REVIEW • FORUM
Doug Saunders' *Maximum Canada* [1]

Maximum Canada: What do Canadians wish to maximize?

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While including a history of population questions going back to the war of 1812, *Maximum Canada* is fundamentally a book-length argument for higher immigration, aimed at boosting Canada's population to 100 million by the year 2100. Throughout the book, the author contrasts what he calls a "minimizing impulse" and a "maximizing impulse," with a clear preference for maximizing. Doug Saunders claims, for example, that as far back as the early nineteenth century: "Canada was making a concerted effort to be small in size and limited in function. This would be a recurring trend through the next two centuries—but it would constantly be in conflict with another, larger idea" (p. 8).

Originally, the minimizing impulse sought to keep Canada as a colony of Britain and a source of staple products. Later, this approach envisaged a mono-ethnic population of British or Anglican identity, favouring an economic elite with strong links to the mother country and preventing Canada from becoming anything like the United States. In contrast, the maximizing ideas placed Canada in a North American context, benefiting from strong trade relations with the United States.

Saunders' maximizing vision extends beyond broad-source immigration and population growth to include continental integration and open trade within North America; a diversified and value-added economy; pluralism and ethnic heterogeneity; indigenous nations as sovereign partners; and a view of society as a collection of individuals (p. 123–25). Besides linking population growth to economic growth and to cultural inclusiveness, Saunders sees ecological benefits to larger cities with a dense pattern of habitation. For Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, he proposes that "all three metropolitan areas could easily double or triple their populations without extending their current boundaries (p. 222–23).

While we support the arguments for cultural inclusiveness, we find that Saunders pays too much attention to overall economic growth and too little heed to individual standards of living and quality of life considerations. Above all, we find it hard to swallow his suggestions that large-scale population growth will bring net ecological benefits.

For instance, Saunders proposes that a more populous Canada could better afford costly climate change mitigation and adaptation measures (p. 177–78). He fails to mention, however, that such population growth would require Canada to act more aggressively to meet its target commitments under the Paris Climate Accord. These targets are expressed in terms of total impact on the

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environment, not in terms of per capita emissions or efficiency of resource use. We would observe that while Canada is 37th in population size, it is already 10th among the countries of the world in terms of total CO_2 emissions (Kerr and Beaujot 2016: 307).

In the concluding chapter, Saunders calls for "a large-scale inquiry into the investments needed at national, provincial/territorial, and municipal levels to prepare Canada for its next (population) tripling" (p. 212). As proposed, this inquiry would not consider other alternatives such as low or medium immigration, only how to accommodate higher levels.

Here, we would observe that his population proposals are out of synch with broadly endorsed goals for further slowing the pace of global population growth (see, for example, United Nations 1994: 5). Such goals will prove elusive if each country seeks to maximize its own population.

Canada benefits from immigration, especially from the diversity that brings us into contact with a pluralistic and globalizing world. By including refugees in immigration planning, Canada comes to the aid of the world's most marginalized individuals and families. Instead of seeking to triple the population of Canada by the end of the century, we would argue for achieving population stability through our current levels of fertility, and immigration levels that are closer to the postwar historical average (Beaujot 2017). While Saunders would "focus exclusively on high-skill and post-secondary student immigration" and predicts a "sharp decrease in refugee numbers, which tend to spike only during crises every few decades" (p. 221), we would argue for a diversity of immigrants across the economic, family, and refugee classes, along with diversity of skill levels and places of origin.

Dominance of a minimizing impulse

Before returning to the current context, we will reflect on some interpretations that Doug Saunders gives to population growth over Canada's history. He argues that while a maximizing orientation was present during the years 1897–1913, and slowly took hold in the period after 1967, a minimizing impulse was otherwise dominant: "The starting point of this book [is that Canada] is a country that has long had trouble keeping people. During most decades of the nineteenth century, and for many decades in the twentieth, Canada sent more people to other countries than it received as immigrants" (p. 8).

Saunders asserts that the period 1867–1967 represented a "century-long crisis of underpopulation that had kept the country closed, dependent, and in denial" (p. 122). In particular, he observes that during the 90 years between 1851 and 1941, Canada attracted 6.7 million immigrants but lost almost 6.3 million to emigration, for a net gain of only 400,000 (p. 99). All accounts of Canadian immigration history point to four decades of net emigration at the time surrounding Confederation (1861–1901) and another such decade in the 1930s, but various analytical works point to net immigration in all other decades. For instance, Kerr and Beaujot (2016: 113) and Edmonston (2016: 116) both show a net immigration of 960,000 for the period 1851–1941 (6,191,000 immigrants and 5,230,000 emigrants). McInnis (2000: 387) calculates a net positive immigration for each decade from 1821 to 1861, for a total net gain of 487,000 in these four decades of the 19th century.

