



The Journal of The Pipe Club of Lebanon

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The Journal of the Pipe Club of Lebanon

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Editorial

July and August have been two eventful months indeed. Beginning on July 12, Israel started a war on Lebanon that was to last thirty-three days, destroy much of the south of the country, inflict heavy damages to our infrastructure, and impose a two-month-long blockade on all our ports of entry. Despite all that, the Lebanese have swiftly rebuilt the country immediately after the cessation of hostilities (no permanent, official cease-fire yet), and we have vowed to make of Lebanon a better, more beautiful, smarter, and friendlier country than before. Meanwhile, the PCoLeb has not been inactive. The theme for this issue is “War and the Pipesmoker,” and we feel that

this small contribution to peace and, by the same token, to the pipesmoking community, will allow us to take part, albeit on a less visible level, in the reconstruction effort. As others have withstood the brunt of the Israeli war machine, and others are bravely rebuilding what was destroyed, our modest input will be to shape, through the proverbial tolerance, generosity, and brotherhood of pipesmokers all over the world, a better human being who, before important and not-so-important actions in life, takes the time—the time it takes to attentively fill a pipe and light it—to ponder upon things to come.

These opening words would

be trite indeed if the many friends who contacted us and expressed support during the war were not acknowledged. Other than our Friends of the PCoLeb who emailed and expressed their sympathy, Ian Edmondson took it upon himself to relay our news to the world, mainly to Jon Henley, of *The Guardian*, the UK newspaper. From Chile, Pablo Berrios, pipesmoker and firefighter in Arica, wrote saying: “I will smoke a pipe for the ones that were killed and specially for the poor little innocents. The world needs us. Resist and be brave. May the smoke of our pipes lead us to the good thinking of the solution to the problems of your country and Humanity.” Well said!

Paul Jahshan

Members

Founding Members:

Paul Jahshan, President, Editor-in-Chief
Tarek Khalaf, Vice-President
Fares Irani, Personnel Manager
Salim Khoury, Treasurer
Elie Seif

Regular Members:

Marc Haddad
Gihad Abi-Rached

Friends of the PCoLeb:

Pedro Romero-Auyanet
Toufic Nsouli
Jose Luis Manzur
Jorge García
Luis McIntyre

The Fifth PCoLeb Pipesmoking Competition



From left to right, Oliver Geha, Jihad Asmar, Paul Jahshan, Fares Irani, Tarek Khalaf, Jihad Abi-Rached and his wife Lina, Salim Khoury, Marc Haddad, Elie Seif, and Kifah Said

Winner: Elie Seif, 1 hr 29 min.
 Paul Jahshan, 1 hr 17 min.
 Salim Khoury, 1 hr 11 min.
 Fares Irani, 1 hr 10 min.
 Jihad Abi-Rached, 50 min.
 Tarek Khalaf, 43 min.
 Marc Haddad, 11 min.

The annual PCoLeb's Fifth Pipesmoking Competition was held, as usual, at Salim's place, on September 17, 2006, and the excitement and suspense have, as usual also, gradually been building up for the last two months. At about 7:00 p.m., all the competitors and guests were assembled and ready for the display. Paul Jahshan, the president, dutifully uncovered the prizes for this year: two Royal Guard pipes, one for first place, and one for second.

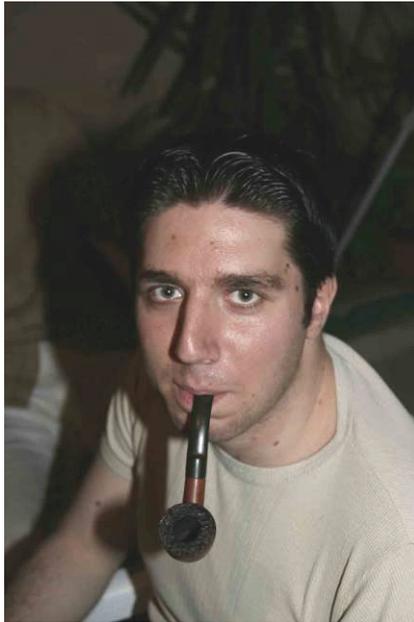
The tobacco, as agreed to by the founding members, was MacBaren's Virginia Flake, and after the two regulatory matches were lit, the race started. Never before have the competitors been so keen on breaking their own scores, and tension was heavy in the air.

