

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 17 June, 1985.

Time — 10:00 a.m.

MR. DEPUTY SERGEANT-AT-ARMS, M. Mason: Their Excellencies, The Governor General and the Honourable Maurice Sauvé.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Please be seated.

Your Excellencies, it is an honour and a pleasure, on behalf of all Members of the Assembly, to welcome you to Manitoba on this your first official visit to our province.

We extend our warmest congratulations on your appointment to your high office, secure in the knowledge that your wisdom and humanitarianism will benefit Canada and all its people. We value your office as a unifying force within our nation, and have the greatest of respect for your abilities in articulating the high ideals which we, as Canadians, cherish.

May we reaffirm through you and your office the allegiance of all Members of the Legislative Assembly to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Second and our unwavering loyalty and affection for her as a person.

It is as Queen of Canada that the Monarchy is a symbol of unity for Manitobans and it is Her Majesty's position as Head of State that commands the historic loyalty of Manitobans to the Crown. Manitobans were most enthusiastic about and sincerely honoured by the visit of Her Majesty in 1984. We were grateful for her visits to many of our cities and towns and deeply appreciate Her Majesty's accessibility to all Manitobans.

It is now one hundred and fifteen years since Manitoba entered Confederation. Ours was the first province to join the original four, beginning the growth and expansion of a nation, participating fully in its opportunities and obligations and fully prepared to continue an equitable position in a great confederation.

Your immediate predecessor, His Excellency Governor General Schreyer, was held in particular esteem by this province. Manitobans are justifiably proud of the accomplishments of a native son and his association with this Chamber. On his official visit to this province in 1979, His Excellency referred to Manitoba as "the Heart of Canada." That being so, we open our hearts in warm celebration of Your Excellency's presence in our province.

It is with pride that the Assembly takes note of the fact that Your Excellency is a former Speaker of Parliament, now no longer subject to the burdens and pressures of that office. We trust that you will find the Speaker's Chair in which you are now seated a comfortable one.

Your Excellency, the origins and history of our province are many and varied. The strengths and diversities of our society are the results of the abundance of natural blessings combined with the contributions of numerous human resources. Each newcomer to the province brings a different aspect of background and experience and each adds to the diverse richness that we know as Manitoba. The province is thus the beneficiary of the talents of its people and while respecting their

differences, all can take their rightful places as Manitobans, assuming their equitable share of the benefits and obligations as Manitobans.

Our province is the home and birthplace of countless gifted individuals who have contributed to the growth and development of Canada. Manitobans are justly proud of what has been accomplished in their own province and will continue to strive for social and economic progress both in this province and throughout the country.

Your Excellency, we are particularly pleased that you are able to be with us in this Legislative Assembly Chamber today. It is here in this Chamber that Members have represented the hopes and aspirations of the people of the province and it is here that we have helped to build a strong and thriving community. We are proud of our Legislature and our loyalty to the traditions of parliamentary democracy.

Your Excellencies, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, I am happy and honoured to welcome you to Manitoba.

Bienvenue à Manitoba.

HER EXCELLENCY, Madame Sauvé: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, Ministers, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, Members of the Provincial Legislature, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for those very gracious words of welcome and introduction. I am very pleased to salute in you a very competent and wise colleague. Though I, too, have roots in the Canadian prairies, I cannot claim to be a native of this province as could my predecessor. I have no doubt Manitobans were very proud of Mr. Schreyer, whose political experience occurred in this very Legislature, and who went on to serve this province and this country as the Canadian Head of State.

Mr. Schreyer brought to the Office of Governor General a much greater awareness and appreciation of the multicultural nature of this country, not only through the fact of his own ethnic heritage, but through his determined efforts to actively support and promote the interests and activities of our Canadian minorities. Manitoba should be extremely proud of the contribution made to the profile of the Vice Regal Office during the tenure of Mr. Schreyer. I am pleased to express, on behalf of all Canadians, our gratitude for the many contributions he has made and continues to make to this country.

It is, of course, particularly moving for me to be here in the Legislature. In Ottawa, I cannot return from whence I came. The Commons is closed to me, its former Speaker, and never again will I be part of its deliberations.

As Governor General, I can only be admitted to the Senate. Being here today makes me feel a bit nostalgic. In my eleven years as a Member of Parliament, my understanding of parliamentary democracy deepened. As Speaker, I was able to experience, many times over, the triumph of the democratic principles it embodies,

despite struggle and pain, freedom of speech, which is so well protected by tradition and practice, remains the basis of our system.

