

Routine Proceedings

the hon. member who becomes pensionable on March 13, 1995 will also not have much intention of retiring.

While we will both attempt to assist our colleagues in aiding both of us to that end in future elections, I think we both know that the work we do here and the remuneration we receive for it is certainly not overwhelming. I want to also say that this is a no win argument in many areas of this country.

I want to say that I am delighted to have taken part in this debate. I thank again the hon. member for Beaver River for bringing forward this motion.

The Speaker: I understand that there will be questions put to the hon. member for Halifax in just a moment. I have been given notice of a request to return to ministerial statements. My colleagues, you will have a chance to put questions to our colleague in just a few minutes.

Might I understand, Mr. Prime Minister, that this is a request to return to Statements by Ministers?

Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Yes.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to return to Statements by Ministers?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to inform the House that Her Majesty the Queen has graciously approved the appointment upon my recommendation of the Hon. Romeo LeBlanc as the next Governor General of Canada. The installation will take place in early February 1995.

• (1220)

[Translation]

Hon. members are well acquainted with Mr. LeBlanc, who has served Canada with distinction in public life for over twenty years: as a member of this House, as a minister of the Crown, as a senator and, most recently, as Speaker of the Senate.

[English]

Born in New Brunswick, Mr. LeBlanc is the first Governor General from Atlantic Canada. He is also the first Acadian to serve as Governor General.

In recommending this appointment to Her Majesty, I was conscious that a Governor General must have a profound love of

his country and of the Canadian people in order to effectively carry out the duties of this high office.

[Translation]

I know that Mr. LeBlanc has these qualities. As a teacher, as a journalist and as a parliamentarian, he has made outstanding contributions to Canada and to Canadians. With his understanding of our country and his personal warmth and dedication, I am sure that he will carry out his new responsibilities with success.

[English]

At this point I would like also to thank on behalf of all Canadians His Excellency Ramon Hnatyshyn and his wife Gerda. First elected to the House of Commons in 1974, Mr. Hnatyshyn has served Canadians for 20 years. As a member of Parliament, I served with him. He served Parliament with great distinction.

In 1990 Ramon Hnatyshyn was sworn in as Governor General of Canada. Since that time he and Mrs. Hnatyshyn have fulfilled their roles with dedication and dignity. I worked with them for the last year and they have been gracious people to work with.

I would like, on behalf of all the members of this House and the people of Canada, to say to Madam Hnatyshyn and Mr. Hnatyshyn, thank you for a job well done.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the appointment of the Hon. Roméo LeBlanc as Governor General will no doubt be welcomed as good news. I salute the Prime Minister's decision to name an Acadian to this prestigious position, in fact the first one in Canada's history. This is undoubtedly a gesture of openness to Canada's francophone communities.

The Hon. Mr. LeBlanc will be able to continue the efforts that he has always made in his long and fruitful career for the promotion of minority rights. I wish him good luck and great success in his new duties.

Let me also point out the good, solid work of the present Governor General, the Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn, and thank him and his wife for what they have done for their fellow Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the Prime Minister's announcement of the appointment of Romeo LeBlanc as the next Governor General of Canada and to protest the appointment as unwise and inappropriate.

In doing so I mean absolutely no disrespect for Mr. LeBlanc as an individual, a parliamentarian or a public servant. However, as hon. members know, the prestige and the standing of the Office of the Governor General with the Canadian public is in decline and it is in decline for three reasons.