

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF  
THE FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES**

**237-C, CENTRE BLOCK  
NOVEMBER 19, 2014**

Speaker Scheer,

Your Excellencies, the Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Ministers,

Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,

Mr. Woodside,

Your Worships, Mayors and Councillors,

Directors and Members of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities,

Distinguished Guests:

Good evening and welcome to our national Parliament, where we have assembled as equals with a common identity and purpose as public servants.

This occasion provides an important opportunity for parliamentarians to meet with mayors and community leaders from cities across the country. By gathering together in the same room, we can freely discuss our common goals and concerns, identify the resources

needed to better serve our constituents, and make the kind of face-to-face contacts which are invaluable for collaboration.

Our country strives to meet the needs of its citizens through three levels of government, with various responsibilities and powers delegated to each. These areas are, of course, the municipal, provincial and federal.

There is a tendency to conceptualize these three types of governance as levels stacked in a pyramid. This implies a hierarchy of municipal foundations, provincial powers in the middle, and a federal apex. It is worth considering, however, a more reasonable and accurate analogy to another tripartite object.

Canada rests upon a stool, and each of its three legs – the municipal, provincial and federal – is of equal and necessary importance in supporting prosperity, democracy and the practice of freedom. As with any stool, balance is crucial. Care and attention must be given to each; if any one of the three is too long neglected, the tripod does not sit steady and the trembles can soon be felt.

This is why it is so important for parliamentarians and municipal leaders to reach out to each other and work together. Occasions such as this invite us to consider ways to do that more effectively. The conversations here this evening also underscore the fact that our shared mission of service to Canadians does not just benefit from each other's work; it depends upon it.

The impressive range of expertise and the many different backgrounds of the Federation's members are testimony to the diversity of Canada. Through its representation of over 2,000 Canadian municipalities, the Federation gives a vital and powerful voice to communities of all sizes and spanning the full height and breadth of this country.

I am pleased to note that its President, Mr. Woodside, is also the Mayor of my own hometown of Fredericton, New Brunswick. This happy coincidence serves to illustrate a certain duality, which it may benefit us to recall throughout our discussions.

Every parliamentarian has some city, town, or neighbourhood which he or she calls home, and therefore some local leader they look to for the quality of daily life in their community. Every mayor, councillor, and municipal leader faces some challenge or opportunity at a given moment, which relies upon the work of our federal legislators. Both groups have much to learn from each other.

With the benefit of this evening's discussions, we may advance together toward a common better future for all our constituents and all our fellow Canadians.

Thank you.