs in an Afghan restaurant (did you know that the plural of *opus* was *opera*?) There's also the ringette-playing VP who makes miraculous hours available to discuss English literature. There's the solar energy expert; the birth companion; the interior decorators (let's not talk about the fervour of Institute debates over paint colours); the story-teller; the fur-trapper; the dog-trainer; the athletes; the artists; the never-matching sports-sock wearer; and other such cheerful oddities.

Research, after all, is a creative endeavour – one hopes, of course, with some measure of rigour – but one that engages the imagination and asks what would happen if the world were otherwise. That creativity cannot help but mark public output and private lives alike. After six happy years at NSI, with all its well-noted public *opera*, I am pleased to have shared in its creative, oddball, extracurricular opera, too.

ALISON VAN ROOY was a senior researcher from 1994 to 2000, launching NSI's research on civil society. She is now the deputy director of the Governance and Social Policy Division of CIDA's Policy Branch, and presently on maternity leave.



## GAIL ANGLIN

For many years, I was the Information Specialist at the Institute and now I am the Director of Planning and Information. From both vantage-points, I have admired our researchers.

What a rare combination of qualities is necessary to make successful researchers! They must have knowledge about how the world is – and vision as to how it should be. They must be scholars, pursuing and unearthing truth – and salespeople, convincing reluctant policy-makers that one way is better than another. They must be sensitive to the needs of people in the developing world – but impervious to the attitudes and attacks of those who are barriers to development.

They must be authors whose erudite style inspires confidence and credibility, while at the same time grabs readers' attention and holds it with dynamic ideas and language. They must be as comfortable in the offices of potential funders and international institutions as they are in the stacks of the library. They must be able to sit long hours in airplanes – and stand before parliamentary committees. They must be canny negotiators, managers and editors of other people's work. And, if that weren't enough, they must sound smart on the radio and look cool on the television.

As job descriptions go, this is a pretty demanding one.

At times, it seems to me that our nine or ten researchers have their work cut out for them as they try to make a dent in the world's problems. Then I remember Margaret Mead's famous line: "Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." I think of all the energy, enthusiasm, intelligence and commitment brought together under The North-South Institute's banner in the research teams with whom I have worked over the years. I take a moment to salute them in my mind, and then get back to my job – librarian, planner, fundraiser – trying to help the researchers make a better world.

GAIL ANGLIN is Director of Planning and Information at NSI. As well as using her long-time skills as a librarian, she is a qualified teacher and a famed story-teller (see Alison Van Rooy's contribution).

## HON. MARC LALONDE

I have had the privilege of sitting as a member on The North-South Institute's Board of Directors for several years.

Not only has this experience been very enriching in itself, but it has also provided the opportunity for me to get to know a team of professionals who are extremely competent in their respective fields, as well as the members of the Board with their vast and diverse experience in international development.

I have always been impressed by the quality of the Institute's publications. It has always shown an ability to approach even the most controversial subjects – not in a detached way, but with a great deal of objectivity and independent thought. In my opinion, the Institute has played a vital role in Canada regarding all matters related to international development. At present, the Minister responsible for CIDA is undertaking an in-depth review of the role and objectives of the Agency. I have no doubt that the work of The North-South Institute will represent an extremely valuable contribution to this process.

On this occasion of the Institute's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I would like to join with the numerous friends of the Institute in expressing my wishes for its future longevity and continued success.

MARC LALONDE held several portfolios, including the Finance Ministry, in the Trudeau government of 1980-84. He was a Board member from 1986 to 1990.

## SHARON CAPELING-ALAKIJA

Allow me to begin with a pre-emptive strike. I would imagine that many of the messages to mark the NSI's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary will pay tribute to the Institute's remarkable achievements and to the outstanding work of its staff – and I wholeheartedly subscribe to every one of them. *Notwithstanding* this, I would like to use my message to indulge some of my memories as a member of the NSI Board, where I have served during two unforgettable tenures.

