

He is probably the person in my life who had read the most books. There was no such thing as paint or wallpaper in a Chuck Cook house, it was just books everywhere, tables, floor, bookshelves. Everywhere you went in Chuck's house were books and lo and behold he had read them all time after time.

That is probably what made him turn his talents to radio when he was at military college, I suspect in part to pay off a mortgage. In 1962 he became the very first talk show host. Talk radio came to Calgary in 1962 and Chuck Cook was the host. His program was from ten o'clock at night until midnight.

I became the semi-permanent guest. Chuck was a neighbour. At 9.15 the phone would ring and he would say he had just lost his guest. I put my coat on, he picked me up and told me what we would talk about in the car on the way down.

In retrospect I cannot think of a better background for budding politicians. You got on the telephone; people told you what was on their minds; you listened; you responded; you talked about it; together you sometimes came up with suggestions or solutions and you moved forward to try to implement them.

That is what talk radio was about in the early 1960s. The big city of Vancouver is what took Chuck Cook away from Calgary. In western terms, at least, it is our big city in western Canada. It beckoned with little richer radio stations. He had great ratings and off he went to Vancouver where he continued that talk show career.

He practised law. He was an entrepreneur. Ultimately he achieved something that had been on his mind for a while and that was an entry into politics. He succeeded in the election of 1979 as I did in Calgary and, lo and behold, here we were together, neighbours, same building, running around doing what the Whip told us, going from this committee to that. It was a minority government as members might remember. That is an awful shocking way to arrive in this place, as a member of a minority government. Believe me. You learn and you learn fast. Just when you thought you had learned something, you were back in an election. Both of us were lucky enough to come back with slightly increased majorities.

We experienced the thrill of opposition, the critic's role, Question Period, all those good things that so many

members of this House are enjoying these days. It was kind of a good world for talk show hosts to have those roles. They fit quite well with past patterns and past backgrounds.

By 1983, in the middle of it, Chuck became the opposition Whip and subsequently, our first government Whip in a majority government in quite some time. He set some patterns and got us started on some paths in what was indeed a very big majority Parliament.

After the 1988 election, he concentrated more on the committee side of things and chaired not only the privileges and elections committee but the liaison committee which deals with all committee chairmen.

He made his contribution always in this place without seeking the limelight.

Members may want to read today the column by John Warren.

• (1510)

Many years ago, John Warren was a third member in our triumvirate, in the same period of time and in the same community college in top broadcasting. Chuck Cook hired him. In John's testimonial today I thought the words were really appropriate. I would like to put them on the record.

The words from John Warren that I would like to put on the record are as follows. In describing Chuck, he said:

He could be serious but never took himself too seriously. "You do what you can, love your family, do not hurt anybody and hope for the best."

A simple credo but one which Chuck lived by. If you know his family, his wife Dale and the children, there is a piece of that credo in all of them.

You could disagree with Chuck Cook. In our very first meeting there was a rather serious disagreement between the two of us, but there was never an element of personal animosity in the disagreement. It was a clash of ideas from somebody who took the responsibility of learning seriously and adjudicating wisely. He never put you down. He expected you to do the same. If you came to a different conclusion, it was simply because your analytic processes were a little different. Your knowledge base might be a little different but there was certainly never anything wrong with thinking differently.