

Visit of President Eisenhower

peaceful and co-operative relations will in due course become the fortune of all mankind.

Sir, as you came into our city you drove by and crossed over a small canal. Few know today when or why it was built. It was built more than 100 years ago to help protect this country from yours. Today it is a museum piece; it represents a past that is past.

I would recall to you, sir, on this the occasion of your visit to our country one of the earliest visits by Canadian parliamentarians to Washington. When Abraham Lincoln went to Gettysburg to deliver his immortal and timeless address, one of those who accompanied him as his guest on the Gettysburg platform was the Hon. William McDougall, one of the fathers of the Canadian confederation. Mr. McDougall had been in Washington with Mr. Galt on a small matter regarding trade, and Mr. Lincoln, with that informality which has continued since to characterize our relations, invited Mr. McDougall to accompany him. It is of interest, too, sir, that when the next day Mr. McDougall wrote to his family in Canada his opinion, so different from many opinions uttered that day, was that the president's words would live in history.

In the years since there have been many comings and goings; there have been meetings, and not all brought satisfaction to both sides. But there has remained that glory to which I referred a moment ago, that we can discuss, that we have discussed, that we shall in the days ahead continue to discuss our problems and our differences with the candour of free men in friendship, understanding and manly frankness.

I have often been asked by other nationals what is the secret of the dedication of these two nations to neighbourliness and mutual respect. The answer, we know, is this. We trust each other in a union of hearts based on common ideals and the abiding principles of freedom and the rights of men. Our peoples are North Americans. We are the children of our geography, products of the same hopes, faith and dreams, products as well of those forms of expression which have been nurtured and enriched in the traditions and common heritage of Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights and habeas corpus.

When, 13 years ago, you were given the freedom of the city of London another great warrior-statesman, Sir Winston Churchill, said of you that you had shown "the capacity for making great nations march together more truly united than they have been before." I take leave to quote your noble reply in which in part you said:

Humility must always be the portion of any man who receives the acclaim earned in the blood of his followers and the sacrifices of his friends.

Mr. President, it is in your clear knowledge that it is only by constructive deeds of living men that the sacrifices of the dead can have their proper values that parliament, yes, the Canadian people as a whole, give you their warmest welcome and acclaim. I salute you, sir, as the wartime commander under whose leadership the legions of freedom marched when liberty was under siege and no man knew where salvation lay. I greet you, sir, as one whose wisdom, humanitarianism and prestige are once more humanity's major hope for freedom and for peace.

Members of the parliament of Canada, I have the high privilege of presenting to you a great and good tribune of freedom in war and in peace, the President of the United States.

Mr. Dwight D. Eisenhower (President of the United States of America): Mr. Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Prime Minister, members of the Canadian houses of parliament, distinguished guests and friends: As I begin, may I be permitted to speak a few words in my halting French to my French friends in Canada. The Prime Minister did this with great courage. I assure you I do it in abject fear.

(Translation):

Here, in Canada, you have demonstrated that differences in speech and forms of speech need not impair communications between free peoples. So it must be among all nations of the free world. Though we may speak in different tongues and accents, that fact does not weaken our determination to work for a just and lasting peace. All of Canada has a great and rich tradition in the service of this high purpose. Her dedication to it has been staunch and persevering. Her example encourages free men everywhere.

(Text):

Mr. Prime Minister, I want you to know of my deep personal appreciation of the warmth of the welcome you have extended to me and of the generosity of the remarks you have just delivered concerning me. Along that same line, I should like to express my very great appreciation of the warmth of the welcome that Mrs. Eisenhower and myself have experienced throughout the city, along its streets and in every meeting in which we have had a part. We are truly grateful.

This is my fourth visit to your beautiful capital. I recall so well that when your gracious Queen came to Washington from Ottawa we spoke together of the beauty of this city and of the greatness of Canada.