THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1962

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 25th November, 1963.

A Special Meeting of the House of Assembly was held today at 3.30 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C., *(Speaker);* Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P.; Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY, C.B.E., *(Leader of the Opposition);* Mr. F. C. GODDARD; Mr. F. E. MILLER; Hon. J. C. TUDOR, M.A., *(Minister of Education);* Hon. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., *(Premier);* Mr. J. W. CORBIN; Mr. S. E. SEALEY; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, *(Minister of Communications, Works and Housing);* Mr. W. R. COWARD; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; His Honour E. L. CARMICHAEL, J.P., *(Deputy Speaker);* Mr. L. A. LYNCH, J.P.; Mr. G. V. BATSON, *(Chairman of Committees);* Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, *(Minister of Social Services).*

Prayers were read.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a special meeting of this House which is summoned between a previous meeting and one which is fixed for tomorrow, because it has been represented to me by a Minister, the Hon. Minister of Education, that the public interest requires that this House should meet on an earlier date than that to which it had been adjourned. I am satisfied that it is in the public interest that this House should meet before tomorrow and accordingly I concurred in the request of the Hon. Minister.

A special meeting is one in which only the subject matter may be dealt with and it is a Resolution standing in the name of the Hon. Minister of Education. However, despite the fact that this is a special meeting and we can only deal with the business of this meeting, yet I am led to understand that there is a Message No. 10/1963, from the representative of Her Majesty the Queen and it is permissible for that Message to be given notice of, if the Hon. Premier thinks fit.

MESSAGE No. 10/1963

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the following Message to the Honourable the House of Assembly from His Excellency the Governor.

The Message reads as follows:-

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
TO
THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

"His Excellency the Governor has the honour to inn the Honourable the House of Assembly that he will be leaving the Island on Tuesday, the 26th November, 1963, for a two-day visit to St. Lucia in his capacity as Chairman of the Regional Council of Ministers.

During His Excellency's absence the Honourable Sir Hallam Grey Massiah, C.B.E., President of the Legislative Council, will act as Governor's Deputy in accordance with Clause XXIa of the Letters Patent."

J. M. STOW,
Governor.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY *re* DEATH OF LATE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY OF U.S.A.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask leave of the Honourable House for the Hon. and Learned Premier to take charge of the motion which stands in my name.

Mr. SPEAKER: Notice has not yet been given of that motion. The Hon. and Learned Premier may proceed.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution that the House of Assembly records its profound sympathy with the Kennedy Family and with the Government and People of the United States of America on the occasion of the tragic death of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, former President of the United States of America.

I would like to ask leave to deal with this Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. and Learned Premier has asked leave to deal with this Resolution. Incidentally, as this Resolution is the sole business of this afternoon, I take it that leave will be unhesitatingly granted.

The Hon. Premier may proceed, leave having been granted.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I have to inform you and this Honourable House that on the 22nd November, 1963, the former President of the United States of America was brutally assassinated and that his funeral took place today at the Arlington National Cemetery in the United States of America.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that bad news spreads very quickly and hon. members would have been, in these modern days of communications, been seised of the tragic facts of the occasion even in the short space of time of this event taking place. However, it is my duty — and a very solemn duty — to move this Resolution so that the feelings of this House and the people of Barbados should be enshrined on the record of this Department of the Legislature.
3.50 p.m.

If I, in my brief remarks, say anything which, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of public and general knowledge, it must be appreciated that those who come to look at the archives of the Legislature in years to come, would not have been in the same position of having direct or in-

direct knowledge of the greatness of the man whose unfortunate passing the world laments today. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born in 1917 in the middle of one of the — I cannot describe them as disturbances, but certainly one of the upheavals which beset mankind in the 20th century. He was born in very troubled times; he died on Friday last at the age of 46 years.

