

REPLY OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON. ROLAND MICHENER TO THE ADDRESS OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE SENATE CHAMBER ON THE DAY OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S INSTALLATION AS GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA, MONDAY 17TH APRIL 1967

Prime Minister,

So quick has been my transition from New Delhi to Ottawa that I have the sensation of having run all the way, and arrived here amongst you, somewhat out of breath—but as you can see, that does not leave me speechless. On the contrary I am full of ideas and emotions some of which I hope to be able to express to you at least in a preliminary way.

First, I am filled with gratitude for the generous words with which you have welcomed me and my wife and with appreciation for your earlier words, even more consequential, in which you gave to Her Majesty the advice upon which she acted in naming me as her representative in Canada. The honour is great and greatly valued, however awesome the responsibility.

[Translation]

Notwithstanding your encouraging expression of confidence that my wife and I will be equal to the task, I am all too well aware, and here I speak for myself alone, of the gap between my qualifications and the potentialities of the office of Governor General. These potentialities have been amply demonstrated by my predecessors. The Right Honourable Vincent Massey, the first Canadian Governor General, gave the office a new significance for Canadians. Their Excellencies the late Georges Vanier and Madame Vanier in the last seven years have so fully represented all that is good in the whole Canadian community, that they have justly won the respect and affection of everyone. His courageous efforts to complete his task in failing health confirm his place among the noblest of our public men.

With other Canadians we have mourned his loss and offered our sympathies to Madame Vanier with a full realization that no other couple would be able to begin at the high level of excellence and esteem to which they had elevated their public responsibilities.

[English]

However, we are greatly heartened in entering upon our term of office by the thought that the Governor General has come to represent the Canadian people as a whole and that in addition to his necessary and important constitutional functions he now symbolizes for Canadians the stability and continuity of

their national life and institutions. In consequence all Canadians have a personal interest in the office and in helping the incumbent to reflect their hopes and aspirations for the future. Already we have been encouraged by the good wishes of many of those whom we shall serve, and we hope to earn and deserve such encouragement from all. It will make our task possible and our lives happy. In any event, Prime Minister, I shall not fail through lack of effort nor of will to serve.

I gladly undertake to assure at once to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth of Canada, as you have requested, the loyalty and devotion of the Canadian people and our delight that she and The Duke of Edinburgh will soon be with us to join in our Centennial celebrations. May I add to this message my own humble duty to our Queen and my profound gratitude for the trust which she has entrusted in me.

[Translation]

Canadians look forward as well to welcoming other royal and distinguished visitors from Commonwealth and friendly nations who will be honouring us with their presence during this momentous year. We are grateful for their esteem and respect which will remind us that our birthday celebrations have significance beyond our own boundaries. 1967 is a time to assess our past achievements in the society of nations and to seek means of extending our contributions to the peace and happiness of the whole family of man.

To my friends in Quebec I should like to say that we look forward very much to the pleasure of living amongst them for a time each year at The Citadel. From there my wife and I shall be able to look down the river to the Ile d'Orleans where we have spent many happy days.

[English]

We now see in French Canada a renaissance of that creative vigour and intellectual brilliance which have long been a mark of French civilization. All Canadians may well take pride in the achievements which are taking place in Quebec for they will stimulate and strengthen Canada as a whole. We are fortunate to possess two mighty currents of civilization: French and British. To these first mainstreams of our national existence have been added the diverse and notable contributions of settlers from other lands and races who have ventured to our shores. They have