

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION FOR U.S. INTERNS**

**SPEAKER'S CHAMBERS  
MAY 29, 2013**

Honourable Senators,  
Usher of the Black Rod,  
Your Excellency, Ambassador Jacobson,  
Dr. James Baker,  
Interns,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to the Senate and to the Speaker's Chambers. Please allow me to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador David Jacobson; to Dr. James Baker, who has for many years consistently provided the highest caliber of students to the Canadian Parliamentary Internship Program; and a particularly warm welcome to all of you commencing your time on Parliament Hill.

Parliamentary internship programs are of tremendous value to international relations. They promote better communication and understanding, while they also create networks of people with personal connections.

As you will no doubt come to learn, in comparing the political systems of Canada and the United States, significant differences are readily identifiable. Perhaps most tellingly is that we have the Queen as our Head of State, while the United States has an elected President. You may also be interested to learn that Canada was President Obama's first international trip outside of the United States in February 2009 and he sat in this very room.

Beyond our respective Heads of State, other significant differences relate to, for example, the separation of powers. In the United States, the President and Cabinet cannot be members of either House of Congress. However, in Canada, the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet are usually Members of the House of Commons and sometimes of the Senate, and traditionally represent the party with the largest number of seats in the House.

Moreover, though both the United States and Canada have bicameral legislatures, our Senators are currently appointed. Canada has a multi-party rather than a two-party system, reflecting our country's many regional, as well as ideological differences.

You will have the opportunity to observe these aspects of the Canadian political system first hand. In working in the offices of MPs and Senators, you will gain significant insight into the Canadian public policy making process, the functioning of our political parties, and our electoral system. Those interns who are directly involved in constituency work will also gain a greater appreciation of the cultural and regional diversity of Canada.

On a related note, I would like you to consider the advantages provided by international post-secondary education, which I regard as a vital component of both graduate and undergraduate education. Having benefitted directly from this as a student in both Ireland and Rome, it is evident that such experiences expose the student to different values and ideas, and in the process provide an experience that lasts a lifetime. Many exchange students who come to Canada become unofficial ambassadors for Canadian ideals when they return to their homelands. Strong personal relationships between Canadians and citizens of other countries endure and promote greater harmony and understanding among our nations. These benefits, and many others, stem directly from an international educational experience.

It is my hope and expectation that you will enjoy your time in Ottawa and that you will be enriched by this Parliamentary Internship Program both now and in your future careers. In turn, parliamentarians will benefit from your hard work, your growing expertise, your dedication to your continuing education, and from the personal friendships and relationships that you will form and likely continue for many years to come.

It is now my privilege to invite Ambassador Jacobson to the podium. Ambassador, you studied at Georgetown University and James Hopkins University, and have a background as a corporate lawyer and as Special Advisor to the President. I understand your service as the 22<sup>nd</sup> United States Ambassador to Canada will be coming to a close in July. After immersing yourself in this country for nearly 4 years, I am certain you will have excellent advice to offer the participants in this year's internship programme.