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O t t a w a
June 11, 1958

Dear Arthur,

Time's remorseless turning wheels bring you another birthday celebration next Monday. I wish simply to offer you my warm good wishes. The anniversary of my natal day follows on Tuesday the 17th. You have the advantage of me by a couple of years. This probably does not matter much at any time, certainly not after one has passed the four score mark. I do hope you are continuing to enjoy a good degree of health. As far as I am concerned I find, or fancy I find, that each passing year takes its bit of toll of ones activities. Most assuredly my wife and myself wish you and Mrs. Meighen several years of happiness together.

Perhaps I should feel honored, for Donald Fleming has selected my birthday anniversary as the one on which to present his budget to Parliament. There is naturally a good deal of curiosity as to what the budget will contain, as there always is. That a heavy deficit will be shown is almost certain. I shall not be too much concerned about this if a deficit can be avoided for next year and the year after, which frankly I think is very doubtful. It is a curious reflection on Parliament that its sense of trusteeship for the people's money has almost disappeared. In each of the political camps one rarely hears the word economy mentioned. I have been browsing a bit through the estimates submitted after Parliament opened for this session. The total amount required for civil service salaries and wages is \$701 million - up thirty millions from the previous year. Twenty years ago the total amount for this item in the estimates was under \$49 million. Again we have tremendously extended our expenditures for Indians and Eskimos which, exclusive of Old Age pensions and Family Allowances, now amount to over \$54 million. This is well over \$300 per head for man, woman and child of the Indian and Eskimo population. Paul Martin's do gooders set the pace. I had hoped that the new administration might have changed this, but here also the estimates exceed those of the previous year. I get a kind of sardonic amusement out of the fact that twenty years ago Charlie Dunning, who was Minister of Finance, almost tore his hair out at the prospect of a budget of around \$550 million. The times have certainly changed.

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