

ADDRESS delivered on May 12/1937 on the Parliament Building Grounds, Edmonton, Alberta, by Premier William Aberhart at 11-45 a.m.

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We are today engaging in one of the most important celebrations that it is our privilege to enjoy, the Coronation of their Majesties, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

On one hand the world is viewing our rejoicing with deep interest and undeniable admiration.

On the other hand, the various peoples of the British Commonwealth of Nations, of which we proudly form a part, are enthused by its deep significance. It stirs within us the noblest emotions and the highest ideals that have been inculcated in us by ancestral heritage and handed down to ~~by~~ us by British tradition.

This is the second Coronation which Alberta has been privileged to celebrate since its establishment as a province in 1905.

Subsequent to the first coronation, that of our late beloved King George V, Canada, as a Federation, has assumed a role of increasing importance in the affairs of the Empire.

In this connection I think it is but fair to say that Alberta, together with the other Western provinces, has contributed much to the progress and development of the Dominion.

We therefore feel, at this time, that Alberta may be justly proud of the place which it occupies as a Province in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The Coronation itself is a sacred ceremony based upon the Christian foundation of Britain from earliest times. In it, the King gives his solemn oath to govern in accordance with the laws and customs of British liberty and justice. By the act of Coronation, the King becomes the custodian of our glorious heritage, symbolizing the treasures which we, as a people, have gained and the ideals and objectives to which we still aspire.

On this occasion, we, as a Province, once more declare our allegiance to our Sovereign and to the Empire. I am convinced that our attachment to our King and our Queen is even greater today than it has ever been in the history of the British Empire. The Crown is the strong abiding link that continues to unite the British nations in one solid Empire.

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It seems to me that we are well described as freely associating members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, bound together by our common loyalty to the Crown. This common allegiance, however, though it may appear tenuous on the surface is, nevertheless, a powerful influence in shaping the policies of world affairs. The unity which it expresses is a unity of purpose, the determination to maintain our democratic institutions, our political liberty, and the desire to promote peace and to secure prosperity in a world suffering through lack of both.

We are encouraged by the fact that, to this strength of unity has been added the virtue of loyalty to a sovereign, who, by contact with his people, has attuned himself to their aspirations and ideals.

Alberta may surely be pardoned for feeling justly proud of the place which it occupies as a province in the British Empire. We greatly appreciate the privilege which is ours in having a part in upholding all of our British ideals.

We gratefully acknowledge the heritage of the principles of freedom and of justice, which have been handed down to us in British Institutions. We cling to the belief that these democratic institutions offer the best medium through and by means of which further advancement of human welfare can be made. Our purpose is fixed in their maintenance.

In conclusion may I say that, with full realization of the great emphasis which is placed upon the Crown as a symbol in the British Empire, we do not hesitate to allow our thoughts, for a time at least, to dwell upon the persons of our beloved King and Queen. We think of them as one of us, a man and a woman, a husband and a wife, a father and a mother. Our hearts go out to them and to their dear children, the lovely Princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret Rose. We are delighted to know that their Majesties, King George and Queen Elizabeth, have this happy family to cheer and comfort them amidst the duties and responsibilities which they have undertaken.

So despite the thousands of miles of land and water that separates us from the throne, we are drawn very close to the Royal Family. Our loyalty and devotion to them is not merely symbolic. It is something very real, human, and personal.

I trust that every citizen of Alberta will join in the sincere wish that they may reign for many years in peace, happiness and prosperity.

LONG LIVE THE KING!