

## *O Canada!*

My home, my heart, my kith and kin, are found in Niagara Falls, New York. The mighty River connecting the great Lakes Erie and Ontario, punctuated by the thunderous cataracts and roiling rapids, forms a magnificent natural demarcation between my native soil and the great Dominion of Canada.

Growing up I breathed the air of Canada. Along the Lower Niagara River my family has two abodes that look across the deep green-blue waters towards our great neighbor. I cannot think of home without thinking of Canada.

My earliest memories are filled with innumerable crossings of that erstwhile friendliest and longest unguarded border in the world. My family loved Canada for its English charm and easy going pace. We marveled at its deep lakes, sandy beaches, picturesque villages, ice wine and red sunsets. As a young boy my friends and I could ride our bicycles unaccompanied across the international bridge spanning the fearsome gorge below. There was always a customs and immigration booth to pass through. In those bygone days no passport nor even identification was required. It was just a friendly exchange: *"Hello boys, how long will you be with us in Canada?"* Bygone days in sooth.

At age eleven I experienced my inaugural high adventure foray into the wilds of Ontario. My first canoe trip was with my father and brothers during a rainy yet stunning October to a land speckled with a thousand glacial lakes: the Algonquin Highlands. There I learned how to survive in the forest, to paddle a straight course in a gusty headwind on Lake Opeongo and portage a heavy wooden canoe on my shoulders for miles. In Canada I learned to split wood to reach its dry core, treasure the invaluable flammable paper-thin birch bark and sap of the pine to light a fire with one match in a downpour. Paddling the mystic lake country, we sang the hearty songs of the French-Canadian voyageurs of old in the very waters they explored and trapped, dipping our cups to drink from the pristine water without concern.

In the deep sleep of winter we would head into that forbidding Northland to snowshoe through waist deep powder across frozen lakes dotted with wolf tracks, using shovels and axes to hack through ice three feet thick so as to slake our thirst on the coveted fresh water beneath. Pitching our tents and crawling into double sleeping bags we proved that a man can survive the dark, windy night at 20 degrees below zero. Emerging from those cocoons in the bitter morning air was a test of the will. My brother and mentor, affectionately dubbed "Pierre le Voyageur," was always first to rise and awake the crew with his uncanny ability to imitate the rooster's crow, a rather unsettling, slightly charming talent.

Amongst the sugar maples, blue spruce and silver birch the air was fresh and exhilarating. Along the streams we would traverse beaver dams; and in the grassy shallows of lakes behold the mighty moose wandering at ease. On occasion we would come across the stern warning of black bear tracks. I have heard the howls of wolves in the midnight darkness, and the haunting call of the loon on the misty lakes at twilight.

In my sixteenth year, the best of my life, Pierre led us on a high adventure canoe trip that commenced 1,000 miles North of my home. Down the Missinaibi River for ten arduous days of dawn to dusk paddling we went, through a terrain of scrappy mosquito infested evergreens that the harsh climate stunted at 15 feet tall. We ended that epic voyage at the frigid salt water of the lower reaches of Hudson's Bay, at an isolated Indian village named Moosonee.

A dozen trips to Quebec introduced me to the past glory of French colonial Catholicism, holy shrines and the marvel of the autumnal Canadian colors. In the Western Provinces I have beheld the bright sun illuminating the golden wheat of the Albertan Great Plains, the snowcapped peaks of the Canadian Rockies and the lush vales of British Columbia.

On a 2,000 mile trek from the Old Dominion State through Yankee Maine and the picturesque Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, I stood at the magic, towering cliffs of the Bay of Fundy and watched the roaring 20 foot tide rapidly engulf the shore line I had just walked. We followed *Le Chemin Français* of tragic Evangeline's *Acadie*, and ate fresh lobster every day for a week. Sailing six hours across the sea, past breaching whales, we at last reached the Island of Newfoundland, the Easternmost point of Canada and a sovereign Dominion in its own right until 1939.

Northward we journeyed up its Western Peninsula into the sub-arctic climate whereat is located L'Anse aux Meadows and the lost Norse settlement of Vinland. Mountainous icebergs drifted southward in the distance, giant sentinels from far off Greenland. At L'Anse stands a bold and imposing statue of the Catholic Viking Leif Erikson, with leather

helmet atop his head and the mighty cross of Christianity on his breast. - the first European to set foot in the New World, fully 500 years before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. Across the strait lay remote, forbidding Labrador.

Canada is a mythic land, a proud member of the vast and vestigial British Commonwealth and the second largest nation on Earth. Yet it is a land whose people have been steadily strangled by socialism's ever-tightening grip.

In normal times, most people cannot even identify the Prime Minister of Canada. But history will long remember the infamous name of Justin Pierre Trudeau. He is the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada. A baptized Catholic yet traitor to throne and altar, he has defended and promoted the corruption of his land via a globalist, pro-abortion trumpeting of the anti-Christian new world order.

Capitalizing upon the tragedy of covid, he and his fellow travelers have ushered in a paranoid and dictatorial regime. Out of a purported concern for the health of his citizens he is crushing them with an iron fist. Exactly how does a thinking man take seriously the protestations of a pro-abortion party that prattles on about protecting human lives? This ideology has dug a moat around a huge segment of society, not only to exclude them from society, but to deny their very humanity and take their lives.

They have dulled minds with marijuana even as they inject bodies with mRNA. The inclusive Prime Minister has been steadily broadening his circle of the excluded; for under the banner of "inclusivity" those who dissent from the Narrative are having their civil liberties systematically eroded.

This societal cancer is in truth international. It is the anti-God and therefore the anti-human party. It demands compliance, acquiescence to government fatwas, domination and control of body and soul - all this in the name of the public health and that ever deceptive inclusivity. Leviathan has been bloated by its exploitation of the plauge.

The world watches as an unlikely coalition of Canadian truckers have led a resistance and a straightforward appeal to stop the madness and end all coercive, destructive mandates that do harm even as they pretend to do good.

The reaction of the Prime Minister is revealing and history must learn from it; for he is becoming ever more tyrannical and actually invoked the Canadian quasi-equivalent of a war powers act. He attempted to freeze the bank accounts of Canadian protesters and has vowed to pursue dissenters from the party orthodoxy. Even the noble Royal Canadian Mounted Police are being used to persecute the political recusants of the land.

Justin Trudeau has apparently lost his mind (or perhaps has revealed it), being on public record as villainizing those who oppose his policies as racist, misogynist, extremists, Nazis and sect members. Yet these are his own people.

Against the force of a government drunk on power stand the patriotic red-blooded truckers of Canada who are standing up for all Canadians and by extension, for all men born free. Today we are all Canadians.

Canada is the second largest country in the world but has the population of California. It is fair to speculate whether it is being used as a test case to see what it takes to condition a populace for abject compliance. We must take note and be deeply concerned because that same ideological virus is infecting the body politic of our land as well.

As a boy I learned the beautiful Canadian National Anthem attending hockey games when the Buffalo Sabres would face off against the Toronto Maple Leafs or Montreal Canadiens in our War Memorial Auditorium. Hearing those two proud hymns sung one after the other in a genuine moment of international friendship has left a deep mark on my psyche. The Canadian anthem contains a prayer and stirring verses that move the soul:

*O Canada! Our home and native land, true patriot love, in all thy sons command!  
God keep our land, glorious and free! O Canada! We stand on guard for thee!*

My friends, now is the time to join Canada's booming chorus of patriotism, for freedom's sake.

Fr. Francis M. de Rosa, Pastor, 2-22-22