

who in 1783 decided to hold the reins of power until the beginning of the next century. Typically, contemporary political historians always try to compare you with your illustrious predecessors, two of whom I just mentioned, and I may also include Disraeli. After listening very attentively to your speech, we understand the reason for these flattering comparisons.

[English]

In greeting you today, Prime Minister, we have been mindful not only of the fact that you are Britain's first woman Prime Minister—and we applaud this—but also of the remarkable place you have carved for yourself in the history of British Prime Ministers. The characteristics which have contributed to your success are legendary. Conviction, tenacity, firmness: in the shifting winds of political fortune, these are the ballast that leaders must carry with them, and when they are combined with vision, patience, and an inexhaustible capacity for hard work, one can expect that the ship of state will sail forward.

Your success in putting your country back on the road to prosperity is so evident that your name is always invoked in every discussion of international affairs and economics. Many debaters, not knowing whether they should refer to England or to Great Britain or to the United Kingdom, take a short cut and say quite simply "Thatcherland".

The world knows that you are a leader of determination and that very often you discard consensus politics. In that, you remind us of our Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, counting the votes in his Cabinet and saying: "Thirteen against my proposition, one for; the yeas have it".

A century ago, Oscar Wilde, in his humorous way, dared to write: "The Lords Temporal say nothing; the Lords Spiritual have nothing to say; and the House of Commons has nothing to say and says it". Had he been living today, he might have added: The Prime Minister has something to say and says it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Charbonneau:** Madam Prime Minister, on behalf of my colleagues in the Senate of Canada, I wish to thank you for honouring us with your presence today.

[Translation]

It was indeed an honour and a privilege to hear you, as a distinguished representative of the Mother of Parliaments, address the Parliament of Canada, and we are most grateful.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** Madam Prime Minister, let me add my own words of appreciation, on behalf of all Members of the House of Commons, and to thank you for your eloquent words and the message you have left with us.

The rare assemblies of both Houses of our Parliament, such as this, are reserved for very special and honoured guests. You, Madam Prime Minister, are among the foremost of them.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Indeed, as has been remarked, this is your second address to us in five years—a mark, surely, of the mutual interests and good will that exists between our two countries.

[Translation]

Thank you, Prime Minister, for having given us this opportunity to further strengthen the ties of friendship that exist between Canada and the United Kingdom.

[English]

It is not every day that we are privileged to listen in this Chamber to one of the longest serving leaders in the democratic world. You have given us much to reflect upon.

I believe I speak on behalf of all Members of the House when I say that one of the continuing benefits of these high level exchanges is to reinforce the positive aspects of international relations between our two countries, and to give a political impetus to resolving those irritants that may arise in any complex relationship.

It would be appropriate to remind ourselves that our Members of Parliament and yours are meeting constantly in the closest and most effective relationship.

[Translation]

Prime Minister, you are among friends.

[English]

In closing, may I say that we look forward to further dialogue and the continuation of vibrant relations between our two nations. The warm association which binds us is a precious asset not only for today but also for the challenging world which our children will inherit. You are among friends. We wish you to come again. God bless you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!