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Canada Day Poll 2002

Three Quarters (74%) of Canadians Say that Americans do a Better Job of Celebrating their Accomplishments than Canadians

Saturday, June 29, 2002

But 71% Say We Have Just As Much to Celebrate

Winning A Nobel Prize (78%) Beats Out Winning a Gold Medal at the Olympics (20%) and Becoming Prime Minister (59%) Beats Out Becoming a Professional Athlete (38%) in Canadians' Assessment of What is a Greater Accomplishment

Toronto, ON – As Canada's 135th birthday approaches, the 2002 Annual Canada Day Poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of the Dominion Institute reveals that three quarters (74%) of Canadians say that Americans do a better job of celebrating their accomplishments than Canadians. This is despite the fact that seven in ten (71%) say that Canadians have just as much to celebrate as Americans. When faced with a tradeoff between two accomplishments, most Canadians (78%) say that winning a Nobel prize is a greater accomplishment than winning a gold medal at the Olympics (20%) and six in ten (59%) say that becoming the Prime Minister is a greater accomplishment than becoming a professional athlete (38%).

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Dominion Institute between June 18th and June 20th, 2002. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,000 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 1996 Census data.

Three Quarters (74%) of Canadians Say that Americans do a Better Job of Celebrating their Accomplishments than Canadians

Three in four Canadians (74%) agree that Americans do a better job of celebrating their accomplishments than Canadians. This includes 48% who "strongly agree" and 26% who "somewhat agree". In contrast, one in four (25%) disagrees (11% "strongly disagree", 14% "somewhat disagree").

Residents of British Columbia (88%) and Ontario (79%) are most likely to agree that Americans do a better job of celebrating their accomplishments.

Men (78%) as opposed to women (70%) are more likely to say Americans do a better job.

Similarly, three quarters (75%) of Canadians agree with the statement "Canadians are too modest about their accomplishments" (44% "strongly agree", 31% "somewhat

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great Canadians, while four in ten (40%) say we do “just the right amount”.

Québecers are much less likely (34%) to say we do “too little” to recognise the accomplishments of great Canadians and much more likely to say we do “about the right amount” (57%).

But 71% Say We Have Just As Much to Celebrate

But Canadians do not think that Americans do a better job of celebrating their accomplishments because they have more accomplishments to celebrate. In fact, seven in ten (71%) Canadians disagree with the statement “Americans have more important people and accomplishments to celebrate than Canadians”. This includes almost half (49%) who “strongly disagree” and one in five (22%) who “somewhat disagree”. Meanwhile, three in ten (28%) agree that Americans do have more to celebrate (12% “strongly agree”, 17% “somewhat agree”).

Albertans (82%) and Atlantic Canadians (81%) are most likely to disagree that Americans have more to celebrate while Ontarians (67%) and Québecers (69%) are least likely to disagree.

Men (32%) are more likely than women (25%) to agree that Americans have more to celebrate.

Perhaps the stereotypical Canadian modesty comes from the finding that eight in ten (81%) say that it is more important to them to take private satisfaction in their accomplishments than it is to receive public recognition for their accomplishments (18%).

Younger Canadians (21%) are more likely than those aged 35 plus (15%) to say it is more important to them to receive public recognition of their accomplishments.

Winning A Nobel Prize (78%) Beats Out Winning a Gold Medal at the Olympics (20%) and Becoming Prime Minister (59%) Beats Out Becoming a Professional Athlete (38%) in Canadians' Assessment of What is a Greater Accomplishment

There are many things that Canadians say makes a Great Canadian. Out of a list of four items, the largest number of Canadians (82%) say that “contributing to the advancement of human knowledge” is an important factor in determining whether someone is a Great Canadian. This is followed by “making a contribution to the local community” (77%) and “strengthening our national identity” (71%). In last place is “making Canada known on the international stage” (62%).

Québecers (73%) are much more likely to say that “making Canada known on the international stage” and much less likely (62%) than the rest of Canada to say “strengthening our national identity” is an important consideration in determining whether someone is a Great Canadian.

In terms of what specific achievements are greater, Canadians are more aligned towards the academic and political side of things. They say it is a greater accomplishment to win a Nobel prize (78%) than it is to win a gold medal at the Olympics (20%) and that it is more of an accomplishment to have a best selling novel (72%) than a hit record (26%). They also say that it is a greater accomplishment to become Prime Minister

spotlight, six in ten (58%) say it is a greater accomplishment to be on TV than be in the newspaper (36%).

Québecers are opposite the rest of the country when it comes to being the Prime Minister versus a professional athlete. Six in ten (57%) Québecers say that it is a greater accomplishment to become a professional athlete than it is to become the Prime Minister (40%).

Québecers are more likely than other Canadians to say that it is a bigger accomplishment to be on TV (65%) than in the newspaper (30%).

British Columbians (62%) and Atlantic Canadians (61%) are most likely to say it is a bigger accomplishment to become a famous artist as opposed to a CEO (38% and 39% respectively). Québecers are much more likely to say it is a bigger accomplishment to become a CEO (60%) as opposed to a famous artist (38%).

To view the complete release and tables, please open the attached PDF files.

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For more information on this news release,
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