

Speaking Notes

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate

On the occasion of a reception celebrating
Air Force Appreciation Day

Banking and Commerce Committee Room, Ottawa
April 16, 2013

Speaker Scheer,

Minister MacKay,

Senator Day,

Honourable Senators and Members of Parliament,

Lieutenant General Blondin, Commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force,

Colonel Chester, President of the Air Force Association

Mr. Black [Master of Ceremonies]

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Parliament and to this historic room, which was originally devoted to meetings of the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce. Given the way in which budgetary matters have come to the fore in all matters military, particularly when it comes to procurement, this is certainly an appropriate place for a gathering to celebrate Air Force Appreciation Day and to acknowledge those whose efforts make our air force such a spectacular success.

This gathering includes representatives of many such organizations and companies, of which I will single out the Air Force Association of Canada for special mention. It has done excellent work over the years in promoting all aspects of this branch of our military. From commemorating air force accomplishments and personnel, to advocacy on behalf of the RCAF, to supporting the Air Cadets, the Air Force Association has proven its value time and time again.

Turning to the Royal Canadian Air Force itself, the men and women who proudly serve our nation in this branch of our military have continued in the fine tradition established in the decades since the formation of the Canadian Air Force in 1920. From a modest beginning, the Air Force gained the royal title in 1924 and went on to become a key element of Canada's military in World War II. It has remained in a prominent role ever since. Recent operations include Afghanistan, Libya and Mali, with Air Force personnel routinely doing everything asked of them and more. We are always thankful when aircraft and crew return safely.

On Air Force Appreciation Day, let us celebrate the air personnel of today as well as those who have served in the past. We should also take a moment to remember that their families have made sacrifices and give heart-felt thanks to all of them.

Thank you.