

Statue of Sir Robert Borden

(Translation):

Those words were spoken by Sir Robert Borden more than a quarter of a century ago. Since then, our policy, both internal and external, has undergone great changes. Perhaps he would not approve of them all. I am sure however that he would agree with us that we have gone a long way on the road to national maturity and unity.

(Text):

In the years since his death we have learned to have a more accurate and a deeper appreciation of a great Canadian statesman. And I am sure that all Canadians who gaze upon the statue which has been unveiled today will recall with respect his sincerity of purpose and his selfless devotion to his country.

One of Sir Robert's oldest friends and perhaps his closest collaborator, who had hoped to be here on this occasion but who is prevented by illness from being present, has written me the following letter:

360 Bay Street, Toronto
January 3, 1957

My dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I feel grateful for your invitation to be present at the coming Sir Robert Borden memorial event (January 8) but am resolutely forbidden to leave the house by my doctor. I have, therefore, prepared a very short statement of acknowledgement and regret. This I hope you will read to the assembled people.

There has been nothing in the past that I had to shrink from which I regretted like I do this failure to take my part.

I sincerely appreciate the invitation and am grateful to you personally.

Sincerely yours,
Arthur Meighen.

This is the statement enclosed with Mr. Meighen's letter:

It is with extreme remorse that I find myself ill and quite unable to attend the proceedings on parliament hill which are to do honor to Sir Robert Borden.

In his lifetime, Sir Robert Borden had friends unnumbered in all parts of Canada, but none, I sincerely submit, more devoted and tireless than myself and this relationship continued until the hour of his death.

To have survived until this event takes place will add much to my feelings of gratitude and satisfaction, and one cannot be wrong in indulging an inward assurance that the waves of goodwill generated here, the richer sense of unity and common purpose inspired, the pride we all have in those who have toiled nobly and passed on, that all these flaming truths will keep us resolutely on our course.

Arthur Meighen.

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson (Speaker of the Senate): Ladies and gentlemen, may I present Mr. Henry Borden, nephew of Sir Robert Borden and one of the most outstanding Canadian figures in the business and professional life of Canada.

Mr. Henry Borden, Q.C.: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Speaker of

the House of Commons, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Chief Justice, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: This is indeed an historic occasion and I wish, Mr. Prime Minister, to thank you sincerely for doing me the great honour and giving me the unforgettable privilege of unveiling this statue of Sir Robert Borden. I have no hesitation in saying that I dearly loved Sir Robert and my life has been enriched by the deep affection and kindness which he bestowed on me.

The statue, in the design and completion of which you, sir, have taken such a genuine personal interest, will serve to keep fresh in the minds of future generations the memory of a distinguished Canadian statesman, of whom you have just spoken in such complimentary terms.

On behalf of Sir Robert's relatives and friends I wish to join in the Prime Minister's congratulations to Miss Loring, and to thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, and through you the citizens of Canada, for causing this wonderful memorial to be created on parliament hill. Thank you very much indeed.

Hon. L. René Beaudoin (Speaker of the House of Commons): Ladies and gentlemen, the honourable the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. John Diefenbaker, Q.C., M.P., will now speak.

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker, Q.C.: Joint chairmen, Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: First, I want to join with Mr. Borden in thanking the Prime Minister for the generous terms in which he referred to the service to Canada of Sir Robert Borden. This is in keeping with the traditions of our public service. While we may disagree in matters of policy each of us must, under our democratic system, realize that it is only in a community of counsel that the best for Canada will be achieved.

I think it is most fitting that we, on this occasion, honour one of Canada's greatest statesmen. As I listened to the Prime Minister review the constitutional development of this country I thought it was a magnificent tribute from one constitutional lawyer, regarding the constitutional development of this country, in giving approval to the contribution made by another. After all, there is that bond of union amongst members of the legal profession wherein the greatness of a contribution is at all times recognized by one's fellows. It is of interest to know, too, that out of the eleven prime ministers of Canada, seven were members of the legal profession, all making their contribution toward the building of this country into the ideal of us all.

Mention was made of the reaction to the attitude of Sir Robert Borden and the stand