I think that many of us are very proud to have belonged to the same generation as John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Not many of us had the good fortune to have been born in the same affluent circumstances in which John Fitzgerald Kennedy was ushered into the world; but it may have been as a result of the troublous times, the soul searching which took place in the early 20's and 30's, the second World War, the second major world upheaval in the 20th century in which John Fitzgerald Kennedy played so gallant a part, that he endeared himself to the minds of mankind. In the days of the affluent society not very long ago after he became President of the United States of America, he said that if a society cannot help the many who are poor, it will not save the few who are rich. And it is in this spirit that he enlisted the support of many young people of the United States of America to go to the four corners of the earth and preach the gospel of democracy to mankind. It is with this spirit that he fired the imagination of many talented and brilliant men of his own generation and brought a new dimension of political thinking not only to the United States of America but to the rest of the civilised world. It is with this spirit that he has built up even in this island and certainly amongst the more progressive citizens of this area, a following which no former American President that we know of has ever enjoyed — not even the great Franklyn Delano Roosevelt — and the confidence that, as long as he was at the head of affairs in the United States of America, the gates of mercy would not be closed on the rest of mankind.

I would like to add a personal note because I think we both owed something to someone who would strive to circulate the use of democracy in the 20th century. President Kennedy had the good fortune, to attend the same College at London University. Although we were not contemporaries, it is significant that his tutor in Political Science was my tutor in Political Science, a gentleman who, unfortunately, died four weeks before I took my final examination; and I was very pleased, when I returned to the United Kingdom last year to give a public lecture, that the widow of that gentleman turned up on that platform and made a very prophetic statement. She said: "My husband would have been very proud to know how many people his influence and his teaching have put in positions of authority in the democratic countries of the world." Therefore, we, in this generation, have a very heavy responsibility.

President Kennedy said that only the young are fit to govern, and that is a sentiment which I am not ashamed to say that I share with him *in toto*. Only the young are fit to govern because the future belongs to the young; the future does not belong to the old who have mortgaged the future of mankind, and would have us in a situation which properly would have meant the extinction of human beings from the misunderstandings which are generated in the societies in which we live.

It is from one such conflagration that the President of the United States of America recently saved mankind. If he had carried out no other act of statesmanship in his life, he would have been fit to be remembered and to be venerated for his statesmanship in 1962 at the time of the very serious crisis which arose.

There are, Mr. Speaker, two other quotations which I should like to mention before I sit down. The first one is that a man must do what he has to do no matter what the personal danger. Those words were spoken by John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a man who has created his own profile encouraged by his exploits during the Second World War, not in destroying a large number of submarines, but in saving the lives of the humble members of his crew. President Kennedy made his last journey to Texas, the "Lone Star State" as they call it; I hope that that state is singular in the experience which it has now given to the world and that it will always be alone in this respect.

I understand that the President of the United States of America was warned of the possible danger to himself, whether it was anticipated or not, of personal violence; nevertheless, the President pressed on without any regard for his personal safety because he felt that his office demanded it and the country expected it. A further quotation from the late John Fitzgerald Kennedy is: "Never ask what your country can do for you; rather ask what you can do for your country."

4.00 p.m.

That is something which the majority of the people in the Caribbean area can very well inscribe on their domestic hearths. The people of Barbados were deeply shocked, as you were, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, by the passing of a man who was at the prime of his youth and displayed such promise, although he had occupied the highest executive role of his country for a short period of only 2 1/2 years.

I am not very often given to flights either of fancy or prose; I do not regard this as an occasion on which one should display either one's personal knowledge, one's erudition or the memory that one has for the things which one may have learnt in one's youth. You will therefore forgive me, Sir, if certain words come back to me from "Adonais":

> "He has out-soared the shadow of our night;
> Envy and calumny, and hate and pain,
> And that unrest which men miscall delight,
> Can touch him not, and torture not again;
> From the contagion of the world's slow stain,
> He is secure."

