

**SPEAKING NOTES
THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD OF THE CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION OF FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS**

**256-S CENTRE BLOCK
JUNE 9, 2013**

Honourable Parliamentarians, past and present,
Distinguished guests,
Friends and family:

It is my pleasure, as Speaker of the Senate, to welcome you to today's award ceremony. To those who are returning to Parliament Hill after being absent for some time, I want to offer a particularly warm welcome.

Many in this gathering today served in what is termed "the other place" in the Senate, but irrespective of the chamber in which you sat, you all recognized the importance of public service. From the beginning of your journeys in political life to the present, you have contributed to the well-being of our nation. That continues through your membership and work with the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians and other organizations.

There are few countries where the practice of freedom has been so enjoyed throughout their history. Canada is one. While there have been stumbles along the way, our nation would not have enjoyed such a high level of freedom without parliamentarians dedicated to the public good.

There are bound to be disagreements as to what constitutes the public good. It is the very nature of a democracy that debate generated by these disagreements leads to a resolution. The back and forth arguments run from the definition right through to the means by which to achieve the public good. However, there is no doubt, I would even risk saying there can be no disagreement, that each of us came to this place to serve to the best of our ability.

Tomorrow morning we will remember our friends and former colleagues who left us in the past year. This afternoon we single out an individual to honour among the many exceptional people whose accomplishments continue to do us proud. This honouree recognized the importance of public service, and continued his work after leaving Parliament Hill. The award this year goes to Mr. Bill Blaikie for his commitment to the Association.

Public service is a noble calling. All those who have served in parliament stepped forward to answer the internal or external summons which eventually led you to the House of Commons, to the Senate, or, occasionally, to both. Each of you continues to answer that call today as a member of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. May you all continue to serve the public for many years to come.

Thank you.