Sadly, by the end of the competition, Salim and Paul discovered that their pipes had burned in the process: Salim's first-ever pipe, a beautiful Stanwell, and Paul's second pipe, bought in 1989, a Stanwell as well. We mourn the passing of these two trustworthy pipes! Below are photos of the competitors and of the "casualties," as well as members' feedback.



Elie Seif: "This was the first time I experienced the feeling of winning in the pipe smoking competition, and it was sensational. I would like to thank everyone for their support and inspiration. The atmosphere was amazing, right from the start of the competition. It felt bad seeing two of my colleagues burn their favorite pipes, however that did not stop them or anybody else from keeping the spirits high, the way they should always be. In the end, we are all winners in this endeavour."

The Fifth PCoLeb Pipesmoking Competition



Salim Khoury, in view of the burning of his best pipe, abstained from comments. He fears that the loss of a favourite pipe will negatively influence his feedback!

Does he still want to participate in competitions? You bet he does! He is already busy practicing for next year...



Paul Jahshan is also mourning the loss of his second-ever-bought pipe, but is happy that the competition turned out quite a success. He says: "Everybody was happy, even those who lost a pipe. The new members and the guests were fascinated by the mounting feeling of suspense and, as the participants crossed the 45-minute mark, expectations rose even higher!"

The Fifth PCoLeb Pipesmoking Competition

Gihad Abi-Rached's introduction to pipesmoking, after only one official meeting, was to the competition straight away. No way to regret it because of the wonderful time he achieved! More than the score, however, was Gihad's surprise about how exciting and rewarding the whole event turned out to be. Happy to spend a couple of hours in complete oblivion of the cares and worries of daily life, Gihad's main concern (a pleasurable one!) was to keep his pipe alive for as long as possible.



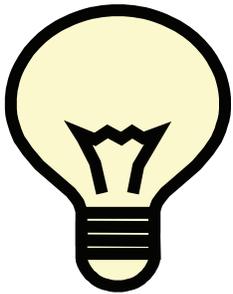
Marc Haddad: "Many incidents occurred during the competition: two pipes were burned and a surprising win from Elie Seif. For me it was my first experience, and I did a bad time, ten minutes. I think it was because I wasn't smoking with my pipe which was not big enough for the quantity we were given. I borrowed a pipe from Salim but still, I wasn't ready to smoke that much. I MUST do better next time since I will have gained more experience!"

Fares Irani: "We have been waiting for this day for the last two years, because last year Tarek and I had surgery so the PCoLeb decided to cancel the competition. So there we were, on the 17th of September, at 7:00 o'clock, and all the members were ready to fill their pipes, and as my friend Mark said about the quantity of the tobacco, it was more than enough. We managed but it was a little too tight, so I was suffering a little bit because of this. After one hour and ten minutes, my pipe was dead but I was very satisfied with my time. Finally, congratulations to Elie, and to Gihad's wonderful effort as it was his first time. Smoke in peace!"



Tarek Khalaf, also known as the "Chimney" during competition time, is famous for the speed with which he burns his way through his tobacco. Not only does he do this quite quickly, but he leaves, amazingly, almost no trace of the tobacco in the pipe. After 43 minutes, his pipe went out and, upon turning the bowl upside down, nothing came down! Not a man to be disappointed easily, Tarek swiftly filled another pipe with his favorite tobacco and went through it before the competition was over. He got the prize for fastest and cleanest pipesmoker! Tarek, however, had this comment: "I should learn to smoke more slowly next time..."

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Q: What should I light my pipe with?

A: Matches, matches, matches. For some reason, the light of a match is very different from that of a lighter, and produces a

Email your questions and we will try to answer them.

marked difference in the quality and durability of the smoke experience. Good quality matches are better. Another related tip:

when you strike the match, wait until the sulfur head is burned completely before lighting the pipe.

Q: Is it normal to relight often?

A: Of course! You're not participating in a pipesmoking competition, and the aim is pleasure/meditation/relaxation, so take it easy and don't even think about it.

Q: What do I do with a loose mouthpiece?

