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Tomson Highway's Canada
My Canada

Born in northern Manitoba, Tomson Highway is the creator of, among other works, the award-winning plays Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing and The Rez Sisters as well as the novel Kiss of the Fur Queen. From his home in Toronto’s Cabbagetown, Highway writes that Canada is indeed the best place in the world to live.

Three summers back, a friend and I were being hunted by bus through the heart of Australia, the desert flashing pink and red before our unbelieving eyes. It never seemed to end, this desert, so flat, so dry. For days, we saw kangaroos hopping off into the distance across the parched earth. The landscape was very unlike ours—scrub growth with some exotic species of cacti, no lakes, no rivers, just sand and rock and sand and rock for ever. Beautiful in its own special way, haunting even—what the surface of the moon must look like, I thought to myself as I sat there in the dust in that almost empty bus.

I turned my head to look out the front of the bus and was suddenly taken completely by surprise. Screaming out at me in great black lettering were the words “Canada Number One Country in the World.” My eyes lit up, my heart gave a heave, and I felt a pang of homesickness so acute I actually almost hurt. I was so excited that it was all I could do to keep myself from leaping out of my seat and grabbing the newspaper from its owner.

As I learned within minutes (I did indeed beg to borrow the paper from the Dutchman who was reading it), this pronouncement was based on information collected by the United Nations from studies comparing standards of living for every nation in the world. Some people may have doubted the finding (what about Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and even Australia or New Zealand?), but I didn’t, nor for an instant.

Where else in the world can you travel by bus, automobile or train (and the odd ferry) for 10, 12 or 14 days straight and see a landscape that changes
Have you ever seen the icebergs and whales of Hudson Bay, the gold sand eskers of northern Saskatchewan?

so dramatically, so spectacularly. The Newfoundland coast with its white foam and roar; the red sand beaches of Prince Edward Island; the graceful curves and slopes of Cape Breton's Cabot Trail; the rolling dairy land of south shore Quebec; the peerless, uncountable maple-bordered lakes of Ontario; the haunting north shore of Lake Superior; the wheat fields of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the ranch land of Alberta; the mountain ranges, valleys and lush rainforests of the West Coast. The list could go on for 10 pages, and still only cover the southern section of the country, a sliver of land compared with the North, whose innerness is almost unimaginable.

Have you ever seen the barren of Nunavut? Have you ever laid eyes on northern bodies of freshwater: colder than any polar sea, tracts like Great Bear and Great Slave Lakes? Have you ever seen the icebergs and whales of Hudson Bay, the gold sand eskers of northern Saskatchewan, northern Manitoba's rivers, rapids, waterfalls and 10,000 lakes, all with water so clean you can dip your hand over the side of your canoe and drink it? Have you ever had the privilege of getting off a plane on a January day at a remote settlement in the Yukon and having the air hit your lungs with a wallop so sharp you gasp quite audibly — air so clean, so crisp you swear you see it sparkle pastel pink, purple and blue in the morning light?

It has been six years in a row now that the United Nations has designated Canada the number one country in which to live. We are so fortunate. We are water wealth and forest rich. Minerals, fertile land, wild animals, plant life, the rhythm of four distinct, undeniable seasons, the North — we have it all.

Of course Canada has its problems. We'd like to lower our crime rate, but it is under relative control, and the fact is, we live in a safe country. We struggle with our health-care system, trying to find a balance between universality and affordability. But no person in this country is denied medical care for lack of money, no child need go without a vaccination. Oh yes, we have our concerns, but in the global scheme of things we are so well off. Have you ever stopped to look at the ranges and apples piled high as mountains in supermarkets from Sisam, B.C., to Twillingate, Nfld.? Have you paused to think about the choice of meat, fish, vegetables, cheese, bread, cereals, cookies, chips, dips and pop we have?

Or even abhor the number of banks, clothing stores and restaurants?

And think of our history. For the greater part, the pain and violence, tragedy, horror and evil that have scarred for ever the histories of too many countries are largely absent from our past. There's no denying we've had our trials and times of shame, but dark though they may have been, they pale by comparison with events that have shaped many other nations.

Our cities, too, are gems. Take Toronto, where I have chosen to live. My adopted city never fails to thrill me with its racial, linguistic, cultural — not to mention life style — diversity. On any ordinary day on the city's streets and subway, in stores and restaurants, I can hear the muted ebb and flow — the sweet chorus — of 20 different tongues. At any time of day, I can step on food from six different continents, from Greek souvlakia to Thai mango salad, from Italian prosciutto to French bouillabaisse, from Ecuadorian empanada to Jamaican jerk chicken, from Indian lamb curry to Chinese ginger and green onion (with a side order of greens in oyster sauce). Indeed, one could probably eat in restaurants every week for a year and never have to eat the same cuisine twice.

And do all these people get along? Well, they all live in a situation of relative harmony, cooperation and peace. They certainly aren't terrorizing, torturing and massacring one another. They're not igniting pubs, communities with explosives that blind, cripple and maim. And they're not killing children with machetes, cleavers and axes. Unlike — raco — may exist in pockets here and there, but not, I believe, harrt on the scale of such blistering intensity that we see elsewhere. Is Canada a successful experiment in racial harmony and peaceful coexistence? Yes, I would say so, proudly.

Much as I often love and admire the countries I visit and their people, I can't help but notice when I go abroad that most people in France look French, most in Italy, Italian. In Sweden they look Swedish and in Japan they look Japanese. Beautiful, absolutely beautiful. But where's the variety? I ask myself. Where's the mix, the spice, the funk? Well, it's here, right here in Canada — my Canada. When I, as an aboriginal citizen of this country, find myself thinking about all the people we've received into this homeland of mine, this beautiful country, when I think of the millions of people we've given safe haven to, following agony, terror, hunger and great sadness in their own home countries, well, my little Cree heart just puffs up with pride. And I walk the streets of Toronto, the streets of Canada, the streets of my home, feeling tall as a maple.
Investing in Life

Since making one of the first recorded corporate donations in Canada in 1894, Imperial Oil has been supporting a wide range of activities from social programs to the arts. Today, the company is focusing its contributions on education.

BY WINNIE THOMAS

It’s unlikely that the bewrinkled directors of Imperial Oil had any idea of the importance of the tradition they were establishing for their fledgling company when, in 1894, they approved its first charitable contribution: a grant of $100 to a fishermen’s mission in Newfoundland. Not only was the gift one of the first recorded corporate donations in Canada, but it established a tradition of giving that Imperial has taken to be one of the cornerstones of company policy.