When I first joined the Board in the 1970s, as Head of Public Affairs at CUSO, I confess being utterly awestruck by my fellow members, a vibrant "who's who" list of distinguished Canadians. I saw – and see – the Board as a miraculous synthesis of Canadian society: women and men representing our country's regions, cultures and sectors – academia, NGOs, business,

labour, government, media and politics. Creating this grid of Canada – and the striking “musical chairs” system by which none of us ever sat next to the same person twice – was a *tour de force* that mystified me in my first incarnation as a Board member.

Today, 20 years later and perhaps because we sit in alphabetical order, I feel less mystified, but no less privileged by the company of my fellow Board members. On the Internet, I recently came across a David Letterman-style “Top 10 list” of qualities that make a board member successful; and each of them – and many more – have been personified in the NSI Boardroom over the years,

I left Canada 20 years ago to serve in West Africa, New York and now Bonn. So being on The North-South Board has been for me a lifeline to a Canadian perspective on the world: that “injection of Canadian thought” which I treasure. The environment in which our Institute operates has changed dramatically between my two tenures – the dramatic drop in ODA with the end of the Cold War, the new rhetoric, IT-accelerated globalization – and I realize to what extent its sustained existence and relevance for 25 years is a tribute to the vision of its founders, the leadership of its three directors, the talents of its staff – and the seating arrangements at Board meetings.

I hope the Institute continues to contribute a distinct Canadian voice on the international scene and remains a sane voice in support of international cooperation within Canada.

SHARON CAPELING-ALAKIJA is Coordinator of United Nations Volunteers. She was an NSI Board member from 1981 to 1992 while holding posts with CUSO and then as executive director of UNIFEM. She is again an NSI board member.

## RIEKY STUART

I was elected to The North-South’s Board as an NGO representative. My fellow Board members included one former prime minister and one former cabinet minister. “*Holy Cow!*” I thought. “*What have I gotten myself into?*” But, when we turned to the Board’s business, it wasn’t so different from other voluntary sector Boards I have been on.

A major preoccupation in those days was straightening out the finances. The Institute needed to move out of the red, figure out how much it really cost to do the work, and raise enough undesignated funds to do independent research. As we put NSI’s financial house in order, it became clear that almost all of the research was contracted research, and there was precious little left after the Institute’s core funding paid the rent and organizational infrastructure. Not unlike NGOs, I thought.

What was different was Board dynamics. Board members would offer suggestions and ideas about policy priorities that the Institute might pursue, or comment on the approach taken by the Institute on particular issues. These remarks would be duly noted in the minutes, but there was seldom engagement or conclusion. Board members were offering ‘advice’ as individuals, but the Board seldom set priorities or strategies, to my recollection. (On voluntary sector Boards people are often consumed by the need to pin down and agree collectively *exactly* the direction and parameters for the organization’s work.) Was this because NSI Board members felt their weighty advice would automatically be taken as direction by staff?

It took considerable self-discipline to adapt to this culture and remain silent when I disagreed with another Board member’s views. Most of the time I succeeded – and in time began to offer my own advice.

Most intriguing remains my question about influence and impact. NSI had access to powerful decision-makers and people of influence that many NGOs can only dream about. Yet, in the final analysis, the impact of NSI’s work in creating ‘a fairer world’ can only come about when the quality of its research and its access are linked to the public pressure for change generated by coalitions like Jubilee 2000. NSI’s ability to make links with both activists and decision-makers is key to its success.

RIEKY STUART was a Board member from November 1990 to 1996 while a senior staff member of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation. She is now executive director of Oxfam Canada.

## ROY CULPEPER

The Institute at that time was just hitting its stride and establishing its reputation as a serious research organization whose analyses would be respected and whose opinions would be heard. It is striking that our studies on Canadian development assistance are still referred to – indeed, they are mentioned in this review by the Honourable Paul Martin – more than 15 years later, as hallmarks of the Institute’s early years.

Much of the Institute’s early research agenda had emerged during the 1970s, around the debate on the New International Economic Order and The North-South Dialogue with its associated Summits. By the time I joined, however, a considerable shift had occurred, thanks to the Reagan and Thatcher regimes. North-South Summits were displaced by the Economic Summits of the G-7.

“North” and “South” were also increasingly inadequate descriptors of the world.