A: Easy, cheap, and tried with 100% success: get some scotch tape and wrap the tenon (the part of the mouthpiece which enters the pipe's hole or mortise). One layer should be more than enough. Now put the pipe together again. The scotch tape should come off; no problem. Take the pipe apart, remove the remaining tape, and put together again. What happened was that the tape was put there only to coat the tenon with some adhesive thickness, that's all. And don't worry about the glue, it won't stay, but only provide friction.

Paul Jahshan

Pipesmoking, Meditation, and Conflict



In his preface to Liebaert and Maya's beautiful book on the history of the pipe, Robert Sabatier, pipesmoker and member of the French Academy, wrote:

For half a century already, I sacrifice to pleasant rites: stroking the wood, filling the bowl with small pinches of well-piled tobacco, giving birth to fire with a match, all with slowness, respect, and religiosity... And what serenity, what great calm, procures us the pipe in times of agitation and turbulence!... All my senses will be satisfied. This is what I hope for you, reader, honest reader, my likeness, my brother.¹

There is a brotherhood of pipesmokers but, unlike other brotherhoods, it is an unspoken, unwritten, one. There are no laws governing its members, no principles guiding the actions and thoughts of its aficionados. Like the silent brotherhood of parents, lovers, sailors, and other people engaged in the journey of life, that of pipesmokers rests on kinship and the common tragedy (in the Greek sense) of being a thinking human being.

The tragic hero, best exemplified by Sophocles' immortal Oedipus, is caught in the whirlwind of events like a leaf in a storm. What differentiates him/her, however, from the leaf is the realization that, deep inside, there is a higher, nobler will which refuses the seemingly meaningless tossing about and which aspires to order, beauty, harmony, and peace. The old battle, of course, between Dionysus and Apollo.

A pipe is a wonderful ("full of wonders") instrument indeed. If you look at it objectively, it's really nothing much: a piece of fire-resistant wood turned into the shape of a bowl and a stem with a hole inside, and a plastic-looking tube. Really nothing. Tobacco is just a plant—with more or less harmful ingredients—which produces more or less pleasant aromas when burned. And a human being is just an upright-going animal which has made more or less useful things since its quite short stay as a dominant species on earth.

The more useful things have all been done with the help of thoughtfulness, reflection, patience, and perseverance: from the Pyramids to Baalbeck to the great cathedrals of Europe, architecture is the art of deliberate and methodical thinking; from the Lascaux and Altamira cave paintings to Guernica, painting is the patient creation of beauty with pigments and dyes; from the Inuit shaman's drum to Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, music is a highly abstract and systematic arrangement and production of sounds. The same can be said of all the arts, of course, including the literatures of peoples throughout the millennia.

The less useful things have all been done because of recklessness, abandonment, hurriedness, impatience, and violence. Even if preceded by methodical and highly advanced planning, wars, persecutions, pogroms, and genocide have relied, on the part of the participants, on the frenzied, unbridled outburst of blind rage. The Norse "berserkers" thrust themselves in battle like furious bears, and the twenty-first-century soldier has to relinquish a lot of his/her humanity, compassion, and thinking in order to be of any use to those who pull the military and political strings.

Homo Sapiens' main characteristic is, as the term shows, thinking. And thinking must take place in a specific time slice, in other words, it takes time to think. The more time one devotes to thinking, the more one sees the usefulness or uselessness of actions, and their accompanying advantages and disadvantages, and such meditation on action is really crucial in understanding the development of our species.

Meditation comes from the Latin "meditatio," meaning *reflection, study, preparation, and exercise*,² terms which beautifully apply, incidentally, to the art of pipesmoking. To smoke properly, with "propriety," the pipesmoker is engaged in reflection (deciding on what pipe to choose, whether small, medium, or big; whether smooth, sandblasted, or rusticated; whether black, dark brown, brown, light brown, reddish, or otherwise; whether straight or half bent or full bent; deciding on what tobacco to fill the pipe with, whether an English mixture, a loose aromatic, or a Virginia flake); in study (learning how to fill the pipe, how to apply fire to the tobacco, how to smoke, how to clean the pipe, etc.); in preparation (finding the right place to smoke in, the right friends to smoke with if needed, preparing the pipe by choosing it and inspecting it, preparing the tobacco, preparing the match or lighter, having the tamper and pipe cleaners ready, etc.); and finally in exercise (the imitation of those who know the lore and constant practice are key elements in any art).

