

House of Commons

place on both sides of the aisle, they do so with a fundamental respect for the rules of parliamentary procedure as opposed to any kind of violence, verbal or otherwise, that can inhibit and ultimately destroy parliamentary democracy.

I salute the hon. member for his contributions in the past. I know that we all look forward to his participation in debates of national and international significance.

[*Translation*]

As the new Leader of the Opposition is well aware, there is no shortage of challenges in this country. We are counting on the new member for Beauséjour and new Leader of the Official Opposition to contribute in a way that is both constructive and useful to the debate on the major national and international issues of the day.

[*English*]

I would like to say on behalf of all members of the House of Commons that we welcome Jean Chrétien back to the floor of the House. We wish him and his family well. We do not wish him all the success in the world, but as much as one can hope for the Leader of the Opposition. I remind him that he has already demonstrated extraordinary ability for that particular role. If he keeps it up, I know that Canadians will reward him further with a long stay in that particular position.

[*Translation*]

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: Good luck, Jean!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, with my colleagues, I have the pleasure of welcoming the member for Beauséjour and the member for York North back to this Chamber.

On behalf of my colleagues I would like to congratulate both members on their successes. I would also like to take the opportunity of congratulating the Leader of the Opposition on his election as the leader of his party.

The member for Beauséjour, as the right hon. Prime Minister has indicated, has much experience to bring this House, having been first elected in 1963, when Tommy Douglas was the leader of my party and John F. Kennedy was President. It is a time when we need that kind of experience in the House. We certainly welcome the wisdom that Mr. Chrétien brings.

[*Translation*]

I am sure the Liberal leader will join millions of Canadian men and women who, with us, want to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Middle East.

The House was recalled for members to consider the most serious issue that has been before this House in many years. This is not a partisan issue. It is not a matter of party politics. It is about the future of Canada and the whole world.

[*English*]

For that reason we are particularly pleased—and I speak on behalf of my party and myself—to have the Leader of the Opposition with us in the House on this important and sombre occasion. While I wish him well, I can only wish him limited success.

As well, I would like to say that we will miss the interim leader, the hon. member for Windsor West, who certainly also brought much honour to the House.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, while the Leader of the Opposition and I will share very different opinions at certain times, I can say with great certainty that, as Mr. Chrétien has shown in the past, we will all serve the interests of Canada to our best. I know the Leader of the Opposition has that interest foremost in his mind.

Welcome to the House of Commons.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am greatly moved by this tribute from the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

As the Prime Minister said earlier, under normal circumstances this would be a pleasant opportunity for some spirited exchanges and a lot of good humour, all of which would show that despite that which separates us