

The Late Hon. George Drew

walked where he walked. We mourn the passing of this great Canadian.

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THE LATE HON. GEORGE DREW

TRIBUTES TO FORMER LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this day has been further saddened by the death just a few hours ago of the Hon. George Drew. His service to Canada and to parliament was so outstanding that all members would wish to join with me today in paying tribute to him. Mr. Drew came to this House from the legislature of Ontario where he had served as member and premier. He was first elected to parliament in 1948 and was re-elected in two subsequent elections. His record as leader of the opposition was an outstanding one for he brought to the debates in this chamber experience gained in a number of areas—as a soldier, as an author and as a barrister.

His public service career did not conclude with his resignation as leader of his party but was furthered during his term in office as Canadian High Commissioner in London and through his immense contribution to the Geneva Law of the Sea Conferences.

Mr. Drew's sense of honour and his devotion to Canada were matched only by the warmth of his personality and the courtesy which he exhibited in his relations with all who were fortunate enough to know him. His loss is a great one, and I extend condolences to his family.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I join the tribute to the Hon. George Drew who served our country with such distinction in peace and in war. He had a distinguished record in World War I and was invalidated home.

Many of my generation who during the 1920s were boys first learned of George Drew in connection with his writings, in particular his book about Canada's fighting airmen. This created great pride in all of us for the skills and courage of Canadians, and did much to create pride among all Canadians in the accomplishments of these brave men.

George Drew was active in many aspects of public life. He was an alderman and mayor of his native city of Guelph. He became the leader of the Ontario Conservative Party and the premier of that province in a minority position in 1943. He moved into the leadership of a strong provincial government and entered federal politics in the fall of 1948, about the same time that Mr. Pearson entered this House as the member for Algoma East and Secretary of State for External Affairs. Mr. Drew was a vigorous man and a vigorous leader, a man of great energy, courage and devotion to duty. In fact, I think of him particularly in terms of courage and integrity.

If I may speak personally, Mr. Drew was a very kind friend to me. I became the party leader in the province of Nova Scotia a short time after Mr. Drew became the national leader of the Conservative party. He was a constant source of encouragement and good advice. I would like to pay tribute to his kindness and friendship to me.

[Mr. Foster.]

Because of distinguished service to his native city, his province and this country as a statesman, diplomat and soldier, I am pleased to associate myself with the tribute paid by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I join him, on behalf of my party, in extending sympathy to Mrs. Drew and the members of the family.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, it is a sad day when members of this House have to mourn the death of two leaders of Canada's major parties. I did not know Mr. Drew as well as I knew Mr. Pearson, but I did know him personally. No one who knew him could fail to be impressed by his great human kindness and friendship toward people. As the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) has said, he had a great reputation for courage and integrity.

If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Drew became premier of Ontario in 1943. I think he was mainly responsible for laying the foundation for the continuing success of the Conservative party in the province of Ontario to this date. Although I was not a Member of Parliament at the time, I remember reading the debates of this House in connection with the pipeline argument in 1956. I was impressed by his parliamentary expertise and his determination to fight what many people at the time thought was a dangerous undertaking of the then government.

On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I join the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the Opposition in extending condolences to Mrs. Drew and the family.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Drew's death has taken everybody by surprise, even if the former statesman was already hospitalized. Mr. Drew was a Canadian citizen whom I had the privilege to know during the years 1946, 1947 and 1948.

I first met him when he was the Ontario premier and then when he succeeded the Hon. John Bracken as Leader of the Opposition in 1948 under Mr. St. Laurent's government.

Mr. Drew, we must admit, lived up to his convictions. He was a true Canadian, but since he had the courage of his convictions, we did not always agree on certain points, nevertheless he had Canada's interests at heart and he wanted to see it develop and reach as soon as possible its present status.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and myself join with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the other members to extend to Mrs. Drew and his family our heart-felt sympathy.

• (1650)

[English]

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I may say a word or two as the member for Wellington, the constituency in which the city of Guelph, the birthplace of the late Colonel George Drew, is situated. It is rather significant that we in North America should now be mourning the loss of three great contemporary men in the persons of Mr. Truman, Mr. Pearson and Mr. Drew who have passed away within the last two weeks.