

APPENDIX "A"

(See p. 1049)

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER,
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE BRIAN MULRONEY, P.C.,
AT THE INSTALLATION OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE RAMON J. HNATYSHYN, P.C.
THE SENATE CHAMBER, MONDAY JANUARY 29, 1990

It is a special privilege and a great pleasure for me to offer you the best wishes of the Parliament, Government, and people of Canada on the occasion of your installation as Governor General.

As your first official gesture, I would ask you to send Her Majesty, the Queen, a message assuring her of our loyalty and affection. Her wisdom, dignity and strength continue to be an inspiration to all Canadians.

And may I say a special word of admiration and gratitude to the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, your predecessor, who served Canada with such devotion and distinction. On behalf of all Canadians, I convey today to Mme Sauvé our warm appreciation and our affectionate best wishes.

Perhaps no Governor General has assumed office in times as exciting or as filled with promise and possibility as these. Around the world, democratic values are in ascendance and the progress of liberty is quickening. In Asia, an economic miracle is unfolding and people are graduating from poverty to prosperity.

In Western Europe, a new supranationality is forming, 325 million people strong. In Eastern Europe, a half-century of repression is ending and freedom is on the lips and in the hearts of people from Berlin to the Balkans.

In November, while in the Soviet Union, I visited Kiev, a city deep in the vast wheat growing plains of the Ukraine. I had the honour, there, of laying a wreath at the monument of Taras Shevchenko, the great poet who, more than a century ago, expressed with simplicity and power the yearning of all men and women for liberty when he wrote:

“. . . In the great new family,
The family of the free,
With softly spoken, kindly words,
Pray, men, remember me.”

As I read his immortal invocation of freedom in Kiev, I thought of wheat fields half a world away and of how Ukrainians had realized the poet's dream—on Canada's prairies and in cities and towns across this country. And I thought how appropriate it was that the son of a Ukrainian immigrant would shortly become Governor General of Canada, here in this Chamber, where his own father had served as the first Canadian Senator born in the Ukraine. Senator John Hnatyshyn was respected, as his son came to be, for civic leadership, a profound commitment to public service and constructive views on Canadian unity.

And how fitting it is that Canada's new Governor General is the son of an accomplished woman, Helen Hnatyshyn, present here today, who has been a civic and national leader in her own right in the course of a very full life, including President of the National Council of Women of Canada.

Your Excellency, the office you are assuming today is a powerful symbol of Canadian nationhood. It is the emblem of the unity and common purpose of all Canadians and the standard of our sovereignty. Your office is a repository of wisdom and insight, a beacon that lights the way of the entire nation.

As Governor General, you personify the values and aspirations of all Canadians.

As a distinguished lawyer, a respected Member of Parliament, a successful Minister of Justice and Government House Leader, you bring qualities of intellect, integrity and experience to your office.

As a second generation Canadian, an advocate of tolerance, a champion of national reconciliation, you know this country and you understand and admire its people.