This rich concordance between meditation and pipesmoking is surprising to the lay person who only sees the pipesmoker as somebody blowing smoke with a wooden stick in his/her mouth. Little does the unwary observer understand that behind this rather mundane (some would say disgusting/offensive/harmful) activity is found a full structure which, through "meditation" in the Latin sense, allows the practitioner to enter into a state of mind more akin to Homo Sapiens (Latin for *intelligent, wise, reasonable, one who knows, a philosopher*³), than to the unthinking brute.⁴

Now the question is, how much "time" and "space" does the modern and, more specifically, the postmodern age, allow us, citizens of a gradually increasing digitized urban landscape? From CNN Live news to instant credit card transactions alerts to portable email devices to online chatting, video-conferencing, discussion groups, and e-list subscriptions, the sheer amount of time forcefully borrowed from us under the pretense of giving us in return more time to lead a more natural life, is staggering. Are we truly free to pursue *our* real lives, as was the old dream of industrialization, or are we in fact unknowingly participating, by proxy, in the lives of others, of those in charge, of powermongers who decide *when* and *where* our capacities for willful, thoughtful, meditation on life's events are allowed?

Mere acquiescing receptors in front of different screens (TV screen, car screen, ATM screen, computer screen), we are gradually losing the power, painfully gained after millennia of patient evolution, to *think for ourselves* and to *watch the thinking of others done for us*. Lazi-fied beyond recognition, we have delegated the privilege of meditation (reflection, study, preparation, and exercise) to others who surely must know more than we do. Instead of empowering us, the twenty-first century has enfeebled us to the point of timidity. In the neck-breaking succession of news, flashes, sidebars, scoops, reviews, and analyzes, all done *live*, the necessary *distancing* from the event—a stepping *aside*, not *away*—is a mere fraction of what it should be for our Homo Sapiens species. Paul Virilio, in the context of the first Gulf War, said:

To focus and concentrate the public's attention is progressively to reorganize the public's regime of temporality, its *use of time*, much more than public opinion. The live image is a filter... a mono-chronical filter that does not allow *the present* to pass away. We are in the grips of a videoscopic technology that has nothing to do with film analysis or the critique of domestic television, a logistics of perception necessary for the progressive acquisition of the neural targets that we have become.⁵

Still nearer to us than the first or second Gulf Wars, the thirty-three-day war between Israel and Lebanon, in July-August 2006,

exemplified this *gluing* of the live escalation of conflict onto the retinal receptor of the audience. Lebanon is a small country, and is, unfortunately, the scene of civil and regional wars since 1975. An ingenious way has recently been devised in order not to unduly startle the inhabitants of Beirut and the South at the moment of impact of Israeli heavy-duty bombs and missiles: since light travels faster than sound, certain TV stations kept their camera lenses, almost continuously, on key locations. If a bomb or a missile hit, the image would reach the viewers before the sound of the blast and they would thus prepare themselves accordingly. Indeed, the inhabitants of the attacked regions would tell their friends that they were able to see, through the screen, *the event before it reached them* (unless, of course, they were directly hit . . .).

The end-product of such live broadcasting of conflict, in the recent war over Lebanon and in the many wars to come, is that the present is not a real present, but rather a *constructed, mediated* one to which we *delegate* our judgmental capabilities. Virilio added that since the advent of the new technologies, we are “joined together, neither *for* nor *against* war or peace, but *right up close*, in a conflict of proximity that is also a conflict of interpretation, since we no longer have the time needed to develop an opinion, instead only enough time to pass from one reflex to the next.”⁶ The perfect illustration is the hunching reflex of the Lebanese TV spectator watching their incoming doom as viewers *from the outside* and as potential victims *from the inside*.

Conflict is not only of the military kind. Conflict is present in the psyche of every living creature, from the most primitive unicellular organisms to the highest sentient creature in the universe, and conflict is preceded and followed, in a forever-extending chain, by interpretation. And interpretation, more than anything else, needs time. Consequently, those who need full control over conflict should also control interpretation, and what better way to do this than to limit the time needed for interpretation? The closer to a zero-degree of interpretative time, the surer and the smoother the conduct of conflict.

