

Depression between them, Canadians had ceased thinking of themselves as colonials. A national consciousness and pride had arisen. Unprecedented growth in population, urbanization, industrialization and wealth promoted great expectations for the future. In the 1950's Canadian society boomed.

Architecturally, an increasing social consciousness was manifested in government-subsidized housing for war veterans and people in the lower income brackets. Few people yet realized that the all-pervasive desire for material goods, increased productivity and profit should be tempered with caution. But why? After all, natural resources appeared to be infinite. The tender care of the husbandman farming the land was often abandoned in the single-minded pursuit of success in an urban setting.

To young people seeking security and higher education for their children, a dream home in the suburbs seemed to be the proper and attainable goal. To the wealthy, an all-electric house of glass, steel, concrete and plastic — providing new heights of comfort and visual delight — was considered an exciting portent of the future. The destruction of run-down centers of older cities and the construction of new high-rise, high-density structures to replace them were felt to be progressive steps in building a new society. Sky-high cities serviced by unlimited supplies of gas and oil were believed to be not only feasible, but good.

An affluent society sought the perfect physical envelope for learning, worship, business and the arts — even for entire communities of instant towns. Individual excellence was achieved. Expo '67 was a simultaneous celebration of Canada's 100th birthday and a demonstration of the country's ability to build an integrated modern environment. Canadians had conquered the lonely northern land. Now they were shaping it to their own ends.