Indeed, recently I have encountered people unfamiliar with the North-South metaphor, who assume that we must focus on the two continents of the Americas, as does the North-South Center in Miami – or, more startlingly, feel that we study the American Civil War! Still, I am glad we have stuck with our distinguished name. If we were born today, we would no doubt be lost in the shuffle of the myriad organizations with “Global Affairs” in their titles.

Our research agenda shifted in the late 1980s and early 1990s to reflect the world of debt crises and structural adjustment. These issues were debated in and managed by the multilateral organizations – the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the regional development banks – to which the Institute’s focus shifted accordingly. New issues also emerged under Maureen O’Neil’s stewardship: gender, governance and civil society. The world was finally recognizing that the social and political dimensions of development are at least as important as the economic ones. But this expansion of the agenda has posed a continuing challenge for NSI: how selective should we be in designing our strategy?

Our staff is now more highly educated. Since 1995, when I succeeded Maureen O’Neil as President, it has been typical for NSI researchers to be recruited with PhDs, some with post-doctoral experience. We now also work much more in collaboration with Southern colleagues. This not only enhances the credibility of our work; it also enables our researchers to learn more about the conditions in, and perspectives of people in, developing countries.

We have also greatly diversified our sources of funding. While CIDA is still our single most important funder, for which we continue to be grateful, we have secured important grants from the Ford Foundation, IDRC, multilateral banks, and the governments of the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

The Institute’s first quarter-century has demonstrated the wisdom and the viability of establishing a Canadian centre of excellence on development research. Some individuals may think that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the very concept of development is passé. But one only has to think of the multiple crises plaguing Africa, from civil conflict to HIV/AIDS and malaria, and the financial instability haunting “emerging markets”, to be convinced that The North-South Institute has an exceptional opportunity – nay, an obligation – to build on its sturdy foundations in the decades ahead.

ROY CULPEPER joined NSI in 1986 as senior researcher and manager of the International Finance research program, and has been President since 1995. Previous posts included adviser to the Canadian Executive Director at the World Bank.

*I have had the satisfaction of watching NSI grow from a young upstart organization into a mature research institute. In 1986, when Bernard Wood hired me to manage the International Finance research program, the Institute was celebrating its 10th anniversary but was still a young entity, staffed by recent graduates from university. Typically, NSI researchers had Master’s degrees in one of the social sciences, although even then there were a few notable exceptions with PhDs.*

## ANN WESTON

Working at NSI for almost 15 years has been a tremendous privilege. After an itinerant life outside Canada, the move to NSI in January 1987 was a personal and professional homecoming. Not only was I able to rediscover what it meant to be Canadian, but also to appreciate the role that Canada plays internationally.

The issues in 1987 – the recent launch of the Uruguay Round of trade talks at Punta del Este, and the negotiations for a Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement – were central to the Institute's research program on trade and adjustment, and led to several research projects, papers and presentations around the world.

For instance, in 1990 Jock Finlayson and I collaborated in a study of how Canada and other middle powers might broker a deal that might bridge the gap in the GATT trade talks between the developing countries and the major players, the United States and the EU. In 1993 Susan Joekes (now heading IDRC's trade work) and I presented our work on "gender and the new trade agenda" at a UNIFEM meeting in New York.

In 1996 Usha Viswanathan and I met Jamaican and Canadian policy analysts and business people in Kingston to discuss NAFTA's likely impact on Jamaica's trade relations. In 1997 I joined two speakers from Ottawa's Centre of Trade Policy and Law to explain the WTO rules to audiences in four cities in Pakistan. And in 1999 research done with Valentina Delich of FLACSO on the settlement of trade disputes was discussed in Buenos Aires.

Today, global trade rules and their impact are more hotly debated than ever. Most developing countries have joined the WTO and many have liberalized their own trade regimes. But questions remain for them about associated costs, about the failure of expected benefits and adjustment assistance to arrive, and about the capacity of countries to participate effectively in the new round of negotiations, to be launched at Doha in November 2001.