In those days, corporate philanthropy was a novel idea—one that was far from winning universal acceptance among shareholders. Indeed, for the most part, all that society expected of business was that it provide steady employment for its workers and a fair living wage. That a company should choose to extend its responsibilities to include the welfare of the communities in which it operated struck many people as a very odd concept indeed.

True, there had been some precedents. In Britain in the early years of the 19th century, the industrialist Robert Owen was attracting much attention by the widespread social reforms he successfully introduced in his cotton mills. The earliest example of such philanthropy in North America came towards the end of the century, when the U.S. railroad companies started helping build YMCA’s in towns and cities along their routes in an obvious match of business and community interests. The towns gained valuable new community facilities; the railroad companies gained decent accommodation for their workers.

Today, there is scarcely any argument about the mutuality of interest that exists between business and the community. And, as society has evolved over the years, so has its expectations, and business has responded accordingly.

“Research confirms our belief that contributions by business to worthwhile causes enrich community life,” says Robert Petersen, Imperial’s chairman. “And in turn, a prosperous community creates a positive climate for business.”

Andrew Carnegie, the American industrialist and pioneer philanthropist, once remarked that it was easier to make money than it was to give it away wisely. Anyone involved with corporate philanthropy would agree that Carnegie had a point. No company, however philanthropically inclined it may be, can afford to support more than a fraction of the many thousands of deserving causes. It must decide where its contributions dollars will do the most good from its own particular perspective.

Since the mid-1990s, Imperial has chosen to put most of its charitable eggs into the education basket. This focus, says Petersen, is a logical one for a company like Imperial, which is critically dependent on a highly skilled workforce. “Our vision,” he says, “is to help build a lifelong learning system in Canada that ranks among the best in the world. In the long run, the only real competitive advantage a country like Canada will have is the quality of its workers. Our priority is on programs designed to help young people improve their math, science and technology skills. That’s not to say that other skills are not equally important or that we are not concerned about education in the humanities and the liberal arts—society needs doctors and architects, painters and writers, clergy and philosophers as well as engineers and geologists. But we decided that it made sense for Imperial, given the focus of our business, to invest in improving the teaching of math, science and technology. We also believe these areas are key to the development of Canada’s workforce in the future.”

Having established this focus, Imperial began to reshape its contributions policies to reflect the new...
emphasis. In 1988, for example, the University of Alberta in Edmonton, at the University of Toronto and the University of the University received grants of $1 million to create or expand courses within their faculties of education to begin the development of new curricula in math, science and technology for primary and secondary schools. These programs will draw upon a wide pool of expertise; the universities' own education and science faculties; individual schools and school boards; and various non-profit educational organizations.

Also in 1998, a $252,000 grant was made to the University of New Brunswick's faculty of engineering in Fredericton to set up an outreach program for children, which will include visits to classrooms, science fairs, math and engineering competitions and science camps.

According to Barbara Hejduk, president of the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation, which was established in 1994 to support the company's contributions policy, these university grants reflect a turning point for Imperial. "They have set a theme for our future donations to universities," she says. "We believe that philanthropy is more effective -- both for the donor and the recipient -- if it has a clear target. The sharp focus on education and the science behind it is the key to all of our educational contributions -- from kindergarten all the way to graduate school." And, says Hejduk, opting for the focused, rather than the ad hoc, approach to giving moves the company much closer to one of its key corporate objectives -- contributions that make a difference.

Imperial is bringing some of the best minds in Canadian education to bear upon the task of improving the teaching of math, science and technology. It is believed to be the first time in history that the foundations of the universities -- their faculties of education, science, math and engineering, their student volunteers and their other corporate partners -- behind the classroom teacher. In its contributions focus, says Hejduk, is giving Imperial an opportunity to participate in Canada's educational system in a meaningful way -- "participants" in the ordinary sense, he stresses. "We are very careful to provide support, not interfere." One project that Imperial sponsors is Let's Talk Science, a national charitable foundation dedicated to developing a society that is scientifically literate and globally competitive through innovative educational programs, research and advocacy. It offers effective science education beginning for students between the ages of three and 15. One of these, for example, matches volunteer science graduates from universities across Canada with elementary and high school teachers in one-on-one partnerships. During the 1989-90 school year, about 15,000 students and teachers across the country, as well as volunteers from 14 universities, took part in Let's Talk Science programs.

The executive director of the organization, Dr. Bonnie Schmidt, credits Imperial's ongoing sponsorship for much of the project's success. "The support we have received from the company," she says, "has allowed us to grow from a two-person project into an organization with a full-time staff of 14 and more than 20 associate scientists and educators, and work in 114 schools in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Windsor and London.

Other educational projects sponsored by the company include Ecco Math Camps, a series of summer camps that have proved popular with students wanting to brush up on their mathematical skills, and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society's Great Canadian Geography Challenge, an annual geography competition.

Although Imperial's contributions focus on the sciences, the company recognizes that the best education is well-rounded one. For this reason, not all of the two-thirds of its donations budget that is directed to children's activities under the umbrellas of the Ecco Kids Program (amounting in 1999 to about $4.6 million) is designated for educational endeavors. In recent years, the company has sponsored such activities as children's after-school and March-break programs at the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto; a student matinee series at Regina's Globe Theatre; the Children's Corner series at the Montreal Symphony Orchestra; the KidStudio Learning Centre at the Lyssyllum Arts Centre in Simcoe, Ont.; the Kids on the Waterfront festival at the Eastern Front Theatre in Dartmouth, N.S.; and concerts of the Canadian Children's Music, staged by Symphony New Brunswick.

A common thread ties these contributions together -- they are all directed at developing young people's appreciation for arts and sciences. And it seems to work. Very few of the children who enrolled in the Canadian Opera Company's kids' program, for example, knew anything about opera prior to participating in this program. In an early class, the firemen heard the kids singing songs by the Spice Girls and the Backstreet Boys. By the last session, however, some of the kids left the class singing opera arias.

The classroom teacher of a 10-year-old participant wrote: "Mohammed has always been easily distracted from his studies. He seemed to concentrate on anything like this before.

One eight-year-old girl came straight to the point. "How, she wrote, "do I get a job as an opera singer?"

Although Imperial's specified focus on young people and education may be relatively new, the company has been supporting educational programs throughout Canada for more than 70 years, making its first grant in this area in 1927. And for the past 49 years, the company has supported scientific research through a series of grants for university projects that investigate areas of interest to the company or to business and society in general. In 1999, Imperial gave $650,000 through this program to support 65 projects at 21 Canadian universities.

A typical one saw Professor John Fox of the University of Alberta supervise research into the use of hydrocarbon-eating microbes in cleaning up soil at contaminated sites -- for example, abandoned service stations -- in cold climates. In 1997, Fogg went to Antarctica to collect additional samples of bacteria similar to those that had previously been isolated by a New Zealand scientist.

