

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

ON THE OCCASION OF THE RETIREMENT OF
THE HONOURABLE CONSIGLIO DI NINO

SPEAKER'S CHAMBERS
JUNE 27, 2012

Senator Di Nino,
Honourable Senators,
Friends and Family,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are gathered here this afternoon to celebrate the distinguished career in the Senate of the Honourable Consiglio Di Nino, to wish him well as he takes a slightly early departure from this place, turning his exceptional talents to other endeavours and to thank his family for lending him to us for nearly 22 years.

He and I came to this place less than 2 weeks apart, both arriving in 1990 just before then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney exercised a provision of the Constitution to add 8 new regional Senators. There was a certain amount of controversy at the time, a little thing called the GST, resulting in a memorable introduction to the work of the Senate. Those involved will always remember those heady days, or perhaps I should say “that heady day” as the parliamentary day seemed to be without end and many of us found ourselves sleeping on the parliamentary precincts.

I am not sure what constitutes proper preparation for this kind of debut, but it would appear that being a businessman born in Italy was useful and perhaps

sufficient. While I understand that some Italian organizations are reputed to have their own forms of initiation, Senator Di Nino had a baptism of fire which would be difficult to top in the business world.

Of course, things settled back into a relatively normal mode of operation soon thereafter, as Senators returned to the interesting and productive work which is a hallmark of this institution. Senator Di Nino's background served him well throughout his years with us, with his keen intellect being applied to the work of many committees. The list of those he did not attend is shorter. I am sure he would have taken a greater interest in the Official Languages Committee had Italian been one of the languages.

It is difficult to single out the committee which benefited most from his sagacity. Foreign Affairs is certainly a contender, as he served on it for nearly 15 years, having been either Chair or Deputy Chair on many occasions.

In the broader scheme of things, Senator Di Nino has been a strong supporter of human rights internationally, having taken a particular interest in Tibet and China. He has maintained many links to the business community, and I know that Scouting continues to benefit from his active interest.

There is no doubt that his presence will be missed here in the Senate and in many of its committees, but those who are aware of his extraordinary work ethic and talents will no doubt seek him out when he leaves this place, and I am certain that he will continue on in the service of the nation in one capacity or another, whether publicly or privately. It is hard to imagine an individual of Senator Di Nino's temperament and capabilities stepping into what I will call "true retirement", but I expect he will find a bit more time to spend relaxing with family

and friends. I am confident they are all pleased at the prospect, even as I know we are disappointed to see him leave us so soon.

With that, I would ask Senator Di Nino if he would like to say a few words.