

Italy's President Visits Canada

THE President of Italy, Giovanni Gronchi, arrived in Ottawa on March 3 for a three-day state visit. President Gronchi was accompanied by Signora Gronchi and by the Italian Foreign Minister, Gaetano Martino and Signora Martino.

The Presidential party was welcomed with full ceremonial honours by His Excellency the Governor General, the Prime Minister and Mrs. St. Laurent, members of the Cabinet and of the Diplomatic Corps. Following a luncheon at Government House, President Gronchi laid a wreath at the National War Memorial. The President and members of his party attended an afternoon reception given by the Speakers of the Senate and of the House of Commons and an evening reception at Government House.

On March 4, the visitors attended mass at St. Anthony's Church where they met members of the local Italian community; later in the day the President also received delegations from the Italian communities of Montreal and Toronto. In the evening Signor Gronchi was host at a dinner to the Governor General and held a reception at the Country Club.

On March 5, President Gronchi and Signor Martino held conversations with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson. Following a luncheon given by the Prime Minister and Mrs. St. Laurent, President Gronchi addressed the Members of the Senate and the House of Commons. The Presidential party then left Ottawa by train for Detroit.

Following are the texts of Prime Minister St. Laurent's introductory remarks and President Gronchi's statement at a joint meeting on March 5 of Members of the Senate and the House of Commons.

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister of Canada) Mr. President, on behalf of the members of our parliament and of the whole Canadian nation, I have the honour to welcome you most cordially in this House and to express to you personally and to the country which you represent our regards and our feelings of respectful and confident friendship.

We are glad to extend also our most cordial welcome to Mrs. Gronchi whose presence adds to the charm of your visit. May this visit, short as it is, be as pleasant to you as useful to the good relations between our two countries.

In presenting you to this joint meeting of the members of the Canadian parliament, I am introducing to my colleagues and friends a staunch Italian patriot and a European statesman who for close to

50 years has worked consistently and courageously for three great objectives—freedom, parliamentary democracy and a society based on Christian principles. As a very young man, when he took an important part in the activities of the new Christian democratic movement, and in the First World War and afterwards, he served those objectives and his nation with outstanding devotion.

During the difficult years of the Second World War, President Gronchi, working with the resistance, became one of the leaders for the strengthening of freedom in Italy, and later, in company with the late Alcide de Gasperi, he served on the central committee of the national liberation front. No newcomer to parliamentary life, he was minister for industry, commerce and labour in postwar Italian gov-