Apart from being adapted to cold temperatures, the bacterium is also unusual in that it grows well on hydrocarbons in soil. Extensive testing has also found that it is capable of degrading about 60 different petroleum compounds. "This is quite an exciting find," comments Fogg. "We're eager to see exactly how low a temperature this organism will tolerate. We're hoping it will be a very useful tool for the Canadian environment."

Traditionally, Imperial has also been a strong supporter of community-based projects that improve the quality of life in places where the company has employees -- in total, about 30 communities from coast to coast. Imperial, for example, supports the United Way in these communities, as well as a wide range of programs that enhance community health, such as those that emphasize the state of the arts and styles. The Volunteer Involvement Program (VIP) represents another way in which Imperial participates at the community level. Through the program, cash grants are made to worthwhile causes in which current and retired employees or their spouses are involved. On behalf of individual employees, the company provides about $5,000, and for groups of employees up to $1,000. To date, Imperial has donated close to $2 million through this program -- the money being used for a wide variety of causes ranging from land purchase for a senior citizens residence to buying hand-knitted hats for volunteer firefighters.

Giving away money might sound like a pleasant enough way of earning a living, but Hejduk says it has its downside. "Inevitably," she says, "we have to say no to a lot of people and organizations, including some that are very deserving, even though they do not meet our criteria or simply because we do not have enough money to donate. Every year, we receive about 5,000 applications for help -- we have to be disciplined in our responses." The foundation has a set of written guidelines for making donations, and it added that it would be unfair to anyone considering applying for a donation should first obtain a copy of these guidelines, either from the foundation itself or from the company's Web site. Since Imperial has spent away that first $100 to the Newfoundland fishermen's mission, the company has supported thousands of deserving causes and people.

In the early days of corporate philanthropy, the company's donations policy was very much an ad hoc affair. But much has changed since then. As society's priorities and needs have changed, Imperial's pattern of giving has altered to keep pace with those changes.

The year 1928 marked the beginning of Imperial's support for the community and the company introduced The Imperial Oil Hour of Fine Music, a series of 16-hour concerts of classical music broadcast live over a network of radio stations from Montreal to Vancouver. Since this relatively modest beginning, Imperial went on to support professional and amateur orchestras, chamber ensembles, opera companies, virtually every ballet company in Canada, singing competitions, musical competitions, upwards of 40 theaters, dance festivals of every conceivable size and shape, art galleries, museums large and small, and folk festivals by the dozen.

Beginning in 1952, when Canada's fledgling film industry was in dire need of support, the company sponsored a number of films by Canadian directors, and supported the many awards and helped establish a firm foundation for a thriving industry. A dozen years later, Imperial decided to assemble a permanent collection of Canadian art, with the twofold objective of fostering public awareness of the arts and supporting the artists themselves. In the mid-1970s, an Imperial grant helped save a famous Canadian magazine, Maclean's.

Noting the changing pattern of Imperial's giving over the years, one wonders if the company will, in the future, continue to adjust its focus for philanthropic operations. "Quite likely," says Hejduk. "Imperial probably won't ever turn its back completely on its support of education -- after all, it's been a strong supporter of various educational programs for nearly 80 years. But that's not to say that the company's perception of how it can best support this country will not alter. In the end, it's society itself, with its ever-changing needs, that determines its own priorities."
“Her Gates Both East and West”

BY AL Purdy

Wanderings in Canada in the century before the millennium...

This is where I came to
when my body left its body
and my spirit stayed
in its spirit home

Beside the soothing Fundy waters
my friend sleeps
and he wakes up for me
I'll wait for you in the west

till your sun comes down for its setting

Three short summer in Newfoundland
when we feasted on wild raspberries
blackberries Scruch and salmon
walked four miles in the rain
(you blamed me for it)

Annie and Sheena where Hodge Ingrid and Anne Smine
digging up leaf the Lucky's mounds
called to them an hour
while I watched the Viking ship
and heard the beat of hooves
where reflected in legend's blue eyes

On a green island in Ontario
I learned about being human
built a house and found the woman
and we shall be there for ever
building a house that is never finished
Camped by the South Saskatchewan
all day we listened to voices
we heard inside ourselves
the river like a blue brook
where the Moors fought their last battle
Duncan Leiter and Old Ouellette
their ghosts came to me in sleep
as white mist moved over our bodies
the river flowed into the sky

In the Alberta prairie badlands
we camped by the vanished Bearpaw Sea
in Dinosaur Provincial Park
after the campground closed to fall
we wander NO TRESPASSING badlands

- the white light suddenly changes
to brown sepia light
we're 75 million years back in time
beasts like bad dreams wrap around us
with bodies we can see through
translucent in the sepia sun

and Canada becomes a very old country
the Rocky Mountains fold themselves
upward against the sky
and we are children again

Through the Crowfoot mountains
at age 17

On the freight train, a black caterpillar
climbing, climbing, climbing
vertebrae, chattering up the mountains
red coal cinders blackening my face
riding the high catwalks, riding the engine
like bugs like dwarfs like boys pretending
they're men half way high as the mountains go
below us valleys bathed in sunlight

The millennium really makes little difference
except as a kind of unalterable reminder
of the puzzle that is yourself and always changing
the country that you wondered like a stranger
but stranger no longer
yourself become indescribable

endless forest then endless empty land
we won't to hang between earth and sky
then a monster hand with a hundred fingers
spreading itself over the river delta
and a permafrost town until Canada
the Beaufort Sea beyond
where the world was blue for ever

- comes the millennium into our brief lives

I suppose it's like a kid growing up

to see the parts of your own country
like a jigsaw that suddenly comes together
and turns into a complete picture
you've reached nearly all the parts
you've become a certain kind of adult
and the ordinary places become enchantments
that dig into your mind and grow there
and you change into what you already are
in a country that you can wear like an old overcoat
Joseph's coat of many colours

I0 SPRING 2000

I0 SPRING 2000
Conserving Energy Only Makes Sense

From production wells to refineries, energy conservation is good for the environment and for business.

BY RUSSELL FELTON

"Are you telling me oil companies care about conserving energy?" my friend asked during an after-dinner discussion. "Why would they? Their business is making fuel. The more fuel that's consumed, the more money they make — simple as that.

Well, perhaps not quite so simple, at least as far as Imperial Oil is concerned. "The fact is that energy conservation, by our customers and in our own operations, is extremely important to Imperial Oil," says Brian Fischer, senior vice president of the company's products and chemicals division. "It just makes good business sense any way you look at it.