I have the honour to move the following Resolution:

WHEREAS this House has learned with great shock and sorrow of the tragic death of the Honourable John F. Kennedy, formerly President of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS the People of this territory have ever enjoyed the warmest and most fruitful relations with the Government and People of the United States; and

WHEREAS the People of this territory have, in common with the rest of humanity, greatly benefited from Mr. Kennedy's statesmanship and wisdom:

BE IT THEREFORE resolved that this House desires to record its profound sympathy with the Kennedy Family, and with the Government and People of the United States, in their bereavement; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved that Mr. Speaker be directed to take whatever action is necessary to transmit the text of this Resolution to Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, and to President Johnson.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, to second a Resolution of this sort is sad to the extreme. The circumstances make it so. It is difficult to pay fitting and balanced tribute to a figure recent and youthful, who nevertheless stood at the vortex of things and exercised stupendous influence for good. Believe me, Sir, the stunning blow of his untimely death makes us grope out into the dark, as it were, for a new sense of direction.

This is an occasion on which Parties, peoples and Nationalisms have lost their meaning, for John Fitzgerald Kennedy was a man who transcended in no little measure, by virtue of his deep convictions, both religious and political — a strange combination Sir — many of those things which would have caused lesser souls to vacillate and to falter in their endeavours and to narrow their vision. The shock and horror which the free world, the world at large and humanity as a whole experienced on Friday last will take no little time to die away and be forgotten. A young man merely 46, an enterprising, courageous president of the United States of America, a man not unacquainted with

adversity and not unfamiliar with sorrow, suffering a pointless and unwarranted assassination. Pointless, I say, for only the skeptic and despairing regard the Crucifix as a symbol of ignominious defeat and crippling despair.

Seldom has the world been so tightly knit together in benumbing and sudden sorrow and distress by the effective and vivid network of Radio and Television, as it was for long pulsating hours on Friday, November 22nd, 1963, after so great a statesman, and so lovable a humanitarian had been shot into eternity.

His name is well-known, his leadership is vindicated, and his wisdom established, if for nothing other than for his triumphant patience in the crisis of October 1962, when the fate of freedom and the fate of mankind were poised precariously in his hand for long and trying hours. His strength lay in his restraint, and his achievement in his own self-abnegation, for the sake of human safety, weak and helpless in the face of nuclear warfare.

No less will John Fitzgerald Kennedy be accorded a place in history for the brave bold stand he had taken and the lead he has given in guiding his countrymen and his country — a powerful, rich and prosperous country, and countrymen for long imbued with the power of wealth and pride of place — to face the decision that doom and evil days were bound to await the country where wealth accumulated and men decayed.

God grant that he may win the cold war of passive resistance and that the blood of this godly martyr may well be the seed of redemption scattered in the productive soil of the United States of America.

Further, it was typical of the man's human concern that wealth, prosperity and technology should have a responsibility to and for the poor unprosperous and underdeveloped peoples of the world, and hence he felt the urge that the wealth and wisdom, the skill and efficiency of the United States of America should be brought to the aid and assistance of the under-developed parts of the world. He had a vision of human inter-dependence and world responsibility; and hence with so much to give and so much to teach to others, he mourned in his country — yea more than that — he sought to banish the incongruity of discrimination and unfulfillment among his own peoples.
4.10 p.m.

As a young Statesman, he stands humbly, nevertheless worthily alongside his great and grand elders, who by their courage and convictions have led men and nations into decisions difficult, demanding and distasteful, but nonetheless decisions for justice, righteousness and for the enduring benefit of all mankind.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon. members, what more? For time would fail me or anyone else. Suffice it to say that John Fitzgerald Kennedy commands a place of honourable memory in our own age and generation.

I have much pleasure in seconding the Resolution so ably moved by the Hon. Premier.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the power of the House of Assembly to summon forthwith any citizen of this country has never been resisted, and so by the designation of the Honourable Speaker in accordance with these Orders of the House, I am here in answer to your summons. You have invited me, as a member of this August Body, to address you upon the enforced passing of the Late John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America.

The mystic chords of grief, stretching from heart to heart of millions of Americans and the world, swell the chorus of sorrow to the Almighty for the life, character and service of the great man.

