

Call Number: 02-00-55

Memorial Statue Dedication – Bartlett

Summary created by: Jacob Metoxen

Date of creation of summary: 3/25/13, 4/22/13

Notes:

Congressman Nick Begich begins by acknowledging Mrs. [Vide] Bartlett, Senators, Representatives, and guests. Begich says this is certainly a historical event for Alaska and the United States. He says the people of Alaska have made their first consideration for a person worthy of a dedication in statuary hall. Today Senator Bob Bartlett is being acknowledged. The Joint Armed Services Color Guard and United States Coast Guard Academy Band perform the Stars Spangled Banner at 45 seconds into the recording. The man says he is pleased to call upon Reverend Edward Eielson, chaplain of the United States Senate, for the invocation. Eielson says a prayer regarding Bob Bartlett.

At 6:00 into the recording Senator Mike Gravel begins a speech. He discusses the memory that so many people have of Bob Bartlett as a warm and genuine human being. Statehood was a turning point on the north that will have far reaching implications for the future. He says statehood is Bob Bartlett's monument. He has many achievements that flow from the years of brilliant public service. While he lived, Alaskans and his congressional colleagues gave Bob Bartlett love and trust. Gravel says now that everyone is together to honor Bartlett's memory for all time. He says it is his pleasure to introduce Mrs. Bartlett, who will unveil the statue of Bob Bartlett. Also in attendance are the Bartlett daughters; Doris and Riley of Anchorage and Sue Peterson of Washington. Vide Bartlett is accompanied by Hugh Wade, the first Secretary of State for Alaska and a friend of Bob Bartlett.

The statue is unveiled and there is clapping.

Washington Senator Warren G. Magnuson is the next speaker. Magnuson served in Congress together when Bob was a delegate from Alaska in 1945. Senator Magnuson was referred to as the Senator from Alaska before Alaska became a state. When Bob came to the Senate in 1959 he wanted a seat on the commerce committee with Senator Magnuson chair. He got that seat and eventually became chairman of the Merchant Marine subcommittee. Senator Warren G. Magnuson is introduced and there is clapping. He thanks "Mr. Chairman". Magnuson says he is sort of an anti-climax after the unveiling but like all historic things someone has to make a record. The record will be printed and looked at for a long time. He says it is a distinct honor to have the opportunity today. The legislature of the state of Alaska has acted in the keeping of the great traditions of Statuary Hall by honoring Bartlett. Bartlett was a man of many talents and for many years a leader in Alaskan affairs. He was born in Seattle in 1904. Bartlett was brought by his parents when he was 1 year old to Fairbanks. He was just past his second birthday when the bill giving Alaska an elected delegate to Alaska in 1906 and the Organic Act went through 6 years later. Bartlett was a graduate of Fairbanks High school and was a student at the University of Washington and the University of Alaska. Bartlett took up Journalism and he became a reporter for the

