

Madam Speaker, I thank you, all your colleagues in the chair, Mr. Speaker John Fraser, the Clerk, the pages, the constables, the messengers and everybody involved with this operation. Have a good summer.

We will let Canadians decide and hopefully we will be back here next fall.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I wonder if I could prevail upon the patience of my colleagues just for one minute or two simply to express a word on behalf of colleagues on this side seconding the comments that were made by the chief opposition Whip with regard to the extraordinary contribution that has been made by all of the people who help us on a day to day basis to discharge our responsibilities as members of Parliament.

I certainly have exactly the same thoughts as my friend the chief opposition Whip when it comes to the pages who are called upon among other things to be extraordinary students. They are all straight A scholars with no problems at all in missing classes. They still ace all of their examinations. There is this incredible good cheer that they show always. They have patience when long-winded cabinet ministers and others make speeches late at night. They constantly bring good cheer to all of the proceedings here in the House of Commons.

I agree with my friend that it would be very desirable to see many of them back here one day as members of Parliament. My only fear is that their exposure to Parliament may cause them as a result of the experience to go into the church, sell real estate or doing anything else rather than spend more time here. I hope that we have not dissuaded them from wanting to make a career in public life.

I do finally want to express two final thoughts. The first is a word of goodbye and thank you to so many of my colleagues who I have been privileged to serve here with who have decided not to stand in the next election. It is an enormous privilege to be able to work with so many dedicated men and women from all different parties in the House of Commons who are here simply to serve Canada.

Finally I wish to express to you, Madam Speaker, and to all of your staff in the House of Commons—all of your colleagues, the clerks at the table and all of the other

staff who contribute so much—a very sincere word of thanks for all of their dedicated service on behalf of Canadians. It is a privilege to work with each and every one of them.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Before putting the question to the House I would like to say a few words.

It seems somehow different to close a session. I just said a little while ago that I do not see the member for Saint-Denis, now Senator Prud'homme, being the very last member to speak. I can just see him somehow opening the door in the lobby. I know he could not resist. I will at least greet him in the name of all our members.

Colleagues, a few weeks ago I undertook a huge responsibility when our Speaker became ill. If I can use the vernacular that was common in my former life I would say that being John Fraser's understudy is not an easy task. He is and will remain one of the great Speakers that this House has ever known and the tribute that was offered to him today proves it abundantly.

If it was relatively easy for me to do this job I owe it to members from all sides of the House, from the government side, the opposition, the NDP and our independent members as well.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank those who made that little extra effort or extended the everyday courtesies which made my life easier. Of course, our Clerk, his assistant and all his team are dedicated and talented people who are always there to help the person occupying the chair, as well as to help hon. members.

You will also allow me to say a brief word of thanks to my team, both on the Hill and in my riding, who worked extra hard.

[*English*]

I want to say thank you as well to the Speaker's staff who were really fantastic, who accepted me as one of the family, as we were all praying for Mr. Speaker's recovery.

To all of you, to our pages, to those of you who direct them and help them, we will miss you. I do hope that you miss us. Thank you very much.

Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.