



Creating a Dream for Canada

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Canada is one of the most loved <https://tinyurl.com/yvffa3tw> and envied countries in the world, topping lists of countries that others admire¹. It is a country seen as distinctly different from our neighbor to the south—described by the late Peter Ustinov as “America run by the Swiss.” The world has profound respect for Canada’s nuanced and successful approach to gun control, international wars and terrorism, refugees and immigration, multicultural tolerance, security, banking, healthcare, education, the social safety net, and peacekeeping. In many ways, Canada is the country that many others wish they were. And Canada’s new-found sense of independence and leadership is already inspiring other globally².

Even so, Canadians have less respect for their democratic political institutions than many others. Recently, Canadians have become more encouraged by the potential of becoming a sovereign voice on the global stage than at any time since polls have been measuring this question. Even so, the lack of a clear vision for Canada, and the substitution of this with partisan political insult-slinging has resulted in a level of rhetoric and bombast in the media about politicians and politics that has risen to match the decline of civility in the House of Commons. Without a unifying aspiration, this will continue, and, perhaps, worsen.

And there we may have both a definition of the problem as well as the solution.

Most Canadians would say today, that Canada’s political system is in need (at the very least) of an image redo. A minority of the population invests the time to study and reflect on issues, and assess the political condition through a calm discernment of facts, knowing that they cannot have everything they want, and certainly not without paying for it, or making some trade-offs, either. But the majority does not think this way. They are looking for *leadership*, and they yearn for—and deserve—a higher standard of national leadership than they typically see around them today—a national dream.

This is the time for Canada to articulate a sharp vision of the future we aspire to. What is our role in the world? How do we engage with our global neighbors? We need to articulate our dream, which describes a clear, aspirational vision of the country we wish to be, the impact we can make in the world and the

¹ <https://thelistwire.usatoday.com/story/life/2025/08/30/most-loved-countries-in-world-canada-norway/85881453007/>

² <https://pivot.mias.org.au/2025/09/30/australia-canada-the-alliance-growing-in-importance/>



magnet we can become for the passion and talent of millions of immigrants who will not only build their lives here but also the future of Canada.

Canada's elected leaders are in the best position to improve this condition—if they have the will. We can—and should—reverse the general trend of declining confidence in political leadership and, of course, our over-dependence on our Southern neighbor.

We can start this transformation by creating a dream.

What is the unifying experience that winning teams, great endeavors, and extraordinary achievements have in common? What is the unique characteristic shared by people who achieve the extraordinary—creating revolutions, overthrowing despots, founding nations, climbing Everest, reinventing organizations, making breakthroughs, or changing the way we live or think? What stirs the hearts in men and women?

Each of these is powered by the passion of a dream.

Over the last 50 years, we have expanded our capacity to quantify, measure, and analyze. But we have stifled our capacity to dream. Even now, while Canada is focusing on the transactional (pipelines, shipping ports, rare earths, trade deals) and important though each of these are, they may not inspire or ignite our passion through a vision of the bigger picture, a grand vision: “What do we want to represent in the world?”. The conventional wisdom in politics (and business) is that dreaming is too “out there,” so we no longer talk about it in an organizational context. Instead, we create banal mission, vision, and values statements and other consultant-speak platitudes. But these feel stale and barren compared to the inspiring power of a dream. The reality of our current condition is that Canadians are in danger of losing a once-cherished national dream.

How did we land a man on the moon? John Kennedy had a dream that millions embraced, making it their own and making it real. Indeed, the dream was so powerful that it restored America's self-esteem after the launch of Sputnik, galvanized the nation, and inspired much of the rest of the world. Dreams are like that. They transcend differences, disagreements, and petty arguments and engage us in a higher purpose, uniting us as one. It is this elusive oneness for which we all yearn. Dreams are unique in their power to achieve oneness—national unity.

Great historical leaders—Christ, Buddha, Lao-Tzu, Confucius, Mohammed, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King, Jr., among them—all knew the impact a dream can have. In his famous 1963 speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, King repeated the phrase “I have a dream” eight times. His ability to articulate his dream united and inspired hundreds of thousands of people to usher in a new era in civil rights.

That is the power of dreams to change the world. Our moment in NOW. It is time for Canada to lead the world by clearly articulating Canada's aspirational dream. Everyone with noble ideals (or who would like to have higher ideals) will want to emigrate to a country with a dream—let us make Canada that place.



I have [personally instituted](#) the transformational concept of [ONE Dream®](#) within organizations and for cities and states. We have [seen these organizations](#) harness the power of the dream to galvanize the passion of their respective constituents.³

In the 1960's, my close friend, the late Don Watt, [designed the Canadian flag](#) for Lester Pearson, and all Canadians—and a surge of Canadian self-esteem followed. I wish to offer our [methodology](#) to Canada to achieve the same, by creating a dream for Canada that will not only inspire Canadians, but the rest of the world too.

³ See this ONEDream® Case Study and White Paper: <http://tinyurl.com/z5tdIng>