



# Martin Brian Mulroney

CHANCELLOR, today's ceremony is symbolic of ties that have joined Canada and the Caribbean over three centuries. Ties of family, emigration, trade, culture, education and tourism have created a special relationship over the years. Canadian cod saved us from malnutrition; our rum and molasses brought winter warmth to Canada. Today we have the honour of recognising and welcoming a distinguished Friend of the Caribbean, whose outstanding achievements have commanded our attention for the last decade.

Martin Brian Mulroney was born in the village of Baie Comeau, Quebec, on March 20, 1939. He was the third of six children of Benedict Martin Mulroney, an electrician with the Quebec North Shore Paper Company, and his wife, Irene O'Shea. Hard work and family values were the norm in the Mulroney home.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in Political Science from St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia and a Bachelor of Laws from L'Université Laval, Quebec City. From his earliest university days he showed a keen interest in politics, and demonstrated remarkable debating skills and a flair for organisation.

On graduating from law school, he joined the Montreal firm of Ogilvy Renault, where he remained a partner until July 1976, establishing a high reputation as a labour lawyer. In May 1974, he was appointed to the Cliche Royal Commission investigating violence in the Quebec construction industry. His acknowledged brilliance in leading the investigation and achieving its mandate brought him to national prominence, and in 1976 he was a candidate for the national leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada.

He joined the Iron Ore Company of Canada as Executive Vice-President in July 1976, and was elected President the following year. He served with distinction as Chairman of the company's Executive Committee, and as President of its subsidiary firms, including the Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway. He was Chairman of several provincial and University fund raising

campaigns, director of several leading Canadian companies, and active in several charitable organisations.

On June 11, 1983, Brian Mulroney was elected leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. Shortly afterwards he was elected to the House of Commons in a by-election in the riding of Central Nova, Nova Scotia and became Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. In the general election of 1984 he led his party to a majority government, winning the largest number of seats in Canadian parliamentary history. He himself was re-elected in the very un-safe Liberal stronghold of Manicouagan, Quebec, demonstrating an uncanny ability, guided by his heart and his instincts, to take a major gamble and to win. He was sworn in as Canada's 18th Prime Minister, and led his party to a second majority on November 21, 1988, thus creating another record. When he announced his retirement as Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party in February this year, he ended a remarkable political era, which can only be objectively evaluated in the years to come.

But let us make contact with some of the guiding principles and beliefs that informed the private and public life of Brian Mulroney.

First, he understood and championed the right of people, regardless of class or occupation, to be treated fairly and to be respected. In his book *Where I Stand*, he insists that, of all factors affecting productivity, people are the most important. People respond better, he observes, to a "thank you" than they do to a kick in the butt. He concludes his observations on this theme with a statement that holds the key to the management of industrial relations in any society. *"Simply put, we discovered that we are all alike - management, clerical and unionized people; we want to be treated fairly; we do not like being humiliated; we want to have a say in how the job is to be run; we want to be respected and treated with dignity"*.

Next, on law enforcement, let us hear directly from Mr. Mulroney: *"Good laws are of little value unless they are enforced. Non-enforcement is an insidious thing because it breeds a gentle but progressive suspicion in the minds of the governed that a statute need not apply to all, that exceptions can be made, that Parliament is in fact somewhat less than supreme"*.

Thirdly, as a political leader, he preached and practised the importance of research and development: *"The starting line for me is the technological dimension. To play with the majors, we must make a firm commitment to double the public and private funds allocated to research and development before 1985. Research and development, and the resulting innovations, are the lifeblood of a successful economy and country" . . .*

Brian Mulroney holds to the view that Canada's hopes for fulfilling that most splendid promise of her youth critically depend on the country's being led by people who accept sacrifice themselves before inflicting hardship on others; who practise the virtues of thrift, compassion, and humility before exacting them from the rest of society; who respect Parliament and its institutions before castigating those who have walked the slippery road of defiance; who tell the truth even when they think their audience would not wish to hear it.

Chancellor, it is good for us to be able to hail a statesman who, in and out of office, believes that, ". . . *One does not need to wear a label to believe that governments should balance budgets; that industry, being the motor of a country, must be kept turning; that initiative should be rewarded;*

*that relations between labour and management should be civil; that research and development are the keys to our national well-being; that the essence of federalism, or of any system of administration is co-operation and consensus. Neither does one need to belong to a political party to believe that men and women will stand on their own two feet when given half a chance; that government must show concern - even tenderness - in dealing with the less fortunate among us . . ."*

Mr. Mulroney's honesty and tough decisions eroded his popularity, but the judgement of the analysts is impressive. Headlines in February proclaimed: "*Canada's best PM in modern history*" (*The Financial Post*); "*The man who did what he knew was right*" (*Maclean's*); and "*Mulroney leaves behind rich legacy*" (*The Globe and Mail*). But we all know how headlines sensationalise, don't we? Let us sample the text itself:

From *Maclean's*: "*He leaves the prime ministership having enacted more than 100 major pieces of legislation, with the high regard of the international community and with an enviable record in keeping the Tory caucus united, which in some ways was his greatest achievement . . . Those who knew Brian Mulroney best, loved him the most. He was a good man caught in a wicked time. Only in retrospect will some of his most risky initiatives receive the credit they deserve.*"

From the *Financial Post*: "*When the public emotion subsides, I am confident that Canadians will recognise Mulroney as the best leader in their modern history*".

From the *Globe and Mail*: "*The Prime Minister turned a fragmented collection of Tories prone to infighting into a cohesive, self-confident team with a sense of family*".

True to his beliefs on the domestic front, he championed the cause of the Caribbean to his personal cost at home. When his government forgave Caribbean indebtedness in 1990, his initiative benefitted all of us, and led to further benevolence by the USA and UK to some of our member states. And there can be no doubt that that gesture has gone a significant way to compensate for the very real sense of loss of so many of our best sons and daughters in the brain drain to the North. It serves to reaffirm the family relationship between Canada and the Caribbean.

Chancellor, in recognition of his statesmanship, his international leadership and his contribution to the development of the Caribbean, I have great pleasure in calling on you to receive into the fellowship of the University of the West Indies, Martin Brian Mulroney, with the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

23rd October 1993