This visit marks my first occasion to address the Province of Manitoba in my role as Governor General. I have, of course, been here many times before, in a variety of capacities. In thinking of those past visits prior to coming here this week, I recall most vividly the time when I was Minister of the Environment and defended the interests of Manitoba in debates over the Garrison Diversion Project. The conviction with which Manitobans addressed that issue and the strength and determination they showed in the face of great pressure from the south created an impression upon me which has remained to this today.

Once more, in my new office, I find myself representing the interests of Manitoba, but this time in a context that is perhaps broader and less political than before. I come to you now as a representative of the Crown and if you allow, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts and reflections on this office and why I feel it is important that the presence of the Crown be felt here in the Legislature.

Le rôle du gouverneur général est, comme j'ai eu l'occasion de m'en rendre compte, très peu connu au Canada. Or, après avoir repatrié notre constitution en 1983 et avoir choisi de conserver la monarchie à la tête de l'état canadien, l'heure est venue d'explorer voire d'exploiter, les riches possibilités et les avantages que nous offre ce régime.

Translation:

The role of Governor General, as I have had the opportunity to realize, is not well understood in Canada. Thus, after having repatriated the Constitution in 1983, and chosen to preserve the Monarchy at the Head of the Canadian State, the time has come to explore, indeed to take full advantage of the wealth of opportunities and benefits which this system offers.

Perhaps my predecessor, General Vanier, summed up the significance of this office best when he described the Governor General as "providing the continuity and sense of permanence so valuable in the transient politics of democracy." The political stability which results from having secured the ultimate power of the State in an institution which cannot be influenced or eroded and is not accountable to any partisan constituency is, I feel, among the greatest strengths and advantages we enjoy in this country.

Further, as the Head of State and the voice of the collective Canadian consciousness, the Governor General is in a position to identify and promote those values and ideals which are shared in common by all Canadians, to instill a sense of nationality in the people of this country and to exert a unifying and cohesive influence on affairs of the nation.

Cette mission revêt, à mon avis, une importance toute particulière au Manitoba. En effet, les différences de langue, de culture, d'origine et de religion ont parfois donné lieu à des batailles politiques violentes et passionnées dans cette province. Pourtant, les fondements du gouvernement et la stabilité de la province dans son cadre fédéral n'ont jamais été menacés. L'esprit de la démocratie a toujours triomphé

des difficultés en nous incitant à trouver des solutions à la faveur de débats et de compromis. Assurés d'une infrastructure politique aux bases solides, nous n'avons pas à craindre la controverse, car celle-ci, quoique parfois douloureuse, peut au contraire nous aider à progresser en nous obligeant à approfondir notre connaissance de nous-mêmes et des autres et à nous efforcer tous ensemble, et malgré nos divergences, d'arriver à une meilleure entente et à l'harmonie. La nationalité ne se fonde pas nécessairement sur la similitude. Au contraire, elle ne peut que tirer parti de la diversité, tant que nos différences sont respectées et reconnues pour la multiplicité des perspectives et l'éventail de richesses culturelles qu'elles nous offrent. Nous découvrirons alors inévitablement que nous sommes liés par des ambitions beaucoup plus puissantes que celles qui nous divisent et que notre diversité est notre plus grande force.

Translation:

This mission is, in my opinion, of particular importance in Manitoba. Indeed, differences in language, culture, origin and religion have sometimes given rise to heated and emotional political conflicts in this province. However, the foundations of the government and the stability of the province within the federal framework have never been threatened. The spirit of democracy has always triumphed over difficulties, while at the same time encouraging us to find solutions through debate and compromise. Secure in the presence of a solid political infrastructure, we need not fear controversy which, although painful, can on the contrary promote our development by forcing us to deepen our self-understanding as well as our understanding of others, and by compelling us despite our differences, to develop greater harmony and understanding.

Nationhood is not necessarily founded on similarities. On the contrary, it can be strengthened through diversity, as long as our differences and the range of opportunities and cultural wealth they have to offer are respected and acknowledged. We will inevitably discover that we are linked by ambitions which are much more powerful than those which divide us, and that our diversity is our greatest strength.

It is the common and unifying elements within this country which I hope to define and promote throughout my term in office, and through that process to balance the sometimes divisive effects of partisan power with the stability and influence inherent in the office of the Crown.

With that in mind, I look forward with great pleasure to these next few days within your province. I hope that during my visit, I might inspire you toward a greater sense of pride in what has been accomplished here and a broader awareness of those things which unite you in this provincial fraternity.

I do thank you once again for having received me so warmly and I wish you all continued success and prosperity.

(GOD SAVE THE QUEEN WAS SUNG)

MR. SPEAKER: In accordance with the resolution passed by the House for this day only, the House will stand recessed until 2:00 p.m. this afternoon.