



The Enlightenment



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O Canada

Today Canada is 149 years old. A year from now it will be our 150th birthday. For me, this brings back memories of our 100th birthday celebrations in 1967. In that year, I was fortunate enough to be living in Montreal and able to attend the magnificent Expo 67 on most weekends. As a nation we had much to be proud of. Canadians had formed a prosperous country of 10 provinces and 2 territories from sea to sea to sea. We had made very significant major contributions in 2 world wars and emerged as a nation of peace keepers. We had a society with reasonable income equality and it was possible to raise and educate a family on one income. We looked for greater things ahead.



Greater things have indeed happened. The advances in technology have been mindboggling with personal computers and smart phones now being ubiquitous. But on the economic scene, advances have not been as great. For many families it is now necessary for both parents to work if they wish to achieve the living standards of their parents. Also, job opportunities for our youth are not as prevalent as in the past. So we do have challenges ahead, but hopefully with foresight, determination and common sense, the challenges can be met.

As we look around the world today with its many problems, we must certainly be exceedingly grateful to live in Canada. Actress, physical fitness guru and activist Jane Fonda put it best when she said, "when I'm in Canada I feel like this is what the world should be like." Yes indeed, wouldn't it be wonderful if all the world's citizens could live in peaceful conditions, with clean water and enough food to eat. But unfortunately, this is not the reality, begging the question, why?

Why are we so fortunate? There are many answers, but one reason I believe, is because we are a secular country with firm separation of church and state and freedom to believe whatever we wish. As humanists, it is our challenge to insure we remain secular and indeed become more secular in the future. We must remember we are privileged to live in Canada, and it is our duty to perpetuate this precious privilege. (DAH).