Saunders is correct in saying that the United States attracted a number of the immigrants who originally landed in Canada, and also that large numbers of Canadian-born emigrated to places south of the border. But despite low levels of net immigration, the Canadian population did in fact grow—from 2.5 million in 1851 to 14.0 million in 1951, or by a factor of 5.6. This is lower than the 6.5-fold growth of the US population, from 23.2 million in 1850 to 150.7 million in 1950, but it is higher than the 2.0-fold growth of the world population over this century (1.241 billion in 1850 to 2.529 billion in 1950; see Livi-Bacci 2012: 25).

Our main point of disagreement regarding the pre-1960s period is that Saunders attributes Canada's disadvantage to a "minimizing approach" that worked against attracting and retaining more immigrants. In our view, he downplays various factors that drove population growth in the New England colonies and the subsequent United States of America. Already by 1760, at the end of New France, the white population of the United States was over a million (1,268,000), compared to just 70,000 in Canada. The USA began building a more industrial economy with its larger population, especially over the last three decades of the 19th century, and by 1900 its population reached 76 million, as against 5.3 million in Canada. This more dynamic economy south of the border was partly based on an independent and enterprising capitalist spirit, but it was also based on the exploitation of Black and Indigenous populations. Clearly, the industrializing US economy of the 19th century was an attractive alternative to the surplus agricultural economy along the Saint Lawrence Valley.

Saunders also downplays the role of climatic and geographic disadvantages north of the border. When comparing Quebec and New England, the Canadian prairies and the Dakotas, and Toronto, Montreal, and Hamilton to Chicago, New York City, and Boston, he says, "And no, it was not the weather," that these represent "similar climates" (p. 35). The *Farmer's Almanac* (2018) shows considerable differences in average annual frost-free days: Montreal at 181 compared to New York City at 230, Regina at 106 compared to Minot (ND) at 141, and Toronto at 173 frost-free days compared to 204 for Chicago. There are other important geographic differences. In the 19th century, there was year-round marine access to New York, while Montreal was not accessible in winter. The United States also benefits from a more contiguous agricultural area, while the narrow strip north of the border is interrupted by the extensive Canadian Shield. Thus, it is not only due to differences in political will that the US westward push, and the associated displacement and near elimination of the Indigenous population, occurred two decades earlier south of the border.

With the benefit of hindsight, we can agree that Canadian Prime Minster John A. Macdonald's "National Policy" was misguided, especially in not integrating the Indigenous and Metis peoples into an advancing agrarian economy (see Carter 1990). Nonetheless, this policy did establish an east-west economy north of the border that managed to avoid being absorbed by US expansionism. It is true that the arrangement gave much land to the railways, and to the Hudson's Bay Company that originally owned Rupert's Land, but here again Saunders is exaggerating. He says that "homesteads could not be established within twenty miles of a train track because the railways had been granted that prime land by Parliament for future development" (p. 57). In effect, 20 miles would have been an almost impossible distance for bringing grain to the railway by horse and wagon or horse and sleigh. In fact, the land given to the railways was on "odd numbered sections" representing an average of 16 of the 36 sections of a given township (Waiser 2007: 156–57). Homesteads *were* available next to the rail lines, not just at a 32-km distance (Tyman 1972). Looking at the homestead map for the Rural Municipality of Silverwood (No. 123), which adjoins the Canadian Pacific Line that opened to Whitewood Saskatchewan in 1882, about one-third of the 324 sections (each a mile square) are labeled as "C.P.R.," but these are spread out over the 18×18 square-mile area of the municipality.

Saunders proposes that "the entire program of settling the Prairies was a failure," in part because of the lack of urban infrastructure and associated markets (p. 58). However, we would observe that by 1921, Saskatchewan was the third-largest province by population, after Ontario and Quebec. It was the dust-bowl conditions in this fragile geographic area and the coinciding 1930s economic depression that undermined the population of the prairies, not the lack of urban infrastructure. Saunders proposes that by 1941, "Canada's population had become more rural" (p. 99). In fact, the rural percentage declined from 58.3% in 1911 to 48.9% in 1941 (Beaujot and McQuillan, 1982: 158).

