

Description and Finding Aid

MICHAEL SHENSTONE FONDS
F2357

Prepared by
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MICHAEL SHENSTONE FONDS

Dates of creation

1979 – 2019, prominent 1979 – 1980.

Extent

13 cm of textual records.

Biographical sketch

Michael Shenstone, CM, was a Canadian diplomat. He was born June 25th, 1928 in Toronto to parents Allen and Molly Shenstone. Raised in Princeton, New Jersey, Shenstone moved back to Canada to attend secondary school at Ashbury College in Ottawa. In 1949, he graduated from Trinity College with a degree in modern languages and history. He later received an MA from Cambridge University.

Shenstone joined the Department of External Affairs in 1952, and worked extensively in the Middle East. In 1972, he was appointed Ambassador to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. From 1974-1976, Shenstone served as the first resident Canadian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. In the late 1970s, he was the Director-General of African and Middle Eastern Affairs, under Prime Minister Joe Clark. And Secretary of State for External Affairs Flora MacDonald. While there, Shenstone was involved in the Canadian Caper: the exfiltration of six American diplomats out of Iran during the Iranian Hostage Crisis. Shenstone kept in close contact with Ken Taylor, the Canadian Ambassador to Iran, who directly oversaw the shelter of the house guests.

In the early 1980s, Shenstone was the Assistant Deputy Minister of Political and International Security Affairs. From 1985-1990, he served as the Canadian Ambassador to Austria. He formally retired from the Department of External Affairs in 1992. In 2002, he was awarded Member of the Order of Canada in recognition of his diplomatic service.

Shenstone married Susan Burgess, whom he met while studying at Trinity College, in 1951. They had three children: Thomas, Barbara, and Mary. Michael Shenstone passed away on September 9th 2019 in Toronto, and is survived by his wife and children.

Scope and content

Fonds consists primarily of diplomatic reports and correspondence between embassies and the Canadian government in Ottawa generated during the rescue of six American diplomats from Iran (known as the Canadian Caper). Also includes interview transcripts, newspaper clippings, and correspondence produced after the fact.

Notes:

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Papers were donated in one accession to the Trinity Archives by Michael Shenstone in 2019.

Arrangement: Order has been imposed by the archivist. File titles for diplomatic correspondence have been taken from the subject headings of the correspondences.

Language: Primarily English; also includes some French.

Restrictions on access: None

Terms governing use and reproduction / publication: Various copyright holders. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain permission to publish any part of the fonds.

Accruals: No further accruals are expected.

Provenance access points:

Shenstone, Michael (1928 - 2019)

Location / File Listing:

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX/ FILE #
Chronology of Events	[1980?]	[1980?]	List of key events in Canadian rescue of the American house guests (the Canadian Caper), from 8 Nov 1979 – 28 Jan 1980.	1-1
Timeline	[1979]	[1980]	Handwritten timeline of unknown events involving S.S.E.A. Flora MacDonald.	1-2
Correspondence – “U.S.A. Embassy Staff Safe Haven”	[11 Nov 1979]	[31 Dec 1979]	Contains original and photocopied diplomatic correspondence between Washington D.C., Ottawa, Tehran, and Bern. Relates to the American house guests being hosted by the Canadians in Iran.	1-3
Correspondence – “House Guests: Safe Haven”	[12 Dec 1979]	[30 Jan 1980]	Contains original, and censored photocopies of diplomatic correspondence between Tehran, Ottawa, Washington D.C., Paris, and Dublin. Relates to the exfiltration of the American house guests being hosted by the Canadians in Iran	1-4
Correspondence – “Safe Haven”	[20 Dec 1979]	[27 Jan 1980]	Contains original, and censored photocopies of diplomatic correspondence between Tehran and Ottawa. Relates to the exfiltration of the American house guests being hosted by	1-5

the Canadians in Iran.

