

measures, the Canada Pension Plan, Medicare and the Canada Assistance Plan. Also, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) indicated, it was during his regime that we witnessed the debate on—and it was not always a happy debate—the acceptance of a distinctive Canadian flag.

[Translation]

Mr. Pearson was well aware of the problem of national unity. It was he, an Anglophone Prime Minister, who introduced a policy of bilingualism within the public service, expressing the wish that the careers of employees be protected. He also proposed a review of the Canadian constitution in an effort to find answers to the problems that make federal-provincial relations difficult and bitter. He sought to achieve within Canada the peace and co-operation which were his objectives in the international field.

I remember that in his inaugural speech on the occasion of the First Constitutional Conference in 1968 Mr. Pearson stated:

Everything that is possible in the world is possible here.

He recognized Canada's immense wealth and the possibility for the people of Canada to achieve social justice and equality for all, given the required courage and imagination. He had confidence in Canada and the Canadian people, and was proud of them.

[English]

Yet it is really as a man, as a human being, that I will best remember Mr. Pearson. I will remember him, as many Canadians will, for his personal qualities of warmth, humanity, deep compassion, and for that humility which is rare in men who wield great power. I always believed that under his easy going exterior there was firm resolve and great courage. I am confident that the history of Canada will record Lester B. Pearson as one of the great prime ministers and leaders of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I wish to join the members from the other parties and extend to Mrs. Pearson and her family our deepest sympathy on the occasion of Mr. Pearson's passing.

I have known Mr. Pearson as far back as 1946, under the administration of the late Right Honourable Mackenzie King, a little later under that of the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent and still later when he moved into politics. He always was as we have all known him: a great Canadian, a man having at heart his country's interests and working with all his energy towards peace between nations.

In addition to his efforts aimed at reconciling conflicting views between nations, Mr. Pearson has given Canada the best of himself. Before being a politician he was a diplomat, a man of peace forever advocating good will. Even in this House, Mr. Pearson has always been a smiling, kind and available man.

The Late Right Hon. L. B. Pearson

And I would like to add in English:

• (1640)

[English]

Mr. Pearson worked for national unity in Canada. He never said anything in the west against the east or in the east against the west. He always tried to convince the Canadian people, whether they spoke French, Ukrainian, Italian, English or any other language, that their first duty was to be genuine Canadians. Everyone admits the important and vast role played by Mr. Pearson while Prime Minister of this country and while working for peace in the whole world.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we wish to extend to Mrs. Pearson and her family our most sincere condolences. We have lost a true Canadian.

[English]

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words in tribute to Lester B. Pearson, especially on behalf of the people of Algoma East whom he represented in the House of Commons. He represented this constituency for some 20 years, from the fall of 1948 to the spring of 1968. Although he carried the responsibilities at various times during this period of Secretary of State for External Affairs, Leader of the Opposition and finally Prime Minister, he looked after the needs of his constituents well.

He came to Algoma East in 1948 as a professional in diplomacy but as an amateur in politics. He proved to be a capable politician as well by handily winning the Algoma riding and going on to the highest elected office in our land. However, it was his humility, compassion and personal interest in his constituents which won the hearts of the people of Algoma. This interest in people and their problems was extended to communities throughout Manitoulin Island and the North Shore area. When communities such as Elliot Lake faced serious economic problems, they were helped by Mr. Pearson. He took a personal interest, as well, in native people and their problems in the several Indian reserves located in the riding.

Mr. Pearson had a special interest in and appeal to young people. When he was Prime Minister he regularly sponsored several senior high school students to visit the nation's capital and to have dinner at 24 Sussex Drive. People of my generation who were in high school in the late 1940s and early 1950s were thrilled by his leadership internationally at the United Nations. He made us proud to be Canadians. I am told that of the thousands of people who visited the Hall of Honour last Saturday and Sunday to pay their last respects, at least one-third were young people. This is so fitting for a man who had such a special interest in youth.

I want to express the gratitude of the people of Algoma for his representation of us in this chamber for so many years. I wish to express our sympathy to Mrs. Pearson and the family.

When I was first elected to the House of Commons, many people told me that if I were to represent the constituency that Lester B. Pearson had represented, I would have big shoes to fill. I consider it a great honour to have