

**Note:** In September 2017, an Ontario music teacher suggested that I pen new English lyrics for our national anthem, "O Canada," which is currently undergoing a fresh retrofit--so to speak--anyway, as a result of *Bill C-210, An Act to Amend the National Anthem (Gender)*. Indeed, many Canadians -- including the music teacher who wrote to me--cannot abide, "all thy sons command," which seems to ignore 51% of the Canadian population. It is striking that previous efforts to rewrite "thy sons" have all "died on the *Order Paper*," often at "the first reading stage." My music-teacher interlocutor also desires an anthem that is ecumenical, without reference to a deity, and an anthem that is cognizant of our multicultural and Indigenous heritage as well as of the great bounty of our wilderness. The pendant, revised, English version of "O Canada" is my attempt to meet the request of my correspondent (and others) for a more inclusive, national statement. Perhaps my poem will please few. Then again, anthems are like constitutions: Almost impervious to direct alteration. Yet, I can state that my rewrite effort was eye-opening, in terms of how difficult it is to write anything that can possibly encompass our impossibly, but beautifully, variegated federation.

## **O Canada**

O Canada, true home of *Liberty*,  
Where salmon leap dams and bison range prairie:

Our North Star hearts glow at thy rise--  
True North from sea to sea--

From East and West and North to South,  
We're the world's most neighbourly....

Native in soul, rooted in *Liberty*:  
O Canada, great's thy humanity.  
O Canada, great's thy humanity