

OUR LIVES

Ten reasons
why there
has never
been a better
time to be a
Canadian

**BEST
OF
CANADA**

WE ARE CANADA. At 144 years we are neither young nor old, as nations go. And nations do come and do go, it bears remembering. You don't have to be very old to appreciate

that the world map that occupied a corner of your childhood classroom is a relic of another age; that borders once drawn in blood aren't indelible at all, they are just lines to be moved, or bent or erased by popular will. Yet, here we are, still in this together, and doing rather well.

Like any worthy anniversary, it is deserving of celebration but also of the appreciation that future years together aren't guaranteed, they must be earned, and mutually agreed upon. Back when Canada was a mere pup of 115 years, Ralph Klein, then the brash young mayor of a brash young Calgary, called Canada, "perhaps the only country in the world held together by curiosity." He asked if such a confederation of interests and regions can endure. "[N]o one is quite prepared to give up on her yet," he said, "as if we all have some lingering desire to see how this ongoing exercise in nation-building ends."

And why not? No. 143 was not the easiest of years, but it was largely free of any soul-sucking existential debate on Canada's future. There was a federal election, and no one died in the process. Economic uncertainty lingers, but we emerged stronger than the year before, and healthier in most every sense than a long list of wealthy, developed nations. And, yes, let's not lose sight of that inarguable fact: we are rich.

Read on. Our Canada Day gift to you is a gentle reminder that by many global measures we are a blessed bastion of privilege, peace, freedom—and big roomy houses. **KEN MACQUEEN**

**REAL ESTATE WE HAVE THE ROOMIEST HOMES ON EARTH**

YOU'D NEVER KNOW it from watching *MTV Cribs*, a program where rapper 50 Cent once showed off his 50,000-sq.-foot Connecticut mansion (18 bedrooms, 25 bathrooms, an elevator, two billiard rooms), but the average Canadian family actually has their American counterparts beat when it comes to living large. A recent survey by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found the average Canadian home boasts 2.5 rooms per person, more than the 2.3 room average in the U.S., and the highest among the 34 OECD member countries, where the average was just 1.6 rooms.

Canada's reigning status as a country of big, roomy houses is a direct result of our hot real estate market, which escaped the global economic downturn relatively unscathed. While the U.S. has yet to recover from the subprime mortgage crisis and the subsequent recession, Canadians have continued to take advantage of rock-bottom interest rates to buy bigger and better properties, forcing prices ever higher. That includes first-time homebuyers who abandoned cramped rental suites for more spacious condos, and existing homeowners who jumped at the opportunity to sell into a hot market and move into their dream homes. More impressive is that Canadians have managed all this while working an average of just 1,699 hours a year.

That's well below what the average American works (1,768 hours) and the OECD average (1,739 hours).

The country's infatuation with home ownership has been a boon for real estate agents, lawyers, house "fluffers" and contractors of all stripes. Meanwhile, retailers like Rona and Canadian Tire are riding a resulting wave of DIY home improvement efforts. (It's no coincidence that when Ottawa sought to prop up the economy in 2009, it introduced a popular tax credit of up to \$1,350 for Canadians who spent money on home renovations.) Canada has even managed to accomplish a rare feat in the world of television after HGTV Canada launched the program *Property Virgins* in 2006, only to have the series expanded to the U.S. market the following season (Canadian viewers were also treated to their own version of *MTV Cribs* around the same time).

But before we get too cocky, it's worth recalling that we got here largely by borrowing a lot of money. Canadian household debt levels now sit at 146.9 per cent of income. That's significantly higher than the 130 per cent reached in the U.S. prior to the crash (it has since fallen to 113 per cent). With Canadian homeowners increasingly stretched thin, some economists are worried about the country's ability to withstand another economic shock. On the other hand, cash-strapped Canadians will always have the option of renting out an extra room to make ends meet. **CHRIS SORENSON**

**IMMIGRANTS WE ATTRACT THE BRIGHTEST NEWCOMERS**

THAT THE DIRECTOR of research at the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) is not yet a Canadian citizen says a lot about the way many immigrants thrive here. Siddharth Bannerjee moved from India to Canada in 2004 after stints in the United States and South Africa. He came to pursue his master's degree in public policy, and wound up a Sauvé scholar at McGill University, where he participated in the reasonable accommodation debates in 2007. A couple of years later, Bannerjee landed his post at ACS in Montreal, an organization that "strives to raise public awareness of Canadian issues." Even though the final stage in Bannerjee's quest to become a Canadian, the citizenship ceremony, is still several weeks away, the 30-year-old has long thought of this land as home: "Canada," says Bannerjee, "is a better place than most other countries for immigrants."

In fact, it's one of the very best, as mounting research reveals. Canada ranks third, after Sweden and Portugal, of 31 countries in Europe and North America for how well it grants equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to immigrants, according to the latest Migrant Integration Policy Index. The study partly measures how easily immigrants can enter the labour market, gain education, and sponsor family, and was co-researched by international think tanks, including ACS. "It's not just about accommodation in Canada. Immigrants are encouraged, or at least permitted, to maintain their identity to a large extent," says Bannerjee. That improves their chances of success because "identity conflicts" are mostly taken out of the equation. Although issues arise, more often "that's not on your mind, so you can go about the most important parts of your settlement."

