



THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

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Canada's Adopted Citizens

BY BECOMING A CANADIAN CITIZEN a person shows that he is no longer satisfied to be merely a guest in the house where he lives but that he has, in fact, become one of the family.

In primitive times, when a person sought to live in another group than his own, ceremonial rites of adoption were necessary. These rites were supposed to make the incoming individual a blood member of the new group.

Citizenship implies acceptance of a code of behaviour, but that is only the starting point. It also gives one a set of anticipations and expectations. After a few years residence in Canada an adopted citizen becomes endowed with all the rights that any of us have.

There is little or nothing to distinguish a person born in Canada from an adopted citizen. People do not go around wearing badges.

If you are a newcomer you are free to lead your own life without reporting to any authority. You can start a business or get a job provided you have the necessary skills. You can buy a house, drive a car, educate your children, join all sorts of clubs and societies, express your opinions, claim the justice of the courts, and in general, live in the Canadian way.

The worth of these freedoms is more evident to adopted citizens than to those who have never experienced the repression and restraint associated with other ways of life.

Becoming a citizen gives you a sense of having a part to play in the community, of sharing fully in the duties as well as in the advantages of being Canadian. You realize that your contribution is appreciated and desired by fellow Canadians, and that you are accepted and welcomed along with the heritage and the culture you bring with you.

Practically all the races and nationalities of the world are represented in our foreign-born population. The ancestors of all of us wore animal skins and coloured themselves blue with woad to ward off evil powers. Today we work together in an enlightened way to build a country in which the best things become available to all of us.

An ethnic mosaic

Canadian citizenship today is a compendium of all Canada's past, contributed to by people from many countries. Every succeeding generation has added to the wealth of knowledge and the store of wisdom that was bequeathed to it. Every generation has been aware of the possibility of improvement, and has contributed its share.

Having assembled the vivid and adventurous spirits of numerous races, Canada has evolved a social philosophy that may be called an ethnic mosaic.

John Murray Gibbon wrote in the Preface to his book *Canadian Mosaic* (McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1938): "Some politicians want to see these [ethnic groups] merged as quickly as possible into one standard type, just as our neighbours in the United States are hurrying to make every citizen a 100 per cent American. Others believe in trying to preserve for the future Canadian race the most worthwhile qualities and traditions that each racial group has brought with it."

We believe that every race has something of special value which it can contribute to the attainment of Canada's high ideals. We believe that we must make useful to Canada the unique good that is in the adopted citizen. We believe that in differentiation, and not in uniformity, lies the path of greatest personal and national development. We believe that Canadian unity and identity are strengthened through intergroup understanding and increased participation by all citizens in their local and national communities.

In diversity is a treasury of riches. Nothing is valued more by our citizens who come from other countries than the sense of being fully accepted in the Canadian community without having to conform to a specified pattern.

A government multicultural policy, announced in October 1971, is designed to encourage ethnic groups and to help them to develop their culture and share it with their fellow citizens.

Our *Monthly Letter* in June that year said: "A

country that has geographical, racial, political and economic differences may draw itself together and bridge its divisions through blending its many cultures. Instead of existing as isolated clusters of people in detached provinces and communities, we become a group of men and women with common interests, and culture is the tie that binds.”

An example of the social intermingling of persons of several racial extractions was given at the St. Jean Baptiste Society ceremony opening the 1973 festivities of St. Jean Baptiste Day in Montreal. The celebration featured entertainment by Ukrainians and Romanians in national costume, dancing to the music of a “coureur de bois” band.

Coping with differences

There is no nation — perhaps not even one family — in which the members have complete unanimity of belief.

Becoming a good citizen does not mean that a person must adopt the same views as his neighbours about politics, art, economics or literature. It means permitting other people to have beliefs that are different from ours. Cross-fertilization is just as important in the intellectual kingdom as in the vegetable. We need pollen from one another’s minds.

When people state their opinions clearly, there is a chance that through debate they may come together. Once they agree on the objective toward which they are working, they can enter into dialogue about the details, keeping in mind the saving graces of humour and courtesy. Sweet reasonableness, gentle manners, and civility go hand-in-hand with effective effort.

