



Statements and Speeches

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A MONUMENT MORE ENDURING THAN BRONZE...

A Testimonial Address by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, President of the Privy Council and Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, at the Unveiling of a Mural by Charles Gagnon in Memory of the Late Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Ottawa, June 11, 1975.

We have met in the hall of this building that bears his name -- friends, colleagues, associates -- to pay tribute to an outstanding diplomat, a brilliant Secretary of State for External Affairs, an accomplished party leader and a great Prime Minister of Canada.

The words of Lester B. Pearson inscribed in the mural we shall presently unveil bear testimony to his manifold deeds in these successive offices. During 40 years, Lester B. Pearson served without respite the people of Canada; and during these 40 years his mettle was tempered by the companionship of his wife, Maryon Pearson. "After all," he wrote shortly after his retirement in *Words and Occasions*, "if I had not married Maryon Moodie, I never would have occupied the positions which made authorship of this kind possible."

These positions, as I just recalled, were of increasing elevation; and the achievements of Lester B. Pearson grew in breadth and in depth with them. Perhaps his outstanding performance as Prime Minister of Canada has cast a historical shadow on his diplomatic career and his tenure as Secretary of State for External Affairs, even if the latter consumed fully three-quarters of his public life. In this building, on this occasion, I therefore felt that it would be appropriate to recall the long career of Mike Pearson, the diplomatist.

When I arrived in Ottawa in 1942, Mike Pearson was already a legend. I had very little to do with him personally, however, until I was instructed to join the Canadian delegation to an UNRRA conference in Atlantic City, in the late Forties. My particular chore was to prepare the first draft of Mr. Pearson's speech. My recollection is that some of that first draft did manage to survive...I forget if it was the tenth or the eleventh final redraft. Thus began my training in the painstaking art of international diplomacy!

After his elevation to the Ministry, I saw much more of Mike. I had the honour of accompanying him and Maryon to Moscow in 1955, at the beginning of the East-West thaw. That trip was memorable for many
