

Installation Citation for Chancellor-Elect Kevin Gordon Lynch, P.C., O.C., Ph.D., LL.D.

Over the past few days since term began, King's Foundation Year students have been labouring at a kind of intellectual archaeology. In their study of texts from the dawn of civilization in its western form, they and their tutors have been excavating the ground works and testing the girders of a cultural tradition built on ancient foundations. When they read the epic story of the Sumerian king Gilgamesh last week, they encountered the figure of a mortal who, after many trials and challenges in the wide world, returns to his native city of Uruk, able at last to appreciate the beauty of life that city affords. By the end of the poem, Gilgamesh has learned that great hero and mighty king though he is, lasting glory and true purpose is to be found only in the communal life of the well-regulated city. More than three millennia before the Common Era, the Sumerians had discovered that the great paradox of human aspiration --which stretches toward heaven-- and mortal frailty --shackled by natural cycles-- could be mitigated only by well-designed and well-managed institutions of state. They learned that in order to master hostile nature and to disburse its produce, they needed writing and scholars who could employ it, recording the wisdom of the past and transmitting it to citizens of the future. In the process they learned that kingship, for all the power and authority it vested in an individual at the top, itself rested solely on the mighty bases of learning and administration, collective and impersonal, unconfined by the lifespan of a single man. It is in token of this discovery that the poet of Gilgamesh asks his audience mentally to "climb upon the wall of Uruk; [to] walk along it... [to] regard the foundation terrace and examine the masonry: is it not burnt brick and good? The seven sages laid the foundations."

The Honourable Kevin Lynch, whom we welcome today as Chancellor, is a man who by his learning, experience, and service has exemplified the wisdom and humanity of ancient Sumeria in their modern Canadian, and indeed, global, incarnations. Born and raised in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Dr. Lynch began his out-of-province adventures by crossing the New Brunswick frontier to take an Honours degree in Economics at Mount Allison. He next crossed the Ocean Sea as a Commonwealth Scholar, pursuing a Master's degree in the same subject at the University of Manchester. Upon his return to Canada he pushed further west, taking the PhD at McMaster in Hamilton, after which he embarked on a long and extremely distinguished career in public service, beginning in 1976 as an economist with the Bank of Canada. In 1995 he was named Deputy Minister of Industry for the Government of Canada, and in 2000 Deputy Minister of Finance, an office he occupied until 2004. After an 18 month hiatus in Washington as Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund, Dr. Lynch was appointed Clerk of the Privy Council, Secretary to the Cabinet, and Head of the Public Service of Canada, a position which gave him oversight of the whole federal public service and its 263, 000 employees. Until his retirement from this position in 2009, Dr. Lynch provided expert policy advice to the Prime Minister, managed the cabinet process, and established key administrative and operational priorities for departments. He did all of this in a context of extraordinary challenge, including a new government, a minority parliament, a global financial crisis, and a war in Afghanistan.

During his 33-year career in Canada's official Public Service, Dr. Lynch ably served a succession of governments of contrasting political ideologies. Yet he did so within the lamentably under-recognized and largely silent cadre of Canadians who form the non-partisan backbone of our body politic. The refrain of those who lauded him at his Public Service retirement, including current Prime Minister Stephen Harper, former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and many others from both government and private sectors, was Dr. Lynch's impeccable devotion, free from partisan bias, not

only to the ideal, but also to the practical reality, of a stable and strong Canada. Dr. Lynch's mandate was and is a Canada well-managed within, and therefore well-respected without its borders for its calm strength and sense of self. In speeches, scholarly articles, and editorials since that time, Dr. Lynch has repeated his conviction that "Canada's experience has been that the democratic values, the ethic of serving the public good, the professionalism, the non-partisanship and the commitment that characterize the Public Service of Canada underpin its role as a fundamental national institution."

From the perspective of those involved in higher education, Dr. Lynch's support for universities and their mission will not soon be forgotten. While in Government, he was responsible for developing a national "knowledge-economy agenda," which included changes to framework policies and new approaches to research that gave rise to the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Canada Research Chairs. These and other initiatives continue to aid universities in their quest to form citizens who will not only increase Canada's global competitiveness, but indeed, attune their souls to the call of public service. For Dr. Lynch, as for the ancient Sumerians and their successors, education is neither luxury nor mere tool, but the sustaining lifeblood of a flourishing society. Even after assuming his present post as Vice-Chair of the BMO Financial Group, where he applies his considerable academic acumen to economic affairs, Dr. Lynch has continued to lavish his attention on Canadian post-secondary education. In addition to his leadership of numerous medical foundations and financial boards, he acts in advisory roles for the Ontario Rhodes Scholarship, the Samara Foundation, and the Shannon School of Business at Cape Breton University. Furthermore, he is Chair of the Canadian Ditchley Foundation, Trustee of the Killam Trusts, and Chair of the Board of Governors at the University of Waterloo. Given such regard for higher learning, it is no wonder that, in addition to his Officership in the Order of Canada and his membership in the Queen's Privy Council, his honours include doctorates equal in number to Uruk's seven sages.

In taking up his new role at the University of King's College, Dr. Lynch is, like Gilgamesh, like the Greek Odysseus, and like Plato's philosopher king, coming home. In the literal sense, he is returning to his native province, where he and his wife Karen share a house on the coast. In the mythical—

and therefore more real-- sense, he returns in the spirit of service to a University that has long nurtured that selfsame spirit in its citizen scholars. We welcome him, proud of our past and, with him as shepherd, hopeful for the future. We invite him to climb upon the wall of King's and to walk along it; to regard its foundations and examine its masonry. And we ask him: is it not burnt brick and good?