

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 31, 1981

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

[Translation]

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT REAGAN—
EXPRESSION OF HOPE FOR SPEEDY RECOVERY

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, yesterday we all experienced a similar feeling of amazement and concern when we heard the news about the attempt made against President Ronald Reagan's life. I believe that all hon. members in this House today express a similar wish for a prompt recovery of the President and the three men who were injured at his side. Some people look upon that lunatic attempt as fresh evidence that unfortunately violence can break out at any moment in our civilized societies. I for one would rather admire the courageous behaviour of the President in this ordeal and equate it with a new proof of the nobility and greatness of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

[English]

His eagerness to reassure and comfort others, his concern for those who were wounded with him and his constant sense of humour, even when the extent of his own injury was still unknown, all demonstrate qualities of character which are in the finest traditions of American leadership.

Throughout Canada today among all our people there is profound relief that the attempt on the President's life did not succeed. There is, as well, an outpouring of good wishes for his quick recovery. I am sure all of us would want to express today, to a man who so recently came to this chamber to assert his friendship and respect for Canada, our gratitude that he is well and our hopes that he will soon be fully recovered.

Our thoughts and prayers are with him and Mrs. Reagan today, and with Mr. James Brady, Mr. Timothy McCarthy, Officer Thomas Delahunt and their families. May this awful event unite people throughout the world in a renewed determination to abhor and reject violence in the affairs of mankind.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I rise to associate myself and my party with the words expressed by the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), and on my own behalf and that of my party I want to express our shock and sorrow over the attempted assassination of the President of the United States. We deplore this act

of outrage which offends the high standards of civilization and freedom which the American people have established.

As neighbours and as friends, our prayers are with Mrs. Reagan and the families of the other victims. We wish them all a speedy recovery.

I am sure all in this House will recall that on March 11 the President himself remarked in this House on the ability of the American people to unite in adversity. He said at that time, and I quote: "I have found there is a wellspring of spirit and faith in my country which will drive us forward to gain control of our lives."

All of us in the House wish the American people and the American President strength and perseverance in this latest crisis in a nation which has long triumphed over crisis, and long excelled in adversity.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, on behalf of my leader, the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), and on behalf of all my colleagues, I am happy to join with the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) in expressing the sentiments they have already conveyed to the House.

Like all Canadians, we were shocked at the news which came to us from Washington yesterday. We deplore violence in our society, and we deeply regret the suffering of the President and of the other three who were wounded yesterday.

We join in expressing our sympathy to all of the families, and we wish the victims an early and speedy recovery.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

CANADIAN FEDERATION

THIRTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF NEWFOUNDLAND'S UNION
WITH CANADA—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity under the provisions of Standing Order 43. On March 31, 1949, 32 years ago today, the dominion of Newfoundland joined the Canadian federation as the tenth province. Therefore I move, seconded by the hon. member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn):