

Today's Notes:**1. Reflections on Labour Day 2010****1. LABOUR DAY**

Yesterday was a gorgeous Labor Day in both Canada and the US. Few people realize that Labor Day originated in Canada in 1869 to honor the hard work and labor of those building that country.

The streets in northern NJ where I reside were empty, sidewalks too. Yesterday offered some of the most beautiful weather here in the New Jersey / New York area. Yesterday was very similar to another sunny warm September day nine years ago- 9/11 when this country was attacked.

So Yesterday I woke up and I took a long slow walk to visit an old local cemetery. Few people, even here in NJ, realize that the Morristown area is one of the oldest and most important founding areas in this country. Not more than 300 meters from my home one of the first iron forges in the United States was built in 1710. At the time this beautiful countryside was controlled by Great Britain. By the way Northern New Jersey is still beautiful contrary to popular belief about New Jersey. The first continuous paper company was developed here in the late 18th century as well. Immediately across from my home, now the empty remnants of Lucent / Bell Labs, the French army in 1789 camped and marched all away to Yorktown to help defeat the British Army in the Revolutionary War. So there is much rich history here. A mile down the road, at Morristown, is the northern headquarters of George Washington while he was commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

Yesterday was a great day off to reflect. As I walked to one of the oldest cemetery in northern New Jersey, I noticed that there were many very old tombstones. Perhaps the oldest I found was one that dated from the year 1811. This soul been born in 1747. In this country, founded less than 250 years ago, it doesn't come much older. But one thing I did notice was that this was the grave of a lowly private in the Continental Line, a soldier who fought in the Revolutionary War.

His name was David Cory. Mr. Cory was born 1747, passed in 1811 just before the second major war of the US won by Canada, the War of 1812. As you can see from the picture Mr. Cory was a private in the Continental line. The Revolutionary War was fought for independence primarily from taxation. Is there anything familiar here? This was also a war fought for fundamental rights and the development of the essence of the "American" ethic of free speech and religion.

Having grown up Canadian I still retain citizenship in that country. I realize that Canadians fought for their freedom and celebrate the War of 1812. So I reflected yesterday on this Labor Day about what is really going on in our world. I took some pictures yesterday just to remind me of our long joint history. Below you will see two generations of the first "Americans" who fought for freedom in a time of great peril and danger. Sometimes I think we forget where we came from and who we are. As you can see Abraham Kitchell was born in 1679 and he passed from this earth in 1741 six

years before Mr. Cory was born. Mr. Kitchell was one of the six founding judges in Morris County in what is now northern New Jersey. As the traffic began to whiz by on Route 10 I tried to imagine what life must've been like in 1740 here in Whippany and Morristown. This originally was the home of the Whippanong Indians, a branch of the Hurons, hence the name of the village Whippany. They too had a claim on this land. As you can see Mr. Kitchell has two flags honouring his grave, one American and one British giving testament to our common heritage. It is interesting to think of our original forefathers as immigrants. Most people focus on the early 20th century when immigrants came from Spain, Italy and Germany. The first immigrants were from Britain and owed allegiance to the King.

For a host of reasons these people eventually established the legal system based on British Common Law, established farms and commerce and then revolted. Thus we view Mr. David Cory's history with interest. There are in fact several graves in this cemetery to honor soldiers of the Continental Line who fought, some died, some froze, some starved and some survived to help build the nation.

All these people were laborers as well. Debt was unknown. Many were tradesmen and farmers. From the land they built homes, iron forges, paper mills and the tools of their trade. They knew no day off for Labor Day. Instead many took up arms to create a nation. Looking back at history gives us unique perspective on their trials and tribulations and their great successes. No matter the complaints today, and there are many, the US and Canada are both great countries who have for years led the world in establishing the many freedoms we all enjoy.



Canadians and Americans have a common heritage the different social political ambitions. But they have already always been ready to defend freedom and create prosperity. Lest we forget on Labor Day 2010 these values are unique in the world and guarding them is even more important in today's very difficult and trying times.



For the next two weeks I will be traveling in Europe. I will be writing infrequently but I will try to keep in touch. I can be reached by email. Obviously there is much trouble in the world. It seems to be happening with increasing frequency. My son Chris will be writing Morning Notes during the next two and half weeks and I shall report back on my findings on the economies of southern Europe in due course.

I looked out my window this morning and realized it was back-to-school time. Standing out front of our home waiting for a school bus were about 8 girls and 3 boys. The boys were standing aloof from the girls. All sprouted new backpacks. Some had cell phones. All were excited at being able to go back to school and socialize and learn with their friends. This is our future. Please reflect this AM on what we can do to protect our country from all the many threats that now face the economy, environment and those who would attempt to destroy our way of life and that of our children and grandchildren.

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