Like earning a good living. A recent survey showed that 30 per cent of the country's wealthiest families (those with investable assets of \$1 million or more) are new Canadians, or individuals born elsewhere. "About 95 per cent of the families are self-made; they've created their wealth," especially through business ownership, explains Andrew Auerbach, head of BMO Harris Private Banking, which commissioned the study. "We live in a fantastic country. It is very welcoming to new Canadians and there's great opportunities to prosper." The success of immigrants here may also be explained by a 2009 Gallup poll showing that Canada attracts older and more educated individuals than the United States.

Home sweet home: The infatuation with home ownership has been a boon for builders





Just be yourself: Bannerjee, at the Montreal Tam-Tam weekly improv, says immigrants are 'encouraged' to maintain their identity in Canada

Among immigrants, adults aren't the only high achievers. Fifteen-year-old immigrant students (those born elsewhere or whose parents were) perform just as well as their Canadian-born peers in reading, according to the latest Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's international student assessment project, which includes 34 developed nations. Previous studies examining math and science literacy found similar trends. "In most countries, immigrants don't do so well, whereas in Canada there is virtually no difference between immigrant and Canadian-born students," says Pierre Brochu, a coordinator for the Council of

Ministers of Education of Canada. "That's very unique."

The possible explanation is equally intriguing: "It's always hard to pin down success to particular policies and practices, but when you

study the example of Canada you are struck by the high expectations that immigrant families have for their children. And even more by the fact that those high expectations are, by and large, held by educators as well," explains Andreas Schleicher, head of indicators and analysis at the OECD, in an online video. That teachers expect immigrant students to do well is significant: "The value placed on the high achievement of immigrant children seems to have positive spillover effects for the expectations of other children too." That is to say, new Canadians do well for themselves by joining this country—and native Canadians are the better for it too. **CATHY GULLI**

**Of Canada's
wealthiest families,
30%
weren't born here**



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SMOKES POUTINERIE

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POUTINETRADITIONAL 6" 5"
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CHICKEN
SAUCE
PEASVEGGIE NACHO 7" 6"
GRANDE
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Profitable poutine: In just three years, there are 15 Smoke's Poutineries between Halifax and Winnipeg—each rakes in \$750,000 in sales a year



BUSINESS WE'RE MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL THAN THE U.S.

BACK IN NOVEMBER 2008, around the time the global economy began its historic meltdown, Ryan Smolkin decided to start a business. Of all things, the 37-year-old Torontonian wanted to sell poutine to the masses. Three years later, Smoke's Poutinerie now has 15 stores between Halifax and Winnipeg, each one pulling in \$750,000 in annual sales.

It's always tough to start a new business, especially a restaurant, but Smolkin's success story is just one of hundreds to come out of what business expert Riek Spence calls Canada's "entrepreneurial revolution."

In 2010, the number of business bankruptcies was 65 per cent lower than in 1990. In fact, the bankruptcy rate for businesses is lower than it's been in at least 30 years. The number of self-employed Canadians also increased by more than 18 per cent between 2001 and 2006, double the rate of growth for normal employment. And by 2008, there were 2.8 million self-employed Canadians. "You can say it's never been a

better time to start a business, but the point is that it actually is getting better and better," says Spence. "Basements and spare bedrooms are where the future of Canadian business is being decided."

A recent report by the U.S. Small Business Association ranked Canada second only to Denmark for entrepreneurialism based on the "quality and quantity" of its businesses, as well as the attitudes and aspirations of its entrepreneurs. America, the self-styled land of opportunity, came in third. In fact, one in five Canadians who don't already own a business are considering starting one at some point in the next five years, according to the RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook report for April 2011.

**Bankruptcy rates
for businesses are
the lowest in
30+ years**

Satinder Chera, with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, says the business environment has improved in the past few years, with governments cutting back on red tape and onerous paperwork requirements. The HST, for example, has made bookkeeping and tax returns simpler for business owners. More importantly, Chera adds, there have been tax cuts for businesses large and small. At the same time, middle-management jobs are disappearing and many people are retiring without enough money to live comfortably. Spence says these conditions have created a "push and pull" effect that encourages entrepreneurialism. Consumer markets have also become more "fragmented and sophisticated," creating opportunities in niches that cater to specific tastes, says Spence. That's why someone like Smolkin can start a successful business selling nothing but poutine. "We're an indulgence, a luxury," says Smolkin, who started his first business when he was 16. "I've never worked for the suits," he says, speaking of a sense of empowerment that comes from being your own boss. "You can totally control whether you make it or break it." **ALEX BALLINGALL**



We come in peace: Canada was ranked the eighth most peaceful nation in the world



PEACE WE'RE MORE PEACEFUL THAN THE SWISS AND AUSSIES

FOR A LONG time, a Canadian flag on a traveller's backpack has been nearly as valuable as travel insurance: its wearer would be treated with respect no matter the locale, a privilege growing out of Canada's peaceful reputation. Some think that comforting truth had faded. In 2009, Louise Arbour, the former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and former UN Human Rights Commissioner, put it this way, in speaking of Canada, post-Afghanistan: "There is a bit of a loss of innocence that the [Canadian] public is perhaps not aware of. We think of ourselves as the 'few that everyone loves.' But I am not certain that's always the case. The flag on the backpack has run its course."

