



A day to ponder, a time to improve

OPINION

Re: "Let's cancel Canada Day" (Emilie Nicolas, June 29)



As Canada day approaches, many have decided not to celebrate, as an act of protest in response to the recent discoveries of 751 unmarked graves at the site of a former residential school in Saskatchewan and 215 at another such site in British Columbia.

In respect those who have made this choice. Protest and dissent are fundamental to our democracy.

This year I will choose to consider Canada Day as time for robust reflection. My Canadian life experience as a son of Italian immigrant parents will no doubt continue to evoke in me the sense of gratitude to the Canada that I believe is still a beacon of hope.

A country that has been so good to me, my family and countless millions who chose to build a new life in Canada - a vast country of magnificent vistas and boundless opportunity.

The greatness of Canada comes in no small measure from the character of its people, known for our civility and understated pride in our country.

We are also an honest people. In 2021 we must acknowledge that in too many of our yesterdays this same Canada failed to live up its promise of freedom, equality and justice.

It is clear that the country's march of success and prosperity was accompanied by systemic racial discrimination that has left too many people behind.

It is time for the governed to insist that our government stop expressing hollow high-minded words and start acting to right the wrongs of the past that shames the Canada of the present.

The Canada I believe in is the Canada that will work today to make our tomorrows better, to bring us closer to that elusive just society - for everyone.

- Ralph Mastro Monaco, Montréal.
www.mastromonaco.ca