Correspondence – “Safe Haven: Contingency Planning”	[9 Jan 1980]	[28 Jan 1980]	Contains original, and censored photocopies of diplomatic correspondence between Tehran and Ottawa. Relates to the exfiltration of the American house guests being hosted by the Canadians in Iran.	1-6
Correspondence – “Iran: House Guests”	[14 Dec 1979]	[17 Dec 1979]	Contains photocopied diplomatic correspondence between Washington D.C. and Ottawa. Relates to the exfiltration of the American house guests being hosted by the Canadians in Iran.	1-7
Report – “Iran: Possible Measures by Canada”	[14 Dec 1979]	[14 Dec 1979]	Report compiled by Shenstone, including summary and action request form. Regarding possible retaliations for Canada to enact against Iran.	1-8
Memo – “Americans in Tehran Given Refuge in Canadian Premises”	[19 Dec 1979]	[21 Dec 1979]	Annotated memo to the minister, with copies sent to Tehran and Washington D.C. Regarding plans if Iran discovers that Canada is hosting American house guests.	1-9
Correspondence – “Christmas Messages”	[24 Dec 1979]	[24 Dec 1979]	Original typed and handwritten diplomatic correspondence between Tehran and Ottawa. Contains lighthearted Christmas wishes.	1-10
Reports – “U.S.A. House Guests”	[4 Jan 1980]	[4 Jan 1980]	Contains original reports and censored photocopies regarding meetings between	1-11

Canadian and American officials.

Authorization for Canadian Passports	[4 Jan 1980]	[9 Jan 1980]	English and French copies of memos requesting the authorization to issue Canadian passports to the house guests. Also includes related censored diplomatic correspondence.	1-12
"Messages to the Six"	[6 Jan 1980]	[8 Jan 1980]	Handwritten and typed drafts and revisions of memo from Cyrus Vance (US Secretary of State) to be sent to houseguests.	1-13
Houseguest Cover Stories	[10 Jan 1979?]	[2019]	Report detailing possible cover stories to be used by houseguests in order to escape Iran. [Note: Original copy is extremely faded, and a transcription was made in 2019. Additionally, based on context the document is most likely from Jan 1980, not Jan 1979.]	1-14
Draft Exfiltration Memo	[Jan 1980]	[Jan 1980]	Draft memo regarding Canadian procedures for any exfiltrations, and response from Cyrus Vance. Also includes transcript of letter from Vance to Flora MacDonald.	1-15
Correspondence – "U.S.A Embassy Hostages"	[18 Nov 1979]	[18 Jan 1980]	Contains original diplomatic correspondence between Tehran and Ottawa, with additional distribution to other major cities. Relates to	1-16

			American embassy personnel being held hostage by the Iranians.	
Correspondence – “Humanitarian Assistance”	[19 Nov 1979]	[22 Jan 1979]	Contains original diplomatic correspondence between Tehran, Ottawa, and Washington D.C., regarding intelligence gathered in Tehran.	1-17
Operation Bread	[20 Nov 1979]	[Jan 1980]	Annotated memos and reports by E.P. Black and L.A. Delvoie regarding Operation Bread.	1-18
C.I.A. Interview with Palestinian Leader	[26 Nov 1979]	[29 Nov 1979]	Memos between Ottawa and Washington D.C. regarding C.I.A. interview with a Palestinian leader.	1-19
Carter – Clark Correspondence	[15 Nov 1979]	[31 Jan 1980]	Includes correspondence between P.M. Joe Clark and P.O.T.U.S. Jimmy Carter as photocopies of letters, and transcriptions in diplomatic cables between Ottawa, Tehran, and Washington D.C. Also includes relevant cables.	1-20
Communications Equipment	[20 Nov 1979?]	[26 Nov 1979]	Includes typed and handwritten memos, and a letter from Robert Duemling to E.P. Black.	1-21
Correspondence – “Canadian Embassy Personnel”	[20 Nov 1979]	[27 Jan 1980]	Contains original, and photocopies of diplomatic correspondence between Tehran, Ottawa, and Bonn, with additional distribution to other major cities. Relates to staffing of the Canadian embassy in Tehran.	1-22

Correspondence – “Travel Plans”	[23 Jan 1980]	[29 Jan 1980]	Contains original and photocopies of diplomatic correspondence between London, Ottawa, Tehran, Paris and Copenhagen, as well as New Zealand diplomatic correspondence. Regarding travel plans of Canadian embassy personnel in and out of Iran.	1-23
“Congratulations and Godspeed”	[28 Jan 1980]	[28 Jan 1980]	Diplomatic correspondence between Ottawa and Tehran, marking successful exfiltration of American house guests out of Iran.	1-24
“Thank You”	[28 Jan 1980]	[29 Jan 1980]	“Thank you” correspondence sent by E.P. Black and A.E. Gotlieb for the involvement of various departments in the Canadian Caper.	1-25
French Language Correspondence	[30 Nov 1979]	[30 Nov 1979]	Contains original diplomatic correspondence between Paris, Ottawa, Yaoundé, Abidjan, and Dakar, and Tehran, with additional distribution to other major cities. Relates to meetings between Canadians and various African governments.	1-26
“Blue Foster” Cable	[13 Jan 1980]	[13 Jan 1980]	Contains censored photocopy of diplomatic correspondence between Baghdad and Ottawa.	1-27
Incomplete Cables	[1979]	[1980]	Includes single pages from 2 separate correspondences (PSI0014, and UGGR2152).	1-28

