

tribute than any words of mine could ever convey.

And yet, if only for our own sakes, we feel we must give expression to our sense of sorrow and of loss...

Others far better than I can tell of his great contribution to our province as Minister of Agriculture for over seventeen years. But this I do know: for such a position of high responsibility, he was "to the manner born". He loved the good earth. Springtime and harvest were no mere passing seasons to him: they were of the very stuff of life. Eagerly he awaited the yearly miracle of spring, lovingly he prepared the soil, planted the seed, tended the crop, ever rejoicing with a child-like wonder as yet again "the earth yielded her increase."

Honourable senators, so far as I am concerned, I wish to express my deepest sympathy to his wife, who was a most devoted companion, and to his little daughter Dorothy, to whom he was so completely and so sincerely devoted and who was equally devoted to him.

I lose a confrère, a colleague, but more than that I feel I lose a most valuable and loved friend.

Honourable senators, the late Senator Robertson, too, was a member of the Senate Committee on Divorce. I need not go over the various things which have been said about his career, because they have been well said and there is nothing to be gained by repetition. However, I would like to put on record what I read in the newspapers of his home town. Let me quote first, if I may, an item from "Trainmen News in Canada."

Senator Robertson is now a conductor on the Kenora-Ignace run in unassigned Pool Freight Service. He has been a member of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen since 1939 and is a Past President of Lodge 270 in Kenora.

Pete was asleep in his caboose at Ignace, the objective terminal 146 miles from Kenora, when a call was received at 8:00 a.m. on November 22. Pete's first thought was of trouble at home but the call wasn't from Kenora, it was Prime Minister Diefenbaker calling from Ottawa offering him an appointment as a Senator.

In some respects it was a most remarkable incident.

It is expected that the appointment of Pete Robertson will be a colourful addition to the Senate—a big, burly man (6'1", 240 Lbs.) with a picturesque turn of phrase who might prefer fisticuffs to oratory as a means of settling disputes, political or otherwise.

Brotherhood members are quite proud of the appointment of Pete Robertson to the Senate of Canada and we wish him every success in his high and responsible office.

World Affairs in its issue of January 1963 carried the comments of the then Prime Minister when he announced the appointment in the House of Commons:

Mr. Diefenbaker said John Alexander Robertson is well qualified to speak from the standpoint of labor. He has three brothers and a brother-in-law working on the railroad... his father worked for the C.P.R. . . .

Mr. Robertson now is a conductor on the Kenora-Ignace run in unassigned pool freight service. He has been a member of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen since 1941 and is a past president of Local 270 of the brotherhood in Kenora.

Honourable senators, here is the local newspaper, just to hand, from Kenora in which they say:

Citizens of Kenora and across Canada were stunned and saddened this morning to learn of the death late Friday evening of Senator John Alexander Robertson... Senator Robertson had earlier assisted in a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Kenricia Hotel, and went home early where he was stricken. He died at St. Joseph Hospital at 11.25 p.m.

Speaking of his appointment and of the interview between himself and the Prime Minister of that time, the newspaper said:

He accepted the challenge of this new avenue of service, working for the good of this district he represented.

Honourable senators, I and my fellow members of the Divorce Committee know something of the friendly and serious qualities of the late Senator Robertson. He was always willing to carry the load. During the years that have gone by—not very many, two or three since he joined our ranks—he has been a working member of that committee, where his knowledge, his fairness and his insight have ever been available. We of the Senate Committee on Divorce join with those who have already spoken in sincere tributes to both these gentlemen.

To Mrs. Taylor and to her little daughter Dorothy, I would like to express my sincerest sympathy. To Mrs. Robertson and her family I join in sending my condolences. We in this chamber are poorer for the loss of these two great citizens.