Fischer's point, although probably not widely recognized, is well taken. Imperial and other petroleum companies have continually improved the quality of their fuels and lubricants over the years to complement increased
flown through the refinery is consumed in the refining process, to heat the crude oil in various processes and to cool and heat those processes and equipment to which it is added.

The transportation of petrochemical products also consumes large amounts of energy, especially to transport the very high temperatures required to "crack" the oil to make fuel and bitumen. In its report, Imperial says this is a major concern for energy efficiency.

At Imperial, the part of its business that requires the most energy is the refining of bitumen — a heavy, molasses-like form of crude oil from the subterranean oil sands at Cold Lake, Alta. Here, in the singularly beautiful region of the province known as Lakeland, immense quantities of bitumen are suspended in layers of sand that are hundreds of millions of years old. Since those sand layers are more than 2.5 kilometres beneath the surface of the ground, for many years the bitumen was considered unrefeatable by any practical or economic means.

Then, in the mid-1960s, after years of research and experimentation, Imperial began re-refining bitumen using what is referred to as the "in situ" or "in place" method by drilling wells into the subterranean layers and injecting steam at a high temperature. The steam is used to heat the bitumen until it flows and can be pumped to the surface. Here, heavy natural gas liquids could be added to the bitumen to thin it so it could be transported by pipeline to Canadian and U.S. refineries to be handled.

Having proven the principle of the in situ recovery method worked, and having gained experience in working with it, Imperial began bitumen recovery operations on a commercial scale at Cold Lake in 1985. Today, after a series of expansions, the Cold Lake recovery operation is Canada's second-largest source of crude oil, and its 132,000 barrels of bitumen a day account for more than half of Imperial's total crude oil production.

Imperial has been exceeding market expectations in energy efficiency, having established a target of reducing energy consumption by at least one percent a year. Imperial's most recent VCM submission, based on 1998 data, shows that total greenhouse gas emissions from company facilities in that year were about the same as in 1997. Later this year, Imperial will publish its performance on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which are estimated to be about 10 percent during the period. This has been achieved through actions that make good business sense, according to Imperial's executive chairman, F. "Paddy" Fischer.

However, it is important to recognize that improving energy efficiency is not necessarily the same as reducing total energy consumption, since the latter is affected by the volume of production, which varies on a daily basis. The biggest gains come, in particular, from the "in situ" and the "in place" processes that injects steam into the subterranean beds for up to six months, at a time, as well as to operate pipelines and other facilities. The "gas bill" at Cold Lake ($1.15 million in 1999) accounts for more than 20 percent of the total direct operating expenses for the entire operation. Some of this gas is purchased externally, but most of it is produced by Imperial at Cold Lake and other operations and would otherwise be sold to commercial markets. The potential revenue to Imperial is substantial, and therefore the financial incentive is great. "The overall environmental values can be found by looking for ways to reduce energy usage at Cold Lake and other operations also," says Fischer.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS — That is to say, the opportunity to reduce costs by reducing energy consumption — provides a powerful motivation for all of Imperial's operations in the "downstream," or manufacturing and marketing, sector, as well as in the "upstream," or oil and gas producing, operation. In fact, energy efficiency is a key concern for Fischer. "Across Imperial's four refineries, energy accounts for one-third of total operating costs. That adds up to around $200 million a year, or to put it another way, more than one dollar for every barrel of crude oil processed. When you consider that the industry's after-tax profit margin has typically averaged around one and two cents per litre of product sold, you can see that saving energy is sound business."

I consider, too, that under the Voluntary Challenge and Registry (VCR) program, aimed at encouraging Canadian industries and companies to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gases from their operations, Imperial has been exceeding expectations in energy efficiency. In fact, Imperial has been exceeding its target of reducing energy consumption by at least one percent a year.

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ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS — That is to say, the opportunity to reduce costs by reducing energy consumption — provides a powerful motivation for all of Imperial's operations in the "downstream," or manufacturing and marketing, sector, as well as in the "upstream," or oil and gas producing, operation. In fact, energy efficiency is a key concern for Fischer. "Across Imperial's four refineries, energy accounts for one-third of total operating costs. That adds up to around $200 million a year, or to put it another way, more than one dollar for every barrel of crude oil processed. When you consider that the industry's after-tax profit margin has typically averaged around one and two cents per litre of product sold, you can see that saving energy is sound business."

I consider, too, that under the Voluntary Challenge and Registry (VCR) program, aimed at encouraging Canadian industries and companies to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gases from their operations, Imperial has been exceeding expectations in energy efficiency. In fact, Imperial has been exceeding its target of reducing energy consumption by at least one percent a year. Imperial's most recent VCM submission, based on 1998 data, shows that total greenhouse gas emissions from company facilities in that year were about the same as in 1997. Later this year, Imperial will publish its performance on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which are estimated to be around 10 percent during the period. This has been achieved through actions that make good business sense, according to Imperial's executive chairman, F. "Paddy" Fischer.

However, it is important to recognize that improving energy efficiency is not necessarily the same as reducing total energy consumption, since the latter is affected by the volume of production, which varies on a daily basis. The biggest gains come, in particular, from the "in situ" and the "in place" processes that injects steam into the subterranean beds for up to six months, at a time, as well as to operate pipelines and other facilities. The "gas bill" at Cold Lake ($1.15 million in 1999) accounts for more than 20 percent of the total direct operating expenses for the entire operation. Some of this gas is purchased externally, but most of it is produced by Imperial at Cold Lake and other operations and would otherwise be sold to commercial markets. The potential revenue to Imperial is substantial, and therefore the financial incentive is great. "The overall environmental values can be found by looking for ways to reduce energy usage at Cold Lake and other operations also," says Fischer.
INSULATED PIPES AT COLD LAKE KEEP STEAM HOT AS THEY CARRY IT FROM CENTRAL PLANTS TO WELLS, WHERE IT IS INJECTED INTO THE UNDERGROUND OIL-AND-SANDS FORMATION TO RATCH THE RETURBEN.

because from gasoline and produce low-sulphur diesel fuel. Meeting these requirements involves additional processing in the refinery, which in turn involves using more energy to produce each litre of fuel. In a sense, we’ve been caught in a squeeze – on the one hand being required to use more energy and on the other being expected to consume less energy. And looking ahead, new regulations requiring dramatic reductions in the sulphur content of gasoline by 2004 or 2005 will further compound the difficulties.”

That Imperial and other refiners have been able to improve their energy efficiency in these circumstances, Roach says, is a considerable achievement. And, he adds, those improvements have come the only way they could have come – in small increments, a little at a time, day by day, every day.