Handwritten Notepads	[17 Dec 1979]	[2 Jan 1980]	Two notepads filled with handwritten notes, authors unknown.	1-29
Security Council Resolution	[14 Jan 1980]	[14 Jan 1980]	Text of a U.N. Security Council resolution by the U.S.A. calling for sanctions against Iran sent in a diplomatic cable from Ottawa to Paris, London, Bonn, Rome, and NATO.	1-30
Fax Coversheet	[20 Jan 1980]	[20 Jan 1980]	Fax coversheet with message from Flora MacDonald to Shenstone, with no files attached.	1-31
Draft Press Guidances and Releases	[24 Jan 1980]	[28 Jan 1980]	Original and censored copies of draft press releases in English and French from Canadian offices. Also includes handwritten transcript of American press release.	1-32
Oral Briefing Notes	[29 Jan 1980]	[24 Mar 1980]	Collection of briefing notes and suggested statements for SSEA and PM summarizing Canadian involvement in rescue of the houseguests	1-33
Press Conferences and Interviews	[29 Jan 1980]	[31 Jan 1980]	Includes diplomatic correspondence with transcriptions of press conferences given by SSEA Flora MacDonald and PM Joe Clark, with distribution to many major cities. Also includes transcriptions of multiple interviews given by MacDonald, and notes for press conference to be given by Clark.	1-34

ABC Interviews	[29 Jan 1980]	[29 Jan 1980]	Transcript of multiple ABC interviews with Flora MacDonald, Jean Pelletier, and family of the hostages, and others.	1-35
Reports from Simard	[29 Jan 1980]	[30 Jan 1980]	Includes annotated original and photocopies of diplomatic correspondence sent from Andre Simard. Discusses interviews and articles by Jean Pelletier. Includes documentation in French and English.	1-36
House Guest Press Responses	[Jan 1980]	[6 Feb 1980]	Includes draft text for a press statement to be made by the houseguests after rescue, and transcript of CTV interview with the Staffords and the Lijeks after rescue.	1-37
Memo – "U.S.A. Hostages and International Law"	[1 Feb 1980]	[1 Feb 1980]	Includes memo detailing how Canada did not breach international law during the Canadian Caper, and cover sheet.	1-38
Memos Post-1980	[21 Oct 1982]	[11 Apr 1983]	Memos by Shenstone and R.V. Lucy regarding additional information about the Canadian Caper.	1-39
Newspaper Articles	Apr 1981	23 Feb 2013	Collection of articles from magazines, newspapers, and journals relating to the Iranian Hostage Crisis. Includes excerpts and transcriptions from: Bout de Papier, The Foreign Service Journal, The	1-40

			Globe and Mail, MacLean's Magazine, The New York Times, The Ottawa Citizen, Studies in Intelligence, Time Magazine, and The Toronto Star.	
MacDonald-McAuliffe Fax	[15 Jan 1998]	[20 Jan 1998]	Annotated fax from Michael McAuliffe (of CBC News) to Flora MacDonald regarding an interview for a Canadian Caper documentary (The Ambassador's Secret).	1-41
Correspondence with Robert Wright	[13 Jun 2009]	21 Jun 2009]	Emails between Wright and Shenstone regarding information for Wright's book <u>Our Man in Tehran</u> ; includes excerpts from the book (chapters 15 and 16).	1-42
Correspondence with Wesley Wark	[25 Mar 2010]	[31 Mar 2010]	Emails between Wark and Shenstone regarding inaccuracies of <u>Our Man in Tehran</u> by Robert Wright; commentary by Wark on Wright's book.	1-43
Correspondence with Marija Dumancic and Bob Anders	[16 Nov 2012]	[17 Nov 2012]	Emails between Shenstone, Dumancic, and Anders regarding interview given by Shenstone and Anders for the US Consulate in Toronto.	1-44
Release from Sienna Films	[30 May 2013]	[7 Jun 2013]	Release signed by Shenstone authorizing use of his likeness in any films to be produced by Sienna Films.	1-45