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A Wealth of Knowledge That Enriched Us All

Daniel L. M. Kennedy*

When I told my brother, who preceded me in law school, that I was going to take an international trade class from Professor Robert E. Hudec, he said, "People don't realize how important in the field he is until they leave law school." I was fortunate to learn before I graduated why this professor was so central to the field of international trade.

About a month into the trade class, I was honored to be chosen as Professor Hudec's research assistant for a groundbreaking empirical study of GATT dispute settlement cases. It quickly became apparent to me in reading panel decisions and articles that Robert Hudec's name was cited everywhere. I believe it remains impossible to find a meaningful article on GATT/WTO dispute settlement that does not cite Robert Hudec somewhere.

Professor Hudec's research project was ambitious: an encyclopedic analysis of all GATT disputes, from start to finish. He had a head start in that he had already published an analysis of early cases and others had followed his lead and done similar studies, but the number of cases had mushroomed and the proposed analysis was more detailed than before. It took four years of work before the results of his study were published in an article in this journal to which Professor Hudec generously added me and my successor research assistant as co-authors. This research data formed the foundation of his seminal 1993 book, *Enforcing International Trade Law*.¹

I treasured the time working with such an ace in the field. It wasn't just that he knew so much about nearly every GATT dispute, but that he kept pressing. When a dispute disappeared

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1. ROBERT E. HUDEC, *ENFORCING INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW: THE EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN GATT LEGAL SYSTEM* (1993).

without a formal resolution, he would read extensively and call people involved to learn what had happened—had there been a side deal made? Then, when he knew as much as he thought he realistically could about all the cases, he drew his conclusions.

Robert Hudec's conclusions and explanations of major trade issues serve as standards in the field. His talent for bringing readers beyond the obvious and behind the pretense led to his use of the phrase "transcending the ostensible" to describe what he sought to—and usually did—achieve. Official explanations and formal statements play an important part in international trade, but economic and political realities, together with an increasingly powerful dispute resolution structure, often produce the real stories. Professor Hudec had a way of finding these stories and retelling them in an understandable and witty manner. His voluminous writings will continue to educate and entertain those in the field of international trade.

Faculty and students at the University of Minnesota were lucky to know Professor Hudec and benefit from his generous sharing of his time and knowledge. In this forum, it should also be noted with appreciation that Professor Hudec played a critical role in the success of the *Minnesota Journal of Global Trade*.

Fourteen years ago, when a group of students desired to start a new law review at the University of Minnesota, two of us approached Professor Fred Morrison. We expected him to agree with our proposed focus on international law, which would allow us to take advantage of the strong international law faculty, notably Professor Morrison in public international law, Professor David Weissbrodt in human rights, and Professor Hudec in international trade. We were surprised when Professor Morrison encouraged us to narrow our focus to international trade. Not only did we have one of the world's foremost experts in our midst, he noted, but we had other law professors whose areas of expertise overlap with trade and notable faculty members in other university departments who meet regularly to discuss trade issues. We asked Professor Hudec to serve as the journal's advisor and he assented after we agreed to maintain an interdisciplinary character.

Professor Hudec helped this journal along in myriad ways. He helped with administrative matters and guided me as the first editor-in-chief, drawing on his experience in the same role at the *Yale Law Journal*. He called colleagues and asked them to consider submitting articles to our new journal. He chose our journal for publication of several articles. And until his retire-

ment, he advised student after student on their research and writing. He never complained about the impositions, but instead enthusiastically related the positive feedback his colleagues had given him on our university's new journal.

Robert and Marianne Hudec departed Minnesota in 2001 for quasi-retirement near their grandchildren in Boston, where Professor Hudec continued to teach at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. But he left our university strong in the field of international trade by collaborating with other faculty members, attracting new professors who taught trade topics, assembling the library resources to support research in the field, and supporting this journal so extensively. A diminished void is still a void, however, and those of us who knew him miss him both professionally and personally.

When Professor Hudec retired, the law school held a symposium and invited presenters representing a spectrum of countries and disciplines. Their essays, later published,² are a tribute not just to their friend and colleague but also to his analytical method of explaining in an understandable and entertaining manner what *really* goes on in trade issues. I heard from several participants that they welcomed the opportunity to tell Bob Hudec in a formal way how much his contributions are appreciated.

This appreciation makes it impossible to mourn Bob Hudec's death without celebrating his life. He enriched those around him in ways that were too profound to go unnoticed. For that, we will always be grateful.

2. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF ROBERT E. HUDEC (Daniel L. M. Kennedy & James D. Southwick eds., 2002).