A maximizing orientation: The 15-year Canadian century and building a maximizing consensus since the 1960s

While it is true that the Wilfrid Laurier years represented a strong advance in building Canada's population, the groundwork had been done during the time of John A. Macdonald. The period 1897–1913 corresponded to a time of globalization, when Canada benefited from conditions much beyond the political reach of Canadian policy. This was just as much "La Belle Époque" as it was the "The Fifteen-Year Canadian Century," to quote the title of Chapter 3.

Saunders proposes that the 1960s and 1970s were a time of confrontation and debate that ultimately produced considerable consensus toward an open economy and pluralistic inclusiveness. In effect, there was the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963–70) that resulted in the Official Languages Act (1969) and the Multiculturalism Act (1971, 1988). In 1982 there was the incorporation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Constitution. The Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada (aka Macdonald Commission,1982–85) became the basis of the 1988 Free Trade Agreement with the United States and the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement. The Commission made a case for free trade on the basis that in contrast to other developed economies, Canada did not have access to a market of 100 million people. In 1991–96, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples produced a new push toward better recognition of the First Nations and repairs of historical injustices.

Saunders sees the associated discussions as resulting in "core maximizing ideas": ethnic, racial, and religious pluralism, as well as population growth, immigration, North American free trade, individual rights, and Indigenous self-government (p. 126). As reviewers, we share in this consensus with regard to openness and pluralism, but we ask why it should be linked to increasing to a population of 100 million by the end of this century. If Canada is already characterized by this "maximizing consensus," why do we need such a large population? While Saunders says that "35 million is not enough," he also observes that Canadians are among the most educated people in the world, with Canada ranking in the top four countries on the Global Entrepreneurship Index and as a world leader in science and technology innovations (p. 160). We would add to these Canada's high life expectancy, which is among the best of the world and three years above US life expectancy (United Nations 2017: Table S6). Apropos, if we need a significantly larger population to be successful, how did Norway, with a population of 5.3 million, achieve such success in the 2018 Winter Olympic Games? By moving instead toward a stable population, can we not build on these core values of openness and pluralism while also playing our role as responsible ecological stewards?

Saunders also claims that the political parties in Quebec have moved away from concern about the relative size of Quebec in Canada to concern about the small absolute size of Quebec:

> By the time the neo-nationalists had evolved into the Parti Québécois in 1968, both separatists and Liberals shared the view that Quebec's absolute population needed to grow, and fast, even if that meant that Canada itself grew faster (p. 138). […] There's a great understanding that Quebec is underpopulated […] francophone Quebecois are a generation ahead of English Canadians in recognizing the shortfalls of absolute population and the need to have a more robust population (Doug Saunders as quoted in Runnalls 2018: 59).

We asked a Quebec demographer who follows these questions to comment. Jacques Légaré (2018) responded that he had never heard anyone make propositions of this kind. He observed that Quebec had been focused on avoiding population decline, but small changes to family policies and immigration have pushed this concern off into the 2060s (see Légaré 2017). There remains a preoccupation to not have the Francophone proportion decline because of international immigration.

Saunders observes that Canada's population tripled in the period 1946–2015, from 12 to 35 million, and thus it is not such a stretch to triple once again, to 100 million, as a Conference Board of Canada study has proposed (Ades et al. 2016). We would argue that there are serious limits to comparing such growth in the 1946–2015 period to a similar increase for 2015–2100. The postwar period was a time of rebuilding. Prime Minister Mackenzie-King had wanted to ensure that the returning soldiers would not be as poorly integrated into the society as had been the case after the Great War. In effect, Canada's welfare state was first designed for the returning soldiers, including health benefits, support for higher education, loans for persons going into business or farming, and investments in housing. As the welfare state expanded, including family allowance, it provided security to young families and set the basis for the baby boom.

It is noteworthy that both groups of immigrants of the 1897–1913 and 1946–60 periods followed a hiatus in immigration, and both groups achieved fairly successful economic integration (Richmond and Kalbach 1980; Beaujot et al. 1988). The lesser economic success of arrival cohorts since the 1990s (Picot and Sweetman 2005) brings into question the continued high levels of immigration.

