

The Late Jean Marchand

Those who like myself had the privilege of knowing Mr. Marchand were able to appreciate his many qualities as a politician and his dedication to great causes. Within the Liberal Party, Mr. Marchand was well known for his political acumen and his leadership qualities. He was a man of rare eloquence who had the courage of his convictions. In a nutshell, he was a remarkable Quebecer and a great Canadian whom we shall always remember with great pride.

On behalf of the Liberal Party, I wish to offer our sincere condolences to his daughter, Marie Eve. Canada has lost one of its great men.

[English]

We are saddened by the untimely death of Jean Marchand. We offer our condolences to his daughter and to his family. With the passing of Jean Marchand Canada has lost one of its great men.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Secretary of State for Canada): On behalf of the Government, I would like to join those who today mourn the passing of a man with a great heart and a political leader who put his stamp on Canadian society.

Jean Marchand was involved in every debate of any consequence in the recent history of Quebec and Canada. He was part of a generation that, from the forties onward, struggled to put Quebec on the road to social justice.

As president of one of the most important labour congresses of Quebec, he was at the heart of the battle fought by workers, for recognition of their rights and human dignity from Asbestos to Murdochville.

In the sixties, his thirst for justice made him enter the political arena and without fanfare but with passion and skill, he stood up for the rights of Francophones at the federal level and in Canadian society. In addition he was one of the progressive elements of the Government of which he was a member.

He decided to maintain his allegiance to both Quebec and Canada in the federal Government. With typical courage and honesty, he fought his difficult struggle to the very end, because Jean Marchand was, above all, a man of passion to whom politics was nothing if not commitment. This man, who had known and experienced our political travail, knew that somewhere, over and above political confrontation and party lines, there was a common ground for men and women of good will, whether they were from Quebec, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick or elsewhere.

For him, the noise and clamour of social and political struggle have now faded away. May he receive from us this final expression of friendship and may he depart from us a serene and respected man.

• (1420)

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Jean Marchand was an outstanding Canadian who never did things by halves. He was a man of passion who fought ceaselessly for what he believed in, whether it was the rights of Quebec workers or the Canada to which he dedicated his entire political life.

He did not wait to see whether a cause would be popular. He made up his own mind and plunged into the fray. Everyone in his beloved province of Quebec and elsewhere in this country always knew what Jean Marchand was trying to do.

[English]

Sometimes wrong, more often right, this warm, courageous man served his country and his province with great distinction. Canada and Quebec have lost a relentless voice for social justice.

On behalf of all members of my Party I send our deepest condolences to his daughter, Marie Eve.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): As one who had the opportunity of working very closely with Mr. Marchand in my capacity as opposition transport critic while he was the Minister of Transport, I would like to join with my colleagues in the House of Commons in expressing my personal sympathy and condolence to members of the Marchand family on his untimely passing.

He was a man for whom my respect and admiration grew with each encounter. He was a tough, skilled, and very articulate debater. As *The Gazette* observed this morning, he loved a good fight. He was an exceptional orator. He spoke with conviction, and with emotion. He knew what he wanted, and he articulated it in a very precise way.

He fought for a better Canada. He fought for justice and equity. He was welcome in all parts of Canada, and particularly in western Canada. To western Canada he was a friend. He spoke to westerners, as he spoke to other Canadians, with sincerity and with honesty.

We may have not always liked what we heard from him, but we always knew that he was frank and that he spoke with conviction from the heart. He was trusted and, as I said, always welcome.

Jean Marchand was a nation builder. He was a great parliamentarian, a great Quebecer, and a great Canadian. I personally mourn his loss, and I am sure it is shared by all westerners.

Mr. Speaker: It would be appropriate if Hon. Members stood for one minute's silence.

[Editor's Note: Whereupon the House stood in silence.]