



L'INSTITUT SHASTRI INDO-CANADIAN INDO-CANADIEN INSTITUTE

Professor Michael Brecher: A Passage of Time.....



Professor Michael Brecher passed away peacefully on January 16, 2022, at his home in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He was 96 years old and is survived by his three daughters and their families.

He was a scholar of International Relations and had been the R.B. Angus Professor at McGill University since 1954, retiring in the year 2021. In these 69 years, he trained generations of scholars who will continue his legacy of excellent scholarly work.

Professor Brecher's role in the founding of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute was noted by Edward Moulton, writing in 1978 in the journal *Pacific Affairs*, as a crucial one (Edward C. Moulton, "South Asian Studies in Canada, and the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute," *Pacific Affairs*, 51:2, Summer 1978, 247-48), and the Institute itself recalled in its fifth-anniversary Annual Report (of 1972-73) the way in which it had been Professor Brecher who was able to translate into reality the vision that had first been expressed by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri of India in 1965 and had subsequently been embraced by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson of Canada:

"It is now eight years since Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in his Convocation Address at McGill University in June 1965 suggested the setting up of an Institute dedicated to enhancing mutual understanding between India and Canada through the promotion of scholarly exchange in the field of the humanities and social sciences. Even before that time, a small group of Canadian scholars who had done research in India and who were struggling to launch programmes of Indian Studies in Canada began urging the Canadian and Indian Governments to make such opportunities possible. The prime role in this latter effort was played by Michael Brecher, Professor of Political Science at McGill University, the biographer of Jawaharlal Nehru. With support from the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi, from Ottawa, and from Prime Minister Gandhi's Government in India, the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute was officially inaugurated in November 1968 by joint Government announcement."

Professor Brecher himself contributed in 1992 an insightful analysis of the Shastri Institute's early years ("India and Canada: Origins and Assessment of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute," in Arthur G. Rubinoff, ed., *Canada and South Asia: Political and Strategic Relations*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1992), thus demonstrating his stature not only as a true founder of the Institute but also as a distinguished scholar who continued over time to chart its remarkable progress in fulfilling his own prescient concept of its ongoing role in enhancing Canada-India relations. That the Institute continues to thrive 53 years after its founding is in itself a powerful tribute to Professor Brecher's outstanding leadership.

Professor Brecher was one of the most important political scientists of his generation, in both Canadian and global contexts. His work focused especially on India: as well as many journal articles, he wrote important books such as *Nehru: A Political Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); *India and World Politics: Krishna Menon's View of the World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); and *Succession in India: A Study in Decision-Making* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966). He also published extensively on international affairs more broadly, especially in edited works such as *Studies in Crisis Behavior* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1979), and *Evaluating Methodology in International Studies* (with Frank P. Harvey; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

SICI is mourning the loss of its architect, but also celebrating his successful life.

Rest in peace Prof. Brecher!