“The challenges are great but improving our energy efficiency would require an ongoing, sys-
tematic examination of all the little things we do and the pieces of equipment we use,” Roach says. “At the refinery, for example, includes kilometers of pipes that carry hydrocarbons between the various refining units. In many cases these pipes must be kept warm. This is accomplished by surrounding them with copper tubing that carries steam, and wrapping both the tubing and the pipes in insulation. This method of heating is called steam tracing. Poor insu-
atation or steam leaks mean a loss of heat, but frequently and systematically checking every pipe and repairing any minor leak right away reduces the problem significantly. This process is simple enough, but it’s by no means easy to execute. The Sarnia refinery alone has more than 10,000 such steam tracing units. You must have a comprehensive set of procedures and standards, work schedules, training programs and so on, so that everyone in the plant understands what has to be done and focuses on the need to save energy.”

To help provide that focus, Roach and others developed an “energy management framework” for Imperial’s downstream operations – a comprehensive set of standards aimed at optimizing energy use by systematically measuring it, controlling performance and identifying opportunities for improvement. “It realises this sounds deadly dull and anything but dra-
matic,” Roach comments with a knowing smile. “But the fact is, it works” – works so well, it turns out, that a similar framework has been developed for use at all refineries in the Exxon Mobil Corporation worldwide network.

A key to finding opportunities for improvement, Roach says, is measurement. “For example, gas-fired furnaces used at the Sarnia site rely on a mixture of air and gas. Optimising usage involves mixing only as much air as necessary to ensure that all the gas gets burned. By carefully monitoring and measuring the excess air, we’ve been able to maximise the gas-burn-
ing efficiency of the furnaces. In the past, the excess air has been as high as 30 percent. Today we operate with less than half that.”

Seeking out such opportunities for incremental energy-efficiency improvements in a mature industry isn’t glamorous work, admits Roach, but with con-
tant attention from management and operating per-
sonnel alike, the commitment to continue to improve can be met.

THE CHALLENGE TO CONSERVE ENERGY IN IMPERIAL’S upstream operations is in some ways similar to that faced in the downstream. In other ways, it is quite different. According to Milc Fischein, a chemical engineer who, as energy management adviser for the company’s Calgary-based resources division, is Roach’s counterpart for oil and gas production operations.

“A refinery or petrochemical plant generally con-
tains a relatively small number of large energy users located in a concentrated area. An upstream operation generally contain a large number of small energy users spread over a large area,” Fischein explains. For example, Imperial’s resources division sector is approximately 2,700 square miles of land over Western Canada and the Northwest Territories. Each pumpjack consumes an average of about $2,000 in electricity each year. While the price for reducing the amount of energy used by the pumpjacks is huge – a portion of $10 million a year – the kinetics involved in the energy costs are complicated.

“We’ve adopted an approach similar to that of the downstream, based on systematically identifying opportunities to improve our efficiency.” That approach, Fischein reports, has led to the development of a comprehensive energy manage-
ment system for the resources division, including a twofold approach, with targets for each of the division’s operating areas. “Working together, we’ve been able to develop a set of useful indicators for monitoring and measuring energy use and improve-
ment initiatives at all our operating sites,” he says. “And through a workshop process, we’re identifying specificenergy-saving opportunities. We suc-
cessfully identified those opportunities at our oil-producing facilties at Norman Wells, N.W.T., and at Boundary Bay, B.C., in 1999, and we expect to have cov-
ered all major upstream operating facilities by the end of 2000.”

The resources division has been singularly suc-
cessful in reducing the amount of so-called solution gas – natural gas that comes out of the ground mixed with crude oil – that is often flared, or burned off, at well sites. This gas flar-
ing not only wastes potentially useful energy but also presents an environmental concern. As a result of a strongly focused effort across all its field operations, Imperial’s resources division now has the best solution-gas conservation rate in the industry. A 1997 survey of 488 oil-producing companies conducted by the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board found that Imperial conserves 94.4 percent of all the solution gas it produces – compared with an industry average of 94 percent. And, Fischein says, the continuing emphasis on this area should lead to an even higher conservation rate in future.

At Cold Lake, energy consumption has been reduced since 1987 by the equivalent of five million gigajoules a year, based on 1999 production rates. “To put that in a perspective,” says Fischein, “in the oilfield, a gigajoule is enough energy to provide heating for about 25,000 homes for a full year.”

Interestingly enough, CIFEPC reports show that energy use per unit of production in Canada’s oil-
sand operations at Cold Lake stood at about 85 percent of the 1990 level. As in Imperial’s downstream operations, most of the energy savings at Cold Lake have come from “little things,” such as improved heat recovery, rather than major technological breakthroughs, says Fischein. “The biggest operator is that we have captured the heat – and the more heat that we can capture – through improved heat-exchanger technologies and careful management — and use to generate steam for injection back into the ground, the less natural gas we have to use,” he says. “During 1999, we were able to identify numerous opportunities to the extent that we lowered Cold Lake energy costs by a further $700,000 per year.”

As we continue to monitor our energy consumption through the use of energy indicators, I believe that we will continue to find similar opportunities. It’s a never-
ending game.”

ONE POTENTIALLY very LARGE OPPORTUNITY for reducing energy consumption and costs both at Cold Lake and in Imperial’s Sarnia refining and petro-
chemical operations may lie in the development of what are called cogenerating facilities.

Cogeneration involves building an independent electricity-generating plant (utilizing natural-gas-
Fished turbi

The resources division has been singularly successful in reducing the amount of so-called solution gas that is often flared at well sites
The following article by Stephen Leacock ran in the Imperial Oil Review in 1931. Perhaps Canada’s best-loved humorist, Leacock was also a respected academic, serving as chairman of the department of economics and political science at Montreal’s McGill University from 1928 to 1936. It was in his capacity as an economist that Leacock penned this pithy and somewhat prescient Depression-era essay.

**Beating Back to Prosperity**

*BY STEPHEN LEACOCK*

The man on the street keeps asking his fellow man on the street: “When do you think things will get better?” “How long do you suppose this will last?” The very iteration of the question is pathetic. It is not conversation. It is anxiety. Behind it is often a dead weight of apprehension very different from the old-time buoyancy; and underneath it, too, a new courage, a bracing of resolution to meet ill-fortune.

It is small wonder that this mental depression is added to the industrial. Never were there harder times like these; harder they have been in sheer poverty, but never this. The ostrich of the hard times was so sudden, the collapse so spectacular, so world-wide in its extent, so obviously not our own fault, or not ours in particular. In our new vocabulary of “world” words of which we were so proud—“world” championships and “world” records, “world” production and so forth—there appears a new one—“world helplessness.” The whole of industrial humanity seems suddenly thrown together, like banded survivors on a raft, drawn together by mutual helplessness. What are we to do?