In sharp contrast with the late 1980s, a wide range of groups are now engaged in research and discussion about trade policies for development. They include aid agencies, development NGOs and civil society organizations in many developing countries. We receive thoughtful updates and analyses on trade issues from organizations based in Geneva, Kuala Lumpur and Nepal, to name only a few.

Working with partners from all over the world, whether in government or outside – in academia, NGOs or the private sector – has become an important characteristic of NSI.

ANN WESTON came to NSI from the Overseas Development Institute in October 1986 to head the Trade and Adjustment program. She became Vice-President in 1995.

## JOHN LOXLEY

When I met Bernie Wood 25 years ago, on what was probably his first of many cross-country tours promoting the NSI, little did I realize that this would be the beginning of a long association with the Institute. At that time, I was Secretary to the Resource and Economic Development Committee of Ed Shreyer's Cabinet in Manitoba. The staff of the appropriately acronymed RED Secretariat were young, idealistic, creative, super-bright and utterly unmanageable in any conventional way. One of those young turks was Roy Culpeper, now President of the Institute who, fortunately, had some intervening years in which to hone a more acceptable management style. Another was John McCallum, who until the last election was a member of the NSI Board. None of us had any inkling that our paths would cross many years later at the NSI.

Bernie and the NSI were kind enough to host me in 1982-83 when I was undertaking CIDA-sponsored research for a book on international finance and tolerant enough to co-publish the final manuscript, the content of which was, in many ways, atypical of NSI publications at that time. Later, under Maureen O'Neil's presidency, I was to work closely with the NSI evaluating structural adjustment programs. More recently, it has been my pleasure to co-operate with Roy Culpeper on both the research and governance levels. I have had the privilege, therefore, of knowing and working closely with all three of NSI's presidents and of seeing the Institute mature into a highly successful research body.

What explains this success? First and foremost, the NSI has managed to attract high-quality staff with excellent research and analytical skills combined with a commitment to global justice. Many have drawn on their NSI experience to go on and add strength to such important national institutions as the IDRC, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, CIDA – and to international bodies. Second, each of the three presidents has, in their own way, been successful in

guiding the NSI's research agenda toward the key policy issues of the day.

Third, the Boards of the NSI have been composed of an impressive collection of individuals from many walks of life and with a variety of interests and political inclinations, bound by a common commitment to the NSI's goals. Fourth, successive governments have seen the wisdom of funding an independent policy think-tank, even as their own policies have come in for careful scrutiny. Finally, the NSI has been fortunate in being able to draw freely, since its inception, on the wisdom of people like Gerry Helleiner, whose guidance and counsel have been invaluable.

JOHN LOXLEY is Professor of Economics at the University of Manitoba. He launched the studies of structural adjustment at NSI in 1983, became a Board member in 1996 and chair of the Board in 2000.

## BOB WHITE

Being quite a new Board member, my main experience of The North-South Institute has been during the time I was leading the Canadian Auto Workers and then the Canadian Labour Congress.

Some of the material coming from the Institute we in the union movement found rather too academic to be useful, and of course we had some differences of opinion on certain policies. But overall, we welcomed and appreciated the Institute's work.

I particularly recall Roy Culpeper's opinions during the Asian financial crisis. There were people who were saying it was just a blip on the landscape, soon over. I felt differently. I had been to an APEC meeting, and the Thai foreign minister told me he expected two million of his people would lose their jobs. I asked Roy, who had been on a delegation to Indonesia and Thailand, to address the Executive Council of the CLC. His analysis was sound and he really focused on the realities of the crisis.

Also the Institute's analysis of the debt situation of poorer countries was close to the position of the international labour movement. Debt relief through rescheduling was important, but not enough by itself, since many countries couldn't meet even rescheduled repayments. I think the Institute's work on debt had an impact on Paul Martin as chair of the G-20. I talked to G-7 leaders and among the OECD people, and the Institute's background work gave credibility to these arguments.

Similarly on trade policy, the NSI statements correctly focused on the lack of any social dimension to international trade and other economic arrangements. They raised the need to include the core ILO labour standards as a vehicle to improve living standards of workers in all countries. Last year NSI was a key partner in organizing an important workshop on "Core Labour Rights and Poverty Eradication" in Hull, Quebec. This workshop drew participants from CIDA, the Labour movement, the ILO, Britain and Nigeria. NSI has also done some excellent analysis on gender issues and poverty.

