

# The Peter Principle Lives

## *Michael Rose's latest a comic masterpiece*

### *Suspended Sentences*

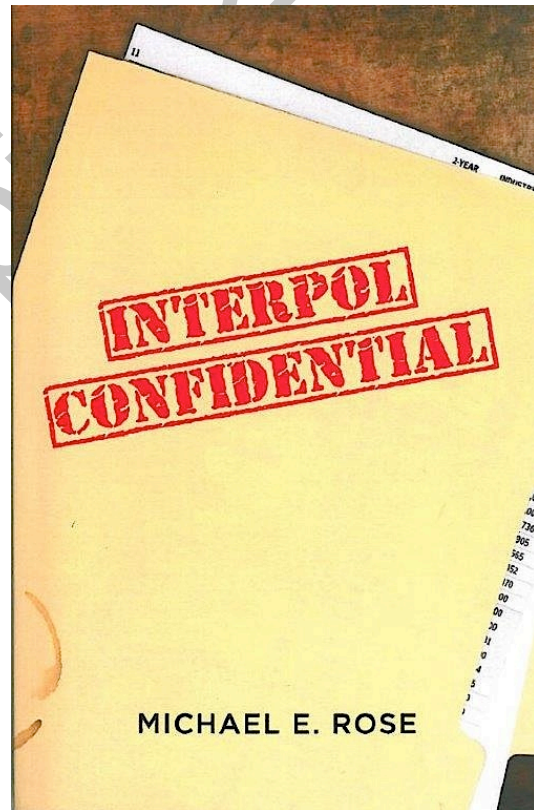
by Jim Napier

We live in stressful times, confronted with more bad news than good on a daily basis, but Montreal-born author Michael Rose has come forward with a timely tale that manages to shed light on those entrusted with our security and, at the same time, provide us with a much-needed humorous perspective on law enforcement at its highest level.

Things are not going well at Interpol, the world-wide agency charged with coordinating crime-busting efforts around the globe. It seems the recently-installed Interpol headquarters sign has fallen to the ground, narrowly missing a delegation of drunken police officers from Belarus, and a member of his own staff. Embarrassing all around.

Vain and ambitious, the Secretary-General of Interpol is not amused. Didier Herriot-Dupont (known as DHD – or ADHD by his detractors) is up for re-election, and views such

mishaps as threatening to his prospects. His position is being challenged by an American – a woman, no less – and the French powers-that-be have decided that only a Frenchman



should head the prestigious body, a view with which he heartily concurs. The situation is complicated by the fact that various national governments have infiltrated Interpol, the

better to keep abreast on what their colleagues know and to control events for their own benefit. There is even, in the building, an entire floor set aside for moles. The pervasive suspicion has led inexorably to a culture of discontent, grievances both voiced and not voiced, unfinished projects and abandoned initiatives, charges and recriminations. All in all, Interpol is not a happy ship.

When the Secretary-General's wife arrives from America, though, things actually take a turn for the worse. She is very much aware that her husband has been unfaithful, and, being a crack shot, arrives sporting a state-of-the-art automatic pistol in her luggage. The Secretary-General, then, is faced with conducting a war on two fronts, a turn of events that defeated both Napoleon and Hitler. Yet another bad omen.

The Secretary-General instructs his Chief of Staff to compile an "enemies list" prior to his bid for re-election, and the man notes with dismay that it runs to dozens of names, some including entire national governments.

But adding to his woes, he learns that a news crew from CNN is also planning to descend on Interpol with the sole aim of discovering scandal and incompetence. It would seem that the Secretary-General is facing an uphill battle for re-election, and as the General Assembly scheduled for Munich draws ever nearer, events move toward an uproarious climax that gives readers renewed hope that something akin to cosmic justice does, in fact, rule world events.

A contemporary, character-driven farce that reads wonderfully, author Michael Rose skillfully draws on his own experience working within Interpol to fashion an entertaining mix of incompetence, scheming, and paranoia that will have readers gripping their sides with laughter (and perhaps dismay). Once this tale hits the streets Rose should expect to find himself dropped from Interpol's Christmas-card list, but the rest of us owe him a big vote of thanks for a much-needed diversion from the grim news of the day.

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Originally published on the *Ottawa Review of Books*, April, 2016.

Since 2005 Jim Napier's reviews and interviews have appeared in several Canadian

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