

eulogy for a journalist and politician 1921 - 1970

BY CLAUDE RYAN EDITOR

Two weeks after the act which opened the Cross-Laporte drama, the cloud which, from the start enveloped this tragic story, far from dissipating, has continued to thicken.

The kidnapping affair at first took on a suspenseful air that everyone thought would end happily. Since the terrible Saturday to Sunday nits, there is no doubt whatsoever as to the seriousness of the events. The first actions of the drama had whipped us like no other story had before. All this was yet nothing. The cruel assassination of Pierre Laporte hit us this time like a dagger, pitilessly cutting into what we considered most sacred in such cold blood that it brought about repulsion and horror.

The death of Pierre Laporte deprived the government and parliament of Quebec of their most vigorous and most efficacious members at the very time when the traits of experience and realism of the minister of Labour and Immigration were so indispensable. This death deprives thousands of collaborators,

old and new, of a friend whose loyalty and dedication were universally appreciated. It deprives, particularly, the family of the assassinated minister of an exemplary head, a father, a son, a brother and a husband, who had always valued family activities.

If deep regret exists today in the Province of Quebec, it's undoubtedly because of the thought of all this man has done and could have done for the service of his people. But maybe it's also because of the tragic way this result came about as it constitutes very little for the dignity and freedom of public liberty in our society. Our public men are certainly not perfect. It even happens now and then that some are crooked.

But an old law has always said that, in case of defiance, they be subject to the same treatment as any one of their fellow citizens, i.e., the most absolute equality before the law. And an old custom has always wanted that violent measures of any kind, not be directed to their

families. The assassination of Mr. Laporte is the first since the death of Thomas D'Arcy McGee in 1868, to victimize a Canadian politician. How could we not be upset?

Getting away from politics, there was in Pierre Laporte, a quality of attention and action which made each of his citizens feel like friends. This minister had known, since his admission to the Bar in 1945, two principal careers: journalism and politics. In each, he had to meet up with hundreds of adversaries and to come in contact with people of all kinds at all times, in all conditions. However, as much as Pierre Laporte was criticized (for all he knew he could take it and answer) also, by divergence of ideas, were all personally attached to him. He was characterized by overbounding goodwill, a burning desire to help his own move forward and a definite worry about democratic discussions that the bridges of communication were never completely broken down, even amidst the worst of disagreements. At the Liberal congress for the Leadership in January, we, at the "Devoir", had supported Mr. Bourassa rather than Mr. Laporte. Ex-journalist for the "Devoir", Laporte was shocked and certainly didn't hesitate to let us know. However, a quick exchange of a few words, a few hours before the results of the election, buried all traces of grudge.

This man was a hardy player. At times, his opinions seemed to waver too easily as events progressed. But he had a heart of gold, a gushing vitality, a stunning knowledge of the rules of politics and especially an the rules of the game of politics and especially an indefectible attachment to Quebec and her essential values. This is why his loss will be felt by all. Never has a blow against one man ever been felt by so many fellow citizens as an attempt at their own lives.

POLITICAL ASSASSINATION

The worst part in the assassination of Pierre Laporte isn't that a public man fell under the blows of the aggressors. In the United States, among others, it has often happened that public figures were molested by murderers. But where the assassinations of the Kennedys were complying with obscure individual motives, that of Mr. Laporte is essentially political.

Not only do the authors of this act give an ethical justification; they threaten to multiply the figure. And they seem to be ready to use these means to count on larger support whether they are partial or impartial, the latter which one tends to believe.

Facing this perspective, it is of immediate importance to reinforce the protection given to those who

- by a close friend - le devoir

TRANSLATED BY KAREN MIMÉAULT FROM LE DEVOIR

serve their fellow citizens in public functions. We must not hesitate, either, to increase the severity of justice of the authors and accomplices of such a repugnant action. The federal government has conceived of resources which we judge are excessive in their possible consequences.