More recently, however, we seem to have nudged our way back into the good books. The Global Peace Index just ranked Canada the eighth most peaceful nation out of 153 countries, its highest ranking since the survey was established in 2007, and up six places from last year. Iceland took the top spot this year, while the U.S. placed 82nd. Despite a rise in the likelihood of violent demonstrations, improvements in relations with neighbouring countries and respect for human rights led to Canada's rise in the rankings. So don't go ripping that flag off your backpack just yet. **CIGDEM ILTAN**



SPACE WE BUILD THE COOLEST ROBOTS IN THE UNIVERSE

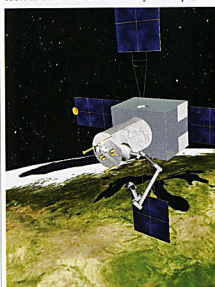
WE'VE NEVER PLANTED a Canadian flag on the moon, but in space, our robots—most famously the Canadarm—do the heavy lifting. After July 8, when NASA launches its last shuttle mission, the Canadarm will be retired, but Canada's role in space robotics won't come to an end. Designers are working on a "next-generation Canadarm" that could be used on a mission to another planet.

In fact, Canada's space industry is "the most commercially successful in the world," says Steve Oldham, vice-president of robotics at MDA, the Brampton, Ont.-based company that helped build the Canadarm. According to a recent report from the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), the space sector's revenues surpassed \$3 billion in 2009, and export represented almost half of this—larger than any other nation's, he notes. Canadian technology is in demand because "we have great capabilities in communication, radar," and of course, robotics, Oldham says.

Space agencies are still settling on the next major manned mission, but Barack Obama has said he'd like to get astronauts to an asteroid by 2025, and to Mars a decade later. With the CSA's help, MDA is working on prototypes for robotic arms that could be adapted to all sorts of scenarios. "If you're going to go to Mars or an asteroid, you'd likely want to have a staging post," says Oldham. The next Canadarm, which would be a "smaller, more capable robot," could be mounted on an exploration base to perform different jobs, "or on vehicles that go off to other planets," he notes. One of the new prototypes has the same 15-m reach as the Canadarm2 (which is attached to and building the International Space Station), but it is lighter and

more compact, designed for use on a futuristic spacecraft. Another prototype is smaller, reaching just 3.4 metres, and could perform workstation repairs.

Beyond robotics, the Canadian space industry stands out in some more unexpected areas, too. Mike Dixon at the University of Guelph,



Top of the world: Canada's space industry is 'the most commercially successful in the world'

for example, is working to develop ways to grow crops in high-tech, radiation-proof greenhouses on the moon or Mars, suggesting Canadians could be the space farmers of the future. When trying to grow food crops, "as far as challenging environments go, a snowbank in Canada comes pretty close to the moon," jokes Dixon. So even if we don't plant a flag on the moon, maybe one day we'll plant tomatoes. **KATE LUNAU**



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Discovery district: The corner of Toronto's College Street and University Avenue is the smartest intersection in the world



HEALTH WE'RE LEADING THE WAY IN MEDICAL RESEARCH

THE INTERSECTION of College Street and University Avenue, in Toronto's aptly named Discovery District, has one of the highest concentrations of stem-cell researchers anywhere: the Hospital for Sick Children, the University of Toronto, Mount Sinai Hospital and the University Health Network, and MaRS (which brings together scientists and entrepreneurs) anchor the corners. "We're all so close together," making it easy to collaborate, says Gordon Keller, director of the McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine, which is housed in the MaRS Centre. Ontario has been eager to support these and other researchers, investing

\$70 million into the MaRS Centre alone, says Ilse Treurnicht, its CEO; the private sector has pumped in \$220 million.

And the work being done is astounding. Keller's team was the first in the world to succeed at making crude human heart cells from embryonic stem cells; they're now

doing it with induced pluripotent stem cells (also known as iPS cells), which are adult cells that have been transformed to an embryonic-like state. Observed under a microscope, these human heart cells can be seen beating away. Others are working on everything from lung regeneration and treatments for spinal-cord injuries, to finding a cure for type 1 diabetes.

It's only fitting that Toronto has become a hub for this type of work: stem cells were discovered here 50 years ago, by Canadians James Till and Ernest McCulloch. "Once you become known," says Keller, "good people keep coming." He's proof of that. Born in Saskatchewan, Keller held prestigious positions in Switzerland, Austria and the U.S.

**The private sector
alone has pumped
\$220 million
into the MaRS Centre**



before returning to Canada to head the McEwen Centre in 2007. Andras Nagy, another star Toronto researcher who is from Hungary, established Canada's first human embryonic stem cell lines in 2005.

