

*Tributes***THE LATE HON. STEVEN PAPROSKI**

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I know that many hon. members will want to take a few moments to remember a long serving and much loved representative of the city of Edmonton who passed away suddenly late last autumn.

The Hon. Steve Paproski came from Poland to Edmonton as a child. As a young man he was a popular hometown player for our champion football team, the Eskimos, while building a successful career in business.

He was elected to the House of Commons in 1968 and retired at the last election undefeated in seven elections. In a quarter century in this House he served as his party's chief whip, as Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport and as one of the assistant Speakers of the House.

He had friends not just in his own party but in every corner of this House. Although he was as capable as anyone and better than many, in the cut and thrust of political debate he refrained from insult and personal attack. He truly believed that all members were entitled to express their points of view and that all were here to serve their country.

As proud as he was of his Polish birthright it is an illustration of his approach to life that he became famous here for his St. Patrick's Day receptions.

Steve Paproski was a big man in every sense of the word. In Edmonton and here in the House of Commons his generosity of spirit and of deed was unsurpassed. He was a proud family man, a pillar of the church and a committed servant of the people.

It is sad that he could not live to enjoy the retirement to which he had looked forward. We all join his wife Betty, his children and his grandchildren in missing his warm and happy personality and his very wise counsel.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu):** Mr. Speaker, I too, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, would like to pay tribute to our friend Steve. I had the honour of knowing him and of being with him and especially of appreciating him from 1984 to 1993.

In 1984, for the new Conservative members, he was a valuable advisor, an exceptional motivator, and he helped us a great deal in learning the rules of the House and the British parliamentary system.

As Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole House, he immediately gained the respect of all parliamentarians. Patient, impartial, a gentleman, knowledgeable of the rules of the House, he always found the words, the friendly approach and the right argument to have his decisions accepted.

In my first steps as House leader of the Bloc Québécois—the party was not even recognized then—every time I asked him for a meeting to claim our rights, he always received me in a friendly, affable way. It was then that I learned to appreciate him. A sincere, democratic, humane, honest man, he always put the interests of the House and its members first.

I would like to conclude by saying a word to his family. We understand your sorrow and the great pain you feel. How many questions must have gone through your mind in trying to understand and accept the death of someone so close to you!

• (1510)

Is there an acceptable answer when such a tragedy befalls us? I do not believe so. There is only the courage and determination to go on with one's life, with the assurance that the deceased person is still proud of us.

The great French author Alexandre Dumas said one day that those whom we have loved and lost are no longer where they were, but they are still everywhere we are.

I extend our sincerest condolences and a word of encouragement to Steve's whole family. Thank you, Steve, for your invaluable contribution to Canadian democracy.

[*English*]

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise to pay tribute and also with sadness that I rise on behalf of my party to make mention of the Hon. Steve Paproski and the contribution that he made to this House.

Steve was born in September 1928. We lost him as a friend in this Chamber as well as to people right across Canada on December 3, 1993.

Mention has been made previously of his wife, Betty, and their five children, Patrick, Peter, Anna Marie, Alexandra and Elizabeth. Although many weeks have intervened since Steve's death we need to realize that that pain, although it does dull somewhat, is still very sharp in their memory after the incredible loss of their husband and father.

Looking at the professional career of Steve Paproski, those of us who are proud of our Edmonton Eskimos certainly know that he became a household word when he was a lineman for the Eskimos from 1949 until 1954. What a thrill it must have been for Steve.

I can hear him on the couch on Grey Cup day screaming as loudly as any one of us who were cheering for the Eskimos: "Go Esks, go". They did not let him down. What a wonderful way for him to witness his last Grey Cup.

He was the general sales manager for Alberta Concrete Products and elected to this House, as has been mentioned earlier, in 1968. He celebrated 25 years in this House of Commons.