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**Introduction of President David Roe
Central College Heritage Day Luncheon
September 25, 2009**

**By
Arend D. Lubbers for President of Central (1960-69)**

There are those here more qualified to introduce our able and estimable President than I; those who have lived closer to his life, those who have lived with him in the trenches of his college Presidency at Central. I am aware, however, of his ties to family; the normal and happy life of a husband and father, a tragedy, and the rediscovery of the blessings of relationship and progeny. I think these attachments carry the most importance in his life. I am aware that his mental brilliance and organizational discipline carried him to the upper echelons of a military career. I am aware that he transferred those skills to business with similar success, and then again to higher education where today we celebrate their manifestations among us. These general themes I am aware of, but the details are for another time and another presenter.

My remarks, therefore, are more testimonial than introductory. Let's assign as much symbolism as we can to this occasion. Two former Presidents are here to take note of the incumbent President's career; a former first lady to introduce the present one. What does this symbolize? It symbolizes a continuity of leadership over a long period, a continuity

accompanied by a strong dose of loyalty to the college. These are the ingredients for success. My roots at this place go seventy-five years deep, and upon that I make my claim to assess what this remarkable President has done.

Central is characterized by people's commitments to it. Previous presidents knew the Central constituency and their commitment. David Roe did not. He came when the committed were concerned about what was happening. He committed himself immediately and unequivocally. He became one with those who loved Central and confidence was restored. He came when the decision making process was questioned and many decisions challenged. He repaired the process and made better decisions. The college began to prosper again. The supply of money, the life blood of the college, was in decline. He ordered a transfusion, and the flow of money to the college, brought through his efforts, has enabled the advances both academic and in facilities. Trust is essential to a working relationship between faculty and administrators. It must permeate the college even at disputatious times. He restored it. Enrollment was in steady decline, probably the most troubling problems he faced when he assumed office. He reversed the trend. Instead, enrollments have been restored to the level of Weller's golden years.

And, oh, yes! He made himself a football coach. He must have thought the punts too short and the place kicks lacked accuracy. When he leaves he must match his record with the past; that demonstrates courage.

He came from outside the Central orbit. Why did he come? Tennyson may have understood his type in describing one of his heroes, "The fire of God fills Him. I never saw his like; there lives no greater leader." Certainly, David Roe has increased Central's orbit, and Tennyson's description fits him. His administration was redemptive and is creative, visionary, fair and filled with good will. Let us hear now from our President, David Roe.