And Toronto isn't the only Canadian city that boasts heavy hitters. The University of Calgary's Sam Weiss, for example, discovered neural stem cells in the adult brain, suggesting they could be used to regrow damaged brain tissue. (In 2008, Weiss, who is director of the Hotchkiss Brain Institute, won the Gairdner International Award, one of the most high-profile awards in science—73 Gairdner awardees have gone on to win the Nobel Prize.)

Stem cells are "the building blocks of human tissue," says Keller, and offer the potential, one day not too far off, to treat a patient with their own cells. They'll help personalize medicine to an even greater level, as well. A patient's cells could be transformed into iPS cells, for example, then be used in the lab to study that patient's disease and test which drugs will work on it. In downtown Toronto and across the country, scientists are working with stem cells to tackle the questions that will redefine medicine over the next century.

KATE LUNAU



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Tasty treat: La Face Cachée de la Pomme in Hemmingford, Que., pioneered apple ice wine



FOOD WE HAVE CHEESE THAT' MAKE THE FRENCH JEALOUS

WE'VE DONE MAPLE syrup. We've done Sauternes-inspired ice wine. We've watched Brooklyn hipsters gobble down our foie-gras poutine. And we proved we can compete with global gourmards: Quebec's La Maison Alexis de Portneuf chèvre won the World Cheese Awards in 2009 over more than 2,000 entries. But the Canadian food gaining recognition in international culinary circles these days has less to do with aping tradition than forging a new culinary path with fare that is sustainable, innovative and nutritious—as well as delicious.

Keith Froggett, co-owner and executive chef of Toronto's acclaimed Scaramouche, cites Sustainable Blue, a fish-farming enterprise in Centre Burlington, N.S., as an exemplar of this new conscientiousness. High-end restaurants give the company—which produces European sea bass and European sea bream and is working with a local First Nations group to produce fresh-water Arctic char—marquee status on their menus: Scaramouche features a \$38 entree "sustainable blue European sea bass with grilled calamari, sweet garlic whipped white beans, chorizo, tomato confit on a saffron-white-wine-herb nage." Froggett, who receives the fish via UPS within 24 hours of harvesting, praises its sustainability and taste: "It's a really clean, fresh-tasting fish. An awful lot of farmed fish tastes muddy. These guys know what they're doing." With demand growing, the company is planning to set up similar units across Canada and even into the U.S.

Also in growth mode is Brevoir Caviar, a Pennfield, N.B., enterprise gaining international

fame for sustainably reviving rare sturgeon stocks. Reception at the European Food Fair this March in Brussels was "fantastic," says company president David Cassidy, who hopes to sell the Bay of Fundy product, marketed as a good source of omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins A and D, in Paris, London and Hong Kong later this year. Meanwhile in their homeland, customers who could shop anywhere are selecting it: last week, Cassidy says, they shipped a kilo—some \$4,000 worth—to a customer in Vancouver planning a major blowout.

There's no better example of Canucks smartly tweaking tradition than La Face Cachée de la Pomme, the cidery in Hemmingford, Que., that pioneered apple ice wine in that province. Martin Juneau, chef at Montreal's Newton restaurant and winner of this year's Canadian Culinary Championship, created his winning entry (St-Canut piglet painted scarlet with beets—pickled, puréed and flecked with dill, and used as a crimsom glaze—beneath a crackling-soft square of pork belly) to pair with the cidery's Dégel, a barrel-aged still cider. "There was no winery interesting enough and I wanted to keep it local," he says. The cidery has won a bushel of international awards for its products, which are sold in 23 countries, says co-owner François Pouliot, who recently presented at VinExpo in Bordeaux. They've been working for almost a decade to establish a Sauternes-like designation for Québec ice cider, which could come to fruition next year: "It's vital in order to give credibility to the category," Pouliot says. Not that his product doesn't already have that: producers in Spain, Germany and Vermont are vying to duplicate the cidery's methodology. And to that we say, "Salute, eh." **ANNE KINGSTON**

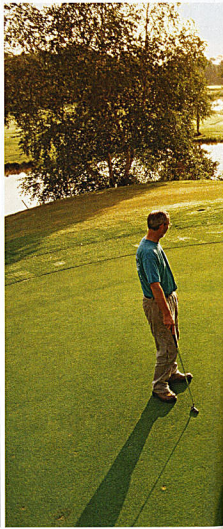


GOLF WE HAVE MORE PASSION FOR THE GAME THAN THE SCOTS

COULD THERE BE a better indicator that Canada is one of the world's most prosperous, contented and civilized nations than this? We have the highest golf participation rate in the world.

At least we did in 2006, the last time it was measured, when 21.5 per cent of Canadians played at least one round of golf. And there's little reason to believe that's changed, since Canadians still spend over \$13 billion on golf annually and played more than 70 million rounds per year during the recession.

And where can the most avid golfers in the country, and thus, the world, be found? In Saskatchewan, where nearly 30 per cent of the population play a round a year. In fact,



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT LEONARD

with 289 golf courses and a population of just over one million, the land of the living skies has the most golf courses per capita of anywhere on Earth. That's one course for every 3,640 people—more than even Scotland, the widely recognized birthplace of the game, where there are 9,379 people per course.

