

## State Funeral of Ed Broadbent Remarks by Brian Topp Discours funéraire d'État d'Ed Broadbent par Brian Topp



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Brian Topp est président du conseil d'administration du Broadbent Institute.*

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I'm deeply honoured to be with you today...

To honour our colleague, our leader, and our friend — Ed Broadbent.

Ed Broadbent was a scholar;

He was a highly successful and beloved politician in the best sense — which, as many in this room know, is not an easy thing to pull off;

And he was a really, really nice guy.

He was an intellectual with a coffee table loaded with books, which he seemed to be reading ten at a time.

He loved learning.

And what he learned lead him to a set of clear, powerful principles that animated him all his life and in everything he did.

He passionately believed in economic and social equality.

And he passionately believed in democracy and human rights.

Ed not only believed in those principles ...

He also knew that every generation must fight for them.

Which is exactly what he did, during a brilliant fourteen-year run as leader of Canada's New Democrats.

Et vous savez, il avait un plan.

Un plan qui a presque fonctionné.

Il savait qu'il n'y a pas de chemin vers la victoire pour son parti sans inclure les francophones et la province de Québec.

Il menait dans tous les sondages fédéraux en 1987. En large partie à cause d'une perçe spectaculaire au Québec.

Hélas, cela s'est avéré un peu en avance sur son temps.

Mais le livre de jeu d'Ed serait repris par Jack Layton – avec des résultats vraiment spectaculaires.

Il a vraiment eu une carrière remarquable, notre ami Ed.

Son dévouement à faire progresser la social-démocratie non seulement au Canada, mais partout dans le monde.

Son engagement de toute une vie envers les valeurs et la valeur du mouvement syndical.

Ses contributions critiques à la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés.

Son engagement dans la lutte contre la pauvreté des enfants.

Le Canada est meilleur grâce à Ed Broadbent.

Ed did all of this while practicing the art of disagreeing without being disagreeable.

He was a remarkably civil and friendly man – civil and friendly to his political opponents as well as to his colleagues.

And wonderful company among friends.

With – let's admit it – an unfortunate love of cigars.

Which – let's also admit it – were good fun to smoke with him.

You knew you were about to solve all the world's problems in a wonderful evening with a fascinating friend.

And so...

Now we gather to say farewell.

At moments like this, it's right to look for comfort from poets.

I like this poem, by the Nobel-prize winning Bengal poet (and anti-Imperialist), Rabindranath Tagore.

*Peace, my heart,  
Let the time for the parting be sweet.  
Let it not be a death  
But completeness.*

*Let love melt into memory  
And pain into songs...*

*Let the last touch of your hands be gentle  
Like the flower of the night.*

*Stand still, O beautiful end,  
For a moment,  
And say your last words in silence.*

*I bow to you  
And hold up my lamp  
To light you on your way.*

Au revoir, Ed.