The situation is made worse by the dense economic fog which seems to surround us. The old lights and landmarks are gone. The world of to-day seems exactly reversed from the world of the Adam Smiths and the John Stuart Mill of a hundred years ago. Our worst enemy now seems plenty. A few good harvests would ruin us. We must shut down our machinery. Half-time is our only policy. We must have no more inventions. We must cut our work. Above all, we must have no more workers. The current of immigration which used to seem the very fountain source of our prosperity, must be absolutely stopped. There must be no more buying. To buy is fatal. We must get away from money. Gold is deadly.

All the signs and symbols of human welfare of a century ago are now objects of dread—bountiful harvests, foreign trade, money, increase of population, labor. Our demons on the scene of today are the honest immigrant, the industrious laborer, the child. The “man with the hoe” is a public enemy and the “hand that rocks the cradle” rules the world. Our present-day gods are scarcity, exclusion, isolation.
This atmosphere has enveloped us like a misty rain from a marsh. It can only be blown aside by the clear north wind of common sense. All those pretentious ideas are just the outcome of a temporary delusion; the industrial world is out of joint. For a man with a broken leg, walking is an injustice; but for such a man to foresee forever the use of legs, would be worse still. Yet that is exactly what the world is doing in its present, anti-plenty, anti-immigration, anti-work, anti-trade, anti-gold policy.

Now, with us in Canada the pain of dislocation is sharp. Our prosperity and advance of the last three decades, both before and after the war, was of a peculiar kind. It was very different from the steady and continuous forward movement of pioneer times, whose every firm was an almost self-sufficient unit, when every added settle was an addition to wealth, when two and two made four. With the newer epoch certain great extractive industries rushed forward out of their national proportion—wheat, wood, paper, nickel, gold, asbestos—and with them a huge outline apparatus of transport, whose principal meaning lay in the future. It was a vast forward moving machine which could not slacken or stop. For the time being the profit seemed phenomenal; two and two no longer made four, but about forty.

We did not see that with all this there should have been built up an orderly mechanism of sale and disposal. We thought only of production and took sale and consumption for granted. Thus we found ourselves, like the political candidates, "in the hands of our friends." When they let go of us, we fell. There we lie, like Humpty Dumpty, having fallen off Wall Street.

Now, the first thing for us in Canada to realize is that after all, as yet there is no very great harm done. Luckily for us, as far as our economic basis goes, we are a people with a vast heritage, enormous assets, boundless natural wealth, most of it still intact and untouched.

National prosperity in the long run does not depend on stock exchanges and marginals and market prices. These are only images reflected in the mirror of exchange. National wealth is based on the land, the resources and the character and the temper of the people. We must remind ourselves that Canada is three thousand miles broad, and is about as big as all Europe—where live over four hundred and fifty million people; that we are ready to raise a billion bushels of wheat as soon as anyone will come here and eat it; that we are lifting out about fifteen million dollars of gold every year; that we possess over 800,000 square miles of forest, either ready to cut or growing with readiness; water power to represent a potential turbine installation of 43,000,000 horsepower—and so on all along the line.

In other words, all our present dislocation and distress is only a transitory phenomenon, a phase, a zigzag in our industrial ascent. If we are "over-developed" in a temporary transient sense, we are away "under-developed" in the real sense. Our little 40,000 miles of railway track is nothing to what we are going to have. We are not really over-developed, or over-tracked or overbuilt at all. Sooner or later, and not so much later either, we shall need more tracks and more buildings; our Royal Yachts will need presently another ten stories and our Chateau Laurier another ten bedrooms. Nothing is wrong as yet. Let us not worry.

But now, protests the practical person, possessing all this, admittedly, what do we do to get straight? How do we bring back the good times? How do we start the ticker again? The answer is that to get back to good times there are two or three things that we
Looking Back

"Distinguished visitor at Toronto service station."  
(May-June 1930)

"Sir William Mulock, chief justice of Ontario and chancellor of the University of Toronto."  
(January-February-March 1931)

"A 42-passenger plane recently installed on the London-Paris air service of Imperial Airways, Limited."  
(April-May 1930)

"Building an improved highway in Ontario."  
(70y-October 1932)

"The warehouse recently erected by Imperial Oil Limited in Churchill, Man. This is the first industrial branch to be established in the new port."  
(70y-October 1932)

"An interesting view of the R-100, the great British dirigible, whose visit to Canada has aroused such world-wide interest. It is expected that the visit of the R-100 is to inaugurate a regular monthly airship service between Canada and the Motherland."  
(July-August 1930)

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...can do, of which the first is the easiest. It is simply to sit tight, without worry, the perfect confidence. As far as economic knowledge goes, that is, as far as the blind can lead the blind, we may say that depression somehow, even if painfully, cures itself.

Our industrial system, so it appears from the two thousand years of its history, RENTS BUT DOESN'T BREAK, CRACKS BUT DOESN'T CRACK, STAGGERED BUT NEVER STOPS. In nature a broken limb heals itself; a mutilated lobster grows a new claw; organic nature goes on and never stops. So is it in economic life there is a self-adjustive process, painful but certain.

This, one may say, is mere economic philosophy, interesting but of no particular immediate bearing. That is wrong. It has a very direct immediate bearing. We need a wide, deep-seated confidence and assurance to keep up our people from imagining that our whole system of private ownership has got to be scrapped; that our ownership of our own farm, our own business, the right to our own wages, our own brains, our own sayings, has got to be abolished in favor of some vague dream of associated brotherhood.

In our world, too, is an imaginary country called Russia. In this an imaginary group of noble fellows with unspeakable names directs the labor of a band of brothers; it is a land where overproduction is unknown, from which unemployment has vanished, and where industrial cities -- a Stalingrad, a Cheliabinsk, an Ural-Astae -- are triumphant in the Siberian solitudes....

The real truth is that of a vast country, half raw, half civilized, a country of shabby villages and mean streets with mournful people dressed in the clothes of an ash barrel, waiting in long lines for their bread....

We can love Russia, in all good-will, quite.

Our safety lies, as it always has, in individual work, individual effort, individual freedom.

But still one asks -- what shall we do to bring back prosperity by a quicker process than the slow healing of the sick medicament nature?