Canadians played more than 70 million rounds a year during the recession

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CANADIAN GOLF ASSOCIATION

This may come as a surprise, given Saskatchewan's reputation as sprawling flatland. But Lynda Haverstock, president and CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan, says golfers can play in river valleys, sand dunes and alongside lakes in the province's boreal forest. Courses range from pitch 'n' putts to award-winners like Saskatoon's Dakota Dunes, which was named Canada's best new course by *Golf Digest* in 2005. And it doesn't hurt that, on average, 18-holes costs about \$50 on weekends.

It's true that there isn't a single Canadian golfer ranked among the top 100 in the world. And the last time a Canadian won a major—or, for that matter, was even in contention—was Mike Weir at the Masters way back in 2003. But then, Mike Weir is from Ontario. **ALEX BALLINGALL**



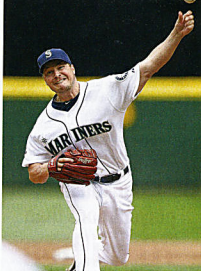
Watering hole: Calgary's new \$430-million Pine Creek Wastewater Treatment Centre



ENVIRONMENT WE HAVE
THE MOST CITIES THAT CARE

WHEN CALGARY eco-moms Melanie Risdon-Betcher and Lavonne Ries learned that over 190,000 children's car seats are thrown into Canadian landfills every year, they formed KidSeat Recyclers. "Car seats are rarely recycled," says Risdon-Betcher, "even though they are so rich in resources." The co-op has recycled more than 600 seats so far, stripping each one to its core. According to Risdon-Betcher, the disassembled pieces are usually turned into rope and carpet. "We've broken many a nail," she says. "But it's worth it."

This kind of grassroots effort, plus larger environmental endeavours, like the new \$430-million Pine Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, which can handle 100 million litres of water a day, helped earn Calgary the top spot, just ahead of Honolulu, in the latest Mercer Ecology Study, a ranking of the world's most eco-friendly cities. Canada was well-represented in the 212-city survey, which took into account a host of factors, including water availability, sewage, air pollution and traffic congestion. Ottawa, which boasts the country's first all-ethanol gas station, finished third. Montreal and Vancouver tied for 13th. Vancouver officials had previously pledged to make it the most eco-friendly city by 2020. Some would say they're off to a good start. **EMMA TEITEL**



Northern stars: (clockwise from top left) Votto was the National League's MVP last year; Seattle's Erik Bedard; and the Cub's Ryan Dempster



BASEBALL WE'RE NOT JUST RIDING THE PINE ANYMORE

AT THE COMPLETION of this month's Major League Baseball amateur draft, a total of 35 Canadians had been selected. And what was perhaps most remarkable about this total was how unremarkable it is. A year ago, 31 Canadians were selected. Three years ago, the total was 32. Five years ago, it was 38. Most years now, 30 or so young Canadians can expect to be drafted when big league clubs go searching for the next generation.

Indeed, Canada has quietly become a reliable producer of quality ballplayers. Twenty Canadians have appeared in the majors this year. More than 70 are in the minor leagues and another 600 are playing American college baseball. And beyond merely making it, Canadians are thriving as stars. Ferguson Jenkins was a superstar pitcher in the 1970s, but between Terry Puhl's all-star appearance in

1978 and Larry Walker's all-star debut in 1992, not a single Canadian-born player appeared in baseball's mid-season classic. In the last 10 years, Canadians have been named to all-star rosters more than a dozen times. In fact, Canadians are comfortably ensconced in the highest ranks of the game. Last year, Joey Votto, a first baseman with Cincinnati, became the second Canadian to win MVP honours in five years (Justin Morneau won the American

League honours in 2006). Over the last decade, Canadians have combined to win Cy Young (Eric Gagne in 2003) and rookie of the year (Jason Bay in 2004) honours.

The growth of the game in Canada includes continued progress at the elite amateur level, a year-round national junior program run by Baseball Canada, and the involvement of current and former players in the coaching and mentoring of emerging prospects (former Blue Jay Paul Quantrill, for instance, was a pitching coach with last year's junior team). "Talented, athletic kids can look at baseball now and say, 'At 15 years old, there's something there for me,'" says Greg Hamilton, head coach and director of Canada's national teams. And with so many among baseball's best, aspiring all-stars now have plenty of examples to justify their dreams. "There's a legacy in baseball now," says Hamilton, "that kids can look at and legitimately say 'I want to be that.'" **AARON WHERRY**

Canadians have filled more than 12 All-Star roster spots in the last decade



POLITICS

How he sees Canada's role in the world and where he wants to take the country

PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER IN CONVERSATION WITH KENNETH WHYTE

Q: Let's start with election night. Was it fun?

A: It's always fun when you win.

Q: Did you take a moment to enjoy it?

A: Yeah. Look, as I think you know, we were pretty confident we were going to win, frankly, from the outset—the question was the margin—and we were feeling pretty good in the days leading up to it. I suppose, yeah, it was exciting that night. But you're also coming off the end of a long, gruelling campaign, so there's also a sense of relief and a sense of exhaustion all wrapped up together.

