

## **It's time to take stock of our good fortune on Canada Day**

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I feel fortunate to be a Canadian citizen. Many more immigrants apply to come to Canada than our Federal Government currently accepts, although Canada annually admits over 200,000 people. Currently plans are in place to increase the annual number of immigrants to 400,000 or more in future years (<https://www.immigration.ca>). According to world-wide statistics on new births, the chances of a newborn baby being a Canadian are less than one in 300 births ([Demographics of Canada](#), Wikipedia). So statistically, to be born a Canadian citizen is a little like winning a lottery. For a newborn baby it is a matter of good fortune.

In Canada we enjoy government-supported health care: this despite the fact that there are occasionally rather long waiting times for some medical procedures during the present pandemic. We do, however, have competent medical practitioners and nurses who are capable of offering excellent health care. As COVID-19 decreases other medical procedures are becoming more readily available.

We live in a democracy with freedom of speech and freedom of religious choice. We also enjoy freedom of political choice. We presently have “first past the post” elections although other options are explored from time to time, such as “proportional representation” which is now practiced in several European countries. Generally speaking, Canadians have relatively short election campaigns compared to our USA southern neighbour. For most Canadians our shorter campaigns are a preferable approach.

We are fortunate to have abundant natural resources. Canada is one of the largest countries world-wide, second in size only to Russia ([Largest Countries in the World by Aaron O'Neill, April, 2021](#)). Precious metals including diamonds, gold, silver and platinum are important minerals mined in Canada. Rare chemicals such as lithium for battery production and uranium are mined in Canada more abundantly than in other countries. Above ground, Canada's

timber industry flourishes. We also have the largest inland fresh water reserves and more inland lakes than other countries. With our large quantity of fresh water in our lakes, Canada has approximately one fifth of the total fresh water supply world-wide ([Ontario.ca](http://Ontario.ca))

We are relatively unprejudiced in our acceptance of the colour of one's skin whereas in USA blacks and whites are often fearful and wary of each other. While we are perhaps less racially prejudiced in Canada we need to be aware that historically, our indigenous people have sometimes been abused and treated unjustly. This is an important topic on which our federal government continues to seek solutions and fair treatment.

We are fortunate to have dependable energy sources such as natural gas, oil and hydro power, as well as nuclear energy. We live in a sparsely populated country where the weather is colder than in many developed countries. Yet Canada's transportation and energy relative to our population tend to be available and abundant.

In Canada we have had a good history of acting as peace-makers in many parts of the world since World War II. Nonetheless, our membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as well as support for the goals of the United Nations sometimes have put Canada under lengthy military obligations in peace-keeping. The tactics of modern war and peace-keeping are now technologically expensive since modern air power and other military developments are relatively complex. On balance, Canada can be proud of our record as peace-keepers.

Canadians who are able to travel within our country are privileged to enjoy excellent scenery from coast to coast. Examples are Peggy's Cove on our eastern shores and Cathedral Grove in MacMillan Provincial Park on Vancouver Island along our western shore. Canadians are fortunate to see a variety of beautiful scenery in Banff National Park, including Lake Louise in western Alberta. Yukon, North West Territories, and Nunavut are scenic as well as our maritime provinces. July 1, Canada Day, is a good time to appreciate Canada's magnificent scenery.

Canada Day is set aside as an annual national celebration of Canada's first birthday on July 1, 1867. Canada Day is an appropriate occasion for Canadians to take stock of our good fortune and to enjoy our Canadian citizenship.

Best wishes to all Canadians for a happy Canada Day on July 1, 2021.