

I have long felt that our current national anthem, O Canada, does not represent the Canadian reality adequately: primarily because the French version says something different from the English, but also because it fails to include any reference to essential features of the Canadian identity. I believe that a patriotic song is needed which reflects our vast geography, a vital formative element in our national character, as well as our multi-cultural, multi-racial composition. It should have essentially the same meaning in both official languages. Our American neighbours have at least three patriotic songs, I see no reason why we should not have more than one. Our song writers should be encouraged to provide an alternative national hymn for Canadians. Below, I offer my submission:

Aurora.

*From Grand Banks waters to Haida Gwaii
Where Pacific breakers roar,
From Pelee Isle to our arctic seas
Beneath the midnight sun,
Throughout this broad dominion
A new day has begun:
Aurora Canadiensis, glorious northern dawn,
Bold panoply of colours, majestic and serene,
Enfolding different races, diverse creeds and dreams,
May your light shine forever in this nation proud and free,
On mountains capped with untracked snow and broad rolling prairie,
On crystal lakes, clear rushing streams, rich golden fields of grain
And families ruled by justice in true democracy.
(And homesteads carved from wilderness by strong and caring hands)

*Chorus of many cultures, voices from many lands,
Let us sing together in peaceful harmony
To Canada our homeland, from sea to sea to sea,
With glowing hearts O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, our own dear land we stand on guard for thee.*

I am less comfortable with the French version, but I believe that with some possible tinkering an acceptable translation may be created. The following is my attempt:

*Aurore
Des Grands Bancs eaux jusqu'à Haida Gwaii
Les brisants du Pacifique,
De l'île Pelee à nos mers arctiques
Sous soleils de minuit,
A travers cet grand dominion
Commence un jour nouveau.
Aurore Canadiensis, aube glorieuse du nord,
Brave panoplie colorée, de majesté sereine
Embrassant distincte races, diverse foies et rêves,*

*Que vos rayons brillent à l'éternité
Dans notre fier et libre pays,
Sur crêtes coiffées par voiles de neiges, larges ondulantes prairies,
Sur nos lacs clairs, coulantes rivières, riches champs de grain dorés,
Et familles réglées par équité en vraie démocratie
(Et fermes taillées des lieux sauvages par mains fortes consacrées.)

*Choeur de maintes cultures, accents de terres lointaines,
Chantons-nous ensemble, en harmonie tranquille,
À Canada, notre foyer, de mer à mer à mer,
Coeurs rayonnants O Canada, nous sommes en garde pour toi,
O Canada notre pays cher, nous sommes en garde pour toi.*

By Dan Farrell

Copyright reserved. No unauthorized reproduction or use without author's consent.