

Tributes

she said: "Erik Spicer is my son". She was proud of him and I would say she has ever reason to be proud of Erik.

Good luck and congratulations to both of them as they retire. They are held in high esteem in this place. God bless them both.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I echo the remarks of the hon. member for Saint-Hubert and the hon. member for Beaver River in the gracious tribute they have paid to our parliamentary Librarian Emeritus. Erik Spicer served for 33 years at the rank of deputy minister. That must be a record of achievement for Ottawa. He has presided over the transition of the Library from the classic library formation to the electronic age, at the same time conserving the immense richness of the past of the accumulated collections.

A librarian sometimes does not have the time to read his books he is so busy. However, this is a gentleman who has read books, a cultivated, witty, articulate gentleman. He has recognized, as Solon did, that wise law making rests upon wise study of the past of the accumulated wisdom in books. One cannot separate a library from the business of making laws. They go together.

It is in this sense that the Library of Parliament represents a treasure house. It is the jewel in the crown in a real sense in this large parliamentary edifice over which you preside, Mr. Speaker.

• (1515)

What Erik Spicer has done, the co-operation he has given, the great impartiality, the openness with which he has presided over the researchers—and never forget we have a magnificent research staff freely available to all parties, to people of all opinions within the House—has brought this together, concentrated in his own very unique personality. We shall all miss him.

We wish him, his wife and his family a pleasant and I am sure an intellectually active retirement. Thank you very much for accepting the treasure of Parliament when you were appointed Librarian, for conserving it, for adding to it, for augmenting it and making it one of the great institutions of the Commonwealth, of the world which has inherited its parliamentary traditions ultimately from the Greeks and Romans and the Britons and the French and all the new cultures that our country represents.

Thank you, sir, and a pleasant and honourable retirement which you have so richly earned.

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to join with my colleagues to wish our distinguished Librarian well.

I could not help but think when the member for Beaver River indicated that the first time she walked into the Library and looked up she was awestruck, I thought she was going to say it was because of Erik Spicer. I think that is how we all felt when we first met Erik Spicer. He probably was the ultimate symbol of devoted public service.

I remember over the years having all sorts of library needs or research needs that not only were always met and met in a timely way, but always beyond even my wildest expectations and wildest hopes. The leadership that he provided for so many years was nothing short of awesome and outstanding.

Not only was Erik Spicer a distinguished Librarian for many years, but more than that, as my hon. friend from Beaver River intimated, he was a friend to everyone. Whenever you would encounter Erik Spicer you knew that you were with a friend, always there to ask a friendly word about how life was going and how your trials and tribulations were unfolding as a member of Parliament.

He is a genuine individual, a gentleman in every sense of the term, an outstanding and dedicated Librarian, a professional known around the world for his ability and leadership in establishing for Canada and for us here in Parliament what must be one of the best libraries and research facilities available to parliamentarians anywhere.

We will miss him, but we will be seeing Erik Spicer around, knowing the kind of gentleman he is. On behalf of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party and all of the independents we wish not only him but his wife Helen and daughter well. We hope to be seeing him for a long time in the future.

The Speaker: As your Speaker it is very rare that I speak in the House, but I do take this opportunity as a parliamentarian, as one of you, to express our great vote of thanks to you, Mr. Spicer.

You have brought distinction to your profession. Witness the title of Librarian Emeritus. There can be no higher honour paid.

You leave us here with a wealth of books and in a sense a wealth of knowledge in this edifice. But more than that you have prepared countless parliamentarians by making information accessible to them, on which they can make rational and good decisions and good laws for all Canadians. You have done a great service to us here in the House and your service has extended to your country even beyond this House.

Sir, you are well worthy of all of the accolades that you have heard on this day.

• (1520)

As Speaker, I wish you the very best of health. I hope that you and Helen will enjoy all of your many years to come, as much as