

Word from the Minister

The Honourable Jim Prentice



Many influential people have influenced our history and left their mark on the development of our country. When we reflect on who they might be, quite often, we automatically look back several generations, to the grand events of our past: to things like the early days of settlement, the creation of the Canadian Confederation, or the exploration of the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

However, Canada's journey through history, and the development of our national identity and national values, is an ongoing process. It is deeply influenced by today's leaders, as well as yesterdays.

And when I say "leader," I am not referring to politicians or corporate decision-makers, I am referring to "ordinary" citizens. Individuals who dare to redefine our hopes and goals, who dare to go beyond what is expected of them—those who dare to dream and define ideals that will have a lasting influence.

Today, the Government of Canada is pleased to honour Terry Fox, and the ongoing work of this great Canadian, as exemplified by his life, his work, and his determination.

Terry Fox was a true leader.

Through his unique and open approach to his personal fight against cancer, he inspired the entire population of Canada to believe in his dream, to participate, and raise funds for research to save others. He shone the spotlight on an unfair illness, which others might be facing with courage, yet in silence. This illness still affects too many Canadians today—but thanks to Terry Fox, we cope with it in a far different manner.

Terry Fox was a Canadian from Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, who did not accept cancer in silence. When cancer condemned him, he decided to put his last energies to good use. And he knew his project was bigger than himself, because he stated: "Even if I don't finish, we need others to continue. It's got to keep going without me." And his message came through loud and clear.

Terry's run across Canada served as an inspiration to Canadians and people around the world. In 1980, tens, hundreds, and even thousands came out to follow him, applaud his determination, and run with him, as a sign of support.

Still today, Canadians of all ages remember his tilted stride, his steely resolve in all kinds of weather, and his unflinching courage.

Still today, Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope keeps alive the flame of hope and touches the lives of thousands of Canadians.

Still today, the work that Terry Fox began almost 30 years ago changes our lives.

The legacy of Terry Fox continues to this day through the support he built to fund research to conquer cancer. I am delighted to have this opportunity to officially recognize the national historic significance of Terry Fox. Through this official recognition, I am inviting Canadians of all ages and of all walks of life to believe in their dreams, to share their hopes, and to take action. This recognition invites Canadians to take Terry Fox's example to heart, as an inspiration to become leaders in their own way.

We have not yet won the fight against cancer. But cancer patients and their families are no longer fighting alone. Thanks to Terry Fox, we have won a very significant battle indeed: the fight against indifference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Prentice'.

The Honourable Jim Prentice, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment and Minister responsible for Parks Canada