

## Robert E. Hudec 1934–2003

Bob Hudec passed away on 12 March at the age of 68. In the world of GATT and WTO legal scholarship he was a towering intellectual figure of his generation.

The foundation of his life work was a comprehensive mastery of GATT and WTO legal doctrine and an inimitable capacity to write in a manner which rendered the most difficult and opaque issues easy and transparent. On that foundation he built an imposing edifice.

He was not, for example, content to expound the rules of dispute settlement, as most lawyers would do. He thought it important to explore their dynamics, understand their systemic importance and assess their impact. The result was pioneering empirical work long before the study of the GATT became popular among academics.

Neither did he shy away from the conceptual, theoretical and normative. His analyses of National Treatment probed depths which are unmatched in any of the panel reports and which only recently have become a staple of the profession. It is sometimes said that claims to originality simply display ignorance of past scholarship. In the central areas of trade law it is difficult to come upon insights that are not to be found or foreshadowed in Hudec's work.

Another important characteristic that set him apart from most other lawyers writing on GATT/WTO issues was his deep understanding of international trade theory. Nowhere is this more evident than in his 1987 book *Developing Countries in the GATT Legal System*, as well as in his more recent work on 'fair trade' issues.

Hudec was a pillar of the 'Ivory Tower' – in the best sense of that expression – but was equally respected in the 'real world', notably as an active participant in the resolution of international trade disputes. His panel decisions were wise and well drafted.

Part of the mission of this journal is to cultivate legal scholarship informed by the economic, political and social contexts in which law is situated ... a mission in the tradition of Bob Hudec.

The July 2004 issue of the Review will feature contributions exploring and honoring his work.

The Editor and the Members of the Editorial Board