

WHY ARE WE HERE?

In asking “Why”?, Mary Jo Leddy proceeds to pose a simple yet complex question of four words.

Who are “we”? Where is “here”?

The question can be asked of many different people in varying circumstances.

Two cellmates might ask “Why are we here”? The answer is a “consequence” as in the case of our two cellmates who find themselves incarcerated in consequence of their having been found guilty of breaking the law. In this case the “Why” is in the “consequence”, the “We” and the “Here” are both specific; “We” being the cellmates and “Here” being the prison.

For Mary Jo Leddy “Here” is the land mass, the country of Canada; “We” is the personality of Canada – the cultures and the people we call Canadians.

In my opinion, Ms. Leddy has presented a quiet look at the darker side – a relatively straight forward thing to do when a person has the benefit of hind sight – 20/20 vision.

I would like to suggest that “We”, the ACTS Book Club and all Canadians are “Here” in consequence of the great courage of 36 men we know as The Fathers of Confederation.

Forged with some understanding of the U.S. Civil War and other actions in the Atlantic Ocean and the invisible border, and fearing annexation by the U.S., a Constitution was written through three (3) significant meetings held in Charlottetown and Quebec City in 1864 and London, England in 1866 preceding Confederation in 1867 and the “birth of a nation” a colony (Dominion) within the British Empire.

Mary Jo speaks of Power in the context of Imperial geopolitical power, the power of Knowledge and Technology and location of power in the sense of the Centre of Power or the Periphery of Power and then of Power to be Responsible.

You Fathers of Confederation are my heroes – when I bleed my colleagues know I bleed “Red Maple Leaves”.

Consider Imperial Power – do you prefer being the Province of Alberta, Canada or would you prefer to be the State of Canada, U.S.A. with less “so called power” than the State of Montana?

Consider the Power of Knowledge and Technology – as Canadians 37 million strong I firmly believe Canada “punches above her weight in the International Community” – Yes we acknowledge there are certain areas of shortcoming but is it not better to deal with these issues now rather than wait 150 years for a whining politician to apologize, all the while vilifying the great Canadians of the past.

If denial of Sir John A MacDonald, as has been the case in Victoria, B.C. or Sir Hector-Louis Langevin, as has been the case in Calgary is considered a medication to cure “political illnesses” of the past, I fear our lack of understanding is magnified.

Close to home we have Sir Hector-Louis Langevin:

1858 – 1861 Mayor of Quebec City

M.P. in the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada

1864 – 1866 Solicitor General

1867 – 1869 Secretary of State

1868 – 1869 Superintendent General of Indian Affairs

1869 – 1873 Minister of Public Works

1878 – 1879 Postmaster General

Behind the scenes he lobbied against the hanging of Louis Riel in 1885

Despite this outstanding record of public service to the newborn Canada, the City of Calgary in January of 2017 struck the name of the Langevin Bridge and renamed it the “Reconciliation Bridge” and 6 months later the Langevin Block on Parliament Hill was renamed “Office of the Prime Minister and Privy Council”.

Dear Friends, the Fathers of Confederation, collectively and / or individually were not evil men!!!!

Mary Jo addresses what she refers to as “The Decline of the American Empire”.

History books tell of the “Fall of the Roman Empire”, “The Rise and Fall of the 3rd Reich”, the “Decline of the British Empire” so we should not be surprised to read of an upcoming, if not already, decline in American Influence.

Following a successful entry and campaign in World War II, the Marshall Plan of assistance to Berlin and the aid in rebuilding Japanese Industry demonstrated a positive approach to political and economic structures of old foes; however, as Mary Jo explains in the 1950s this positive view of the world veered strongly away from that which America (U.S.A.) stood FOR to focus upon that which America is AGAINST citing examples of Communism, Noriega, Saddam-Hussein, the Taliban and “terrorists”.

In Canada, Mary Jo cites Quebecois against English Canada / “the West” against “the East” / “the North” against “the South” / “rural areas” against “big cities” / environmentalists against “Big Oil”,

This NEGATIVE attitude can be seen here in Canada as a Federal Election was conducted; as a Provincial Election has taken place, and locally as a referendum built momentum on that which we cannot do rather upon that which we can do and the benefits therefrom.

The question raised for politicians and all the citizenry is WHAT ARE WE FOR – once defined the non-partisan cooperative approach to achieving goals can and should result in a synergism the envy of all onlookers.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, It is our time to give thanks

We give thanks for the privilege of meeting together with friends as we do these Monday evenings.

We give thanks for the environment / jurisdiction in which we live granting each of us freedom of expression.

We give thanks for societal leaders who provide leadership with honesty and integrity.

We give thanks for all the little things we complain about knowing that somewhere in the world young men and women will die tonight fighting for such rights and things

Help us and all Canadians this evening and every day to learn something from each other leading to greater understanding of individual characteristics which in synergy makes St. David's and our Canada a place of open hearts, open minds, love and compassion.

Amen