

## Preface

From the early years of Confederation to 1875, when the House of Commons began to report its debates officially, speeches delivered in the House were reported in major newspapers of the day, notably the Ottawa Times and the Toronto Globe. Parliamentary library staff clipped the reports and preserved them in scrapbooks; these became known as the “Scrapbook Debates”, which have provided most of the source material in producing the present volume.

This volume represents the First Session of the Third Parliament and brings to light a period of parliamentary history presenting numerous firsts; notably, the governing party changed for the first time in the existence of our young nation, and a law was passed to create the first Military College in Canada. In terms of lasts, this session represents the last without an official record of debates.

As Parliamentary Librarian, I take great pride in having led this final stretch of the reconstituted debates project, which has served to fill the gap in Canada’s early parliamentary record. Reconstruction of the parliamentary record from 1867 to 1874 was initiated in the 1960s under Eric Spicer, then Parliamentary Librarian. In his Preface to the first volume, he described the reconstituted debates as “very valuable in preserving a continuous record of the political history of the Dominion”. I echo that sentiment as we mark the publication of this final volume in the project.

I am grateful to the Honourable Andrew Scheer, Speaker of the House of Commons, for his support and recognition of the value of this work. Thanks are due to Dr. David Farr, one of three eminent Canadian historians who over the years have painstakingly reconstructed this material from primary sources. Thanks also go to Lynn Brodie, Director General, Information and Document Resource Service, to our dedicated Library staff, and to our parliamentary partners for their support and invaluable contribution to the project.

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