

# CERLAC

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## Dan Benedict Receives Order of Canada

CERLAC is very proud to announce that **Dr. Daniel Benedict** has recently received the Order of Canada. Since CERLAC's foundation in 1978, Dan has collaborated extensively with the Centre as a consultant, advisor, and a friend. Dan's inspirational efforts in organized labour and social justice movements both within Canada and abroad make him a worthy recipient of this prestigious honour.

Dan has been involved in establishing contacts and promoting new projects in the region. For instance, he was centrally involved with CERLAC's Chile Project in the 1980s and acted as a liaison between academics and labour activists in Canada and Chile. His efforts helped to keep socially relevant education and research alive during the Pinochet military

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## Louis Lefeber in Profile

When Professor **Louis Lefeber** is credited as the founding director of CERLAC, he points out that the primary credit belongs to a group of committed, but at that time young, scholars. They had a leading role in obtaining the support of the York University administration for the formation of a centre for Latin American and Caribbean studies. When CERLAC was officially established in 1978, Louis was appointed director as a senior faculty member with Latin American experience.

Louis remained in that post until 1985. Sharing the work with him as Deputy Director was **Liisa North**, followed by **Peter Landstreet**. Louis also recalls the devoted help of **Liddy Gomes**, whom originally he appointed as secretary, but who rapidly advanced to become CERLAC's office administrator. Major research projects were started and strong linkages were developed with FLACSO, Quito, and various other Latin

American and Caribbean institutes and academic organizations. The graduate diploma programme in Latin American and Caribbean studies was also created at that time. But Louis is particularly pleased that it was during his tenure as director that the Centre's academic independence and disinterested scholarly orientation were solidly established, in spite of various—and occasionally heavy—institutional pressures. He remembers **Sidney Eisen**, the then Dean of the Faculty of Arts, as one administrator who gave him and CERLAC his unwavering support.

Since his official retirement in 1994, Louis has continued his York association as professor emeritus of Economics and the Graduate Programme for Social and Political Thought (SPT), as well as Fellow of

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## A Tribute to Liddy Gomes

Liddy Gomes retired from York University on May 1, 1999. Directors of CERLAC come and go but Liddy represents the thread that has provided continuity, stability and a sense of place for CERLAC Fellows, Associates and students throughout the years. She has been the source of institutional memory to which they could turn for help and information. Liddy has an extraordinary loyalty to the Centre. As its administrator with twenty-one years of uninterrupted and dedicated service, she has contributed significantly to the growth and development of CERLAC since its formation in 1978. Often working long hours, she has attended to the ever-increasing CERLAC administration all by herself.

As the reputation of CERLAC has grown, so has that of Liddy Gomes. Her duties have included all matters of institutional arrangements, correspondence, accounting, budgeting, Fellows' travel ar-

rangements, conference organization, guest accommodations, and all other imaginable matters that require attention to detail. In so doing she has become known everywhere—here and abroad, wherever CERLAC has academic linkages—for her civility, efficiency and ready willingness to help.

In addition to her hard work and dedication, Liddy has shown over the years a delightful sense of humor, and has extended a great personal warmth and hospitality to Fellows, students and visitors alike.

While Liddy's work will be taken over by new staff members, she could never be replaced. The history of her service to the Centre is the history of CERLAC. In recognition of her contributions, Liddy has been named an Honourary Fellow of CERLAC. For her retirement we wish her and her husband **Lamberto** a long, healthy and fulfilling life. ☺

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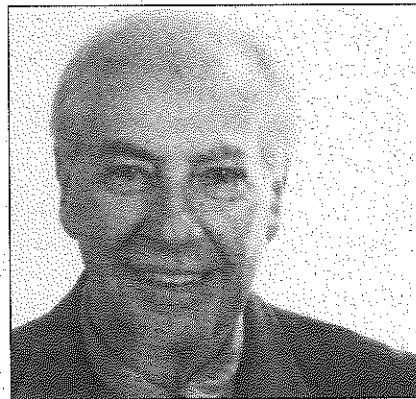
**LOUIS LEFEBER**

CERLAC and Special Project Advisor to York International. He continues to do research, to write and to publish. His current work, jointly with Professor Liisa North, has been focussed on Ecuador. His recent publications are on income distribution, employment, rural transformation and agricultural policy with special reference to Mexico and Ecuador. A paper of his on economic thought in historical perspective is forthcoming in a political theory journal.

