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There is an old story about three workers who were cutting great blocks of stone. One day they were asked by a passerby what they were doing. The first answered, "Cutting stone," the second, "Earning my wage," but the third replied, "Building a cathedral." This last reply, in essence, reflects the animating spirit of the United Nations (UN) — its vision, idealism and faith in a better tomorrow.

Far too often, dreams are lost in the need to deal with reality's harsh problems. But dreams and reality need not be mutually exclusive. Instead, to improve the world, there must be a fusion of vision with practical considerations. The third worker's contribution to the labour is as real and concrete as the others, but it is greater because it is tempered with care and commitment and shaped with a vision of the future.

It takes courage to apply one's dreams to reality, but it is this very vision which founded the United Nations, and which, over the years, has led it to conquer social injustices, bring peace to war-torn countries and feed the starving. The UN's broad and caring vision is one the world desperately needs, and despite its many problems, its long list of accomplishments in realizing its dreams is impressive.

Canada was one of the strongest supporters of the UN at its founding more than 40 years ago, and remains so today. The country's continued provision of innovative ideas, personnel and funds to the institution, to its specialized agencies and to its world programs is proof of an enduring commitment to multilateralism. Canadian leadership in UN peacekeeping operations, disarmament and arms control initiatives, humanitarian relief efforts,

human rights and environmental issues is second to none. Yet, Canada has not lost sight of the fact that dreams are pursued in a world of practicalities and therefore strongly supports the ongoing process of UN reform and change.

Realizing the United Nations' vision will be a difficult task. But its dream to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirm faith in human dignity, practise tolerance, and promote the social and economic advancement of all is the highest expression of human aspiration and dedication. As such, it is too valuable and too needed to be allowed to fail.

Canada

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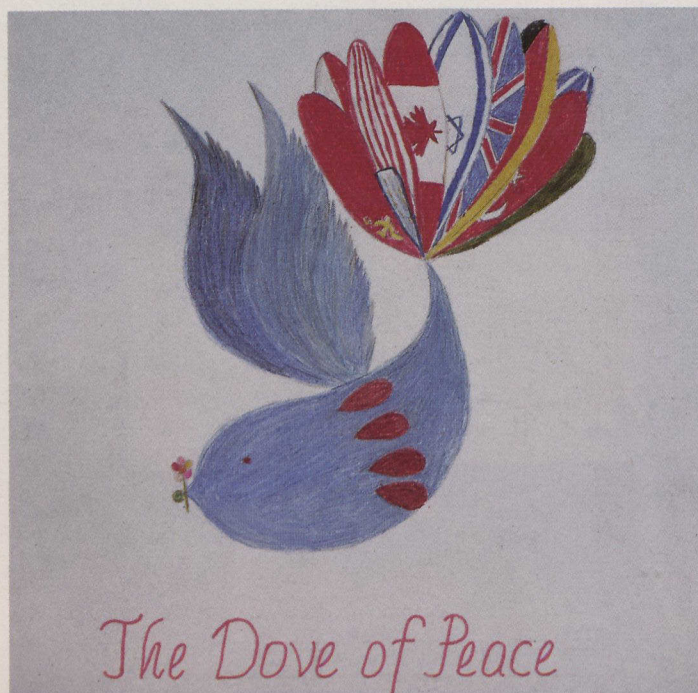
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The Dove of Peace