Which brings us back, after this detour, to our pipe. Picture this: you go to your pipe rack, weigh such variables like the time of the day, the general weather, the mood you’re in, where you will smoke, what you will be doing with your hands, and what you will be thinking of, and then decide on a pipe. You do the same with your tobacco. With a mind filled with the joys to come, you take your gear to your sitting place and proceed to fill your pipe. You puff every now and then to make sure that the filling is neither too slack nor too tight. Once this is done, you take a match, strike it, wait until the sulfur head is completely burned, and apply the flame to the tobacco. If you have filled your pipe to the brim, the tobacco will expand on contact with fire and make a nice, red, glowing little “hill” which will exclusively captivate your attention for a few moments. A minute or so, after having made sure that the top layer is evenly aglow, you take your tamper, tamp down the tobacco lightly, and apply another match to the bowl. Time to relax and enjoy your smoke. But beware! Forgetfulness will anger your pipe and it will refuse to give back the pleasure. Like a forlorn lover, it will only reciprocate in its love if it is given full attention.

In this hour devoted to pipesmoking, you have made contact again with yourself, your calm, thinking, meditating self, with your capabilities and your limitations, your strengths and weaknesses, with the real world around you, vibrant with other individuals dealing with their own inner and outer conflicts.

Mindfulness. Attention. Plenitude. The Other. The present. Zen.

Far from being a strategy of escapism, pipesmoking is the forgotten art of placing oneself on the side, in order to watch the event, to interpret it, to meditate on it, and to devise a plan of action accordingly. Without distance there is no action possible. Without action there is no life.

The pipesmoker, although appearing to stay still, is in fact at the heart of movement.

Paul Jahshan

Notes

1. Alexis Liebaert and Alain Maya, *La Grande histoire de la pipe* (Paris: Flammarion, 1993), 7. My translation.
2. Bernard Auzanneau and Yves Avril, *Dictionnaire latin de poche* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 2000), 378. My translation.
3. *Ibid.*, 548.
4. This is not meant to disparage animals in any way. Pipesmokers in general have the greatest respect, affection, and compassion for our animal brethren.
5. Paul Virilio, *Desert Screen: War at the Speed of Light* (London: Continuum, 2002), 22.
6. *Ibid.*, 24.

War is a Crime!



I am 26 years old and it was the first good summer and a new beginning for Lebanon since 1975. It meant that our young generation was about to see and live the true Lebanon, what was known as the

“Switzerland of the east.” We are tired of returning to a war every six or seven years; we are tired from all the lies we have swallowed and from all the false promises. We have had enough killing each other, seeing mothers crying over their children, children losing their parents. More than one million citizens

month living in schools or cities completely isolated from any human aid, living one month without water or food, trying to guess when the Israeli army will come and drop flyers warning people to leave their homes after, ironically, they have destroyed all the main roads and the bridges. These poor civilians who can’t move or run away are waiting the ghost of death and their destiny is in the hands of a fighter pilot flying above their heads! Living in unsecured shelters because the lethality of Israeli weapons means that there is no safe place and no refuge from there air strikes: the “smart,” guided bombs and rockets will turn a building to ashes. And when the

lost their homes, more than one-and-a-half thousand souls have been killed in Lebanon and in Israel, most of them civilians. Peace isn’t so hard; it just needs good men and women with a good heart and a love for their country. If you watch and listen to presidents of organization and leaders of political parties, I assure you that you will only get confused. I know that my only way to understand what is happening and where are we heading to is to take my pipe which can bear with me in these hard times. I

people came back, after the cessation of hostilities, they found their homes, buildings, and shops completely destroyed. Can you imagine that there are still undiscovered dead bodies under the rubble until now.

