

DAILY AIRMAIL BULLETIN

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Friday, January 25, 1952.

Mr. Massey Appointed Governor-General: Ottawa, January 24 (CP) -- Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey has been appointed Canada's first native-born Governor-General, it was announced officially tonight.

He succeeds Viscount Alexander, relinquishing his post here January 28 to assume "other responsibilities"--presumably an appointment as Defence Minister in the United Kingdom Cabinet.

Mr. Massey's appointment and Viscount Alexander's retirement were announced tonight from Buckingham Palace in London and confirmed here in a statement by Mr. St. Laurent.

The date of Mr. Massey's assumption of office was not disclosed.

The text of the statement issued by the Prime Minister's office read:

"The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, announced that the King, on the formal recommendation of his Ministers in Canada, has acceded to the request of Field Marshal the Viscount Alexander of Tunis that he be relieved of the duties of Governor-General of Canada and that the appointment of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey to succeed him as Governor-General was being officially announced from Buckingham Palace."

Viscount and Viscountess Alexander today announced they are cancelling all their official engagements arranged to take place after January 28 and said they will sail for England from Halifax February 17, aboard the liner Franconia. They will leave Ottawa by train February 15.

The Ottawa Citizen commented this morning, in part, as follows:

"The Canadian Government has shown enterprise and boldness in its decision to depart from custom and recommend the appointment of a Canadian citizen as the Governor-General of this country. Only time will tell if as much may be said for its discretion and judgment.

"The appointment marks an abrupt break with tradition which is bound to provoke controversy from one end of Canada to the other. Those who fear a weakening of the already tenuous chain which links Canada to the crown will inevitably be dismayed. Indeed, the ground rumblings of discontent have already been heard even while the present move was still in the rumour phase. Such objections, it may be noted, do not stem from ardent imperialists alone. They are shared quite widely by Canadians who distrust an appointment which may link, however remotely, with the processes of party politics...."

Under the heading, "Opening A Way To Trouble," the Montreal Gazette editorialized, in part:

"There was no need for haste in appointing a successor to Viscount Alexander as Governor-General of Canada. But a hasty appointment has been made.

"Were the appointment made in the usual and customary way, such haste would have been less questionable. But the Government has decided upon an innovation, a new way, a break with precedent. When a change of this kind is to be made, nothing seems so necessary as a full opportunity for public opinion to express itself. This is scarcely a matter in which the public should be artfully confronted with an hastily accomplished fact.

"Some have suggested that a national referendum might be in order. At the very least, the matter ought to have been thoroughly debated in Parliament. But rumour came that Viscount Alexander would be leaving sooner than had been expected....

"Certainly, in making its first appointment, the Government has taken care to reduce objections as far as possible. Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey is a man who has served his country well and disinterestedly through many years and in many offices. His work in London in the years of war will be gratefully remembered by many who served overseas and who found comfort and reassurance in his generous and tactful hospitality....