

The Late President Kennedy

the British tradition of government, leaders have been singularly free from the assassin's hand. One prime minister of the United Kingdom only—in 1812 I think it was—died at the hands of an assassin. We in our country have been free from this, except in the case of two of our statesmen, D'Arcy McGee and George Brown. A tribune of freedom has gone. Whatever the disagreements, to me he stood as the embodiment of freedom not only in his own country but throughout the world. Canadians, yes, free men everywhere, will bow their heads in sorrow.

All of us would like to convey, as the Prime Minister has so eloquently done, our sympathy not only to Mrs. Kennedy and the family but to the people of the United States. Free men everywhere mourn. Mankind can ill afford to lose this man at this time.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all of us, like the people of Canada, are stunned at the news of the assassination of the young and far seeing President of the United States. President Kennedy was a good friend of the people of Canada, and I think the people of Canada had a high regard for him. I think they watched with deep sympathy his endeavours to bring about racial integration and a better understanding among the people of his own country with regard to the problem of minority groups.

This tragedy is all the more pronounced since it has taken place in a democracy; because in democracies there are constitutional and peaceful means to bring about changes of government. It is a reflection on a democracy when an assassination like this takes place.

I am sure all of us are grief stricken at this sad news. I know that the Prime Minister will convey to Mrs. Kennedy, to Vice President Lyndon Johnson and to the government of the United States our deepest sympathy in this tragic hour, and our hope that the government of the United States will go forward with its program to develop a better racial understanding in its own country and to promote the interests of peace throughout the world. The members of this group join with the government and all members of the house in expressing our sympathy on this tragic occasion.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I join with those who have already spoken. We are shocked and deeply grieved by the assassination of President John F.

Kennedy of the United States. I am sure it is the thought and wish of every Canadian, not just those in this chamber this afternoon, that we extend our sympathies to his wife and family and also to the American people at this tragic time. We in Canada have watched his administration with perhaps keener interest than any other people in the world, and certainly we are grieved by this unfortunate incident that has taken place just a little while ago.

President Kennedy was a man who brought youth and a new ambition to the administration of the United States. He tackled the duties of his high office that carries such tremendous responsibilities with devotion and determination. Not only the people of the United States and of Canada, not only the people of the western world, but the people of all the world are the losers in this event.

As has already been said, we can ill afford at this time to lose a man of the calibre of John F. Kennedy. I think it would be well that when the Prime Minister sends the sentiments and sympathies of this house to the family of President Kennedy and the American people that he should also send our sympathies to the family of Governor Connally and the people of Texas.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Gregoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, our group wishes to add its own tribute to that of the house, which unanimously extended its most sincere and deepest sympathy to those who are most sorely tried by this tragedy which has fallen upon the free world today.

The fact must be stressed that we find extremely loathsome acts such as this one which do nothing to strengthen the cause of those who are responsible for them. A man may be assassinated, but you cannot kill the principles he stood for. Others will rise after him to keep on defending his ideas and to promote democracy among the free nations of the world.

[Text]

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, as a tribute to and out of respect for the President, our friend, as a token of sympathy to his wife, for whom this has been a dark year, and to his family; and as an indication of our desire to share in the grief of the American people, I move, seconded by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker), that this house do now adjourn until Monday.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 2.50 p.m.