Men and women find their greatest self-fulfilment in groups. All persons have passions, natural desires and noble ambitions. The practice of citizenship in a democratic country consists in bringing about the expression of these desires in harmony, and channelling them into constructive effort.

Citizenship is not a status conferred by the award of a certificate bearing the Seal of Canada. It is part of the process whereby a person enhances his happiness by entering into fruitful relations with his neighbours seeking their shared good as Canadians.

A citizen does not stand alone. He is one of as many million people as make up his nation. Sir Arthur Keith, distinguished scientist, tells us: “Of the millions of nerve units in the brain not one is isolated. All are connected and take part in handling the ceaseless streams of messages which flow into the brain from eyes, ears, fingers, feet, limbs and body.”

A community is built by similarly close relations between citizens. The individual good of every citizen depends upon the harmonious working of all the community. Here is a functioning group. The people in it see themselves as highly individual but at the same time as responsible citizens using organized action to improve their living environment.

Shape your destiny

The rational purpose of the state is to work out the best possible satisfaction of the changing wants of its members. A well-integrated individual life is impossible unless the social relations that surround it respond to its needs.

A marriage is needed of the technical age with a civilization that makes way for science while retaining the five fundamental qualities: truth, beauty, adventure, art and peace.

We need to lift up our heads and determine which way leads toward the sort of Canada in which we wish to live. When we decide what things must be changed, and are brave enough to go to work on them, we are headed in the right direction.

The dignity of man demands that he participate actively in shaping his own destiny. Indolent people cannot enjoy the fruits of citizenship. Only people who are small in character and weak in intelligence are content to look on, and conjecture, and gossip in undignified idleness instead of putting their hands to construction of something desirable.

Becoming part of

The people who are Canadians by accident of birth and those who chose Canada to be their home are alike in this: they started life with a heritage of goodly beliefs, and along their path they have heard, felt, thought and learned much. They should care enough about the past to learn what it has contributed to today, and go on to add their contribution to the structure.

Canada has institutions which encourage every man and woman who has industry and ability to rise to any position in the land. To start with, in nearly every urban centre and in many rural districts, language and citizenship classes are conducted by the local school authorities or by voluntary organizations. Language study books are provided free by the Government’s Citizenship Branch to Departments of Education and voluntary organizations that conduct language classes. Booklets which give information about Canada are available to persons preparing themselves for citizenship.

There is a big array of adult education classes. Many institutions, including school boards, provincial and private schools, business and professional associations, community colleges and universities, offer a variety of correspondence and extension courses. Hundreds of thousands of adults are pursuing academic, vocational and cultural education to obtain diplomas or to gain individual satisfaction.

The most effective way for individuals to improve the quality of their lives is through organizations founded by citizens for purposes which they themselves have determined. The Citizenship Branch cooperates with voluntary agencies and with social action groups which express the needs and interests of

people across Canada. The interests may be in the theatre, ballet, festivals, music, visual arts, writing. To supplement this work there are many museums, art galleries, libraries, television and radio.

Its work is done by the Citizenship Branch through eighteen regional offices which work closely with citizens' groups, organizations and local government agencies. Regional officers, trained in the social sciences, are available to help agencies and groups to organize and plan.

Many thousands of persons are helped by newspapers published in languages other than English or French. These total about 85; they appear in 23 languages, and have a circulation of close to three million.

Through this press, loneliness of newcomers is eased, they are made acquainted with Canada's aspirations, problems and opportunities; and they are assisted to fit into and make the most of their new way of life. They feel free to go into one of their newspaper offices for information about jobs and housing and other things that affect them.

Seek rewarding citizenship

The rich rewards of citizenship are within the reach of everyone who wants them. The foundations of citizenship do not consist of statistics and research projects that can be traced on squared paper, but of wisdom, belief in betterment, and virtue found in the hearts of people.

Citizenship means, like culture, religion and education, progress of the individual and of the group toward something which they ardently desire. Being a citizen is part of their outreaching for Utopia. Every step opens up a whole new vista.

