

Tributes

An electrician by trade Harold was very proud of his work and role as a founding member of the New Democratic Party and the CCF before that.

I served with Harold from the time I came here in 1965 until 1972. Although I have not had the pleasure of talking with him for many years, my memories of him are of a jovial, hard-working member who cared deeply for his constituents.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party, I join with all members in this House and the former members who knew him in expressing my condolences to his friends and family.

Those who contribute so much to others are always missed in the community but they are never forgotten.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my other colleagues in the House in paying tribute to Harold Winch. From time to time we rise in this House to pay tribute to former members of Parliament. Some have been away from here for some time but that does not in any way diminish the fantastic records they built in their own day.

Today we are paying tribute to a member of Parliament, Harold Winch. He was the member for Vancouver East and served in this Parliament of Canada for 19 years, from 1953 until 1972. Prior to coming to this House he served in the British Columbia legislature for a total of 20 years, from 1933 to 1953. Imagine what it must have been like to be elected to the B.C. legislature in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression and the great problems that faced elected politicians of that day.

I can say with total sincerity that my memory of Harold Winch since I came here in 1965, along with the member for Victoria—Haliburton, is that of a strong-willed, dynamic frontbencher of the New Democratic Party. He spoke with great conviction at all times and was known as a silver-tongued orator long before he came to this House.

He was a man who had a very difficult youth, difficult times. He was an electrician by trade, as has been mentioned, and he was what one would call well read, which really means that he was to a large extent a very successful self-educated person.

He won elections to this House of Commons in 1953, 1957, 1958, 1962, 1963, 1965 and 1968. His memory is well planted in the minds of those who knew him in those

days as a silver-tongued orator at the peak of his political career.

In 1952 he came within one seat of being premier of his home province of British Columbia. In that year his party of which he was leader won a total of 18 seats and W. A. C. Bennett won a total of 19 seats. There is a lifelong debate on this because the preferential ballot system was blamed for his defeat. In that year Mr. Winch's party received 34 per cent of the popular vote and the government that was formed under W. A. C. Bennett won the election with a total of 30.2 per cent of the popular vote.

I suppose I, like the late Harold Winch, am one of those people in this House who never wants to see our Parliament elected by any preferential ballot system. The system that we have here is one that Harold Winch would sincerely believe in as I do and as most members of this House I think are dedicated to.

To this dynamic individual, Mr. Harold Winch, who spent 39 years in the public life of his province and this Parliament of Canada, we extend today our condolences to his family, to his wife, Jessie, to his sons, Donald and Gerald, and to his daughter, Shirley. We want to say to them that we feel enriched having known Harold Winch as long as we did and thank him for his service to Canada and to British Columbia.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, my first memory of Harold Winch in the midst of his many struggles on behalf of ordinary people of this country was his statement that he was proud to be a Canadian, Canada was his country, but British Columbia was his home.

It is on the focus of his home that I wish to make these remarks, Mr. Speaker, because as you know every one of us who comes to this Chamber has immense pride in the region which we represent in this great nation of Canada.

Within the province of British Columbia Harold Winch's name and his father's name will be implanted in the provincial history forever. This is a man who had a natural impediment that he had to overcome before he could become a speaker. He was a silver-tongued orator by determination. He entered politics with a speech impediment that forced upon him a stutter that by sheer will he overcame in his process of development as a politician.