Q: If you're not going to stop and enjoy that one, what are you going to stop for?

A: I did enjoy it. We have to enjoy things. These guys—my staff—probably enjoyed it more than I did. I'm always thinking. The next task is almost immediately on my mind.

Q: I saw you give an interview after the election in which you alluded to the next task: you want to establish the Conservatives as the natural governing party of Canada. What does that entail?

A: What I want to do, of course, is really trench, over time, a Conservative-majority

coalition in the country. I probably—the more I've thought about it—I should probably stay away from the natural governing party terminology, because I think as soon as a party believes it's the natural governing party it's in a great deal of trouble. Since coming to office, we've grown steadily. We've grown from our base out. We haven't tried to re-engineer the Conservative movement, we've built on it by bringing more people into it. We still have more work to do to be as representative of people as we'd like to be, but all the elements are there in terms of the coalition. I think, obviously, it has to be backed up with an agenda, and the agenda has to be successfully implemented, and the country has to buy into it and be happy with the results. So that's the big thing we have to do, but I think in the end—given the outcomes of the election—we're greatly helped not just by our own result but by the relative incoherence of the opposition as an alternative for government.

Q: This is a fundamentally different mission from when you started off in politics. The

Reform Party, by virtue of its name, was about changing the political landscape, changing the political structure in Canada. When you're trying to become the natural governing party you want to be where Canadians are, so it's more about managing a consensus than being a catalyst for change.

A: Well, first of all I think you have to remember, I began my serious political involvement in the Progressive Conservative Party way back, so my involvement has always been about conservatism. I began in the traditional Conservative Party and then became involved in the Reform Party, and—I think as you know probably better than anyone—my involvement in the Reform Party was really to reinvigorate conservative principles in Canadian politics. And I think with the eventual merger of the Reform Alliance and Progressive Conservatives, we've achieved an organization that embodies conservative principles but is also pragmatic and trying to reach a sufficient number of Canadians to form a government. But it's also about, in the suc-

EXCLUSIVE
A BACKYARD CHAT WITH
STEPHEN HARPER P.16

The Royal Tour
HOW TO DRESS LIKE KATE P.74

**THE WINNER OF THE
GREAT CANADIAN
FACEOFF** P.38

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JULY 11, 2011

CANADA DAY SPECIAL

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IS RED HOT

WE WORK
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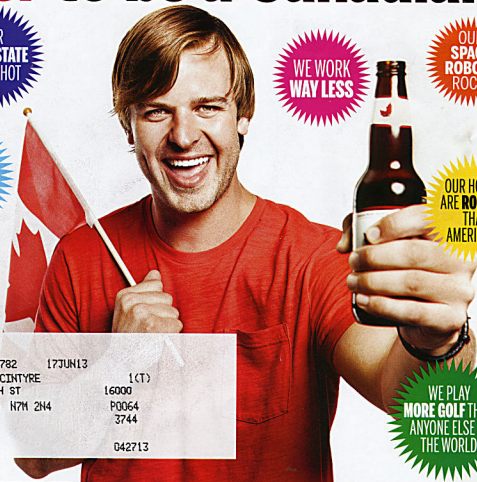
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SPACE
ROBOTS
ROCK!

OUR
**IMMIGRANTS &
ENTREPRENEURS**
ARE THRIVING

OUR HOUSES
ARE ROOMIER
THAN
AMERICANS'

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MAKE THE
FRENCH
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WE PLAY
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cess of advancing conservative principles, of moving the country toward the values that you represent and that you demonstrate through the policies and the programs you deliver. And I think that both those things are happening. I also think the party and the government have been moving the country toward conservative principles. I think there's an increasing number of people who vote for us not just because they think we're the best choice but because they actually believe we [have] the values that are closest to their long-term values. And we're starting to see in our own polling that at the federal level more people identify themselves as Conservatives and as voting Conservatives than any other party, and that is a huge change, and that never happened even during previous Conservative governments. So I'm optimistic that we're moving in the right direction, but we have a lot of challenges.

Q: *You've been running for something for nine years now, and you have had no real job security, you haven't known from year to year where you're going to be.*

A: Yeah, in nine years I've run four national election campaigns, two leadership campaigns, a party referendum merger, and a couple of other convention processes. And of course by-elections. You know, I've been elected five times in my riding in nine years. I've been literally running non-stop.

Q: *In addition to that, you've had all the false alarms about elections.*

A: Yeah, every three months. Look, it's been exhausting. I wouldn't say as much for me

as for my senior staff and for, frankly, senior public servants. Every three months we've had the plan for the government and every three months we've had the plan for the election. The great irony is that only once did I threaten an election, then I actually called it—that was in 2008—but every single three months in between we've had a threat of an election, and we've always taken it seriously. One of the reasons we won is in spite of the fact the other guys made the threats, we were always the best prepared. But yeah, it's been two tracks, and it's been exhausting to everyone involved in it. So it's very different now planning for a four-year period.