J. B. S. Haldane, the "burly, tweedy, shaggy man" of many academic and scientific distinctions, wrote: "I have not very much use for people who are not in touch with the invisible world. At best they are good animals, and too often not even that. . . . If you do not make any contact with this timeless world (in other words, have no inner life) you have at best a very precarious hold on happiness."

The good citizen participates in and promotes education; he supports his church and other good moral forces; he takes part with intelligence in the selection of persons to represent him in government; he believes in the family and its duties; he does the best work of which he is capable, in whatever profession, trade or business he engages; he takes part in programmes for the good of his community. He bears allegiance to ideals, to the system of liberty and order that Canadians live under.

Diversity of culture

Citizenship is the daughter and mother of civilization. Comte de Mirabeau, the most important figure in the first two years of the French Revolution, asso-

ciated civilization especially with women. He regarded it as a condition of humane laws, customs and manners, of relatively tender human relations. It is not to be measured by the number of automobiles per hundred thousand population, but by the number of good people per thousand.

Social organization is the standardized manner in which groups behave. A civilized person gets along with other civilized persons no matter where they were born or to what race they belong. The higher the state of civilization the more completely do the actions of one member of the social body influence all the rest.

Within civilization, there is a diversity of culture. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism reported a few years ago: "There cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others."

All cultural groups are essential elements in the community of cultures which make Canada what it is. They are encouraged to share their cultural expression and values with other Canadians, thereby contributing to a richer life for all.

Culture is not a fixed thing, imposed once and forever. New requirements arise from new knowledge and new circumstances. It is a deposit from the activities of men and women as they endeavour to control reality for the satisfaction of their wishes. The members of each generation receive the cultural heritage from preceding generations, adapt themselves to it, add to it, and pass it on to their descendants.

No culture is ever complete. That would be stagnation. We borrow and accept from others the ideas, beliefs and practices that will enhance our own culture. The outcome, some time in future, will be a Canadian culture to which all have contributed and from which all benefit.

The form of government under which people live is part of civilization, and, indeed, it is a guide to how civilized they are. Good government can be provided only by socially-minded citizens organized for their "better ordering and preservation" as was written in the Mayflower Compact.

There is no compulsion upon a citizen to vote in any election, but the good citizen will prize and will not throw away this valuable right. The democratic system and the Canadian form of representative government rely upon the ability and willingness of citizens to accept the responsibility of citizenship, taking a lively interest in issues of the day so that the laws of the state represent the will of the majority of citizens.

The real laboratory for democracy must be in the community. Here are all the institutional modes of life as expressed in the home, the church, the school, the state; here are the hundreds of "little states", called by Pope Leo XIII, "the 'Society' of a man's own

household"; here are younger citizens in the making and older citizens in the remaking.

Freedom to think and speak

Upon the thoughts and actions of the individual citizen depends the continued existence of democratic freedom. Liberty grants us the right to act without undue interference. We are, like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, free as long as we keep some rules.

John Stuart Mill, philosopher and economist, wrote in his essay "On Liberty": "The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it."

Kahlil Gibran, the Lebanese poet, essayist and philosopher, asked the question: "What is it to be a good citizen?" He answered: "It is to acknowledge the other person's rights before asserting your own, but always to be conscious of your own. It is to be free in word and deed, but it is also to know that your freedom is subject to the other person's freedom."

The liberty to express and publish opinions is of almost as much importance as the liberty to think of them. Every person is encouraged, in Canada, to expound his honest beliefs. If what a public representative says or does displeases us, we are free to express our distaste.

There is no repression of the communication of ideas, even of ideas which advocate the separation of Canada into a western alignment with the United States, a prairie authority based upon wheat and oil; a French cultural bloc; or a Maritime confederacy aligned with the United States. All these are freely stated, patiently heard, and deeply considered.

Democracy and freedom include what are called civil rights. These are the legal immunities of individuals which the state protects against interference. Here are some of the rights that are considered fundamental in Canada, and they belong to all the people, to every individual, and to none more than to another: the right to life, to personal freedom, to contract, to earn a livelihood, to freedom of belief and speech; to associate; and to equality before the law.

