

# Two giants have left us: Herbert Marx and Yoine Goldstein

At a time when funeral services are being scaled back and attendance discouraged because of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, two giants in our community have passed away and they sadly will not get the sendoff they deserve.



Yoine Goldstein

Former Quebec Justice Minister Herbert Marx and former Canadian Senator Yoine Goldstein will be remembered for their significant contributions. I knew both men. In the case of Marx, we had a close connection. When I was looking to change careers more than two decades ago he was a

Justice of Quebec Superior Court. A family member had told him of my situation and out of the blue he called me one day and said, "I would like to take you for lunch." I accepted and he provided me with some solid advice.

Goldstein was not only legendary in the Montreal legal community, but throughout Canada. He was a role model for lawyers for well over 50 years. Appointed to the Senate in 2005, he introduced and sponsored bills to protect refugees in Canada, to relieve Canadian students from the crushing burden of their student loans, to add a human rights element to the Investment Canada Act when a foreign investment is reviewed, as well as to facilitate the supply of Canadian medications to African and Asian countries at affordable prices. He co-founded and then chaired the All Party Parliamentary Group of the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes against Humanity. He was also devoted to volunteer public service, serving as president of the Jewish Community Foundation, president of Federation CJA, president of UAIFC, Vice President of Jewish National Fund, and honorary legal counsel to those and many other organizations.

Marx was a lawyer, university law professor, politician, and judge. He was the Liberal Member of the National Assembly for D'Arcy McGee from 1979 to 1989. After obtaining his BA at Concordia and a Master's at the Université de Montréal

he went on to Harvard Law School. Between 1955 and 1964, he worked in the lighting industry, becoming vice-president of Verd-A-Ray Industries Ltd. In 1967 and 1968 he articulated in the law firm of Stikeman Elliott in Montreal and then joined the Faculty of Law at the Université de Montréal. For a decade he taught constitutional law, civil liberties and poverty law. Between 1969 and 1979, he was a consultant to the Quebec Ministries of Justice, Education and Intergovernmental Affairs as well as to the Canada Law Reform Commission, the Quebec Civil Code Revision Office, the Quebec Gendron Commission on Language Rights and the Montreal Island School Council. He was also a visiting professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal and McGill University Faculty of Law. In 1969, he was a founding member of the Pointe Saint-Charles Legal Aid Clinic in Montreal. He was a Commissioner of the Quebec Human Rights Commission from 1975 to 1979, and a member of the Consultative Committee of the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario from 1977 to 1982.

When Victor Goldbloom retired in 1979, Marx made the plunge into politics and he was good at it. He served as Minister of Justice and Attorney General from 1985 to 1988, stepping down as a matter of principle after his Liberal government used the notwithstanding clause to override a Supreme Court decision that the province's French-only

signage law was unconstitutional. Marx chronicled this decision in his memoir released a year and a half ago called *My Story* (a *Mon Histoire* in French).

In recent years Marx was a devoted member of [the Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University](#) executive and delightfully travelled the globe with his devoted wife Eva. I last saw him at a family gathering last fall. While he was in poor health and needed a walker to get around, he had not lost his wonderful sense of humour.

Tributes were pouring in for both gentleman.

"For many years, I was fortunate to have Herb in my life as my mentor and close friend," said Jack Jedwab, president of [the Association of Canadian Studies](#). "He was a great Quebecer and Canadian, and will be sorely missed by many."

John Parisella, a chief strategist for successive Liberal governments, stated: "Herb was above all a friend. He was also a man of character and integrity. Anyone who knew him were struck by his humility and his sense of humour. His legacy will recall his generosity, his courage and his social progressivism. Knowing him and sharing long conversations with him made me a better person."

Present-day D'Arcy McGee Liberal MNA David Birnbaum

said "Herb's courageous leadership, good humour and strong local presence will be long remembered. I am so honoured to have followed in the footsteps of community icons like Herb and Victor Goldbloom. Both were friends and mentors, and I am deeply saddened that they are no longer with us. Herb had a keen sense of social justice that made its mark on all of Quebec."



Michael Tenenbaum , president of the Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University, said "it was my honour to learn from the best. He was an inspiration to me and all our board members. His leadership and mentorship were invaluable. He set a high standard for all of us."

Robert Libman, who succeeded Marx as the MNA for D'Arcy McGee, noted how "he was a special person whom I have admired and became very friendly with over the years. He leaves an indelible mark on Quebec history and on our

community."

As for Goldstein, community leader Stephen Lipper recalled how during the second intifada in Israel the two of them had frequent conversations about how to combat the negative publicity and get out the truth about Israel. "Yoine was a passionate Zionist and a great community leader," he said. "We are all grateful for his contribution and we extend heartfelt condolences to his wife Elaine and the entire family.

Added Eddy Wiltzer, another community leader: " Our Community has lost a great human being in Yoine He was truly an academic, a deal maker attorney and a great Jewish Leader. He will be missed by many."

Present-day Senator Marc Gold said that whether in the leadership he displayed on behalf of the Jewish community, or on behalf of the cause of inclusion and respect for diversity, "Yoine has left a legacy that has enriched us all."

Charles Bronfman said he was shocked to hear the news. "What a wonderful human being," he noted. "A great sense of humour often belied the seriousness of purpose that he brought to every assignment he undertook, be it within or without the community. He served us so very well both in Montreal and in Ottawa. The world is poorer because of his absence."

Stanley Diamond, executive director of [the Jewish Geneological Society of Montreal](#) had this to say. "Like so many others, I was fortunate to have reaped the rewards of his friendship, wisdom and counselling," he began. " I have known so few people who commanded the respect and affection that Yoine did, wherever he went and with whomever he dealt. While Yoine's admirers in legal circles were legion, one of the most compelling testaments are the many opponents in cases who then become his clients the next time around. They saw the best in action and they wanted the best, Yoine. There was never a moment of doubt in anyone's eyes when he was appointed to the Senate. At the time, it was considered wise and appropriate choice and there too he left an important mark."

On Goldstein, Birnbaum remarked: "Yoine was a brilliant lawyer and community leader, whose presence one felt as soon as he entered a room. It didn't get in the way of his humility, though. I always listened carefully to his point of view, which was inevitably based on principles of social justice. I remember a key meeting with language officials where I felt I had to clarify things. Yoine told me I got it wrong; thanks for the precision. I will miss him."

Funeral services for Goldstein were held on Friday. Marx will be laid to rest on Sunday.

My deepest sympathies to their families.

