

Routine Proceedings

this afternoon or on looking at this government's record. I think time and history will take care of that.

• (2210)

In any case, soon an election will be called, during which these issues will be debated. This afternoon, all my colleagues made it clear where they stood.

Today, and especially this afternoon, members paid tribute to several colleagues. They referred to the classes of '68 and the class of '72, and I would like to congratulate all classes. A number of members announced they would not run in the next election. So, whatever their class or the year they arrived here in this House, I want to congratulate them and wish them good luck, health and happiness and a successful career in the field of their choice. I want to stress their dedication to this country and to Canadians. They were elected, they came here and they took part in the proceedings of this House.

In 1984 I had the honour and the privilege to be elected as a member of Parliament. In fact, Madam Speaker, you and I belong to the same class, since we both arrived in the 1984 election. But two and a half years ago, when my leader, the Leader of the Opposition, appointed me chief opposition Whip, I was able to find out more about this House and to appreciate it and the way it operates. Often, through the media and television, Canadians witness scenes or moments that are positively electrifying. That is because of the kind of political system we have on both sides of this House. But also what Canadians do not see and do not know is that in most cases this House operates with the unanimous agreement of the various parties.

As Whip, I had this honour and privilege to work with the three parties and even at times with some independent members so that this House could operate and really work toward the main objective we all have, that is to serve our fellow citizens as well as possible and to make this beautiful country, Canada, work. It is a modern country which everyone loves. People all over the world would pay fortunes and give all they have to come to live here and share in our happiness and prosperity.

I see here all these good pages who have served us during this time and I thank them for their work—I think

I speak on behalf of all my colleagues when I say that. Congratulations and hear, hear.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gagliano: I trust that many of them will be able to return here as elected members.

Madam Speaker, I would like to commend you for what you have done, especially in these last few weeks since our Speaker fell ill and had to be away. On behalf of the Official Opposition, I congratulate you, because you have performed brilliantly. I know that it is not easy, especially during Question Period. But I congratulate you on a job well done.

I want to thank our Clerk and his colleagues at the table, all the staff and the people at *Hansard*. I know that it takes many people to make this House work and we thank them all for their help and support. I would like to thank my colleagues, the government Whip and all his staff for their co-operation, as well as the New Democratic Party Whip, the House leaders, my own staff, my fellow members, the opposition House leader and all his staff and of course the constables and all the employees who belong to this big House of Commons family, and the messengers who help us do a job that can be difficult and hectic at times.

• (2215)

Here we are now at the end of this third session and I might add perhaps at the end of this 34th Parliament, since an election will soon be called. So thanks to all for their cooperation. My experience as Whip was wonderful and I would recommend it, although there are difficult moments.

[*English*]

My colleague before was saying that sometimes he did not listen to the Whip and he had a choice whether to listen to his constituents or the party Whip. It is not an easy job being a Whip. On the other hand after a long day like today one goes home and thinks about it. After all the trouble and all the misery I can say that it is worth while. It has been a pleasure. I think these past two and a half years have been the best two and a half years of my political career.