In contrast to the period 1946–2015, the proposed tripling of population for 2015–2100 would occur under rather different circumstances. In particular, this tripling in Canada would stand in marked contrast to the projected 1.4-fold growth in the US and 1.5-fold increase for the world as a whole (United Nations 2017: medium projection for US and world population).

Saunders is not clear about the immigration level that would be needed to reach this 100 million mark. At one point he says that even at "current immigration levels and fertility rate, (Canada's population) would still be approaching 90 million people by 2100" (p. 217); elsewhere he says that "a robust set of family policies to bring fertility rates to 1.7" and an immigration rate of 1.3 per cent annually would reach a population of 100 million by 2100 (p. 157).

It is worth citing official projections relating to Canada's long-term population growth. United Nations (2017) projections show low, medium, and high populations of 36.4, 51.6, and 72.0 million, respectively, for 2100. Since the Canadian immigration level has averaged 7.5 per 1,000 population over the period 1991–2015 (Kerr and Beaujot 2016: 112), Statistics Canada uses the low, medium, and high assumptions of 5.0, 7.5, and 9.0 immigrants per 1,000 population (Bohnert et al. 2015); these are paired with Total Fertility Rate assumptions of 1.53, 1.67, and 1.88 births per woman, respectively. Because of the underlying uncertainty of projections, Statistics Canada only publishes results for 25 years at the provincial level and 50 years at the national level. It is, however, possible to extend these projections up to 2100 based on a continuation of the same assumptions. These produce populations of 40.8, 65.9, and 100.8 million for 2100 under low, medium, and high assumptions, respectively.[2] Thus, even an immigration of 5.0 annual arrivals per thousand population, with fertility rates of 1.5, shows a larger population in 2100 than in 2015.

The case for 100 million

Saunders' case for the near-tripling of Canada's population hangs substantially on the promise of large economic and fiscal gains. He argues that the resulting changes to Canada's age structures, GDP growth, and government revenues would offer a "significant" cushion against pressures associated with population aging and free up much fiscal capacity (p.157–59). Among other things, such gains would help Canada sustain social programs (p.157–58), expand public institutions (p.181–83, 188), upgrade foreign policy, security, and defence capabilities (p. 180–81), undertake

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2. These results were provided to the authors by Statistics Canada on special request.

costly climate change–related investments (p. 177–78), and make long-needed upgrades to transit systems, affordable housing, and other urban infrastructure (p. 211, 221–28). Canada's private sector would also benefit from the rising population size and density, which would unleash significant gains in innovation, productivity and economies of scale (p. 159–72). Ultimately, Saunders holds out the promise of a more prosperous, sustainable, and safer society that enjoys not only higher standards of living but also a better quality of life.

Saunders tempers these bold assertions with notes of caution, as he admits to certain social and political risks associated with his population strategy (p. 192–213). He also acknowledges that his proposed surge in immigrant numbers would require costly up-front investments in programs, institutions, and infrastructure (p. 212, 222–25). In the end, he maintains that the potential benefits of the strategy would far outweigh all such costs (p. 212). We remain unconvinced, however, as we believe that he has overstated likely economic gains while ignoring or downplaying significant risks to the environment and to human well-being. Below we raise some specific concerns with his arguments and flag other points that may warrant consideration.

Impacts on age structures and dependency ratios

Saunders cites the burden of rising dependency ratios as a key reason for boosting Canada's population growth. He acknowledges that his proposed population expansion would not prevent overall population aging (p. 154–59), but suggests it would produce a "considerably younger" population (p. 221) and a "markedly lower" peak share of Canadians over the age of 65 (p. 157). By contrast, other sources and studies suggest that similarly large increases in immigration levels would yield only modest long-term changes in age structures, median ages, old age dependency ratios, and workers-per-retiree ratios (Kerr and Beaujot 2016: 198–200; Riddell et al. 2016; Statistics Canada 2015: 14; El-Assal and Fields 2017: 20–22).

