

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON.  
SIR ROBERT MENZIES, KT, CH, QC, MP, AT THE  
ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION, LONDON, ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE LAUNCHING OF THE WINSTON  
CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST APPEAL

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1ST FEBRUARY, 1965

What we are proposing to do in Australia is to set about having an appeal which will probably open and close on one day - February 28th, 1965.

You may think this is a little dramatic but we are celebrating a very dramatic man. Of course donations will be received - and are, I believe, already being received - before February 28th. But our modest ambition is that by the close of that day, we in Australia will have raised £A1,000,000. We believe that we will. We believe that if we can do that, much larger sums of money can be expected from much larger and richer countries.

Now having said that, may I say this to you in the broad. I went down the other day to Westminster Hall and I was pleased to see how many young men and women and boys and girls were passing through Westminster Hall, because, you know, men are easily forgotten and the names of even the greatest of men may suffer some kind of eclipse for a while.

But it is vital that this name should never be forgotten and it is vital that this man should never be forgotten. It is vital that his spirit, touched with immortality as it was, should continue to be immortal, a living thing, a continuing presence among many generations to come in countries which speak the English language - a language in which he, by the miracle of science, was able to address so many scores and scores of millions of people during the war, reaching them, touching them, inspiring them, driving pessimism underground. None of us who lived through all this could ever forget it. I think we have a great task here to see that it is never forgotten.

Sometimes in the course of one's life one incurs a debt and the debt may perhaps be discharged by one blow, by one payment, by one act, but this is not a debt of that kind. This is a debt which is part of our inheritance; it will never be fully discharged.

If our grandchildren and great-grandchildren are living in freedom, they will be his debtors, because at the crucial moment in modern history it was he more than anybody else who inspired the public will and who made victory a certainty. This is a continuing debt, and a continuing debt is not paid merely by having a monument, great though it may be, merely by having some inscription on some tablet in some place. It must be paid in a continuing fashion.

And that is the beauty of this conception which was worked out here in this country and was taken to us and to other people and was understood and acted upon. This is a marvellous conception because in 200 years' time, there will be Churchill fellows, men and women of all sorts of colours, all sorts of religious beliefs, all sorts of experiences,

some of them on a high level of academic learning and some of them in the practising field of ordinary industry and ordinary life - thousands of them, as time goes by, who will carry this great name, this proud name, and who will regard it as a matter of honour to think of him and to perpetuate his memory.

This is a wonderful way of securing a continuing payment of a continuing debt, and I think that if it is looked at in this way, this appeal will be a great success. Its results will go on.

I trust that as time goes on its funds will be enriched from time to time by people who see it with the eye of imagination and will be proud of discharging a debt. How valuable this is! How important this is!

We have looked at in this way in my country, and the people engaged in the central Committee in the various bodies which have been set up cover the full range.

We have not cast the net narrowly - we have cast it wide and I am happy we have had the enthusiastic support of all.

That makes this a notable, historic occasion because it is the launching of proposals to honour in that abiding fashion the most historic person whom you or I ever knew or are ever likely to know.

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