



PETER WORTHINGTON

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## The Sun's champion has died. Lawyer Edwin A. (Eddie) Goodman

In life he was indomitable, irrepressible and seemed indestructible. And now he is dead.

But what a life Edwin A. (Eddie) Goodman had — lived to the fullest, energetic, compassionate, filled with enthusiasm for just about everything.

He played company softball with the same verve (but less competence) as he displayed when defending the *Sun* in its 1978 Official Secrets case and when challenging all comers at pinball.

He did everything at full speed.

Eddie's friends extended far beyond his philosophic (and partisan) affection for the Conservative party.

To those of us at the *Toronto Sun* (and its mini empire today of Sun Media) Eddie was something special — even to those who never knew him when he was “Fast Eddie,” the political dynamo in Conservative ranks.

If it had not been for Eddie Goodman, there'd have been no *Toronto Sun*. That's not hyperbole, but unvarnished fact.

### Dream seemed ended

When the *Toronto Telegram* folded and Doug Creighton, Don Hunt and I were scrounging for investors to start the *Sun*, all seemed futile on Thanksgiving Day, 1971.

Our dream seemed ended. No viable investors. Doug was going to work for Air Canada, Don going to a job on the West Coast. I had a job offer from the *Toronto Star*.

As a sort of Hail Mary gesture, I phoned Eddie and told him of our dreams. With characteristic enthusiasm based on emotion as much as logic, Eddie said he could raise \$1 million.

Within 24 hours, on a Sunday, he'd raised \$750,000 in pledges, and the dream was on again.

As it turned out, we actually only needed around \$300,000 to start the *Sun*; it was enough to get started, and we soon made modest profits.

Eddie was ever proud of his quiet involvement with the *Sun*, even if he disagreed with editorial views on occa-

sion. I have framed on the wall above where I am writing this, a letter Eddie wrote to me when I was editor on Jan. 8, 1974: “Peter ... If you have a copy of your text that was used when you appeared on *Viewpoint* (CBC) last night, you might let me have it so I might write a short article for the *Sun* telling your readers how full of crap I think you are.”

Vintage Eddie. I sent him the text, but he never wrote the article. We played tennis instead. (I won.)

### Took issue with us

His law firm, Goodman and Goodman, represented the *Sun*, but he was never loath to take issue with us. That was Eddie Goodman.

At one showdown, he declared he solicited *Sun* investors only on the assurance that the paper would be pro-development, pro-conservative, pro-Israel.

As the editor who had negotiated the deal, I disagreed and insisted our only assurance was that we wouldn't be mindlessly anti-developer, anti-conservative or anti-Israel. Eddie felt that was nit-picking but agreed.

I think that creed still stands today — we try to judge issues on their merit.

Eddie was a wonderful man whose friends crossed party lines, and one whom his political foes relished. He had a vivid sense of humour (and at times a vivid imagination), and a memory that was at times suspect.

In recent years he had the beginnings of Alzheimer's.

This week, two quick heart attacks felled him and he was taken off life support yesterday — the way he would have wanted to go.

Eddie would joke about his failing memory, about which his friends would quip, “How can you tell?” because Eddie always remembered only what he wanted and not necessarily what actually happened.

A holder of the Order of Canada, Eddie was a passionate Canadian of the old school. He fought in WWII in the Armoured Corps and was badly wounded in France. For the rest of his life he was living proof of the adage that the



Eddie Goodman posed for a portrait by artist Kooluris Dobbs. Goodman, born in 1918, was the initial backer of the *Sun*.

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army makes boys into men — and guarantees that men remain boys forever.

He was proud that he'd been a fighting soldier and would joke with his great friend, the late John Bassett,

publisher of the *Toronto Telegram* that although the war was hell “it was better than no war at all.” Anyone who has been a soldier in war knows what he means.

We in the media tend to

use words like “legendary” loosely.

But that's what Eddie Goodman was.

Canada without him is a poorer place.

Eddie fought gallantly for

his country in war and peace — a brave friend and a decent opponent, and someone of whom it can genuinely be said, that those who knew him will never forget him.