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# THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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**U.S. POLITICS**

## 'Same-sex couples should be able to get married'

With one phrase, Barack Obama takes a stand on America's most divisive debate and again seizes the initiative in the contest for the White House

**SONIA VERMA**

President Barack Obama declared his support for same-sex marriage, a politically charged play that dramatically distances him from Mitt Romney even before the Republican's presidential campaign is officially out of the gate.

Mr. Obama's prime time announcement on Wednesday infuses a volatile new element into the race for the White House that has been, until now, largely focused on jobs and the econ-

omy. But it is a calculated play. Mr. Obama's stance is likely to energize his political base and frame Mr. Romney more starkly as a social conservative, while carrying a more minor risk of alienating more rightwing voters who had never supported him in the first place, analysts said.

Marriage laws are made by states, not the federal government.

So while Mr. Obama is now the first sitting president to say he supports gay marriage, his statement carries no implications

beyond its political stagecraft. The President's stance brings him in line with the swelling ranks of Democratic officials who support same-sex marriage, but more crucially it echoes the views of a growing majority of Americans. By declaring a position, after coming under pressure to make his views known, he also appears in sharp contrast to Mr. Romney, who has said he unequivocally opposes same-sex unions, but has been reluctant to discuss the issue in his own attempt to cast himself as more

centrist than the Republicans who contested him for the nomination.

"At a certain point, I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married," Mr. Obama told ABC News in an interview.

He said his position on gay marriage had changed over time. He credited friends, his wife and his daughters for shaping his current view. **Obama, Page 18**

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What do new Canadians bring to the economy? Weighing the benefits - and the costs. **News, Page A3**

Cabinet ministers are being given a wide range of new powers to decide the scope of **environmental assessments**. **News, Page A4**

Ottawa is asking the aerospace industry to keep quiet about the **F-35 controversy** as it sets up a new process to buy its next fleet of fighter jets. **News, Page A6**

Nova Scotia's **electricity rates** are rising for the second time in a year because two big customers are in trouble. **News, Page A6**

A roadside bomb that wounded six troops in **Syria** prompted the UN Secretary-General to cast doubt on the likelihood of peace. **News, Page A14**

Obscure bonds issued in 1889 are emerging as a potential hurdle to restructuring at **Canadian Pacific Railway**. **Report on Business, Page B1**

Canadian tennis star **Milos Raonic** lost a nail-biter to legend Roger Federer at the Mutua Madrid Open. **Globe Sports**

### Stanley Cup

Call these the 'dead-puck' playoffs. Here's a solution taken from the basketball court. **Eric Duhauteck, Sports**

**WSH 2 vs. NYR 1**  
Series tied 3-3



### He started a style revolution

When Vidal Sassoon arrived on the scene in the 1950s, his wash-and-wear cuts freed women from beehives and hot rollers. **Obituary, Page R5**

OBAMA PHOTO: CAROLYN KASTER/AP

OTTAWA/QUEBEC EDITION

Ottawa: High 13, Low 6  
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**JUSTICE**

### As jails are closed, complaints of overcrowding are on the rise

**ANNA MEHLER PAPERNY**

Inmates in Canada's federal prisons have been sleeping in trailers, interview rooms, family visiting spaces and gymnasiums, while the percentage of prisoners sharing cells built for one has nearly doubled in under three years, according to documents obtained by The Globe and Mail.

The documents, obtained from access to information requests, suggest a penal system stretched to capacity. Canada's prison population has been rising since 2005 after years of steady decline, growing 7 per cent between March 31, 2011 and May 1, 2012. Part of the latest increase can be

attributed to the government's tough-on-crime agenda. At the same time, the government will lose 1,000 beds after it closes facilities in Kingston and Laval, Que., but says it will more than make up the difference with new units.

The Office of the Correctional Investigator has fielded increasing complaints from both inmates and corrections staff about double-bunking. Two areas of concern are the Edmonton Institute for Women, where women have been housed in interview rooms and visiting areas, and Kitchener, Ont.'s Grand Valley Institution, which set up a trailer for up to 16 women inmates. **Prisons, Page 13**

**LONDON 2012**

### Canada's new export to Britain: A lesson in customer service

**ELIZABETH RENZETTI LONDON**

On a recent vacation in Montreal, Ricky Francis and his partner sat down in a café, intending only to have a coffee. But the pair, who own a bed and breakfast in Wales, were so charmed by the waitress that they ended up buying a meal and a nice bottle of chardonnay.

The waitress was friendly and accommodating instead of dismissive and rude. In other words, it was a different dining experience from the kind Mr. Francis is used to at home in Britain. "We're appalled at customer service," he says, and even over the phone line from his B&B, The Old Recto-

ry on the Lake in Snowdonia National Park, you can hear the shudder.

So when he was offered the chance to learn the Canadian art of people-pleasing, he leaped at the opportunity. Mr. Francis is one of thousands of British hoteliers, waiters, shop assistants and taxi drivers being trained in the WorldHost program, which was created by the government of British Columbia and is now being used to prepare for the influx of Olympic visitors to the U.K.

Think of it as Canada franchising civility, or exporting its last untapped natural resource: politeness. **London, Page 15**

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