80TH BIRTHDAY SPEECH

FOR

HUBERT PEREIRA

Hello everyone!! It’s really so wonderful to be here on this very special occasion. There is a song lyric that tells us, “Some people wait a lifetime for a moment like this.” In this case it’s really true!!! It’s taken eighty fascinating years to get to this day. We are gathered here to honor and celebrate the life, the legend, the myth and the mystique of the very special, vital, engaging Charles D’Souza. Each one of us has eagerly anticipated this day but it is true, some people **HAVE** waited a lifetime for a moment like this…. It’s taken a lifetime to live and love and survive the ups and downs and curve balls that life aims our way in order to be able to really savor this achievement. Charles has had **EIGHT DECADES** to prepare for this day…. me? I’ve had a few days to gather my thoughts and anecdotes and to share them with you. Today Charles is my muse and I cannot imagine a more perfect inspiration or reason to look back on such a noteworthy life… and to look forward to even greater new experiences and memories thanks to the spirit and energy that exudes from this terrific man!

Although Mark Twain once said, “Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen,” I don’t know if Charles would necessarily agree. After all, “those first eighty” might be the toughest… or so I’ve heard…but the life experience one has achieved in those four score of years is nothing short of priceless. Let’s take a look…. it’s taken eighty years for him to develop into the avid sportsman he has become. His devotion to sports and his exceptional talents in the areas of cricket and field hockey brought him worldwide recognition and more than his fair share of national pride and acknowledgement. It’s taken a few generations to mellow into the loving father and devoted grandfather that he is to (**name his children, their spouses and his grandchildren**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (**Name a couple of points to show what a devoted father and grandpa Charles is**) I cannot imagine anyone being happier than when Charles spends time with (**name one of his kids**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or when he gets the chance to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**name the grandkids**). It’s taken a complete lifetime for him to develop, sustain and cherish loving, understanding and supportive relationships as a devoted brother to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , and it’s also taken about half a lifetime to become a trusted friend and loyal brother-in-law… and this I can attest to from deep and meaningful **personal** experience…. and of course it has taken almost a lifetime to perfect and mesmerize crowds with his smooth moves… on the dance floor!! He took his notable skills of agility and fleet-footedness from his years as a renowned sportsman and channeled those attributes into becoming the “Fred Astaire of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” (**Name the community Charles lives in or the place where he does most of his dancing**). Charles just might be the most eligible partner on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dance circuit!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). In fact I have a feeling that with the rhythm and motion he might display tonight, the Internet might break tomorrow if any… or **ALL** of you upload some video footage of Charles showing his moves!! (**Wait for the laugh**)… after all… isn’t that **REALLY** why we’re here? You’ve got it!! Any excuse for dancing!!! We just can’t keep a good man down!! (**If you want to mention his deceased wife you can say**). All I know is that through all of this celebration and tribute, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is looking down on this party tonight with a very big smile on her face… it also took a lifetime to be a devoted and attentive husband and the fruits of their wonderful marriage are all around us living on in the smiles of their children and grandchildren.

The French author Victor Hugo said, “When grace is joined with wrinkles, it is adorable. There is an unspeakable dawn in happy old age.” And the American President Theodore Roosevelt said, “ Old age is like everything else. To make a success of it, you’ve got to start **young**.” There are a couple of responses I have to say about this…. if Victor Hugo were alive today… first of all he’d be **213 YEARS OLD** and probably **REALLY** wrinkled… not so adorable!! (**Wait for the laugh**) …so he also probably hasn’t heard the wisdom of Hugh Pereira who says, “80 is the new 40!!!” Now before everyone gets all nervous thinking…. Oh no!!! Do we have to DO all of that OVER?!?! (**Wait for the laugh**) …. Let me just say that I for one am happy to live in an era in which we can remain interested and interesting, alert, engaged… involved with life. And like Roosevelt said, Charles started at a young age and learned to really **LIVE LIFE** and **LOVE** the life he is living. He has a deep appreciation for people and humanity… for sports and family. He’s got a great sensibility for finance and never fails to share his sage advice with others. He is a person who is truly **INTERESTED** and **INTERESTING**. It has been one of the great gifts of my life to know Charles as a friend and peer and it’s always a treat to spend time with him at social events and family gatherings. Some may think we can’t pick our family members, but in the case of Charles, I will be forever thankful to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who brought him into our clan.

Charles and I have a little “thing.” Call it a tradition; call it a special communication between two great friends who truly appreciate each other. It’s very simple but it means so much to me, as I am sure it does to Charles. When he comes to my home I urge him to have that “extra” scotch and soda. It’s our way of extending the time we share together- our way of acknowledging our bond, and he reciprocates when I visit him… don’t worry, we are both responsible adults and know we better not drink and drive! In the spirit of our tradition, I would like to raise this glass of scotch and soda and propose a toast to Charles D’Souza… “Charles, You’ve enchanted us with your **FIRST 80**… Here’s to the **NEXT 80**… more wonderful years of friendship and vitality… precious memories, earned grace… and **AT LEAST** that many scotches and soda!! May you live the life you choose in happiness and health, warmth and love, with rhythm and style and wisdom!! Have a wonderful birthday!