Three brief, crucial years of his leadership tell a great story of a man who lived among men: but he, himself walked with God. He was intensely human and incensed with right and justice.

As a man he was brave, yet gentle; strong, yet tender and sympathetic; and as a liberator and benefactor of mankind he had few equals in all human history.

Words would be futile to express - I say all this in pain and sorrow - the throbbing public sorrow, the mystic chords of sorrow. The bondage of Israel is today only an epic poem; the Greek slave adorns simply a niche in some Palace of Art.

Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom, that has led this world to understand that we can live together in peace.

There are only three great charters of freedom of the Anglo Saxon peoples - The Magna Charter, the Declaration of Independence, and the proclamation of Abraham Lincoln. "I set thee free, the underman."

His loss is being told in many tongues and in many lands. Whose life will outlast our monuments in bronze? John F. Kennedy, late President of the United States of America.

Mr. COWARD: Mr. Speaker, I think that the whole civilised world has done, and is still doing, what we are here doing today; that is making notes of expressions of sympathy on the savage assassination of President John F. Kennedy on a day and at a time when he was moving in the execution of his duty.

There are times, Mr. Speaker, when history will repeat itself and it is so on this regrettable occasion. The late President Kennedy was elected as President of the United States of America at a time of very great world tension: and from the masterly way in which he assumed his responsible task, he showed to the world that he was capable in tackling the problems ahead. He was fearless and at the same time he was very firm.

I know that hon. members will agree with me in saying that never in the history of the United States of America were such substantial loans and gifts made to the underdeveloped countries. But it was not only in this field that the late President of the United States showed his strength; but it was in one place his desire and determination to crush the prevailing conditions in the South and to establish that the coloured people should be treated as human beings and not as dogs.
4.20 p.m.

His attitude towards segregation in schools met with bitter opposition in many quarters, but he pursued his policy; and in another place we see how determined he was to ease world tension and, consequently, he had been able to get the Soviet authorities to ease the tension. Unlike all his predecessors in office, he came into office and found his hands filled: despite the very much he did, he ever had his hands filled.

We think of him acting as firmly and as determinedly as he has acted when War was brewing at our backdoors, just there in Cuba, and of how successful he was on that occasion. I believe that on the late President's desk can be found much unfinished business and plans for future peace and development of many nations and people; but by his untimely removal he has not been able to fulfil his desires. We can only say that it is the hands and brains of mischievous persons, and under the circumstances, Kennedy has gone at a comparatively young age. My sympathy goes out not only with all Americans, but with all right-thinking people who are, at a time like this, mourning the loss of one of the most outstanding Presidents of the United States of America.

Mr. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Resolution which has been moved by the Hon. Premier. Since last we met here, there has been a melancholy trend of events which would almost defy description and which, had they been the subject of a novel, might well have received public rejection, so strange have they been. The news of the assassination of the late President of the United States of America has been the means of conveying to the

hearts of many a deep, personal affliction. The manner of his death has been a dark stain, as dark as any that has ever occurred in the pages of history. A man cut off in the prime of his life, at the very height of his powers when the shadows had not started to fall towards the West, must incite the pity and commiseration of every person living in the free world and some who live even in other parts of the world. He was a man who was endowed with many gifts; so outstanding were his gifts that he gained the Purple Heart for courage in warfare and the Nobel prize for excellence in literature. That was the range and width of his endowment. His achievements were many, too many to catalogue at a time like this.

