

## APPENDIX

## ADDRESS

of

JOHN F. KENNEDY

*President of the United States of America*

to

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS  
AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

in the

HOUSE OF COMMONS CHAMBER, OTTAWA

on

Wednesday, May 17, 1961

*The President was welcomed by the Right Honourable J. G. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, and thanked by the Honourable Mark Robert Drouin, Speaker of the Senate and the Honourable Roland Michener, Speaker of the House of Commons.*

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. President, Speaker of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Commons, members of the Parliament of Canada. Today it is my honour to welcome here, on behalf of the Canadian parliament and people, one who comes to us not only as a renowned leader of the free world but as a good neighbour and friend.

(Translation):

Mr. President, Members of the Parliament of Canada.

Today it is my honour to welcome here, on behalf of the Canadian parliament and people, one who comes to us not only as a new but as a renowned leader of the free world, and also as a good neighbour and friend.

(Text):

Mr. President, the extraordinary welcome from the people which you have received is a demonstration of their admiration and affection not only for your country but for you and Mrs. Kennedy. As you passed through the streets yesterday and today, Mr. President, you must have been conscious of a divided attention, and all who had eyes to see could see why that was so.

This is an unusual gathering, Mr. President, bringing together as it does the members of the Senate and the House of Commons. I believe with your experience in both legislative branches of parliament you will feel particularly at home in the parliament of Canada, for I am told that on occasion the Senate of the United States and the House

of Representatives are not always in agreement either with themselves or with the President. In that regard they seem at the moment to be similar in class and kind to what we have here.

In these houses of parliament, as with yours, we cherish our right to live under a system of government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed, our right and our glory being that here in our institutions, opposing views are respected. Here, as in your country, views are not only uttered but are debated. Men who are free to speak are also compelled to answer, and it is our common right to live our lives according to our lights and without any dictation from any ruling clique. Today, sir, I bring to your attention the words of Robert Frost, the poet of your inauguration, who recently in the city of Jerusalem signed the guest book of the university there with these words:

Something there is that does not love a wall—  
it is friendship.

When you spoke in New Brunswick to the university there four years ago you quoted from the same poet:

Good fences make good neighbours.

We in Canada believe that good fences are necessary. We are determined that as to our two countries, no one shall be permitted to build a wall between them. We have fences between us, but they are not hostile barriers; but rather, by way of co-operation, evidences of distinctiveness that each of our countries cherishes and of the independence and sovereignty that each must respect in the other.