

Tribute to Hon. Edward Broadbent

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, if I can break the rules at the outset, if I were you, Ed, I would take that as a prelude to an appointment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): You and I know, Mr. Speaker, that politics is a rough profession; it is a tough game. The Leader of the New Democratic Party knows that. Politics is also an honourable calling. The House of Commons is an honourable place. The Leader of the New Democratic Party knows that as well.

I have always respected from the outset the Hon. Member's skill as a parliamentarian and his respect for this place. He is "a House of Commons man", if I can use that memorable phrase of John Diefenbaker, the ultimate compliment paid to anybody in this place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) stands in the great tradition, the line of Woodsworth, Coldwell, Douglas, Knowles, and Lewis. He stands by his beliefs. He fights for his principles, whether they be popular or unpopular. He understands the modern techniques of politics and uses them well, sometimes too well for our liking. He understands as well that values, principles, and judgment are just as important in public life and leadership as those modern techniques.

Obviously I do not agree with the Leader of the NDP about a lot of things. For example, I am not about to take his retirement announcement as any precedent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I am listening, Ed, but I am not quite paying attention. I worry, too, as did the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), about praising my hon. friend too highly today, because even he has been known to change his mind.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member never forgot the people in Oshawa elected him, and those constituents remained very faithful to him over a twenty-year period. And the Honorable Member for Oshawa fully realized that Canadian political parties must be national in scope. For the first time in the history of that party, he bound ties with Quebec. But in spite of everything, he kept his sense of humour. He always studied the problems carefully. He also realized that his political opponents also may have deep convictions.

[English]

I had better be careful here, Mr. Speaker. Looking to my left again and to the Hon. Member, in a direction that makes a lot of my Members nervous, I see that a good number of the NDP Members are fidgety. They suspect that I may in fact be launching a "Draft Ed" movement here.

In any event, we are paying tribute today to a fine gentleman, to an outstanding Canadian. He has been and will continue to be, as long as he chooses to stay, an ornament to this House. I say to him and to Lucille that he carries the full weight of our Party behind him. To both of them together, I wish them continued success, continued happiness, and thank them for their contribution to this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I guess it is safe for me to say a few words on behalf of our caucus about the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), since I am not going to be one of those who will be running to replace him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Riis: I just want to make that clear. If I did not make that clear there would be a number of people behind me who would be poking me in the back. I can actually feel it now. I do not think they quite believe me.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Right Hon. Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner) made some funny comments, attempts to embarrass to a certain extent our Leader. It is easy for them because they do not have to sit beside him for the next eight months.

I think it is fair to say that all Canadians see Ed Broadbent as a familiar face in their communities across the country, as a welcome face in their living rooms. I know we in the New Democratic Party see him not only as a great political Leader in the tradition of those who have gone before him but also as a great parliamentarian and as a great friend, because with Ed Broadbent, the Hon. Member for Oshawa, what you see is what you get. He says what he means and he means what he says. He believes that politics not only is a calling, and a very, very important calling in terms of it being a way to serve one's country, but should also be fun. Perhaps at a more appropriate time we will relate a number of occasions when Ed Broadbent had fun. Perhaps today should not be one of those days.