Q: *Over that nine years you develop habits of mind. I would imagine that you're making short-term calculations all the time about how this is going to play, how that's going to play. You try and look long-term but you have to be constantly aware that you may be going to the polls soon. Now that you're in this longer-term mandate, how do you stop thinking that way?*

A: Well, I'm not sure you completely do. There are some good disciplines this teaches you. Even when we were thinking short-term, you don't ignore what could be the long-term or mid-term consequences of your actions. I would always point that out to staff: something may be great today, you know—we got a great headline today—and six months later everybody goes, "What were you thinking?" You've got a big problem, especially in a minority context. So it does heighten your political instincts, but I think that's good. The party has to—and the government has to—move the country with it. Now, does that mean the country has to agree with you on every single issue? No, but even in a minority I never took the view that the opposition parties or even the country at large

had to agree with every single thing we were doing, but they had to agree with the direction we were taking and that will remain the case. It's just that we're less under the gun from day to day.

Q: *At the Conservative convention on June 10, you made quite a remarkable speech. The first thing I noticed was how much time you spent thanking people who worked in the parties, and thanking your MPs, your ministers, your staff, in great detail and with great specificity. And having watched you deliver speeches over more than 20 years now, I don't think I ever recall an occasion where you went so far out of your way to express personal gratitude. Was*

that deliberate?

A: Well, I'm not sure it is that different. I think I've done similar things, maybe not at quite the same length, but on similar occasions. The party convention is unique in that you have, literally in one room, almost every single person who is responsible for whatever success the organization has had, and they also happen to be in the room at the moment where the organization has its greatest success, and so that's obviously the appropriate thing to do. I'm the first to say, you look over the past nine, 10 years, we're today a majority government not because we have the best leader but because we have the best team, and we have the best team on every level—and they actually work together as a team far more than any of the other guys.

Q: *You don't think that you operate differently at a human level than you would have 10 or 20 years ago?*

A: Well, I think as you spend more time at any occupation you get better at everything you do—I hope—and so I think I'm better at a lot of things than I was 10 years ago. But do I think there's a sudden change at the convention this year? No, no, no.

Q: *Another striking thing, to me, was some of the language around foreign affairs, and you said that, essentially, Canada needs to redefine its national purpose, and that its national purpose is no longer just to go along with everyone else's agendas. How would you describe Canada's definition of its national interest in the past?*

A: Well, I'm not going to belabour analyzing previous governments. I'll just say this: since coming to office—in fact since becoming prime minister—the thing that's probably struck me the most in terms of my previous expectations—I don't even know what my

expectations were—is not just how important foreign affairs/foreign relations is, but in fact that it's become almost everything. There's hardly anything today of any significance that doesn't have a huge international dimension to it, beginning first and foremost with the economy. Yeah, we have a strong economy, but really we have a stronger Canadian economy within a world economy. When we had a world recession it didn't matter that there wasn't a single thing that had caused the recession anywhere else that was present in Canada, we were still in a recession, and we didn't go down as far as the others, and now that it's recovering, we're recovering

We have a majority government not because we have the best leader, but because we have the best team

ahead of the others. But nevertheless, we're just a piece of the global economy. That's the first thing, and whether you go to security matters or pandemics, it's all international. I'm not saying it is not necessary to have good relations with a lot of people; in fact, having good relations, first and foremost, with our most critical ally, the United States, is essential to Canada's well-being, as are our good relations or good dimensions of relations with a large number of other players. But it isn't enough, in this day and age, to say we get along with people. We have to have a clear sense of where we want to be and where we would like our partners to go in the various challenges that are in front of them. Whether they're economic challenges or security challenges or anything else, we better know what we're trying to get out of this and where we're going to align ourselves, and it's not just good enough to say, "everybody likes us." That is not a sufficient way to protect your interests when your interests are so deeply enmeshed with everybody else's.

Q: So what do we do differently?

A: First and foremost I think you see the differences in this government in terms of how we approach foreign relations. First of all, we take pretty clear stands. We take stands that we think reflect our own interests but our own interests in a way that reflects the interests of the wider community of nations, or particularly the wider interests of those nations with whom we share values and interests. Whether it's taking strong and clear positions, for instance, at the G20 on something like a global financial regulation and a banking tax, we don't just say, "Well, a consensus is developing for that. We'll go along with it." It was not in our interest. It actually happens to be bad policy as well. So we worked to oppose that particular agenda. I won't get into specifics, but in some issues of foreign affairs or conflicts, what are the Canadian values or interests at stake? We think it's pretty important that our long-run interests are tied somewhat to our trade, but that they're more fundamentally tied to the kind of values we have in the world: freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law. We see over time—it's not an ironclad rule—but those societies that promote those values tend to share our interests, and those that do not tend to, on occasion, if not frequently, become threats to us. We also make sure as well—and this is important—that we have the capacities. I know we've received some criticism for re-investing in our military, but when you're in a dangerous world and countries are from time to time called upon to do things



At home: Prime Minister Stephen Harper on June 27 in the garden at 24 Sussex Drive

to deal with those dangers, if you don't have the capacity to act you are not taken seriously. Nobody takes your views seriously unless you can contribute to solutions, and it's very difficult to contribute to solutions unless you can contribute across the range of capabilities, up to and including military capabilities. I think if you look back—I think Hugh Segal's written quite eloquently on this recently—Canada's been at its most influential when it's actually had a range of capabilities, so we've made sure we have capabilities.