But this could not make doubtful the necessity of forceful measures of authority during an indefinite period, to favor the work of the police forces. The democrats will have to see to it that the application of these measures be done with the maximum amount of discernment.

DESIRE FOR OBSTRUCTION

It would seem inappropriate (foolish) to interpret such a vigilance as systematic desire of obstruction.

The too exclusive recourse to dispositions of protection and to criminal chases, however, will not settle the matter over a long period. If a citizen is found guilty of crime, one risks, if the powers are not careful, cause a certain climate of exasperation which is in no way a stranger to the emergence of a phenomenon like the FLQ.

The tense hours which Quebec is experiencing presently once again brings the question, whether we

like it or not, concerning the political regime and socio-economic structures under which we have lived for nearly one century. Troubles of this nature are not born spontaneously: they grow in fertile ground. It matters more than ever, during the crisis that the citizens give support to the reasonable decisions of the legitimate political leaders, and, at times when complete explanations cannot be given immediately, a certain benefit of the doubt. But it is equally important that the political leaders become aware of the fragility of their leadership and occupy themselves without delay to its consolidation by associating with those, from diverse sections, whose social influence and moral authority are of another form different from politics but often not recognized by political power. Right now, it's not the prestige or authority of any one person but that of the democracy of Quebec that must be saved. That is the objective to which we must cling throughout the thickness of such a night as Quebec has lived.

To Pierre Laporte's family, particularly to his courageous wife, to the colleagues and collaborators of the assassinated minister, we wish to express our deepest sympathy and consternation. May this test, rather than ruin Quebec serve as a purification in view of a true reconstruction.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

THIS IS WORTH paying attention to. It was last published in The Glynn Reporter, Brunswick, Ga. It was first printed in the Bartlesville (Okla.) Examiner-Enterprise, 51 years ago. It was later editorialized as follows in the Concrete (Wash.) Herald, as follows:

"Your enemies are patient but thorough. Your greatest enemy, however, is your disregard of the danger signs."

This was summed up by the Glynn Reporter which said: "If you think most of the problems that beset the world and our nations today just happened that way; if you think it is a natural trend born of the modern age; if you think that it will suddenly all dissolve when we, the people, get tired of being bothered, then read an excerpt from a file on The Communist Rules for Revolution published before 1919!

"THE FILE WAS OBTAINED by the armed forces in Düsseldorf, Germany. These were the instructions issued to those who were to bring about world revolution:

"A. Corrupt the young, get them away from religion. Get them interested in sex. Make them superficial, destroy their ruggedness.

"B. Get control of all means of publicity and thereby:

"-Get people's minds off their government by focusing attention on athletics, sexy books and plays, and other trivialities.

"-Divide the people into hostile groups by constantly harping on controversial matters of no importance.

"-Destroy the people's faith in their natural leaders by holding the latter up to contempt and ridicule.

"Always preach true democracy but seize power as fast and ruthlessly as possible.

"-By encouraging government extravagance destroy its credit, produce fear of inflation with rising prices and general discontent.

"-Foment unnecessary strikes in vital industries, encourage civil disorders and foster a lenient and soft attitude on the part of government toward such disorders.

"-By specious argument cause the breakdown of the old moral virtues; honesty, sobriety, continence, faith in the pledged word, ruggedness.

"C. Cause the registration of all firearms on some pretext with the view of confiscation of them and leaving the population helpless."

BRUNSWICKAN'S NEW SECTION

This issue of the Brunswickan has the second edition of Inside which is devoted to what we feel is one of the most important documents ever to fall in the hands of a newspaper. The report on the over production of PhD's in this country may serve to help some people make up their minds about what they want to do with their lives.

Inside will be weekly and will be our pride and joy in that it will contain as many creative works of this university as we can find but that means the Insight Editor will need public contributions of poetry, prose and graphics.

The Brunswickan will now be a standard 12 pages of increasingly better news copy once we get the technical bugs out and an eight page supplement designed to hold solid literary and intellectual content.

Read this weeks it has something for everybody.

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