Fairbanks News-Miner. Within three years he had become an associated editor and highly regarded commentator on the Alaska political scene. Anthony Diamond is discussed and Bob Bartlett's support for him. Bartlett went to Washington in 1954 as secretary of the Alaskan Delegate. Bartlett attracted considerable attention for his knowledge of territorial problems and affairs. In 1935 he was appointed Assistant Director for Alaska's Federal Housing Administration. In 1939 Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed Bartlett Secretary of Alaska. During four years as Secretary, Bartlett was acting governor on numerous occasions including the opening of Alaska national highway. Magnuson got to know him well at that time because Magnuson was Chairman of the International Highway Commission. He was a member of the Alaska War Council from 1942 to 1944. When Anthony Diamond retired from Congress Bartlett resigned as Secretary and ran for Congress and was elected. He was appointed to seven committees, all of which he performed his duties with remarkable ability. He wrote and accepted a lot of Bills to bring federal funds and recognition to Alaska. In the 80th congress, no less than 13 of his Majors became law, that's two for each committee. Bob Bartlett was equally impressive in defeat, according to Magnuson. In 1947 he introduced a Bill providing statehood for Alaska and the House Committee on public land took up the issue with enthusiasm. The arguments for statehood were advanced in great numbers from various locations. The foes of statehood had many arguments of their own, all of which Bob Bartlett was supposed to overcome. Many in congress were alarmed by the geographic location of Alaska. They believed it would be difficult to defend and govern a state so far away. A large segment of Alaskan businessmen threw their weight against the Bill and they had some effect. Alaskan fishing laws are discussed and Hawaii statehood is also discussed. Magnuson says although Bartlett's Alaska Statehood Bill was reported favorably, it failed adoption by the 8th congress. Bartlett was going to continue to struggle. In 1949, Bartlett sponsored the adoption of the Alaska Public Works Act which made available some \$70 million dollars available in federal matching funds for rehabilitation and community services in that area. He was a part of creating the Alaskan Housing Authority. Bartlett was a major force for Alaska becoming a state. Bartlett stood for election in 1960 and was elected without any difficulty. Bartlett established himself as a recognized expert for economic knowledge. Magnuson believes Bartlett's great work was involved in fisheries. In 1966, Bartlett was the overwhelming choice to be Alaskan Senator. Magnuson says that he thinks it's significant that he talk about Bob Bartlett the man. Bartlett revealed all the qualities of a man and uncommon human being, according to Magnuson. Editorials from Alaskan newspaper speak eloquently about Bartlett. "The people of this state who love them [Editorials] are known for their individualism, sectionalism, arrogance, and cleanliness yet he [Bartlett] held them behind him for a quarter of a century." Magnuson says Bartlett has once enjoyed 81% of the votes to become Senator. Bartlett was many things to Magnuson. Bartlett was humble but fiercely proud of Alaska. Bartlett was somewhat non-political but he was a master politician. He was sensitive and shy but practical and bold. He was quiet but he had a gifted wit. Bartlett was a public speaker who could enthrall people. For a third of Magnuson's life, Mr. and Mrs. Bartlett were friends. They both were friends of Jermain [no last name] and Magnuson. Magnuson says Bartlett was a nice man who finished first. He set a standard for Alaska politics for many years to come. Bartlett can rightly be called the founding father of Alaska. Magnuson thanks the crowd and leaves the microphone. There is clapping.

The next speaker is the Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; H.A. Red Boucher is making the dedication of the statue. Boucher begins by saying he received a call from Governor Bill [Egan] Monday morning and it was with deep distress that he indicated that Alaska legislature was in its last 24 hours in a vital moment of Alaskan history. Governor Bill Egan asked Boucher to join Mrs. Egan in Washington D.C. for the unveiling of the statue. He says he does it with a sense of humility because he was raised in the town and stood in the middle of the rotunda. He watched Franklin Roosevelt come down Connecticut Avenue in 1932. He says he had prepared remarks but when Vide pulled the veil from the statue he thought to himself that this was not the moment for prepared remarks. He says you will see in the statue that there is a sense of nobility in Bartlett's face. He says that people who are friends of Bob do not need to be told the kind of person Bob was. From Governor Bill Egan and the people of the state of Alaska, we give the memory of E.L Bob Bartlett. Begich then says Senator Ted Stevens will accept the Bartlett statue on behalf of the capital at 32:00 minutes into the recording. Stevens says Bob Bartlett was more than a Senator. Bob Bartlett was bigger than life. He loved life and all who brushed by him felt the love and returned it. The Library of Congress estimates that he had more bills passed than any other member in the history of the Congress. Stevens highlights the Radiation Safety Bill and the Bartlett Act as some Bartlett highlights. Stevens says statehood was just the beginning for battles that Bartlett took on. Bartlett saw Alaska's people become strong and proud. Stevens gives a quotation from author James Whitcomb Riley about good men never dying. Stevens discusses how the future generations will see Bob Bartlett. Stevens says the statue was done by Felix de Weldon who also memorialized the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima. De Weldon's works are found in many countries and Stevens lists a portion of the statues de Weldon has done. Stevens says he is honored to accept the statue of his predecessor in the name of the United States Senate. When Bartlett was buried in 1968 his favorite poem was read then and Stevens reads "Under the wide and starry sky, dig the grave and let me die, glad I lived and gladly die, and I laid me down with a will, this be the verse you gave, here I lie where I long to be home is the sailor, home from the sea, and the hunter home from the hill." Stevens finishes and there is clapping.

Begich says that the Coast Guard Academy Band and its director Lieutenant Commander Bud Well [?] are performing. Bartlett was fond of the Coast Guard. Begich calls upon the Coast Guard Academy Band to play "Alaska's Flag." The song is played at 38:57. The song is finished as Begich wants to thank the many Alaskans who traveled to Washington D.C. Begich then reads a quote from Bartlett about his love for Alaska. Begich then calls upon Reverend Eilsen for the benediction. Begich then reminds people that there is a reception in room S207. Reverend Eielson then begins the benediction and wraps up the event.