

## PRESENT AT THE CREATION

**As Canadian Ambassador to the European Union, Jeremy Kinsman sees opportunities for Canada in Europe's changing landscape.**

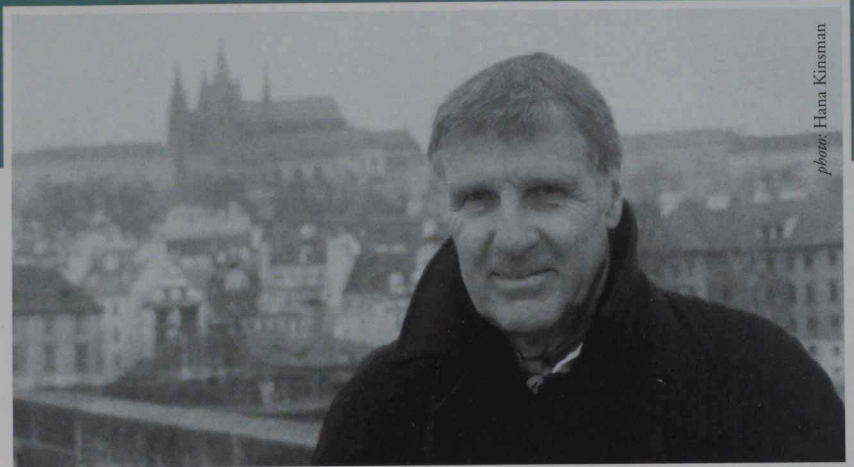


photo: Hana Kinsman

Europe had a different shape when Jeremy Kinsman took his first foreign posting in 1968 as a political officer in Canada's start-up mission to what was then the European Economic Community in Brussels. The maps on the office walls were of the six founding members of the EEC, but, reflecting a post-war idealism, among them were Tuscany and Bavaria and Normandy; not Italy, Germany and France. Canada, meanwhile, was trying to use Britain's renewed interest in joining the EEC to gain profile on the continent. It was, he says, an "unrequited love."

Nearly four decades later, Mr. Kinsman's career has come full circle, as Canadian ambassador to a greatly expanded and much more powerful European Union in Brussels. And Canada's voice is not only being heard, but is being sought by the Europeans in dealing with issues ranging from immigration and human rights to relations with the United States.

Mr. Kinsman, 62, says it was his belief in Pearsonian idealism, "a sense that you could make the world better," that inspired him to join the Canadian foreign service at 24. Those values continue to shape him and his beliefs about Canada's global role in the 21st century.

"I'm an international humanist, with a concern for the world community, which is what Canada is all about," says the Montreal native. "I believe in a multilateral approach to dealing with the world's problems. Those problems have changed since I first came to Brussels in 1968, but there remains the same need to find a global system, a global strategy and global instruments that work."

Mr. Kinsman's approach has trickled down to his everyday interactions in his assignments to Algeria, New York and Washington, and for the last 12 years as a representative in Europe, as Ambassador to Moscow and to Rome and as High Commissioner to London. In Moscow, where he served in the tumultuous post-Soviet period from 1993 to 1996, he instituted a new openness in relations with the Russian population by overturning a Cold War policy that had banned locals who were employed by the

mission and even Russian spouses of Canadian citizens from the Canada Club in the embassy basement.

"We had to show the Russians, on a human level, that this was not a master/slave relationship," he says. "We didn't have to give them access to secret files, but surely we could let them have a drink with us."

Reinforcing his determination to demonstrate Western openness were the experiences of his wife Hana, a refugee from Soviet-dominated Czechoslovakia who admits to "crying at night for two months" when Mr. Kinsman was posted to Moscow, but who had a warm and binding experience with the new Russia once they were there. Those connections to the Czech Republic are helpful now in providing insight into the 10 newest members of the EU, primarily countries of the former Warsaw Pact.

Mr. Kinsman calls the EU "a work in progress—like living in a changing landscape." He is convinced that the expanded union, with its 450 million people, creates enormous opportunities for Canada, both because of the wealth of Europe and because of the new light in which Canada is perceived. He sees his main job as a communicator for Canada, with the goal of trying to win a bigger share of EU investment in North America.

"When I first came here, Canada wasn't really noticed. Today it is because we have earned a reputation in Europe through our economic performance, through our fiscal performance and through our commitment to multilateralism."

Canada's entrepreneurial and social development are seen in the EU as attractive compromises between Europe's sense of social responsibility and the drive for all-out market-supremacy Europeans see in the U.S.

"Europeans are looking to Canadians for insight into how we manage," he says, "because increasingly they see we're managing pretty well." ♣

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Ambassador Jeremy Kinsman on the Charles Bridge in Prague: "Living in a changing landscape."