The NSI has never had proper funding, and has had to scramble for grants and contracts. That is the price, perhaps, of being an independent voice. Visionary political leadership should understand that most government revenue comes from the Canadian people, many of whom are deeply concerned about the impacts of this so-called brave new world on their lives. More adequate funding for institutes such as NSI would contribute greatly to a better understanding and to informed debate on the economic, social and political issues facing us.

ROBERT WHITE has been a Board member since May 2000. He has held many top trade union posts, including the leadership of the Canadian Auto Workers and the Canadian Labour Congress.

## GABRIELLE LACHANCE

From its inception, The North-South Institute has presented a bilingual face, both in its publications and among its personnel. This is one of its features and, I would add, one of its great strengths. People can read any of the variety of press releases, newsletters or research reports published by the Institute in either French or English. They can also receive information in their preferred language over the telephone or in person with Institute staff.

The first time I attended a Board of Directors meeting, it was explained – after the customary greetings – that members could express themselves in their own language. This openness was something that I very much appreciated in an environment where the great majority of people were English-speaking. However, I often had the impression that some members did not have a very good grasp of what I was saying. Sometimes, I felt obliged to summarize my contributions to the discussion in English, which made them unnecessarily long.

When I was elected Chair of the Board of Directors, I expressed to the President of the Institute my desire



to have a simultaneous translation service in order for everyone to truly feel a part of the discussions. Although the majority of the members not only understood, but also expressed themselves, very well in both languages, I felt it was important not to overlook anything to support the full participation of all those in attendance.

This desire soon became a reality, despite the associated cost. And so it was that one more step was made toward better dialogue and greater respect for those involved in the Institute's primary decision-making proceedings.

**GABRIELLE LACHANCE** became a Board member in 1991, and was chair of the Board 1996 to 1998. She was Executive Director of the Montreal-based NGO, Développement et Paix.

## **JACK GRANT**

I joined the Board of The North-South Institute at the urging of my old colleague, the late Don Taylor, who was looking for fresh faces. As a businessman and a volunteer director of Oxfam Canada, I had been used to direct action; so I had some reservations about what seemed to be an academic think-tank. These were diminished as I saw the quality and dedication of staff and Board. If I were to compare the two presidents, Maureen O'Neil and Roy Culpeper, with senior business and bank people, The North-South would rate well ahead.

As well, to see, close-up at Board meetings, the human faces of Marc Lalonde, Joe Clark and (earlier) Bob Stanfield gave me new respect for the political breed. I was impressed by how people from academic, business, NGO and political backgrounds were broadly united in a concern for human rights.

The North-South Institute has been remarkable, too, in the respect and collegiality shown between staff and Board. Other voluntary organizations with which I have been involved have more intense rivalries and ruffled egos than any business rivalries I have ever seen!

One must address the fundamental question of the value of the end-result of The North-South's work. Do others read and then transform its analyses into concrete action? If so, are these groups in turn achieving their objectives? Tough questions. At least it is clear to me that The North-South Institute has been a counterweight to the apathy and indifference often shown toward the lives of people in less affluent societies. As governments have shifted away from their previous goals of equality for their own citizens, the notion of cooperation with and assistance to those in the Third World has even

aroused hostility among many in the North. The mental gulf between "us" and "them" had become a chasm.

It seems that Ottawa will start restoring funds for international development. If The North-South Institute helped set a receptive mood in the public mind for this move, then its efforts have been very worthwhile.

**JACK GRANT** is a Toronto businessman and philanthropist. He was a Board member from November 1990 until 1994.

## **JOHN McCALLUM**

My association with NSI, while brief, was a pleasure for me, bringing back old memories. Three or four years ago, when I was still Chief Economist at the Royal Bank, Roy Culpeper invited me to join the Board, no doubt thinking that my membership would help get money from Canada's largest bank (it did) and perhaps thinking a token right-winger would offer a useful balance against the Bob Whites of this world. Then, a few months before I decided to go into politics, I was elevated to the lofty position of Vice-Chair of NSI, with John Loxley as Chair. However, as soon as I decided to go into politics, I was unceremoniously dumped, so I never got to vice-chair even one meeting.

