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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 February 1985

C D Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

*Dear Powell,*

PROPOSED NEW CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER

We have been informed that the Canadian Government propose to appoint Mr Roy McMurtry, at present Attorney-General in the province of Ontario, to be Canadian High Commissioner in London in succession to Mr Jamieson. I enclose a curriculum vitae.

The Foreign Secretary welcomes this appointment. As you will be aware, it is not the practice between Commonwealth countries of which Her Majesty is Queen to seek formal agreement to the appointment of a High Commissioner. The Foreign Secretary would be grateful however if the Prime Minister would agree to our informing the Canadian Government that the British Government will be glad to welcome Mr McMurtry in London and look forward to continuing with him the happy association which they enjoyed with his predecessor.

Mr McMurtry was a member of Premier Davis's Ontario provincial Cabinet, and an unsuccessful candidate in the recent election of a successor to Mr Davis as leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. Our High Commissioner in Ottawa telephoned last night to say that he had been asked by Mr Mulroney's office whether it would be possible for us to agree to their announcing Mr McMurtry's appointment on Monday 4 February, because the new Premier of Ontario is expected to announce his Cabinet within the next few days.

I should be grateful if you would seek the Prime Minister's agreement to the Canadian request, and let me know a time today when it would be convenient for Mr Mulroney to telephone Mrs Thatcher.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Shepard Cooper-Giles*

Resident Clerk

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*original  
of letter  
re faxed*



THE HONOURABLE R ROY McMURTRY QC

Born in Toronto on 31 May 1932.

Educated Trinity College, University of Toronto (modern history). Osgoode Hall Law School (graduated 1958). Trial lawyer and instructor in the Bar admission course and the Bar Association's continuing education programme.

First elected to the Provincial Legislature in 1975. Appointed Attorney-General two weeks later, a post which he held continuously until the present. At one time he also held the office of Solicitor-General.

Mr McMurtry is a long-standing friend of Mr Mulroney and is a close friend and confidant of former Premier Davis of Ontario. He is a key member of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, and has been active in Progressive Conservative politics (at both federal and provincial level) since the late 1960s. He worked in the campaign to remove Mr Diefenbaker from the leadership of the federal PC Party in 1967. Although his breadth of experience is limited, he has been the most high-profile Minister in the Ontario provincial Cabinet, and has been responsible for an impressive amount of important provincial legislation much of it designed to help disadvantaged people and minority groups. Mr McMurtry was a candidate in the recent election of a new leader for the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

He is a federalist, and played a central role in the federal-provincial negotiations leading to the request in 1981 for the patriation of the Canadian constitution.

He is a keen sportsman and an accomplished artist. His wife, Ria Jean, has not played a prominent part in his political life, but shares his interest in landscape painting and community services.

North America Department  
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