I know a shop for an internet and network computer games where there are always a minimum of twenty young people, girls and boys, it took the attackers one click of a button to destroy the whole shop. And in the south of Lebanon, the village of Kana was

fill it, give it a light and sit on my chair, trying to think clearly and ask myself: “Why?” And I prefer to let my answers inside me because talking reasonably in Lebanon is a crime. After concentrating on my pipe for a while, clearing my mind of the things that are going on, and enjoying the only moments with my pipe, I think that, unfortunately, I can’t share this with all the people in Lebanon. I hope things get better soon and I will tell the world that there is a country called Lebanon which refuses to be ruled by another country. And now what? After the war and the bombing has stopped, all the civilians are returning to their homes after one

the scene of a massacre where about thirty-five people, among them more than twenty children, and the images have shocked the whole world. But to Israel this cannot be called a massacre. Do you know why? Because an Israeli spokesperson said in an interview that a “massacre” must at least count fifty persons killed for it to be a “real” massacre. Just tell me which human being who has a heart and a brain and who calls himself a responsible person, can utter these words. Shame! Let me go back to my pipe...

Fares Irani

My Pipe and the War



I am writing these lines during the war waged on Lebanon by Israel. Despite all the horrors of wars, I can say that my pipesmoking, instead of decreasing, has increased manifold. Due to our enforced staying in the Bekaa Valley, hiding as best as we can from the “smart” bombs and missiles, I have found myself filling three or four bowls of Sail Black every day (thanks to Leo Starrenburg, from Holland, for his generous gift of an assortment of Sail tobaccos, mainly Blacks, which he sent upon reading that this specific Sail is unavailable in Lebanon!). Add to this that there was no work, that communications were cut, and that the roads were impracticable, and you get the picture. To spend my time in such conditions and retain my sanity, I took up my pipe at any time of the day, and also at night while watching with apprehension Israeli warplanes attacking various targets in the region.

As much as these were trying times, my trusted pipes kept me company and provided solace in moments of doubt, frustration, and anger. Another good side-effect is that these long smoking hours gave me some practice for the PCoLeb’s fifth annual competition!

Tarek Khalaf

Pipismoking and War



It was on August 12, 2006, when the war against Lebanon began. The next day, I woke up at the sounds of fighter jets humming all over Lebanon and I heard the

neighbors shouting: “the enemy has destroyed the airfield!” Later, Israel started committing massacre after massacre against the valiant Lebanese citizens and civilians, making false and immoral claims to cover up their hideous crimes.

Living through that war was very hard; especially that Lebanon is a small

country with limited—non-existent?—means of defense against two jealous neighbouring countries that take every opportunity to attack it and undermine its prosperity.

To get through the hard times, I had to concentrate my mind on the fact that everything is a passing phenomenon and that even the worst periods of time will end. As a pipe lover, my pipe was my resort. I dedicated a period every afternoon of every day during the war to smoking a pipe. One day I focused on the smoke and how it becomes dense as the fire in the pipe burns the tobacco but gives life to the pipe, and felt that it resembled the smoke made by the blows of the enemy’s bombs which burn our structures but light, paradoxically, the fire of resistance

in us which make us alive more than ever.

Now that the war has ended, I know that my pipe was—and will remain—my companion, and that it enabled me to find the right view and the right frame of mind to be able to think straight and feel well during all the hard times.

Being a Lebanese, I learned resilience from my fellow countrymen and would like to give a friendly advice: smoke a pipe and calm your mind whenever you feel a heavy burden on your chest; everything will change. Nothing is permanent.

Salim Khoury

Reflections on Pipismoking and Peace



“Pipe smoking is properly an intellectual exercise.” With these words, Christopher

Morley explained how he understood pipismoking, and we, at the Pipe Club of Lebanon, have adopted these words as our motto. Since then, we have set ourselves on a journey to discover what smoking a pipe is about, the true meaning that might lie behind it, and perhaps try to understand what pushed Christopher Morley to describe pipe smoking as an “intellectual exercise.”

Along the journey that started back in 2001, I have discovered a variety of meanings, and today, in times of war and aggression on our beloved country, it seems most appropriate to bring out peace, the peace of mind that pipe smoking can provide you. Pick up your pipe, fill it up with your favorite tobacco and your voyage into a new world of

your own creation will start with the light of your match. You will find yourself floating in a place where your mind, freed from the problems and complications of real life, is only surrounded by peace.

Smoking a pipe gives you the time you need for reflection. It teaches you to be patient and appreciate the things you have, including the most precious of all, life itself. A life that we must strive to preserve instead of destroying through wars. Evil and hatred can only come out when one loses his/her inner peace. A person who is always in conflict with others is only so because he/she is in conflict with one’s own self.