We can do a great deal. First, we can do our share to help correct some of the general dislocation of the world which is racing upon us as upon all others. A large part of this is due to the disastrous arrangements made after the war at Versailles. The economic basis of that treaty turned upon the payment of "repayments" -- not to be paid in goods or ships or labor -- but in gold. The insane theory that all selling for foreign money is good and that all buying is bad, made this arrangement look like the very quintessence of prosperity -- like living on the foreigner. As a result, the greatest industrial nation of the world sits taking in gold, gold, gold. It will not buy, it will invest and thus take in more gold and still more. But it will not buy.

There sits like King Midas of the Golden Touch, its lower limbs already paralyzed.

If all the nations of the world cancelled all the repayment payments tomorrow, there would be a leap upward in industrial prosperity like the setting free of a spring. Someone must begin. Let me do it. The Government of Roumania still owes to Canada twenty-five million dollars. As we number ten million in Canada there must be a Roumanian who owes me two dollars and fifty cents. Let him keep it.

But we can do more than this. As an immediate measure, which we can do without international or inter-imperial discussion, we can go ahead promptly and confidently with every public development of our natural resources, that is bound sooner or later to bring in a reproductive return. The return should be one as early as possible, but if not early, better late than never. We can do this with Govern-
Looking Back

"Mr. D.E. Crabb with the seaplane he built by himself." (May-June 1932)

"The round-the-world flyers, pilot Wiley Post, centre, and navigator Harald Gatty, right, on their arrival at Edmonton." (April-May, June 1931)

"Vilhelm Stefansson, Arctic explorer." (May-June 1932)

Radial aircraft engine.
(April-May-June 1931)

"Good-bye to 1931." (December 1931)

"Imperial Oil Symphony Orchestra at rehearsal in Massey Hall during the early morning hours." (January-February-March 1931)

I speak as an economist – has not yet laid. The schemes suggested hitherto were not practical because not wide enough. Canada cannot buy British manufactures to the detriment of our own factories. But Canada can buy and has to buy enormous quantities of tobacco, coffee, rubber, oil, fruits, a multitude of purchasing power at present given without a quid pro quo. If we can make, with and through English co-operation, inter-Empire arrangements of a three-cornered, or even multiple, character, then the sale of Canadian wheat in England balances, for example, the purchase of raw cotton, tobacco and various fruits from markets open in turn to English manufactures. In this new inter-Imperial block sale method rests a marvellous power for British union and British welfare.

Put together what has been said and it amounts to this: We need an assured confidence in our own country and own way of living: an intense and challenging public opinion as to public honesty, expenditure on any and every reproductive enterprise that develops our resources for an assured return; corporate enterprise, rewarded liberally for success; bigger and better penitentiaries unite the St. Lawrence with Chicago and, if need be, with Omaha and Salt Lake City; join with England in a big scheme of inter-Imperial guaranteed trade: cut our imports give the Romanians two-fifty each: kiss the Russians good-bye: as soon as we can, let in the immigrants again: bring in brains, and money and capital: be just as anxious to buy as to sell straighten up the currency so that it will do both equally well.

Do all this and in less than no time values will rise and the ticker will be clicking away merrily again, the hotels full, the sleeping cars crowded, the theatres jammed, motor cars parked – in short, the glad old life all back again.
Celebrating Our Journeys

The historian Michael Bliss looks at the many and varied experiences that have shaped the history of this country.

Canadian history, it seems to me, is flourishing as never before. At festivals and battlefields, parks and forts, libraries and museums, around campfires and on pilgrimages to military cemeteries far from Canada's shores, we are celebrating our heritage. The secret of history, the reason it's bound to flourish, is that it moves us all. All Canadians have a history to trace and learn. All Canadians have a sense of Canada and how their experience here has shaped them. In this sense we have as many histories as there are Canadians, 30 million. And every one of us has a story to tell.

Does this mean there's a bewildering, conflicting bubble when we talk Canadian history? You bet. Inquisitive Canadians tell Canada's story a little differently from French Canadians, Newfoundlanders' narratives have more fish in them than Saskatchewan farm boys' histories. Black Nova Scottians and Japanese Canadians in British Columbia's Fraser Valley know how Canada could marginalize people; graduates of Upper Canada College know the history of the cultured, privileged elite. If great-grandfather fought at Vimy Ridge in 1917, a person may have a different sense of Canada's military traditions than if he fought conscription in Chicoutimi, Que. Coming to Canada on a famine ship in 1847 was very different from flying in on a North Star in 1947.

We each experience Canada differently, and we're gradually realizing that this is normal. There isn't a common Canadian experience, and there certainly isn't a common Canadian identity or history. The essence of our modern multiculturalism is a celebration and tolerance of our individualities, our seemingly unlimited variety of identities and ways of life.

Still, we keep on using that word, Canadian, to describe us, and it does have some meaning. We do have certain things in common. If we think of our lives as journeys, millions and millions of them, no two exactly alike, then Canada is the vessel, the vast ship we've chosen to take us on that journey. We have a lot of personal histories (every single person's trip diary, no it were), but there is also a real history of Canada - the story, or log, of this country's voyage, with all its peoples, down through the years. Almost all of us have been shaped, to one degree or another, by the 500-year-old journey of the communities that make up modern Canada.

History and a few other things have made the Canadian ship different from anyone else's. The few other things mostly have to do with cold, long winters. But even our space has been shaped by our history. How different it would have been if Britain had given in to the temptation in 1763 to trade the newly conquered New France, what Voltaire scoffed at as "a few acres of snow" that produced only a few animal skins, back to France in return for the rich West Indian sugar island of Guadeloupe. Then there was the fact that what became the British province of Quebec included the whole of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi watershed all the way down to the Louisiana Territory. Was it too bad for us that Great Britain gave away the great midwest to the newly independent Americans in 1783? Maybe just as well, for the United States surely would have claimed that land as part of its westward "manifest destiny." As it was, when the Americans did invade British North America in the war of 1812, we were barely able to fight them to a draw.

After the conquest of New France, the British decided not to rid Canada of its French population (as they had done in Nova Scotia in the 1750s by deporting the Acadians). The original 60,000
Canadians cling tenaciously to their culture and had a very high birth rate. There were too many of them to be assimilated. The result has been all the unusual characteristics Canada possesses because of its mil- lions of French-descended French speakers—and a half French provinces (many of the Acadians made it to New Brunswick), our official biling- gualism from sea to sea, two languages on our con- stitution, and the fact that we were once called缓冲; the Mont- real Canadiens, Celine Dion and, for the last third of the 20th century, a Quebec separatist movement and a perpetual national anxiety.

