

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

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**Friday, November 20, 1964**

The house met at 11 a.m.

### THE LATE PRESIDENT KENNEDY

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMING OF MOUNTAIN IN MEMORY

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, it was a year ago this week end that shots were fired in Dallas that brought shock and disbelief throughout the world. President Kennedy had been slain. Hon. members will not soon forget, I believe, the emotion we all felt when the news was announced in this house, a feeling which was shared by millions everywhere. The funeral in Washington a day or so later was a moving and dramatic demonstration of that feeling.

I attended President Franklin D. Roosevelt's funeral in 1945 and there was a great outpouring of grief then, but it was for a leader who had done his work, who had finished the course. Last November it was sorrow for the loss of one who had just begun; it was the ache of unfulfilment. His life, so short, is already a legend. His death, in the words of James Reston, has become "a symbol of the tragedy and caprice of life. He never reached his meridian. We saw him only as a rising sun".

Members of this house and the people of this country will, I know, approve of a decision of the government to commemorate this sad anniversary and honour John Fitzgerald Kennedy's memory by naming a high Canadian peak in the Saint Elias range in the Yukon, near the Alaska border, Mount Kennedy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** I believe it is appropriate that Canada's memorial to him should be a mountain. A mountain is solid and enduring, and so will be his place in history. Mount Kennedy is a graceful, towering, unencumbered peak. President Kennedy was clean cut, a man of clarity and direct vision. A mountain is a symbol of aspiration and upward reach. John Kennedy greatly aspired and his reach, as the poet tells us it should, exceeded his grasp. Today Canada honours, and we re-

member, the young president, the uncommon man, in the designation of Mount Kennedy.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I speak today, as I did one year ago, extemporaneously and without knowledge in advance except that a few moments ago the Prime Minister advised me that he intended to make a reference to the tragic passing of President Kennedy. I think the course taken by the government in naming a mountain in his honour will epitomize the words which I used one year ago, words that were used at the time of the death of President Lincoln; "Now he belongs to the ages". Mountains, too, belong to the ages.

The intervening 12 months have cleared away many of the fears that touched the hearts of men at the time of President Kennedy's assassination. We now know that it was not an international plot but the action of a demented individual. We also know that the controversies which would have arisen had the commission not been set up have been allayed by the findings of the commission headed by the chief justice of the supreme court.

One year ago the world was struck with horror and fear. God works in his own way. The president who has succeeded him has carried on the work that was commenced by President Kennedy and has done it in a way that has done honour to him and given to all free mankind the sure hope that the United States will follow the course of freedom.

This is a most unusual occasion, giving parliament the opportunity to pay its tribute to one whose life was short but whose contribution was great.

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt whatever that all the people of Canada will approve of the action of the Prime Minister in naming a mountain peak after the late President John F. Kennedy. In the three short years during which he held that high office he won for himself a place in the esteem and affection of the Canadian people. It is amazing that a man who held office for so brief a period of time should have left the imprint of his personality so indelibly stamped upon his day and generation. Not only the people of the