Along the years, we have struggled to spread our ideas about pipismoking. Sadly, some people have recently come to know about us because of the war. In their search for news and updates about the maddening course of events taking place in Lebanon, they have learned about our Pipe Club and even emailed us expressing their sympathy. For all our thanks, that is surely neither the way nor the circumstances we wished for.

Our comfort lies in the fact that we might have provided an example to follow, an example in patience, reflection, determination, and a noble detachment from those frustrating events. We hope that we have shown to the world that there are better ways in solving conflicts, more peaceful ways. Pipismoking will teach us to sit together, have discussions and experience differences in opinions. It also engages us in friendly competitions, where a pipismoker is eager to last the longest before relighting his or her pipe.

Indeed, as Paul Jahshan said, it is obvious that pipismoking will not directly affect the conduct of hostilities in the world, yet we, as serious pipismokers, believe that we are in a privileged position to spread our views on pipismoking and peace, hoping that this could be the start of an end to all wars.

Elie Seif

Arthur Ransome: War Correspondent



A classic example of the pipe smoker in conflict involves the *Manchester Guardian* journalist Arthur Ransome. In 1919 he wished to cross the border between Estonia and Russia, and wrote:

I filled a pipe, lit it, and with typewriter in one hand and bag in the other, walked over the hummock behind which we had stopped and set out across the open country towards that line that might or might not be the trenches of the Russians. I puffed pretty hard at my pipe, burning my tongue but producing lots of smoke. Nobody, I reasoned, was going to shoot at a man walking slowly across and obviously enjoying his tobacco. Certainly no Russian, whose natural curiosity was sure to be greater than any wish to let off a rifle. (Arthur Ransome, *Autobiography*, 276)

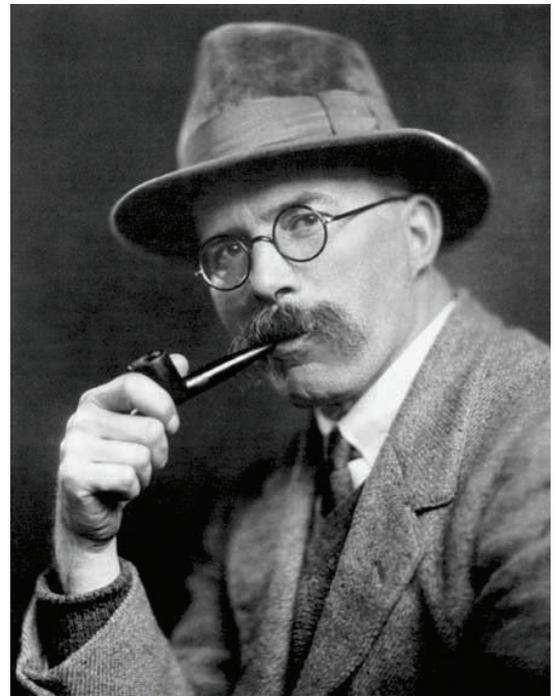
Not sure that I would recommend this tactic! The quote from the autobiography continues with the Russian soldiers using his tobacco to roll cigarettes. The background to Ransome's pipe smoking appears in his *Bohemia in London*:

The van drew up before the door. I...packed all my books into it, a railway rug, a bundle of clothes, and my one large chest, said goodbye to my relatives, then, after lighting my clay pipe and seating myself complacently on the tailboard, gave the order to start. I was as Columbus setting forth to a New World, a gypsy striking his tent for unknown woods; I felt as if I had been a wanderer in a caravan from my childhood as I loosened my coat, opened one or two more buttons in the flannel shirt that I wore open at the neck, and saw the red-brick houses slipping slowly behind me. The pride of it, to be sitting behind a van that I had hired myself to carry my own belongings to a place of my own choosing, to be absolutely a free man, whose most distant desires seemed instantly attainable: I have never known another afternoon like that.

and in his "Sailing in the Eastern Baltic" that appeared in the Spring 1923 *Bulletin of the Cruising Association*, an article that combined such diverse information as the virtues and failings of The Baltic Pilot, what languages were spoken on which islands, where there were still mines uncleared after the World War, and what the difficulties were in obtaining good pipe tobacco.