The word "right" has a powerful appeal. It carries with it the idea of the square deal upheld and enforced by the state. To have a home of your own, to do what you like in your spare time, to leave the country when you wish and enter it again, to select your own amusements, and to work at what you choose and are fitted for — these are rights that are not available everywhere. They are part of the fabric of a democracy like Canada.

Morals, law and justice

Every citizen plays his part in determining the character of the conscience of his nation. Society has established more or less definite standards for conduct; it has agreed upon a certain set of rules. These are not chains, but just restraints in the interest of all the people. They conspire with quiet inducements and

concealed checks to keep the surface of life comparatively respectable.

The goodness of a nation must embody itself in the life and ideals of its citizens. Ideals are something very personal, developed within the hearts and minds of men and women. It is as useless to discuss an ideal with someone who cannot perceive it as to discuss Beethoven's piano sonatas with a person who has no ear for music. But most men and women in Canada have an instinctive appreciation of, and love for, what is right, just as artists have for what is beautiful.

Happiness through citizenship

It is not enough to fulfil the animal function of keeping alive. That is merely the means toward the end of enjoying life.

Happiness includes, among other things, the satisfaction which can come only through the full development and utilization of one's faculties.

To be happy, newcomers and old-timers alike need to approach life as a wholeness. It is not merely, or even primarily, physical or economic or aesthetic. It is all of these put together, with emphasis on this or that according to our own nature, character and aspirations.

Values emerge from life at all its levels: there is virtue, as Plato saw, in the good shoemaker, quite as much as there is in the philosophic guardians of the Republic.

Love, art, poetry, disinterested thought, service to others, the pursuit of non-utilitarian activities and the enjoyment of non-consumable goods — all these are beyond calculation in dollars and cents, and a life that does not enter into their realm is incomplete. They are at least as much part of the reality of a happy life as are atoms and electrons.

It is not enough to be mentally brilliant in order to be happy. You may be able, like Rev. Charles Dodgson, to recite *pi* to 71 decimal places, but unless you have something of the love of life and the sparkling imagination he displayed when he wrote *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* you are not enjoying all that life has to offer.

The Canadian attitude toward adopted citizens should offer them: the opportunity to serve Canada as good citizens; the possibility of personal development, of satisfying body needs, of building up adequacy and self-reliability.

Then it should point the way to extend the range of their participation in the country's life, of achieving their expectancies, of building up congenial loyalties and friendships with persons and groups, and of finding opportunities to serve Canada as citizen members of the family.

Canada's variegated population may be likened to the little dabs of colour an artist spreads on his palette. With these colours, Canada can paint a masterpiece showing national life at its most beautiful and its illustrious best.



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HEAD OFFICE - MONTREAL

W. EARLE McLAUGHLIN
CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT

November 1973

To the readers of the Monthly Letter:

With this edition of the Royal Bank Monthly Letter we are marking the thirtieth anniversary of a continuing endeavour by John Heron, who has been the author of every Monthly Letter since December 1943.

Prior to that time we had been publishing a letter directed exclusively to the world of business and finance. John Heron began his writing career with us by saying "I couldn't write that stuff!" Rather than attempting to imitate his predecessors, he remained true to himself and to his training as a journalist by choosing to write on subjects he knew and in a way with which he was familiar. During the past thirty years his essays have touched on education, youth, health, the family, communications, and—perhaps his favourite subject—Canada. Each has been of interest and help to thousands of people throughout the world.

Honours are not new to John Heron. Statesmen and students, universities and governments have all lauded him. Yet in spite of an abundance of citations, awards and letters of appreciation, he shrugs off praise as he does any discussion on economics and finance.

One of his favourite quotations is from Montaigne:

"I gather the flowers by the wayside, by the
brooks and in the meadows, and only the string
with which I bind them together is my own."

On behalf of more than seven hundred and fifty thousand people in over one hundred countries who receive our Monthly Letter, I wish John Heron an abundance of flowers to gather and sufficient string for all his years to come as our essayist.

W. Earle McLaughlin.