

Sir John A. Macdonald

in the House of Commons on June 8 will live for all time.

When I was 15 years of age I decided to make a public speech on Sir John Macdonald. I rose to heights of eloquence which I thought were worthy of the highest commendation. I memorized my speech. Unfortunately I forgot the last few lines. I was not successful in that oratory contest. The culminating feature of his life was the honour of membership in the Privy Council, knighthood and, after his death, the placing of his bust in St. Paul's Cathedral not far removed from where rest the last remains of Nelson and the victor of Waterloo.

To quote words which are as true today as when they were uttered, or written, on June 20, 1891: Punch's tribute to "Old Tomorrow" as he was known. Sir John never did today what he believed could be achieved tomorrow with co-operation following consultation. Indeed when he was asked what his title would be if he ever received a peerage he said "I suppose I shall be known under the title of 'Lord Tomorrow'".

Here in part is what Punch said:

Hail to "the Chieftain!" He lies mute today,
But Fame still speaks for him, and shall for aye,
"Tomorrow—and tomorrow!" Shakespeare sighs,
"So runs the round of time! Man lives and dies.
But death comes not with mere surcease of breath
To such as him. "The road to dusty death"
Not "all his yesterdays" have lighted. Nay!
Canada's "Old Tomorrow" lives today
In unforgetting hearts, and nothing fears
The long tomorrow of the coming years.

These words I used, Mr. Speaker, in that oratory contest many years ago.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):

Mr. Speaker, the members of this party are most happy to associate themselves with the two previous speakers in paying tribute to the work and memory of Sir John A. Macdonald who was born in Glasgow, Scotland, 152 years ago today.

It is sometimes forgotten that Macdonald was a Scottish immigrant who made good, and who made Canada in the process. For while it is undoubtedly true that men like Cartier, Brown, Tupper, Tilley and McGee made outstanding contributions to the realization of confederation, it was Macdonald's genius which produced the framework.

● (3:00 p.m.)

Even more important were his patience and perseverance which built upon that framework what is now Canada. I think when the history of that period is fully appreciated we shall recognize not only that Macdonald was a

great architect in framing the British North America Act, but that his capacity for administration and negotiation made it possible, after 1867, to purchase northwestern Canada from the Hudson's Bay Company, to form the province of Manitoba in 1870, to bring in British Columbia in 1871 and Prince Edward Island in 1873, and finally to bind these various regions together with bands of steel.

For some strange reason we Canadians have never really paid our full due to the memory of Macdonald. He was the father of our country in the same sense that George Washington was the father of the United States of America, but we have never made as much fuss over Macdonald as the Americans made over Washington. I hope we will even now rectify that neglect.

But in some ways it is not monuments, the naming of large cities or highways that really matter. The lasting monument to Sir John A. Macdonald is Canada, what it is and what it has become. It is reported that during the latter part of his life at one of his great rallies an admirer called out "John A., you will never die"; and in a sense, Mr. Speaker, I submit that this is true. That so long as this country continues to grow and to expand, to promote justice for all men under responsible parliamentary government, the spirit of Sir John A. Macdonald will live on.

Yet it seems to me that if he were here in this house today he would ask us to think not merely of the past but of the future. He would remind us that the only value in looking into the past is to grapple with the problems of the present and to enable us better to plan for the future.

Two great problems that obsessed Macdonald's entire public career are still with us. One is how to prevent disintegration from within, the other is how to prevent absorption and assimilation from without. While these two problems have changed in degree and in manner they are the same in substance. One of the great problems that face this country and this Parliament is the problem of how we can live together, two founding races with different languages, different cultures, different outlooks. The essence of this problem is how we can have diversity yet unity, how we can live together, two founding races with mutual understanding and good will.

Macdonald understood, probably better than any other English speaking statesman of his day, the sense of injustice which the French Canadian people felt. He understood better than most of his race that French Canadians wanted not concessions but rights,