The British influence did steadily fade. By the 1930s, Canada was formally independent. In the 1960s, we adopted our own law to give birth to a new people, Canadians. We began to adopt the constitution in 1982, inserting in it an American- like charter of fundamental human rights. "Racial" and "Dominion" discrimination dropped drastically from Cana- dian nonconformity; and we have always preferred baseball to cricket, dollars to pounds, MGM to Ealing Studios. If American popular culture is sweep- ing the world, Canada is a little more crowded. Nonetheless, as the millennium draws to a close, England's Queen continues to grace Canadian currency. Stratford, Ont., holds a wonderful annual Shakespeare festival, and tourists flock to afternoon tea at the Empress Hotel in Victoria.

Did history make us all that different from the Americans? Well, a little. In everyday life, the difference between a country constituting itself committed to "peace, order and good government" and one devoted to "liberty and the pursuit of hap- piness" can be important. The idea of a country being of being robbed, assaulted, shot in the street or other- wise interfered with have always been a lot less in Canada than in the United States. A police force, the Mounties, became a Canadian symbol for good rea- son. Canada had no wild west, no tradition of taking the law into one's own hands (except on the hockey rink), no constitutionally guaranteed right to bear arms. True, until the 1880s, it had no bill of char- ter of rights in its constitution, far less citizen assertive- ness than the United States, much more obedience to authority. When America is much like the United States, Canada is more. When it was the United States, it was more like Canada than the United States. It is, however, a false step to call Canadians "rational." The idea of "peaceable kingdom" that experienced generations of desperate struggle against poverty, a hostile climate and intolerant minorities. Well into the 1960s, Canada's provincial and national govern- ments continued to apply a higher tariff to more of other countries than the United States. In developing collect- tive social policies. The border matter more economi- cally, the "price" of making our life's journey on the Canadian dollar. But even the American ship was, on average a significantly lower standard of living. By world standards, Canada was not a great society, but Canada was a great country.

The historic "brain drain" out of Canada has sometimes been interrupted and reversed—most notably in the 1960s, when thousands of young Americans chose Canada rather than going to war in Vietnam. During 1987, Canada's Centennial Year, it seemed as though the United States was a decaying, declining country and Canada a wonderfully altering "peaceable kingdom." But the Americans righted themselves, won the Cold War and took their enter-prising economy from strength to strength. In recent years, the widening of the income gap and the higher levels of taxation required to fund our supposed above-the-welfare-state welfare system has apparently sparked a new exodus of highly talented Canadians—jumping ship to climb aboard the USS United States.

Throughout the 20th century, everyday life on our own boat—a magazine, radio, television—became steadily more Americanized. So did our trade, our tastes, our culture. Certain groups of the Canadian elite always tried hard to maintain intercourse with the Americans by making the border a real wall. From the old days of the Anglo-French trade right through to 20th-century high-turf protectionists, economic nationalists tried to discourage north-south trade in favor of a much stronger west connection. Thinkers such as Harold Innis and Donald Creighton argued that geography and history made Canada a natural extension of Europe, a great west-east intercontinental bridge between Orient and Occident, the home of the Northwest Passage, if not by sea then by rail. At the very least, Canada had its own integrity as the "True North strong and free," the less trade and with the Yanks, the better.

But the United States was the most powerful of magnates. The lure of its opportunities and effec- tiveness and egalitarianism would be felt elsewhere. Throughout our history, millions of Canadians have succumbed, many by voting with their feet against the cold north and in our old country institutions. When French Cana- dians left the crowded countryside of Quebec in the 19th century, they moved south rather than west; today, there are more people of French Canadian descent in the United States than there are in all of Canada. Maritime immigrants "to the Boston states" long before they began "pion down the road" to Toronto. Ontario farm boys drifted to Michigan and Illi- nois and Indians for more land, for jobs in the packing houses, then to work in the auto plants. Because of the British value educators and professionals. High school students, college students, professional training highly, Canada has almost always produced a spillover of trained men and women, engineers, technicians, and other skilled workers. The United States became the mecca for Canada's most ambitious comedians, baseball players, topless comedians and economists.

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The Canadian ship is bigger than the American one, and its decks and staterooms are a heck of a lot less crowded.

The most obvious ensuing difference between the countries is a simple matter of the ratio of space to people. The Canadian ship is bigger than the American one, and its decks and staterooms are a heck of a lot less crowded. There are almost 500 suites with cars and only 30 million Canadians. We are one of the world's last empty countries. We are entering the 21st century with an amazing asset — emptiness, space, room to roam in, room to grow.

Canada stills takes in immigrants, for more in proportion to its population than the United States. Our history explains this, in fact provides us with the greatest of our national resources. When Sir Wilfrid Laurier made his famous prediction that the 20th century would belong to Canada, he believed that we would receive a huge and constant influx of people similar to the 19th-century rush to the United States. Laurier thought in 1904 that by the year 2000 Canada would have more or less caught up to the United States in population (the wrong immigration has often drifted up, and there has always been that countertrend south. How fortunate we are in the year 2000 that Laurier was wrong. How lucky we are that Canada has been able to be changed in the years since 1904.

And now we return to the remaining differences between Canada and the United States. The difference continues to be a matter of Quebec and the French presence in Canada, part of a matter of health care and other social policies, partly the residual strength of cultural institutions ranging from the CBC through Margaret Atwood and Mordecai Richler. It's also a residue of social conservatism, the sense, as a journalist once put it, that Canada is a "deaculturized" United States. Canadians tend to be a little more reserved and deferential than Americans, a little less enterprising, a little more inclined to let others, such as governments, make the initiatives in their lives.

I have to tell you that selecting pieces to reprint proved challenging. There were so many articles I wanted to retain, each creating a vivid image of an earlier era. In this issue I thought about using "The Expert," an amusing piece about the adventures of the country's first asphalt specialist, "I called into the office and informed that the Company was going to handle Asphalt Products," wrote Don Guilmont in 1931. "The roads of the province were being destroyed by the automobile and asphalt products were going to save the situation." It is a light-hearted story that in hindsight seems charmingly naive, but it's also a revealing piece, taking one back to a time, not that long ago, when the network of automobile-dirt roads we now take for granted — a network that was to link the country more effectively than the railroad — was in the embryonic stage.

I hope that you will enjoy, time and time again, "Her Gaze Both East and West," which was composed especially for the Review, or more specifically its readers, to mark the arrival of the year 2000. The poem was written by Al Purdy, one of Canada's most distinguished poets. In The Canadian Encyclopedia, the late essayist George Woodcock wrote that Purdy "has sought especially to bring into poetry a sense of Canada's past, of the rapid pattern of change that has made much of Canada acquire the quality of age as so briefly a history. Few Canadian poets have explored our past as effectively..." To this work, Purdy not only brings a sense of the past but also touches the heart of this country — our Canada. — Sarah Lane.