It would not be amiss to mention that the twin pillars of his policy seem to have been the achievement of world peace and the guaranteeing of civil liberties for a despised minority. The name of Lee Harvey Oswald, who was accused of being his murderer, will go ringing down the corridors of time. The three names will be a trilogy of infamy. Mothers yet unborn will shudder with repugnance when anyone suggests that their innocent offspring should be saddled with any of these infamous appellations. The modern mass media of communication with which we are served in this modern world "blew the horrid deed in every eye." Many a man looked at his neighbour aghast when the news was reported to him. The shot that ended the life of the Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajero echoed round the world. So echoed too the shot which snuffed out the life of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. It snuffed out not only his life, but also the brilliant plans which occupied his thinking. It severed the sweet ties of home affection and sundered relationships which were slowly being built up between the warring factions of the North and South. Even the weather at the time of his assassination seemed to presage some dread and direful event - the weather not only locally, but in the domain over which he ruled; but there are people who believe that:

> "When beggars die there are no comets seen:
> The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."

Over the entrance to Dartmoor Prison there is an inscription that he who runs may read, *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*, "To spare the subjects and to put down the proud." That seems to have been one of the noble ambitions of the late President: to spare the subjects, the despised minority who lived in the South and to put down the proud who feel that they alone should enjoy the benefits of the doctrinal form of democracy. No "storied urn nor animated bust," however animated it is, can draw the fleeting breath back to the mansion which it has left, but the name of John FitzGerald Kennedy will live on. He cannot be really regarded as having died, because he will live on in the hearts of those who are left behind and this is not to die. The right hand of the assassin has turned him from the full tide of the affairs of men, the tide on which buoyantly float the hopes and aspirations, the temporary reverses and the rewarding triumphs which go to make up life. That right hand, Mr. Speaker, has turned him to yet another tide:

> "Such a tide as moving seems asleep
> Too full for sound and foam;
> When that which drew from out the boundless deep
> Turns again home."

As Secretary of War Stanton said as he gazed at the lifeless body of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator; "Now he belongs to the ages." Now ex-President Kennedy belongs not to this epoch nor to any other, but to all time. Now he belongs not to the Caucasian race from which he sprung, but to all races; not to the people of America whom he loved, but to all people.

He has now joined that noble trio who predeceased him slain in like manner, Lincoln, Garfield and Mc.Kinley. Even now in Valhalla they make room for him and greet him with grave and welcoming discourse.

This man whom we mourn, Mr. Speaker, measured up to the three-fold requirement which the prophet Micah tells us the Almighty asks of any man: "To do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with his God."
4.30 p.m.

Mr. CORBIN: Mr. Speaker, the death of President John F. Kennedy shocked me. It is sad to think that such a great and mighty man of valour has been cut off from among the living in the execution of his duty. When I remember the great work which he was doing, I could not other than say that he was a man chosen by Almighty God. He was doing a great work in preaching peace and unity to the whole world and not only to the people of the United States of America, in order that the world might exist a little longer. When there were those great missiles in Cuba which could be fired from one part of the world to dominate the rest of it, President Kennedy walked on the threshold where destruction would fall and met his opponent face to face and brought peace. When I think that such a mighty man has been cut off, it brings tears and sorrow to me, and no one can fathom the depth of sorrow and grief of mankind for the loss of such a man as President Kennedy.

Mr. Speaker, I must say: "Blessed is the peacemaker," and blessed are those who preach peace among the nations. His work shall follow him continually, and to his wife and children I trust that the peace of God which passeth all understanding will keep their minds through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Mr. SPEAKER: I regard it as a privilege to associate myself fully with and to endorse the sentiments expressed and the tributes paid to the imperishable memory of the late President John FitzGerald Kennedy.

In order that hon. members may indicate their assent to the passing of this Address, I am requesting that all hon. members, as I will do myself, stand in our places for a period of two minutes. That applies only to hon. members of this Chamber. Will hon. members please stand?

Members stood at their places for two minutes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will hon. members please resume their seats?

Assent having been duly given to the passing of this Address, I will, as directed, take what action I deem necessary forthwith to transmit the text of this Resolution to the widow of the late President, that is, to Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, and to President Lyndon B. Johnson.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: That being the only business of this meeting, I now declare all business at an end. Hon. members need not be reminded that this House meets again tomorrow at 12 o'clock noon.

This meeting now stands adjourned.
4.38 p.m.