

The murder of my Labour colleague Jo Cox was as shocking as it was senseless. It was a tragedy on so many levels but my heart breaks thinking about her husband and small young children who have lost a wife and mother. The tributes to Jo in the Commons on Monday were emotional but full of love and admiration for her life and work. Her family, including her children, were watching from the public gallery. As we sat listening to the speeches of those who knew her best, we could here the innocent chatter of her son as he read a book. It is perhaps a blessing that they do not understand as much as we do.

In the immediate aftermath of her murder an interesting response from members of the public emerged. Many local residents got in touch with me, as people did up and down the country with their own MPs, just to say thank you. Many started their communication with "I don't always agree with you..." and ended with a "thank you for the job you do". It was touching. We are cited as the most hated profession but very few, especially Jo, stand for parliament for anything other than the right reasons: to make lives, communities, and occasionally the world, better. We may differ on what better looks like and how it is achieved but the ambition is still the same.

MPs don't do a dangerous job. Our lives are not at everyday risk like other frontline public services. But we still do a service and despite the tragedy of Jo's murder we must remain accessible to the people we represent and at the very least, in her honour and that of her children, redouble our efforts to make lives, communities and the world a better place.