

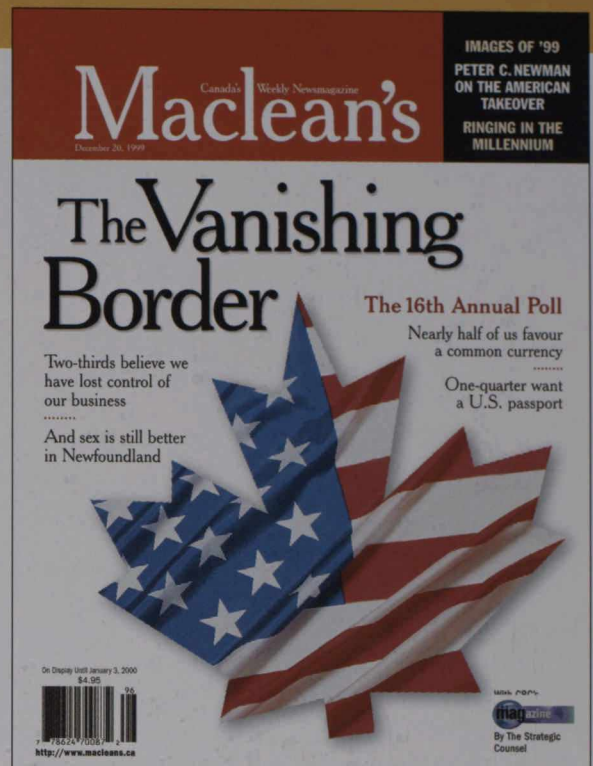
spirit—stable, pacific and compassionate, utterly unlike the extreme and unruly Yanks.

All the while, however, the connectedness has only grown. To the natural ties of family and commerce were added deepening cultural influences and, beginning in the Second World War, an intimate military alliance. In August 1940, U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt met Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King on the border, in Ogdensburg, New York, to concert action for the defence of North America. That summit, involving common necessities and compatible leaders, launched the modern Canadian-American relationship.

By the 20th century's end, with free trade firmly in place between the two countries, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace asserted that the border was "likely to disappear before any politician finds the political courage to negotiate its removal." The Canadian edition of *Time* magazine in mid-2000 enquired "What Border?" while *Maclean's* highlighted "The Vanishing Border" on a December 1999 cover featuring a star-spangled maple leaf. The accompanying *Maclean's* story led with polling data that suggested a borderless North America was only a matter of time. Canadians still wished to be different—and felt different—but 25 percent of those surveyed indicated that they would become American citizens if the opportunity arose.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 brought sympathy with the U.S.—but not nearness. The 2002 *Maclean's* year-end survey showed that the desire for U.S. citizenship had diminished, as had support for a common North American currency. Only 38 percent thought the two countries shared a common set of values and beliefs. None of this could be divorced from a widespread wariness about post-9/11 U.S. foreign policy and the makers of that policy.

President George W. Bush, his heartland a long way from the border, has been a gift to Canadian nationalism.



A special issue of *Maclean's* in 1999 suggested a borderless North America was only a matter of time.

In a Bush world, border security has been heightened and predictions of borderlessness are receding. Canadians like my students display a reinforced confidence in the superiority of their peaceable and tolerant kingdom. Books by Daniel Drache and James Laxer, focusing on the border, wax optimistically about the prospects for an independent Canadian future in an age of North American integration. Borders matter, Drache exclaims.

Borders do matter, but they can have more than one meaning. The long and porous Canada-U.S. frontier fosters similarity and cooperation. Canada and the U.S. are interdependent, their pasts and their futures woven together inextricably and inevitably. It isn't fashionable to say it, but the border people have far more in common with their southern neighbours than most dare admit. 🍁



Intimate alliance: (left to right) U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King and U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson met on the border in Ogdensburg, New York, in 1940 in a summit that launched the modern Canadian-American relationship.