

## NEWS & VIEWS

### IS THERE A PLACE FOR GOD IN CONSTITUTION

In general, religious beliefs are not as widespread in modern society as they were once. The population of atheists is increasing with the increase in scientific information, because many religious concepts cannot stand the test of science and logic. Therefore, people are losing faith in religions. Now the atheists have attacked the Canadian constitution to remove God from it. Decreasing morality; increase in number of divorces, teenage mothers, children without parents; shooting sprees by young students in schools and indiscriminate shooting by grown-up persons in institutions, restaurants, and other public places will force the humanity to think seriously to find solution to these serious problems. It appears that there is going to be tough argument about the place of God and morality in personal lives of the next generations during the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Svend Robinson caused a stir in the House of Commons when he delivered a petition from about 1,000 of his BC (British Columbia) constituents calling for removal of reference to God from the constitution. The only New Democrat present, Robinson listened to taunts from other MPs while he read the petition urging Ottawa to amend the Charter of Rights and Freedom, which states *"Canada is founded upon principles that the supremacy of God and the rule of law."* The petition suggested changing the reference to *"the supremacy of intellectual freedom and the rule of law."*[1].

The Humanist Association of Canada, which drafted the petition and protested quietly outside, and said it is a *"discriminatory reference and offensive to millions of Canadians who are non-Christian and non-religious."* The atheists believe that *"A Person Without God Is Like a Fish Without a Bicycle."* On the other hand Rev. Tony Van Hee, Roman Catholic priest says, *"With the best intentions and the best will in the world, without God we self-destruct."*[1].

The Federal Government has shelved the proposal to usher God out of Canadian constitution and Canadian courtrooms. *"Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"* while keeping a hand on the Bible, will stay. However, the Canadians have a choice to take any other oath without Bible [2].

The Editorial of the Gazette says, *"Dropping the reference to God would in no way infringe on the freedom of individual Canadians - quite likely the majority of us - to go on acknowledging God's paramountcy. It would not change how we conduct our affairs one iota, either in public forums or in our private lives. It would simply remove an unnecessary and unseemly intrusion of religion into the body politic. The pity is that, as with the monarchy, there are far more important issues on the constitutional agenda to be dealt with first [3]."* Francesco Furfard said [4]: *"The formation of a nation's constitution is a political matter, not to be clouded by references to supernatural agencies and other non-participants. This should be obvious. Svend Robinson's petitioners merely suggested that our national document be trimmed of a little fat. This could enhance its attractiveness and credibility to our increasingly multicultural population."*

Across the boarder in the United States of America, the Government firmly believes in God as shown by printing the following phrase on the back of their currency bills: IN GOD WE TRUST.

According to the Nanakian Philosophy (Sikhism), incorporated in the *Aad Guru Granth Sahib* (AGGS), the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs, God (the One and Only) is Ineffable, Incomprehensible, Infinite, Eternal and Exists everywhere.

The following questions will arise for serious discussion during the 21<sup>st</sup> century, although it has been discussed many times before:

Will belief in God and/or developing certain type of morality solve the above mentioned problems?

What is a morality? How to teach morality?

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#### References

1. The Gazette, Montreal, June 9, 1999, Page A 8. MP tables petition to drop God from constitution.
2. The Gazette, Montreal, June 10, 1999, Page A 8. Feds drop plan to usher God from constitution.
3. The Gazette, Montreal, June 10, 1999, Editorial, Page B 2. Leave God out of it.
4. The Gazette, Montreal, July 10, 1999, A Letter to the Editor, Page B 6. Constitution is political, God isn't.