

FOREWORD



Institutions matter and, in Canada, no institution matters more to the proper functioning of our democracy than Parliament—itsself comprised of the House of Commons, the Senate and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who personally embodies the Canadian Crown.

As The Queen's representative in Canada, I perform the Crown's essential duties in Parliament: summoning and dissolving our legislature, granting Royal Assent to bills passed by parliamentarians, and ensuring Canada always has a prime minister and government in place. Since my installation as governor general in 2010, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the symbiotic relationship between the office I hold and those held by our elected representatives and other public servants. Simply put, Parliament is central to the Crown, just as the Crown is vital to Parliament.

Canada's system of responsible government is unique, layered and continually evolving. I therefore welcome the present volume of essays on the historical and contemporary relationship between the Crown and Parliament. Remarkably, it is a history that predates the Magna Carta and can be traced back more than a thousand years. Yet it remains dynamic, adapting to the changes of the present day. This living legacy reminds us that when it comes to the Crown and to Parliament, we are all students with much to learn.

These essays, which make valuable contributions to our current thinking and illuminate a number of contemporary debates, highlight why we should pay close attention to this important subject. As we approach the 150th anniversary of Confederation in

2017, I encourage all Canadians to study, teach and celebrate our unique system of government, and to grasp how the Crown and Parliament are the keys to unlocking the possibilities of a better country.

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston
Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada

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