

Mr. Mulroney: Because of the Prime Minister's deep concern for policy and wanting to know where people stand on issues, a very appropriate concern because he has always wanted to know where people stand on issues, I know he must be comforted by the clear-cut positions some leading candidates have adopted over the years. Because of the Prime Minister's determination to avoid any right wing bias affecting his Party, he must be consoled to learn that policy making will now be removed from the back rooms of the Liberal Party and brought right up front, over smoked salmon and caviare at one of Toronto's best restaurants.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mulroney: On September 12, Mr. Speaker, in my first remarks to this House I said that the Prime Minister was, in my judgment, an individual of accomplishment and class. I have had no reason over the past six months to change my view. I would never have voted for the Prime Minister, but neither would I have remonstrated vigorously with anyone who did.

As I am in the process of learning, the leadership of a national political Party is no small task. I have not yet had the experience, and the trials and tribulations, of doing so for 16 months. That the Prime Minister has done so on behalf of his Party for 16 years is a remarkable tribute to his talents and his unquestioned love of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: All the more so, Mr. Speaker, because the Prime Minister for 16 years has led a Party which Lord Birkenhead once described as akin to Noah's ark, "filled with all manner of strange beasts and wandering aimlessly all over the face of the earth".

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, to those of us from Quebec, this is an important moment. There is no doubt about the sincerity of the Prime Minister in insisting on increasing the number of Francophones involved in Canada's decision-making apparatus.

No one can deny the energy and feeling with which he has always defined and defended his vision of a more bilingual Canada, more tolerant in its attitudes to minorities, either linguistic or otherwise.

This noble legacy will be defended with enthusiasm by his successors, in the interests of a united Canada.

From the outset I took part in regrouping the "No" forces in Quebec at the time of the Referendum, and I shall never forget the role played by the Prime Minister at that historic moment. The Referendum night was a great moment in the history of Quebec and Canada. In the future, anyone looking back on these events through the perspective of history must recognize the vital role played by the Prime Minister of Canada in the final outcome.

Tributes to Mr. Trudeau

It was the challenge of his career, and he met this challenge with courage and dignity.

[*English*]

One is always uncertain as to the ultimate judgment of history. Irrespective of that view, I am confident there will be little disagreement, Mr. Speaker—at least I hope—with the following personal assessment. He was a strong leader and an honourable man who cared for his country, saw its future threatened, and sought to make it right. When he leaves this Chamber he will do so with the scars of vigorous, democratic debate, and the memories of hopes dashed, and dreams fulfilled. He will leave with honour unsullied, and with the warmest good wishes of all to enjoy the pleasures of a family he loves so very much.

● (1410)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I speak today on behalf of the New Democratic Party and on behalf of our Leader, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent). Unfortunately our Leader is in British Columbia and unable to return in time, because he would have wanted to speak.

I reread with interest the last goodbye statements that were made, and I could not help but think to myself: "I hope I don't say anything here today that will prompt you to reconsider." I must say that 16 years of leadership are a very long time. In those 16 years the United States has seen five Presidents, and other countries have had many leaders. It is an accomplishment that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) can look back on with pride.

We are much too close to the scene here in the House of Commons, in Ottawa, to be able to understand either the importance or the significance of the contribution that the Prime Minister has made. I will, as I must, leave that to the historians to decide.

I look back though, to 1968 and the years that followed, and I think of the varied presentations of self that we saw from the Prime Minister—the flower child of the 1960s, complete with rose and sandals, and the vision of a just society. It is a vision that I think we all subscribe to, and a vision that we all hoped would come to pass but, I might say, eluded us somewhat. However, it is still valid and still must be pursued. From there he went to the gunslinger, thumbs tucked in belt, threatening and challenging the country to rise to aspirations that the Prime Minister himself had set; and on to the new Father of Confederation seeking that compromise, that common ground, that would make Canada a viable entity as it entered into the new world politics.

I wonder how the Prime Minister will be remembered. I was thinking this morning, as I trudged through the snow—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deans: I want to say that when I was told our Leader would not be here I had a sauna, looked up, and said: "Oh God, why me?"