Fiscal impacts

Saunders quotes fiscal projections from a 2016 Conference Board of Canada study to demonstrate that certain strategies yielding a population of 100 million by 2100 would free up substantial fiscal capacity by the end of the century (p. 157). We would discount this portrayal for two reasons: (1) there is dubious value in fiscal projections out to 2100; and (2) the study focuses on outcomes with respect to health care and Old Age Security costs, but does not consider spending increases associated with much higher levels of immigration (Ades et al. 2016). A subsequent Conference Board study, which looks at "status quo" versus higher immigration scenarios out to 2040, gives a somewhat more balanced take on fiscal impacts; it projects that a high-immigration policy would reduce health care costs by an amount equal to roughly two per cent of provincial government budgets by 2040, while adding an unspecified amount to social expenditure costs. The study also warns of possible negative fiscal and economic consequences if Canada fails to address the long-standing obstacles to labour market integration faced by immigrants (El-Assal and Fields 2017: 20–22). This suggests that much higher levels of immigration would likely offer some long-term fiscal relief, though this is not guaranteed. In any event, a large windfall of added fiscal capacity seems unlikely in the years to 2040.

Impacts on GDP versus GDP per capita

Saunders points to large GDP gains under his suggested high immigration scenario, but he says nothing about the consequences for GDP per capita. The above-mentioned 2017 Conference

Board study projects that Canada's total GDP in 2040 would be nearly 5 per cent higher under the high immigration versus the "status quo" scenario. Conversely, the projected GDP per capita in 2040 would be roughly 2.0 per cent *lower* for the high-growth versus "status quo" scenario (El Assal and Fields 2017: 20). High-level immigration would no doubt increase Canada's national income over time, but it might do little for average individual incomes.

Impacts on productivity and competitiveness

Saunders contends that his population strategy would deliver large economic gains in the form of enhanced innovation, productivity, market size, and economies of scale. We see a need for further study of these effects within the Canadian context and on a microeconomic scale, as outcomes could vary substantially by industry. Researchers should also assess the broader economic costs and benefits of such growth on those cities and metropolitan areas most affected. Some urban planners suggest that optimum density levels vary by city, and they warn of possible negative economic and social consequences if these levels are exceeded (Florida 2012; Lehmann 2016). Might a tripling of Canada's population mean a four-fold increase within the Vancouver census metropolitan area? If so, this area would harbour 22,000 people per square kilometre, twice the current population density of New York City. A quadrupling of people within Toronto's census metropolitan area would yield a population of 25 million and a density of over 17,300 people per square kilometre. (NYC nd; Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2016). Would these numbers fall within "optimal" ranges?

Saunders is correct to flag the serious productivity concerns facing Canada, and the extent to which these may undermine future standards of living. We would note, however, that studies have pointed to multiple potential causes and remedies for this problem, many of which do not relate to population or labour market size (Antunes and Ozyildirim 2015; Capeluck 2016; Drummond 2011; Hodgson 2017; Van Ark et al. 2015).

In making the case for a larger domestic market, Saunders points to a global rise in protectionist tendencies since 2009. We should not assume this trend will last, as the world has seen numerous swings to and away from protectionism in the past two centuries (Reuveny and Thompson 2004: 112–15). One might further argue that current high levels of globalization and tightly integrated transnational supply chains will serve to limit the depth and duration of protectionist swings going forward (Sandbu 2017). In any event, a Canada of 100 million would no doubt remain substantially reliant on external markets; our market size and related economies of scale would still be dwarfed by those of the USA, the EU, China, and the increasingly integrated markets of East Asia. We should recognize this and maintain a strong focus on securing access to diverse external markets.

Impacts on labour markets

Maximum Canada has little to say about the effects of proposed population increases on employment rates, real wage levels, and labour market composition. Past research suggests that immigration flows to Canada have had relatively little impact on wages and employment rates, although less is known about potential distributional effects (Riddell et al. 2016). Looking ahead, however, it may be wise to consider the impacts of population growth on labour market conditions and income distributions, given the unknown and potentially disruptive effects of forthcoming labour-saving technologies and anticipated high levels of job automation throughout the developed world (WTO 2017: p. 90–100).

Impacts on the environment

We find that Saunders' arguments are weakest in the environmental realm. He notes that increased levels of urban density serve to improve ecological outcomes (p. 174–79), and this is certainly true when population levels are held constant and redistributed to achieve greater density. It is a dubious assertion, however, when such density is achieved by enlarging populations. Saunders explains that one city of 8 million people requires 15 per cent less material infrastructure than two cities of 4 million people each (p. 175). While this may be true, it is also almost certainly true that 8 million people will have more total environmental impact than 4 million.

