

PM speaking notes for Canada Day

1 July 2020

PM: Happy Canada Day !

SGT: Bonne fête du Canada !

PM: Normally, as a country, our biggest concern today is starting the barbecue at the right time or deciding whether to allow the kids to stay up late to watch the fireworks.

I'm sure many of you are still thinking about this, but this year it's probably not the only issue on your mind.

SGT: For our family, as I'm sure for yours as well, Canada Day is not the same this year.

Things have changed. Our lives have changed.

But, as always, we adapt and we manage.

Let me give a huge shout-out to the amazing volunteers here with the Ottawa Food Bank, spending the day harvesting fresh vegetables for families in need.

Justin and I, and the kids, are so happy to be able to lend a hand.

Right across the country, we're celebrating inspiring people like everyone here today.

People like them, but also so many of you who have turned a challenge into an opportunity to unite as citizens and as a country.

[Pause]

PM: This year is unlike any other. But it's certainly not the first time that our country has celebrated today during tough times.

[Pause]

80 years ago, our parents and grandparents marked this day almost a year into the Second World War.

That weekend's edition of the Toronto Star told them that they were living in "circumstances such as no one imagined would come to pass."

Well, 8 decades later, that sounds pretty familiar.

[Pause]

Maybe you're able to spend today with family and friends — something I don't think anyone will take for granted after this spring.

But maybe that's not possible for you. Maybe you're celebrating without someone you love.

A mum who's a frontline worker. A friend who hasn't been able to come home. A loved one you've lost to this terrible virus.

The last few months have been hard, and on this Canada Day, we need to be there for each other.

[Pause]

As Canadians, we understand how important it is to be there for one another.

Solidarity is not only part of our identity: it is our way of life.

We've experienced too many long winters not to help a stranger get his car out of a snow bank.

Because, as Canadians, when times are tough, we do not withdraw into ourselves. We help each other.

We're here for the most vulnerable and hardest hit. We think about the people we love, but we also think about the people we don't know.

The reason that our communities are resilient — and I know that they are —

The reason that Canada stands strong and united — and I know that it does —

Is the choices that Canadians make, every single day.

The nurses and doctors who protect those around them. The women and men in uniform who serve at home and overseas. And the people, of every age, faith, and creed, who stand by one another.

[Pause]

Over the past few months, across the country, we have joined forces to get through some tough times.

And now we have a chance to build a better Canada for all.

This is our challenge for the year 2020 and the years to come.

And I know we're going to be up to it.

[Pause]

What makes Canada special is not that we know this is the best country in the world — it's that we know it could be. We know our work together is not yet done.

Not until every senior has a safe place to live.

Not while anyone faces racism or injustice.

Not while we still have so far to go on the path of reconciliation.

[Pause]

Where we go from here is up to each of us.

[Pause]

SGT: In recent months, we have seen what it means to be good neighbours, what it means to be part of a community.

We understand how much we can depend on each other.

We won't lose the North.

As Canadians, we share a vision for our country. And we want to get there together.

That's why we keep each other motivated.

We lift each other up.

We have each other's backs.

But we also have each other's hearts.

We are so proud as Canadians to know that our reputation is that we are strong because of our diversity.

And through these difficult times, not only is the world watching, our kids are watching.

To all the kids, you've been so amazing, and we are so proud of you.

You are the leaders of today and tomorrow. Together, we are unstoppable.

[Pause]

PM: When the Toronto Star in 1940 remarked that people were celebrating this day at a difficult time, they also said this:

"It has become Canada's century. Canada's century of opportunity to change the course of history."

That was the reality our parents and grandparents were called to face. That was the challenge to which they rose. And this is the country they built.

On this Canada Day, it is our turn. We must now restart and rebuild a Canada of the 21st century. My friends, I know that together, we are ready.

[Pause]

Happy Canada Day, everyone!

SGT: Happy Canada Day, everyone ! Have a great day !