Ian Edmondson

Department of Environmental Science
Lancaster University
UK



Ransome as War Correspondent



Notice the pipe cradled in his right hand

The Pipe Club of Lebanon on the Net

- The PCoLeb has already been mentioned twice in the British newspaper *The Guardian*. On August 9, 2006, Jon Henley wrote in his "Diary":

Amid the horror of war, a voice of reason. "Dear pipe-smoking friends," writes Paul Jahshan PhD, assistant prof of American studies at Notre Dame University, Lebanon, and founding pres of the Pipe Club of Lebanon. "As you probably know, Lebanon has been in a state of war since July 12. Many thanks to those of you who emailed us expressing their sympathy. On this occasion, the Pipe Club of Lebanon would like to make a call for papers for the second issue of its journal, due September 15. The theme will be, appropriately, War and the Pipe Smoker. Possible ideas are: pipe smoking and war; pipe smoking and conflict situations; pipe smoking and peace; stories of pipe smoking in times of war; pipes surviving wars; the symbolism of the pipe as it relates to conflict situations; etc. Submissions should be between 500 and 1,500 words in length and may contain illustrations." The Diary says: give this man a medal. Read the full story [here](http://www.guardian.co.uk/diary/story/0,,1839941,00.html) (http://www.guardian.co.uk/diary/story/0,,1839941,00.html)

On September 7, 2006, the "Diary" carried these words:

Finally, a welcome reminder from our old friends at the Pipe Club of Lebanon that there is more to life than prime ministerial power struggles and exploding trouser crotches. "Pipesmoking will not directly affect hostilities in the world," writes Dr Paul Jahshan, the president. "Yet we, as serious pipesmokers, may be in a privileged position to provide an example, be it one of patience, reflection, courage, determination, and a stoic detachment from the maddening course of events." A truer word, we feel, was never spoke. Read the full story [here](http://www.guardian.co.uk/diary/story/0,,1866226,00.html) (http://www.guardian.co.uk/diary/story/0,,1866226,00.html)

- The Wrecking Crew, a page devoted to Harley Davidson bikes, at <http://www.wrecking-crew.co.uk>, has a link to us. Our friend Ian Edmondson is the site's webstuffer. Below is Ian in his "Wrecking Crew" gear.



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Announcements and PCoLeb Meeting Schedule

Announcements:

- The Pipe Club of Lebanon welcomes our new members in the recently created “Friends of the Pipe Club of Lebanon” section. Greetings to **Jorge García** from Uruguay and to **Luis McIntyre** from Argentina!
- We also welcome **Gihad Abi-Rached**, our second regular member. Gihad, who has also been around for a while, finally made up his mind during the club’s last meeting and was totally convinced while participating in our fifth pipesmoking competition, his first ever. Photos and short bios of all Friends and Members are available online.

Welcome to all!

On the PCoLeb’s Schedule:

The PCoLeb’s schedule for the coming three months (Oct.-Dec.) is as follows:

- First week of October: Club Meeting “Three Main Kinds of Tobacco”
- First week of November: Club Meeting “Italian Pipes”
- First week of November: Club Meeting “English Pipes”

Coming Soon from The Pipe Club of Lebanon:

Keep checking our page for the following projects:

- “The PCoLeb’s Complete Pipe Mouthpiece Treatment” **NEXT MONTH!**
 - The PCoLeb’s Examination and Ranking System **NEW!**
 - “The Book of Shapes” in a new format
 - “The Absolute No-Nos of Pipesmoking”
 - “A Brief History of the Pipe Club of Lebanon”

**Become a
member!**



About the Pipe Club of Lebanon: We are the premier pipe club in Lebanon and, probably, the first club of its kind in the Middle East. Our aim is threefold:

We want to become the rallying point for serious pipesmokers in Lebanon and in the Middle East.

We aspire to provide knowledgeable information about pipesmoking, about pipes, and about tobaccos to amateurs and professionals alike.

We are dedicated, as is clear in our motto, to eagerly investigate ways in which pipesmoking is “properly an intellectual exercise.”

Serious pipesmokers, be they beginners or veterans, are welcome to join us and share in our quest for the perfect pipe and the perfect smoke.

Visit us at www.pipecluboflebanon.org !