

The Address

contributions to humanity. They believe that the gift of the discovery of radium to heal the sick deserves to be recognized by Canada and they call upon Parliament to honour Marie Sklodowska Curie by issuing a commemorative stamp on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of her birth which takes place November 7, 1992.

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[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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• (1010)

THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**DEBATE ON ADDRESS RESUMED**

The House resumed from Monday, May 13, consideration of the motion of Mr. Pronovost for an Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

Hon. Jean Chretien (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start my comments by congratulating the mover and the seconder of the motion before the House today.

I am delighted to see my successor in Saint-Maurice in the role it was my privilege to have in 1964, when I was quite a bit younger than I am today. I congratulate him, and I also wish to congratulate the hon. member for Regina—Wascana for seconding this motion. Quoting a passage from our history, he said that if a rural member who had the privilege of moving the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne happened to come from Quebec and followed Laurier's example, he would become prime minister.

I can inform the hon. member that I had the honour to do so in 1964, and I want to thank—

[English]

I am very happy that the member for Regina—Wascana has predicted that I will be forming the government. The people of Canada will be very happy with the wisdom he displayed yesterday.

Yesterday I was involved in an incident that was very, very interesting. While I was listening to the Speech from the Throne in the Senate there was a person there who, like many Canadians, could not stand it any more. She could not take it any more and she fainted. She was next to me and out of a sense of duty, I took her out of the chamber to give her some fresh air. It was the right thing to do. I will do the same thing for the Canadian people; I will take this government out of this Chamber, I will put this team on the other side of the House and fresh air will come back. Happiness and joy will come back to this nation. It is the call of duty. This is what was predicted by the member for Regina—Wascana and so I would like to thank him again.

I would like to start my speech by quoting one well known Canadian who not long ago said:

The problem with the Government of Canada as presently constituted is that it has lost the confidence of the people. Confidence is very fragile and difficult to define. Once you have lost it, you can never recapture it. Once you have betrayed your word and you have let the people down, you have an enormous problem ahead of you.

Those are tough words. They speak of betrayal and lost confidence. They speak of letting people down. The words I have quoted were spoken more than eight years ago in this House by the right hon. member opposite, the Prime Minister himself.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chrétien: The problem with the Government of Canada as presently constituted is that it has lost the confidence of the people. Those are the words the Prime Minister used in December, 1983 when he stood where I am now standing. In all honesty, I could not find a more fitting epitaph for this tired Conservative government, now drifting in its eighth year.

There is no doubt the government has lost the confidence of the Canadian people. To paraphrase the words of the Prime Minister himself, when you have lost the confidence of people, you are in deep trouble.

The Speech from the Throne yesterday is obviously the last will and testament of this government. Like any last will and testament, it is filled with some good