

Tributes

cannot remember what the issue was but Paul was front and centre in that as he was in many other things.

One other memory I have, and it is not mine but from my predecessors in the region, is the fact that Paul McRae once was a CCFer. He ran for the CCF in Rainy River before 1972. I do remember being at the public meeting where Paul indicated that he felt it was time to make a change and he felt he could do more from within, as opposed to being a member of the opposition, and he lived up to that. He worked hard, he worked for the things he believed in, he worked hard for his constituents. I know that in addition to Yvonne, his wife, David, his son, and David's family, all of us in this House and in Thunder Bay will miss Paul.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I will not take a long time but I would just like to add one further comment about Paul McRae's work as a parliamentarian.

Some very fine words have been spoken so far to describe his work as a constituency person and someone who was deeply interested in the issues of northern Ontario and of Canada. I would like to talk about my own experience with Paul from the time I began to serve with him in 1979 as someone who was that special breed of parliamentarian who took an interest in the world outside.

He became very active, as the last member of Parliament said, in Parliamentarians for Global Action. He was one of the most knowledgeable and informed members of Parliament on questions of nuclear disarmament, arms control and north-south issues. He put his energy and time and interest, not just in terms of what was happening to his own constituents, but he had a much broader constituency he felt he had to serve and that was people around the world who felt that they were being threatened or victimized. Something that deserves recognition in this House is the fact that even after he left the House and served at the CRTC, I can remember on virtually a weekly basis getting notes from him or articles or comments about various matters dealing with international affairs, particularly his really strong commitment to try to end the scourge of nuclear war in this world.

For that reason I will have a special memory of Paul McRae.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with members of the House in paying tribute to Paul McRae who served in this House for many years. Paul, as you know, was a member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, a member of our northern Ontario caucus for a number of years.

As the hon. member from Winnipeg has just said, Paul liked to be involved in more global issues and issues that went beyond his own constituency. I think we all recognize that and it was especially refreshing because sometimes we do tend to get bogged down in all the nitty-gritty and the problems of our own constituency.

His wife Yvonne was from Manitoulin Island originally in my constituency and Paul actually taught school in Mindemoya. Paul had a great interest in the wide scope of issues of northern Ontario and of the country. When he left the House of Commons he served in the CRTC for a number of years. He always had that ability to put forward an alternative view. He did not always agree with the majority and that was very refreshing in the House of Commons. Some of those in the cabinet on the government side back in those days may not have found it as refreshing, but he had that special ability to look at the alternative view.

I want to join with members of the House in paying tribute to Paul and extending our condolences to his wife Yvonne and to his son David and his family.

Mr. Speaker: I do not usually do this, but I knew Paul McRae very well. I have been much affected, as I think members on both sides of the House have been, with the comments that have been made concerning our colleague. I found that Paul McCrae was one of the most idealistic men I ever knew and he had no apologies for it. He was not always easy to get along with, I suppose, because he reminded us of the distinction between right and wrong.

I remember once when the government of the day felt it had to take very strong measures with respect to energy resources and conservation. The then minister was the Hon. Donald Macdonald. I notice my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, who, like so many of us, was elected at the same time many years ago, is smiling because he probably remembers this.