

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

TUESDAY, 20th MARCH, 1934

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OFFICIAL REPORT



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 20th March, 1934.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) in the Chair.

DEATH OF MR. R. T. H. MACKENZIE.

The Honourable Sir Brojendra Mitter (Leader of the House): Sir, it is my painful duty to bring to your notice the fact that Mr. Mackenzie, one of our Members, suddenly passed away at half-past six this morning. Sir, as you know, Mr. Mackenzie attended the sitting of the House yesterday. He was in his usual cheerful mood yesterday, and I understand he attended a meeting of the Aero Club in the evening. He appeared to be in the best of health, and we were shocked to hear this morning that he had passed away. It was only the other day that we had to mourn the tragic death of Sir Thomas Ryan, and nobody thought that within such a short time we would have to mourn the death of another of our colleagues.

Sir, Mr. Mackenzie was nominated to represent the Associated Chambers of Commerce on the 16th August, 1932. He was a Member of this House for one year and seven months. During this time, by his genial nature and pleasant manners he had made himself extremely popular with all sections of the House. Sir, we do not know the circumstances in which this tragic event happened, but we know that Mrs. Mackenzie is here, and they were contemplating to retire Home after many years of useful work in this country. That heightens the tragedy. I hope you will convey to Mrs. Mackenzie and to the bereaved family the sense of loss that we have suffered and our deep sympathy.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, we once again meet under the shadow of death. Hardly have we reconciled ourselves to the loss of a faithful Government servant who sat on the opposite Benches, when we have to mourn the loss of one of our friends from the European Group. Again, Sir, as in the case of Sir Thomas Ryan, Mr. Mackenzie was going to leave this country for good within a few weeks. I believe that, had it not been for his duties in this Assembly, he would have retired a few months ago. As a matter of fact, I met him in England in the summer, when he told me he was coming back to this country in August on account of his duties in this House. Mr. President, Mr. Mackenzie passes away not as an old man but, I understand, at the early age of 48. It is truly tragic that, when he was about to go Home to enjoy his well earned and deserved rest after many years of service to his Company in this country, he has been deprived of all the fruits of his labour and snatched away by the cruel hand of death. The European Group have suffered a deep loss, and the whole House would like to condole with them in the death of one of their valued Members.

[Sir Cowasji Jehangir.]

Mr. President, the non-official Europeans have played a peculiar part in the history of India. They came to this country for purposes of trade. They remained to govern, and the time is fast approaching when they will go back to play the role for which they originally came to India, that is to develop its trade and industry and let us hope that they will long continue in this country to give us the services of more men like Mr. Mackenzie and to work in the true interests of the country of their adoption. Mr. President I should like to associate myself and my Party with the words that have fallen from the Leader of House, and would request you to convey to Mrs. Mackenzie our sincerest condolences on the loss she has suffered, an irreparable loss, for I understand, she was to sail for England next Saturday and her husband was to have followed her within a few weeks. There are no words which can describe a loss of this character. It is better left to the imagination. I trust you will convey to Mrs. Mackenzie the sincerest condolences of this House.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur *cum* Champaran: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, on this melancholy occasion, I should like to associate myself and my friends with all that has been said by the Leader of the House and by my Honourable friend sitting on my right. Mr. Mackenzie was a man of very cheerful and amiable disposition, and those of us who knew him intimately will not fail to mourn his sudden and untimely death. It was only the other day that we mourned the death of one of the distinguished servants of the Government in the person of Sir Thomas Ryan, and we hardly realised on that occasion that we would have to mourn so soon the death of another distinguished colleague of ours in this House. Sir, not only the European Group, but all of us sitting on this side of the House feel very much shocked at the death of Mr. Mackenzie. It is very tragic that on the eve of his retirement from this country he should have been snatched away suddenly by the hand of death. I associate myself again with all that has been said, and I request you to be so good as to convey to the members of the family of the deceased an expression of our heartfelt condolence and sorrow.

Mr. E. S. Sarma (Nominated Non-Official): I desire to associate myself and the members of our Party, in the absence of our Leader, with the sense of deep regret and sorrow that has been expressed on the floor of the House. Mr. President, this tragic news has come to us with such a surprising and stunning suddenness and our hearts are so full of grief that it is difficult for us to give adequate expression to it. Therefore, I shall content myself by asking you along with my colleagues to convey to the members of the bereaved family an expression of our deep regret and sympathy.

Sir Hari Singh Gour (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): This is indeed a melancholy occasion that, within only a few days of the loss of our dear old friend, Sir Thomas Ryan, we should meet this morning to mourn the loss of another valued colleague of ours—a loss so tragic and so sudden that we cannot even realise that our dear friend Mackenzie has passed away. His loss is not only a loss to the European Group, but to all Members of this House who valued the calm criticism and advice which the late Mr. Mackenzie brought to bear upon our deliberations. It has been a matter of some satisfaction to us that he was spared to advise and help us in our daily task, and the fact that he has passed away leaves us the poorer, because we feel that, if he had been here, he

would have discharged his duty with the same integrity of purpose which characterised his association with the Members of this House. Sir, I associate myself and the members of my Party with the loss that the European Group and Mrs. Mackenzie and his family have suffered in the untimely death of Mr. Mackenzie, and I wish that you will convey to the family of the deceased our heartfelt condolence at his untimely death.

Mr. G. Morgan (Bengal: European): I am sure the House will realise that the death of Mr. Mackenzie has come as a very great shock to us this morning. In fact, it has been such a shock that it is very difficult for me to control my feelings to such an extent as to be able to say very much on this tragic affair. I would like to thank Sir Cowasji Jehangir for the remarks he made with regard to Mr. Mackenzie as a member of our Group. Mr. Mackenzie's death is a great loss to the Associated Chambers of Commerce for which he was a Nominated Member. He was very devoted to all his duties, and, as every one knows, his character was a genial and beloved one. In his social life he was the President of the Gymkhana Club, and, in respect of public service, he was a member of very many Committees and very devoted to his work. Sir, it is too tragic to dilate upon, it is almost impossible to realise that such a thing has happened, and, on behalf of our Group, I would ask you to convey our most sincere condolence to the bereaved wife and his family.

Sir Muhammad Yakub (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it has been truly said that calamities do not come alone. The House has not yet recovered from the shock which we received on account of the sudden death of Sir Thomas Ryan when another calamity has fallen on us in the sudden death of another distinguished Member of this House, Mr. Mackenzie. As has already been pointed out, during the period of 1½ years that Mr. Mackenzie was a Member of this House, he made himself very popular with all sections of the House. It was a great delight to talk to him. His sudden death is not only a severe loss to the European Group, but to all the Members of this House. I wish to associate myself with the vote of condolence that has been moved, and I request that our sincere condolence may be conveyed to his bereaved wife and other members of his family.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Chair wishes to associate itself with the sentiments given expression to by the Leaders of the various sections of the House. It has been our sad lot to mourn the loss of two of our popular colleagues within the space of about a week. Like the late Sir Thomas Ryan, Mr. Mackenzie was a popular figure in this House, and like him he was to have gone home for his well earned rest. The tragedy is heightened by the fact that, just a few days before his intended departure for his native land, he had to lay his life in the country which he had served so long. It would be the duty of the Chair to convey to Mrs. Mackenzie the condolence of this House at the loss of their popular colleague, and the Chair thinks it would be acting according to the wishes of all sections of the House if it adjourns the House today as a mark of respect to the memory of our late colleague. The House now stands adjourned till 11 O'clock tomorrow morning.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 21st March, 1984.