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Dear David,

I very much wanted to join you and your friends for this well-deserved dinner in your honor. But because I have to speak at a 7 a.m. breakfast meeting in Windsor tomorrow, I am not able to be with you.

I am particularly disappointed that I can't join you tonight because we have had so many good times together in the past. How many times did we sit in my office over a glass of scotch, or beer, or, as a last resort, wine, discussing how depressing it was to be in Opposition?

And then there were the all night sessions, all night dinners, developing strategies for the House that led to bells, filibusters, resignations from the Liberal Government, and eventually, its defeat. Now, after setting all these precedents in the Legislature, the Liberals are showing the same disrespect for the system that you did -- a fine mess you got us into!

David, you are a great asset to the caucus and to the Party, and you should take a lot of credit for our success.

On a more personal note, you will remember the difficult times I had a couple of years ago, and I want to say how much I appreciated your support and friendship. It meant a lot to me then, and I will always value your friendship.

Good luck and best wishes.

Dave Cooke