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Monday, January 29, 2001

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THE HONOURABLE DAN HAYS
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Monday, January 29, 2001

THIRTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OPENING OF FIRST SESSION

Parliament having been summoned by Proclamation to meet this day for the dispatch of business:

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m.

SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

READING OF COMMISSION APPOINTING
HONOURABLE DAN HAYS

The Honourable Dan Hays, having taken the Clerk's chair, rose and informed the Senate that a Commission had been issued under the Great Seal of Canada, appointing him Speaker of the Senate.

The said Commission was then read by the Clerk.

The Hon. the Speaker then took the Chair at the foot of the Throne, to which he was conducted by the Honourable Sharon Carstairs, P.C., and the Honourable John Lynch-Staunton, the Usher of the Black Rod preceding.

Prayers.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, this is my sole opportunity, on this ceremonial occasion today and tomorrow, to say a few words. I do not want to miss this opportunity. No public opportunity could present itself, however, without noting the tragedy that occurred in Gujarat State in India on Friday and over the course of the weekend, and it continues as I speak. On behalf of honourable senators, I express sympathy to our sister Commonwealth country, India, and our friends in that country.

Honourable senators, I am grateful to have been asked to be your Speaker by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. I will do my best to serve the institution and all senators. I thank the many colleagues who have supported me in this place and ask all for your continued support.

[*Translation*]

I wish you all a happy return to the Senate. It is with great enthusiasm that I undertake this new session as your new Speaker.

[*English*]

The office of Speaker of the Senate is unique in the tradition of Westminster-style parliaments. In contrast with the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Speaker of the Senate can vote and speak on any matter before the chamber. These freedoms grant

the holder of the office remarkable latitude in defining the scope of this position. I am, of course, aware of the tone and precedent set by my predecessor in this office, Senator Molgat, who served us so well in the last two parliaments, as well as other Speakers and Senates responsible for the evolution of the office. In particular, I am aware of the rule changes, beginning in 1906, giving the Speaker a role in maintaining order and thereby making the Speaker's responsibilities less like those of the Lord Chancellor of the House of Lords; the parliamentary office the position most closely resembled in 1867.

Each Speaker chooses a role for him or herself. The Honourable Speaker of the other place from the previous session, Gib Parent, for example, was active and interested in supporting numerous humanitarian causes not necessarily related to his parliamentary role.

[*Translation*]

As Speaker of the Senate, I intend to continue to maintain good relations with parliamentary institutions, the government and particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs. During my mandate, I also intend to continue to adequately protect the interests of my region and province and to stress issues that concern Albertans.

[*English*]

With these concepts in mind, I will consider the focus for my term in the context of the good example of former Speakers.

[*Translation*]

As honourable senators know, French is my second language, and I can assure you that I will take the opportunity provided by my new role to improve my knowledge of that language, which I truly love, and to get better acquainted with Quebec and all francophone regions in the country.

[*English*]

I congratulate Senator Carstairs on her new role as Leader of the Government, as well as Senator Robichaud on his new job as Deputy Leader of the Government, a position filled previously by very notable senators.

I should also like to compliment Senator Lynch-Staunton and Senator Kinsella on their re-election as Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, I wish you every success in your endeavours during this new session.

[English]

COMMUNICATION FROM GOVERNMENT HOUSE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform you that I have received the following communication from Government House, which reads as follows:

RIDEAU HALL

January 23, 2001

Sir,

I am commanded to inform you that the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, in her capacity as Deputy of the Governor General, will proceed to the Chamber of the Senate to open the First Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament of Canada at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, the 29th day of January, 2001.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony P. Smyth
*Deputy Secretary
Policy, Program and Protocol*

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate
Ottawa

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

• (1110)

At 11:15 a.m. the sitting was resumed, and was then adjourned, pending the arrival of the Deputy of Her Excellency the Governor General.

The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Deputy of Her Excellency the Governor General, having come and being seated,

The Hon. the Speaker commanded the Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House that it is the desire of the Honourable the Deputy of Her Excellency the Governor General that they attend her immediately in the Senate Chamber.

Who being come,

The Hon. the Speaker said:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I have the honour to inform you that Her Excellency the Governor General has been pleased to cause Letters Patent to be issued under her Sign Manual and Signet constituting

the Right Honourable Beverley Marian McLachlin, P.C., Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, her Deputy, to do in Her Excellency's name all acts on her part necessary to be done during Her Excellency's pleasure.

The Commission was read by a clerk at the Table.

The Hon. the Speaker said:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that Her Excellency the Governor General does not see fit to declare the causes of her summoning the present Parliament of Canada until a Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen, according to law; but tomorrow, Tuesday, January 30, 2001, at the hour of two o'clock in the afternoon, Her Excellency will declare the causes of her calling this Parliament.

The House of Commons withdrew.

The Honourable the Deputy of Her Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

The sitting of the Senate was resumed.

COMMUNICATION FROM GOVERNMENT HOUSE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that I have received a communication from Government House, which reads as follows:

RIDEAU HALL

January 18, 2001

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, and His Excellency John Ralston Saul will arrive at the Peace Tower at 14:00 on Tuesday, the 30th day of January, 2001.

When it has been indicated that all is in readiness, Their Excellencies will proceed to the Chamber of the Senate to formally open the First Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament of Canada.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony P. Smyth
*Deputy Secretary
Policy, Program and Protocol*

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate
Ottawa

ADJOURNMENT

That the Senate do now adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, January 30, 2001, at 2 p.m.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government), with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), moved:

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

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