

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 24, 1993

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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[*Translation*]

**TRIBUTE TO RIGHT HON. BRIAN MULRONEY,  
PRIME MINISTER**

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House today with some emotion. I really wonder what snowstorms can do to our prime Ministers.

[*English*]

When there is a snowstorm, something happens to the Prime Minister of our country. This is the second time I have seen that.

• (1405)

I have known the Prime Minister for a long time. We have known each other since the early 1980s. Now that he has announced he is quitting it is not without emotion that I want to salute him.

Of course he has done great things for his party. The fact that he has won two majorities in a row deserves a lot of credit because it is extremely hard to achieve. It is something that I hope to achieve some day.

The tenure of the Prime Minister has been remarkable in many ways. He has brought to this country a lot of changes. History is always the best judge of these developments. We did not always agree with them. I have to say that the Prime Minister was truthful to his political doctrine and he tried to implement these approaches as much as possible in this moderate country of ours.

I have had some experience with coming to the House of Commons, quitting and then coming back, so I have to be a bit prudent today. However, when I quit I remember

that the Prime Minister in 1986 said he had a lot of scars to prove he was a fighter. I have a lot of scars also to prove that he is quite a fighter.

The nature of politics leads to disagree very often but now we have agreed. We agreed especially about Canada in the 1980 referendum, the patriation of the Constitution in 1982 and we agreed last fall on the Charlotte-town accord. Now that he is leaving we have to pay respect to him for the hard work and the dedication that he has shown because it is not easy to be a Prime Minister these days. It is not easy for the person involved as well as for the family.

I see Mrs. Mulroney and the children in the gallery today. It is a difficult situation today where they face not only us but the hard scrutiny of others. I want to say to the Prime Minister and his family that they have acted with great grace and class.

I would like on behalf of my party to wish the Prime Minister and his family a very good life together. It is a great family. They share great family values and they will be happy to see the Prime Minister have more time with them and peace of mind too.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** I would particularly like to say to the people in the region of Baie-Comeau, his home town, who supported him that I want to congratulate them on placing their confidence in a son of their town who became the leader of his party and managed to achieve something which is very difficult in Canada: to win two elections with two consecutive majorities.

We did not always agree, as I just said, but what is important and what we find on days like today is that despite our political differences, everyone who sits in this House wants only one thing: to try to improve the lives of their fellow citizens. When someone who has led his party for 10 years and has been Prime Minister for eight and a half decides to bow out, we must thank him for