

for or who gave more constant attention to the burden of the oppressed peoples of the Jewish faith than did the late Mr. Bercovitch.

I am sure all hon. members will join with me when I say that we have lost from our midst two most valuable members of the House of Commons. Their memories will long be cherished by those of us who knew them well.

On behalf of the members of the House of Commons, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to convey to Mrs. Bercovitch and to Mrs. Fleming an expression of sympathy, both for themselves and the members of their families.

Hon. R. B. HANSON (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I say that I agree with everything said by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) about our two departed colleagues. Hon. members on this side of the house join in the tribute to the memory of these men who during the recess of parliament have passed to the great beyond. I have been looking over the record and I find that since this House of Commons was elected less than three years ago, no fewer than ten of its members have been called by death. At the opening of each session of parliament we have thus been reminded of how fleeting is human life and how heavy is the toll among those in public life.

I am glad to be able to say that I knew the late Peter Bercovitch and was privileged to call him my friend. He occupied a highly respected position at the bar of his province. No public man at the bar ever performed a greater service than did Peter Bercovitch on behalf of his race in connection with the school question in the province of Quebec. That will be a living monument to his memory. He was widely known in the business community of the city of Montreal, because, after all, he was a commercial lawyer by practice.

He entered this house after a long period of service in the legislative arena of his province. During his short membership of this house he was suffering from the malady which caused his death, and we seldom heard his voice. But I think he won for himself the respect of every member of this House of Commons. He won mine at an early stage. I remember with pleasure his courtesy at all times. On occasion he was a man who could exhibit great erudition and learning. To the members of his family as well as to his gallant son, who I understand is now a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, I should like to tender on behalf of myself and my colleagues our very sincere sympathy.

The late member for Humboldt, Doctor Fleming, was called in the very prime of life. I cannot say that I was intimately acquainted

with Doctor Fleming, but I do know that he was a man who had the power of expression and the courage of his convictions. He said what he thought, whether you agreed with him or not. He was a native of this old province of Ontario, but early in life he went to the prairies and there built up a practice for himself, accumulated a competence, I hope, and made for himself a place in his community. As a physician he brought to the deliberations of this house an extensive knowledge and interest in all questions affecting the health and social welfare of the people of his constituency. Many of us did not share the views which he expressed on the floor of this house on various matters, but I can say that he held the interest of his listeners by the independence, aggressiveness and sincerity of his presentations. To his young widow, the daughter of an old friend of mine who was in parliament when I first came here, and to his young family, I tender my sincere sympathy. I should like to extend to the Prime Minister our expressions of sympathy upon the loss of two valued supporters.

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate this party with the remarks made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) regarding the two gentlemen who have passed on. Doctor Fleming and I came from the same province. As the leader of the opposition has said, he was a man who expressed himself forcibly on the floor of this house and often spoke his mind in a manner which at times must have caused him embarrassment. It is always a sad thing to see a man pass on in the very prime of life. Doctor Fleming leaves behind him a widow and a young family, and I am sure that our hearts go out to them in their bereavement and sorrow.

I knew Mr. Bercovitch much better during the past year than I had previously. He was one of nature's gentlemen, a man whom I grew to respect and admire. Somehow or other he gave one the feeling that he too shared the sufferings of the race to which he belonged. From conversations I have had with him I know that the events of these later years depressed him. He was a man of great ability, and when I heard him speak in this house on the few occasions that he did speak I always felt that it was regrettable, perhaps because of the large number on the government side of the house, that a man of his unique qualities and fine mind and education was not able to intervene more