

indeed of our collective life as an independent state. In truth, he was the one Canadian who stood above political controversy, and could fill such a role.

It gave me courage to think that on this account every one of you would have a personal interest in the Office, and a reason for helping the incumbent in his efforts to reflect the hopes and aspirations of Canadians, both for themselves and for their country.

I am glad to acknowledge today how well you have done your part, and how deeply I am indebted to Canadians in every province and territory, not only for the kindness of their welcome as we have gone to meet and know them in their home communities, but also for their constant encouragement and support – well, almost constant. Really I should also thank, and do thank, those who have had the hardihood to tell me about my shortcomings. It is good treatment for the ego – if not applied too often!

From this view of my role it followed also that I should want to use the prestige of the Crown to encourage those many Canadians who give so much of themselves, as individuals or through their voluntary organizations, to making life better for all of us.

I think of those who work for excellence in the arts, in sport, and in the countless avocations and hobbies which lighten our workaday lives and give scope to our individual talents.

I think, too, of the many people, young and old, high and low, who work more directly for unity of purpose and feeling, in our collective but diverse society. No praise is too great for those who strive for understanding and goodwill amongst our various people, and especially between the two basic language groups.

My bilingual wife (really she is trilingual, because of her fondness for Italian) is in complete agreement with me on this score, and we have tried to raise our own family in this belief and practice.

Nor have I tired in preaching to students, that if they wish to play a worthy part in Canadian affairs, public or private, they must learn to communicate in both English and French.

I think, too, of other Canadians who devote themselves to the relief of poverty and suffering at home and abroad – to charitable works in the broadest sense of the word.

The travellingest Governor General

Mr. Michener travelled more miles during his term of office than any other Governor General. Since 1967, when he was appointed, Mr. Michener and his wife covered 146,005 miles by air, 54,763 by train, 14,482 by car and 4,265 by ship, for a total of 219,515 miles in Canada. On trips abroad, including visits to Iran and the Benelux countries, they logged 47,913 miles: air 45,710, car 1,888, ship 315, for a grand total of 267,428 miles – and countless handshakes along the way.

People of the kind I have mentioned do much to bring purpose and fulfilment into the lives of individuals. They also contribute substantially to the betterment of Canada as a whole – yes, to its identity and its unity.

In the main they serve without thought of recognition.

Outstanding Canadians

I have met so many of such doers in my travels, and at Government House. One of them was a remote Eskimo, Sam Crow, who appears this year on our Christmas card. He spent years of his life at an isolated post on the Belcher Islands, helping the nomadic people of the east shore of Hudson's Bay. I think of the late Chief Warrant Officer Partanen, one of the heroes of the disastrous fire in the engine room of HMCS *Kootenay*. One could add so many examples of other Canadian men and women who have served well, not only Canada but humanity: artists like Lois Marshall, Wilfrid Pelletier, and Gabrielle Roy; in science: Wilder Penfield, Pierre Dansereau and Gerhard Herzberg; humanitarians: Pauline McGibbon, Gustave Gingras and Gertrude Laing; statesmen like two so recently mourned: Louis St. Laurent and Lester B. Pearson.

Fortunately we can now honour such achievements with our own Canadian decoration, the Order of Canada, the Order of Military Merit, and three decorations for bravery in risking life or limb to save others from danger.

But beyond this kind of recognition, a life of service brings its own satisfaction, especially in this time of change, so rapid that it can leave us all, individuals and nations, groping for direction and purpose.

In the years of which I speak we have seen great material gains under technological compulsion, to the point where most Canadians live in great cities, with services and comforts which were either unknown a few years ago, or enjoyed by very few. But such life becomes impersonal. We have lost the independence of our pioneer ancestors, in a complex society of specialized automation and irresistible growth. Neither individuals nor nations can insulate themselves from the hazards of ever-expanding population, and the over-consumption of resources which are certainly not unlimited. It seems that the whole human family is being swept onward through uncharted seas. What can one do in such circumstances? How should one live?

I feel impelled in these final words to commend the warm human concern for others, of which I have been speaking, as an antidote to the cold materialism of the computer, and as a sure road to a happier life – open to all. Above all we should not be fearful.

Canada remains a favoured land of opportunity. Let us embark on a New Year of Confederation, with confidence in ourselves and each other.

For our part, my wife and I move to new interests, pleased to slow down our pace, but nonetheless grateful to Canadians, for the opportunity to work with, and for them in such an honourable post.

Governors General since Confederation

Viscount Monck (1867)
 Lord Lisgar (1869)
 Earl of Dufferin (1872)
 Marquis of Lorne (1878)
 Marquis of Lansdowne (1883)
 Lord Stanley of Preston (1888)
 Earl of Aberdeen (1893)
 Earl of Minto (1898)
 Earl Grey (1904)
 Duke of Connaught (1911)
 Duke of Devonshire (1916)
 Lord Byng of Vimy (1921)
 Viscount Willingdon of Ratton (1926)
 Earl of Bessborough (1931)
 Lord Tweedsmuir of Elsfield (1935)
 Earl of Athlone (1940)
 Viscount Alexander of Tunis (1946)
 Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey (1952)
 Rt. Hon. Georges Philias Vanier (1959)
 Rt. Hon. Roland Michener (1967)