Saunders allows at one point that his proposed high immigration strategy might add to overall problems of pollution and environmental degradation in Canada (p. 176). This can be justified, he suggests, because increased immigration to Canada would benefit the global environment; it would help to depress global population growth because immigrants to Canada from high-fertility source countries tend to have substantially lower birth rates within a generation of arriving (p. 177). We see several problems with this justification: (1) the fertility rates of most major source countries have dropped or are in decline; (2) per capita consumption levels tend to balloon for immigrants who move from developing to developed countries; and (3) Canada is responsible for protecting its own environment, for the sake of its current citizens and future generations.

Saunders cites underpopulation as the cause of urban sprawl, traffic gridlock, and other environmental problems in Canada's largest cities. He claims that current population levels "force" us to use inefficient or high-carbon technologies, as our cities lack the financial resources and tax base required to install adequate public transit systems and green infrastructure (p. 173–74, 222). Some might argue instead that these cities have failed to keep pace with the needs and impacts of their surging populations because residents and governments have been slow to embrace needed changes in behaviours, policies, and investment priorities (Resnik 2010). To the extent these latter factors play a key role, adding large numbers of people will not solve our urban problems and may well make them worse.

There is good international evidence to suggest that cities need not be highly populous to be sustainable. For example, a sustainable cities index compiled by two multinational consulting firms ranks cities around the world according to their environmental performance; six of the top 10 cities on the latest list have populations smaller than those of Canada's three largest cities (Arcadis 2016: 20–21). Certain US cities with populations under one million were among the best performers on a 2010 index of urban sprawl compiled by University of Utah researchers; only two cities larger than a million made their top 10 list for urban "compactness" (Jaffe 2014). Some of the best-performing US metropolitan transit systems also have populations of less than a million, according to a 2011 study by the Brookings Institution (Tomer et al 2011: 824–25).

Saunders contends that a tripling of Canada's population would not jeopardize valuable farmland or green areas, as substantial population growth would only take place in the largest cities; indeed, such growth would leave "natural spaces untouched and probably better protected" (p. 171). This assertion does not align with Canada's past experience, however, as large-scale urban population growth has invariably spilled over into nearby regions, disrupting local ecosystems. Even if governments managed to prevent all such peripheral growth, a tripling of Canada's population would result in significantly more travel to or through Canadian wilderness areas. Such a trend would place added pressures on Canada's natural ecosystems at a most disadvantageous time; the World Wildlife Fund has warned that as many as half of Canada's wildlife species may be dying off at alarming rates due to habitat loss, climate change, pollution, and overfishing (WWF 2017: 5).

Impacts on well-being

While pursuit of urban density is a desirable and increasingly necessary response to population growth, it does not automatically follow that people are happiest living in high-density environments; indeed, a variety of foreign-based studies point to negative effects on health and happiness for those living in high-density environments (Cramer et al. 2004; Florida 2016; Lederborgen et al. 2011; Okulicz-Kozaryn and Mazelis 2016; Peen et al. 2010; Sundquist et al. 2004) There is no doubt that efficient transit systems and good urban design, including features such as green architecture and urban forests, can do much to reduce ill effects from urban density. Yet there is risk in assuming that such optimal conditions will prevail, and that they will solve all problems associated with high-density living. There is also danger that while some population groups may benefit from increasing density, others with fewer resources will disproportionately suffer the costs.

Finally, we submit that Saunders puts the cart before the horse when he calls for a national inquiry into the feasibility of major immigration increases. Instead, Canada should first embark on broad-based discussions and debates over a desired population trajectory. These discussions should not be left to select committees alone; they should incorporate views from interested citizens, officials from all levels of government, NGOs, and specialists from a wide array of disciplines, ranging from the social and health sciences to environmentalists and urban planners. Such population debates could prove contentious, and there is no reason to expect that compromises would emerge. But this airing of views could allow for well-informed policy decisions that better reflect a balance of Canadian interests.

Canada suffers from a dearth of research into the impacts of population growth on diverse aspects of Canadian life. These analytical gaps make it difficult to assess and properly challenge many assertions in *Maximum Canada*, and they impede any national debates on this topic. More important still, governments at all levels currently lack analytical support for many population-related decisions. Canada's academic and research community needs to step up with a more comprehensive and refined array of analytical studies into the impacts of changing population size on the prosperity and well-being of Canadians and the health of domestic ecosystems. If *Maximum Canada* inspires such needed studies and debates, it will have served Canadians well.

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