

Tributes

spent many hours together. Not only I but also my wife and children and especially the people of Champlain appreciated his kindness, sense of humour, generosity and graciousness. On behalf of my party, since he was a Liberal, and my family, and in my own name as well, I would therefore like to extend to his family and those who were close to him our most sincere sympathies. We must all keep in mind that he was a real gentleman.

[*English*]

I would like to say the same about Ged Baldwin. When I arrived in this House, there was this gentleman who had been in the House for many, many years. He came from a part of Canada for which I have a special attachment, northern Alberta. Many of his constituents were francophones from Farrow and from other places which I have had the pleasure of visiting.

Ged Baldwin was everyone's friend. He was a great person in the House of Commons. He knew the rules very well. He would use them effectively. He was a competitor with Stanley Knowles regarding rules. He and Allan MacEachen would play games among themselves and exchange their knowledge which was somewhat too thoughtful or too specialized for the ordinary member to understand.

He could be tough too. When he had a good case, Ged Baldwin would get up and he would cut pieces out of ministers once in a while. I must have been the victim of some of his attacks. These were always done with class. He was a reflective man. For me what is so good about this House of Commons is that people come from all over the country with different personalities, different backgrounds, and yet we all serve the same cause. Through the years, you realize that sometimes the people you are most comfortable with are on the other side of the aisle because they are not really competing with you. Ged Baldwin was probably consulted throughout all his career by a lot of Liberals, asking: "Why am I having problems?" Because he was a gentleman, you were sure he would tell you honestly what he thought.

He was a great member of Parliament and the people of Peace River had many reasons to be proud of him. His family must be very proud of this great gentleman, Ged Baldwin, who served his country so well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, today I wish to join the Liberal leader in his eloquent

tribute to Jean-Paul Matte, the former member for Champlain, who was elected three times as the member for the electoral district of Champlain: in 1962, 1963, and 1965.

Mr. Matte died on January 6 at the age of 77. He spent his last years in Saint-Maurice, in the riding of Champlain, but spent most of his life in Saint-Tite, in *Filles de Caleb* country. He was the first member of Parliament from Saint-Tite, where my family comes from. I think it was Mr. Matte who first gave me a taste for public life. I remember when he was elected in 1962. I was only nine years old, and my father was one of his best friends. Mr. Matte often came to our house, where we listened to him talking politics. I must say I was very impressed.

Interestingly, he was beaten by the Cr ditistes in 1968, as a result of some tricky political manoeuvring. They found a candidate whose name was the same as his, which caused considerable confusion at the time. However, he continued to enjoy the respect of the voters who had elected him since 1962. In fact, a major electoral reform which amputated part of his riding and gave him part of the electoral district of Portneuf was the main reason why he was defeated.

Mr. Matte was not known as a partisan politician. He rarely made fiery speeches. In fact, he always had this ability, which has become increasingly rare nowadays, to avoid political partisanship, and he always subordinated his own interests to the interests of Saint-Tite, the riding of Champlain, Quebec and Canada.

I spoke to him several times during the past few years, and I must say I found his advice very useful on many occasions. To the very last, Mr. Matte was a faithful Quebecer and a faithful Canadian, and I think members on the government side will wish to join me in paying him this special tribute today.

[*English*]

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my colleagues today in recognition of the contribution that Mr. Matte made to this House of Commons, to the people of Canada and to the people of his riding for a number of years.

I was not here when Mr. Matte served his constituency and his country, but we know him by reputation as an individual who struggled on behalf of his constituents for a number of years and would have continued had it not been for a serious redistribution of his constituency.