Louis was born in 1924 in Budapest. He obtained his baccalaureate in 1942 at the gymnasium of the Pázmány Péter university—alma mater of many distinguished Hungarian mathematicians and scientists—but his subsequent university studies were interrupted by the war, specifically by the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944. Louis went underground and was member of a resistance group that was formed by some former volunteers of the Hungarian contingent of the International Brigade in the Spanish civil war and other antifascists. He left Hungary for Italy in 1947 and went to Venezuela in 1948. There he was working first as an oil field hand, then in various maintenance and construction jobs. He returned to his studies in 1953 and received his Ph.D. in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1957. In 1958 he married his wife Rosalind, a scholar and teacher of French and later of Sanskrit language and literature. She has recently retired from McMaster University.

In his academic career, Louis has held an impressive array of teaching positions. From 1956 to 1961, he was instructor and assistant professor at Harvard University. From there he moved to MIT as an associate professor of economics. While teaching at MIT Louis also worked as a research associate of the MIT Centre for International Stud-

ies on various India related projects and made many visits of varying durations to that country. His career at MIT came to an end in 1965, when he objected to the Center's use of research on Indian planning for political purposes. His promotion to full professor was held up by the university administration, in spite of the unanimous recommendation of the Department of Economics. (The background to the story was written up in George Rosen, *Western Economists and Eastern Societies*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.) At that point he accepted an invitation by Andreas Papandreou to work at the Athens Center of Planning and Economic Research and as an advisor to the then Prime Minister George Papandreou. When a royal putsch



*Photo courtesy of Louis Lefebvre.*

removed George from office in the summer of 1965, Louis went as a visiting professor to Stanford University, where he was offered tenure and the opportunity to establish a Latin American research centre, both of which he declined. (The latter was subsequently undertaken by Enrique Iglesias of ECLA and IDB fame.) The temptation was great, but both he and his wife decided that they were not made for the California life. Returning to the East in 1966, he took the F.C. Hecht Chair of International Eco-

nomics at Brandeis University. He came to York at the invitation of Andreas Papandreou in 1972, where he remained active until his official retirement at the end of 1994.

Louis has also been involved in a variety of research and professional activities in many different countries. In the spring of 1962 he was appointed technical director of the review of the Chilean ten year development plan under the Alliance for Progress (Pan American Union, Committee of Nine) and prepared (jointly with Benjamin Hopenhayn of Argentina) a critical report on the Chilean economy that outlined many of the reforms that were legislated and partially implemented by the Frei (Christian Democratic) and Allende governments. At various times he acted as a consultant to diverse UN agencies, the Interamerican Development Bank, the World Bank and the Indian government. In the nineteen-eighties he was personal advisor to Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou. For eight years, during the first two terms of the PASOK government, he commuted between Toronto and Athens.

Though Louis does not teach regular classes anymore, he takes an occasional SPT or CERLAC related student for guided research or seminars. He feels he has been lucky as a teacher for having had a number of outstanding students, some of them with distinguished careers. He remains a member of various professional associations, including the Canadian Pugwash Group and Science for Peace. When not at his desk in Toronto, he enjoys spending time at his cottage on Martha's Vineyard, looking at the sea and the dunes, and trying to keep the wild grapes from overrunning his trees and bushes. ☺



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**WOMEN'S FORUM**

their efforts to promote gender equity in their respective countries and regions. Members of the forum presented their Agenda for Gender Equity in Central American Integration, and the process that brought it about. Central American presenters also focused on issues such as the role of women in Guatemalan politics, the women's movement in Honduras, and violence against women in Belize. Barbara

Cameron (Political Science, Atkinson) compared women's political mobilization in Canada and Sweden. Joan Grant-Cummings, president of NAC, discussed the challenges of the women's movement in Canada. Daina Green presented on pay equity and affirmative action programs in Canada. Activist Josephine Gray focused on the impact of economic integration and women's efforts to build North-South solidarity. At the end of the day, both Canadian and Central American participants emphasized the need to link up women's move-

ments in the North and the South.

*Adapted from a Gazette article, with kind permission of the Department of Communications, York University.*