The reason my association with NSI brings back happy memories is that, way back in the mid-1970s, I worked with Roy and John in Manitoba in the Schreyer Government. We were all in the Cabinet Planning Secretariat, and Roy and John were also in something called RED. It sounds a little communist, but I think it stood for Resources and Economic Development. Maybe it was a bit of a leap – but not a direct leap – from Manitoba NDP-land to the Royal Bank, but perhaps not a greater leap than from the Royal Bank to politics.

I also enjoyed my time on the board of NSI because it was great to get to know certain "Bob Whites of this world" a little better, notably Bob White and Ed Broadbent.

A touch more seriously, I've always had an interest in development economics and even studied under Celso Furtado in Paris in the early 1970s. (Apart from Professor Furtado, my experience taught me more about Paris than about economics.) I believe strongly that Canada should increase both the quantity and quality of its foreign aid. Suggestions in the media that this is indeed the Prime Minister's intention are encouraging. I also think that aid through reduced trade barriers can be at least as important as aid through aid. I will do what I can in my new role to push this

agenda, which, I hope, may turn out to be a more productive activity than being Vice-Chair of the Institute.

JOHN MCCALLUM was Dean of Arts at McGill University and Chief Economist for the Royal Bank before being elected M.P. in November 2000. He was a Board member from 1996 to 2000.

## BETTY PLEWES

I have had a personal association with the Institute for ten years, first as CEO of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) and more recently as a Board member. At CCIC we cooperated with NSI in many activities to try to advance the public dialogue on key global issues. We collaborated in meetings with Cabinet Ministers and senior officials; we made presentations together to parliamentary committees; and Roy Culpeper for The North-South took part in an important CCIC delegation to Thailand and Indonesia to raise awareness of the impact on poor people of the Asian financial meltdown.

As well, throughout the 1990s the Institute had a broader impact on the NGO sector. During this time, Canadian international NGOs increased their capacity to engage international institutions and Canadian corporations on policy issues. They concentrated on issues of focusing aid on the poorest, eliminating the debt of the poorer countries and reforming the International Financial Institutions. In all these areas The North-South Institute was an important resource: it provided independent research and analysis that strengthened the NGO initiatives.

The increasing strength of NGOs, and their demands to take part in structures of international governance, led to the need for more research and understanding of the role of civil society, and to its relationship to the public and business sectors. Here again, particularly through Alison Van Rooy's work, the NSI helped expand the understanding of policy makers about the nature of civil society both in Canada and elsewhere.

There are substantial challenges facing Canada if it is to play an effective part in eliminating poverty and promoting equity and justice. The NSI's mandate of providing "*research for a fairer world*" is as crucial today as ever.

BETTY PLEWES was President and CEO of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation from 1992 to 2000 after holding several posts in CUSO. She is now Vice-Chair of the NSI Board.

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# Canadian Development Report

## ▶ 2001/02

### “Building a Fairer World”

“Is the glass half empty or half full?” The question is thought to separate optimists from pessimists. Does it? Or is it when the glass, so to speak, is only one-quarter full that optimists really come into their own? When the odds seem stacked against the possibility of a favourable outcome, when the forces of evil seem to be everywhere and insurmountable – that is when optimists show their mettle. And they demonstrate optimism not just in their beliefs and spirit, but in their actions. That we are here, as one of our guest authors puts it in this report, proves that history is a succession of small victories, not defeats.

by ROY CULPEPER, President The North-South Institute  
(excerpt from the Introduction of the CDR 2001/02)

This fifth edition of the Canadian Development Report, designed to mark The North-South Institute’s 25th anniversary, also features five guest contributors from around the world who reflect upon positive changes for the coming years:

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- ▶ **Jocelyn Dow**, Women’s Environment & Development Organization – Guyana
- ▶ **Yao Graham**, Third World Network-Africa – Ghana
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