Q: And when it's actually been using them.

A: And when it's been using them. If capabilities are just in the freezer all the time then they're not really capabilities, right?

Q: You think Canadians are prepared?

A: We're trying to make our foreign aid more effective. We don't fund talk shops anymore, we fund aid that actually makes a difference. On the economy, if there's a banking crisis and a debate over banking we make sure we've got a good record on that, but we also make sure we have good people who understand the subject matter who are able to be

at the table and drive discussion. So that's what we do across a range of issues. I say it's a very different shift from simply every country likes us and would raise its glass to us at a cocktail party. That's not the issue.

Q: It's one thing to say you want a strong-in-principle foreign policy, and another thing to carry through. I admired a lot of things the government initially said on China and human rights violations, but when we had a negative response from China on the trade front, your government's line shifted. We've also seen different policies with regard to Afghanistan, some based on principle, some buffeted by what our allies would want, or the public wants.

A: I think on China we've been clear from the beginning that we're anxious to have good relations and to pursue vigorous economic relations, but we are going to continue to speak out on democracy and human rights issues, and we have. I think it took the Chinese government some time to get used to the fact we had shifted the approach from one of utter silence on those issues, but the

shift was made and I think it's a productive relationship. On Afghanistan, look, the issue is complex and obviously the government's been trying to decide as it goes forward each step of the way what's the next best thing to do. I've said from the beginning we've needed to be engaged there on all levels to try and affect outcomes, but that the goal cannot be the permanent military occupation and kind of de facto governance of the country. This is a position not only that we're pursuing but that I've argued with our allies. I think if you look at what's happened, the positions we've been arguing have, over the past two or three years, become the positions of our allies, after we'd already been clear which direction we were going.

Q: Do you think you can wield the same influence on Israel? You've been a strong supporter of Israel for some time, but you're now more or less isolated in the G8.

A: The Middle East question is more difficult in terms of the opinion of others. I wouldn't go so far as to say isolated, but it is a difficult position. That said, in my mind, the stakes are very clear, the issue is very clear and the stakes are very important. We all recognize there has to be a two-state solution, but we have in Israel essentially a Western democratic country that is an ally of

ours, who's the only state in the United Nations whose very existence is significantly questioned internationally and opposed by many, including by the other side of that particular conflict—still, to a large degree—and when I look around the world at those who most oppose the existence of Israel and seek its extinction, they are the very people who, in a security sense, are immediate—long-term but also immediate—threats to our own country. So I think that's a very clear choice. That doesn't mean there aren't individual issues that become quite complicated and nuanced, but I think it is important and I will continue to be very clear with other leaders the way I think we should see this problem.

Q: You're confident that Canadians are prepared to accept a more muscular foreign policy? I noticed that when you talked at the convention about Canada's founding principles, you mentioned first the phrase "courageous warrior."

A: I think you have to take the triumvirate: the courageous warrior, compassionate neighbour, confident partner.

Q: Yes, but you didn't choose to say a nation

of peacekeepers, nation of immigrants, or drawers of wood or drawers of water, you said a courageous warrior, and that is not a way that Canadians are really accustomed to thinking of themselves.

A: Well, not recently, but in fact Canada has a proud military history, beginning with the War of 1812 that essentially began to establish our sense of national identity. That was really the genesis of the geographically wide and culturally diverse nation we have today. We've been consistently involved on the right side of important conflicts that have shaped the world in which we live, that are largely responsible for moving the world in the overall positive direction in which it is moving. Look, let me give you the two big threats of the 20th century. First, fascism. Canada, next to its big-three allies, played one of the largest roles in the world in the defeat of fascism, which purged the world of one evil, and obviously the most robust military engagement anyone's ever been involved in. And then through

a different kind of engagement, the long, sustained state of alert of the Cold War against Communism, the other great threat to the world and to our civilization. In spite of, quite frankly, the ambivalence of some Liberal governments toward that, Canada, in fact, remained engaged in that from the

beginning to the very end. I'm not dismissing peacekeeping, and I'm not dismissing foreign aid—they're all important things that we need to do, and in some cases do better—but the real defining moments for the country and for the world are those big conflicts where everything's at stake and where you take a side and show you can contribute to the right side.

Q: You suggest that we are in one great conflict, or that we're heading to one that we need to be prepared for.

A: I think we always are.

Q: What is the nature of that present threat?

A: Well, I think it's more difficult to define now. We know there are challenges to us. The most obvious is terrorism, Islamic extremist terrorism. We know that's a big one globally. We also know, though, the world is becoming more complex, and the ability of our most important allies, and most importantly the United States, to single-handedly shape outcomes and protect our interests, has been diminishing, and so I'm saying we have to be prepared to contribute more, and that is what this government's been doing. ♦

**When you're
in a dangerous
world... if you don't
have the capacity
to act you are not
taken seriously**



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