

worried; life was always great! But he did not neglect the rejects of society. These people count a lot for us politicians.

That is why Richard Hatfield will be remembered in Canadian history as one of the English Canadians who has done the most for promoting, very rapidly and with an incredible amount of energy and courage, the French fact in New Brunswick and the Acadians that I now have the honour of representing. He also helped the native people who, at the time, were not important in the political debate. Nonetheless, every time the subject of native rights came up at the table, no one could have better promoted the rights of the natives and the entrenchment of their ancestral rights in the Constitution than the great Canadian that was Richard Hatfield.

[English]

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party I would like to join in making some comments about the unfortunate passing of the Hon. Richard Bennett Hatfield.

I would like to join with my colleagues in everything they have said about the contributions he has made. I would like to concentrate on just a couple of points.

I did live in New Brunswick from 1972 to 1975 when Mr. Hatfield was the premier.

There were a couple of things that, as a resident of New Brunswick, touched me particularly. Most people who live in Fredericton at least got to know the premier because he was a person who would be available in the city. You would often see him in the market.

He was someone who touched ordinary New Brunswickers in a very special way. That certainly is indicated in the way feelings have been responded to since and also by the fact that for 17 years he was premier of that province.

I would also like to make mention of one other point which has also been raised, that is, the truly magnificent efforts that Mr. Hatfield made in bringing official bilingualism to the province of New Brunswick, something which would not have been easy for a Conservative leader at that time.

He did it. He expanded the party as has been indicated to the Acadian population and made the fact that New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province a very important contribution to Canadian political and constitutional life.

With those few words, I would like to extend on behalf of my party our sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Hatfield.

[Translation]

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, I knew Richard Hatfield. I too can testify to his human qualities, his simplicity and his open-mindedness.

[English]

He was a sincere Canadian, but at the same time a sincere friend of Quebec.

Even in critical times like these it must be possible to give tribute to a man of honesty and openness. Richard Hatfield was both.

[Translation]

This man, as deeply involved as he was in the political fight, had no animosity against anyone. He harboured nothing but respect for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, whatever lays ahead for Quebec and for Canada, we must be able to count on the good will and realism of political leaders like Richard Hatfield.

[English]

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to just briefly pay my respects and tributes as well to the memory of Richard Hatfield as a friend, as a great Canadian and as a fine New Brunswicker.

I had the privilege of first meeting Richard Hatfield during my work on the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada in 1980-81.

I will never forget the passion that he brought to his commitment to keeping this country together, to strengthening the country

[Translation]

and, of course, to promoting the equality of the Acadian men and women.