

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 10, 1948

The house met at three o'clock.

JAN MASARYK

DEATH OF CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER— EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government and I am sure the Canadian people were shocked and grieved to learn this morning of the death of Jan Masaryk, foreign minister of Czechoslovakia. As the son of the late president-liberator, Thomas Masaryk, he bore one of the greatest names in Czech history; indeed, one of the great names in world history.

Jan Masaryk had seen his father's work crowned with success by the establishment of the republic of Czechoslovakia in 1918. He devoted himself to the service of that state and of the liberal democratic ideas it embodied for the twenty brief years of its independent existence. When Czechoslovakia was occupied by the nazis in 1939, Jan Masaryk, with that courage and resource which always characterized him, carried on the struggle from abroad until Czechoslovakia regained that democratic freedom which she has once again so tragically lost.

On behalf of the Canadian government and people, I wish to express to the family of Jan Masaryk and to the Czechoslovak people our deep sympathy in their great loss. His contribution to the effort to establish a peaceful democratic world of free and friendly peoples will not be forgotten.

In making this reference to that great patriot in this house, lest there be any misunderstanding I think I should take this occasion to say that in my view the Canadian government and the Canadian people at large associate themselves in every respect with the declaration about the tragic events in Czechoslovakia which was made by the three great powers on February 26 last.

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all hon. members will wish to associate themselves with the minister in the statement he has just made. It has been the privilege of some of us, with many members of the government,

to have been acquainted with Jan Masaryk and to know something of what he was trying to do for his country. As the minister has said, the son of a great patriot of Czechoslovakia was trying to serve his country in the footsteps of his father. We not only regret the circumstances which have brought about his death, but we sincerely regret the event itself. On behalf of my associates I wish to join with the minister in the statement he has made in extending our sympathy to that nation in the loss of this great man.

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggart): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate myself with what has been said. Those of us who knew Jan Masaryk and the ideas which always guided his political life were shocked to find his name among those who were included in the new government two weeks ago. We could not understand what had happened. Perchance when the curtain is lifted we may understand and realize that he took the step in order to do something further for his country, and having failed to do so, not being satisfied to live under a regime which he thought would destroy those democratic principles for which he stood, somehow he met his death. One day history may tell us how and why.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

VETERANS AFFAIRS—CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT

Mr. W. A. TUCKER (Rosthern) presented the first report of the select committee on veterans affairs, and moved that the report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

WHEAT

TABLING OF COPY OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Trade and Commerce): At the request of the leader of the opposition I now wish to lay on the table a copy of the international wheat agreement in English and in French. Perhaps I could amplify the answers I gave the leader of the opposition at the last sitting. The agreement is open for signature until April 1. Fifteen governments had authorized their representatives to sign on March 6. The remaining