ANGOLA, La. (AP) — A grim-faced Timothy Baldwin, bitterly proclaiming his disgust and denying he beat a blind 85-year-old woman to death, was executed in the Louisiana electric chair early today.

"I've always tried to be a good sport when I've lost at something and I see no reason not to leave this world with the same policy," Baldwin said in a defiant statement made public alter his death. "After all, it was a hell of a battle."

"I therefore congratulate all those who have tried so hard to murder me. I definitely have to give them credit as it takes a very special kind of person to murder an innocent man and still be able to live with themselves."

Baldwin, a small man whose arms were covered with jailhouse tattoos of a snake, a skull and a naked woman, would have been 47 Thursday. He was sent to his death for the murder of Mary James Peters, the godmother of his youngest son, in an April 1978 robbery in West Monroe, La.

Prosecutors said he went into a rage and attacked her with an iron skillet, a telephone, a stool and a television set when she refused to tell him where her money was hidden.

Baldwin went through a succession of lawyers as he persistently took his case through eight appeals and eight execution dates in six years, but the U.S. Supreme Court rejected his last attempt 7-2 on Sunday.

An intelligent man — one lawyer said his IQ was near genius at 147 — Baldwin went to the electric chair with an acid sarcasm that poked fun at prosecutor Johnny Carl Parkerson, who refused last week to release the investigative records of the case for a final appeal.

"It's over now, so you can drop the pretense," he said. "And I can't blame you if you in society are upset with the district attorney and the police.

"After all, that wasn't a very smart move when the district attorney and the police refused to release the records — they as good as admitted I was innocent."

"Shame on you, Mr. Parkerson! You almost blew it. People were starting to get curious.

"But, who am I to condemn anyone? After all, I was just a human being like anyone else."

It was the same tone he used as he ad libbed a few sentences in the execution chamber, where he told the seven official witnesses that he hadn't been sure he could make a statement.

"You know," he said with gallows humor, "it's possible to get weak in the knees."

Rev. Joe Ingle, Baldwin's spiritual adviser, described Baldwin's attitude as "basically disgusted with society because they killed an innocent man."

Baldwin was the fourth person executed in Louisiana and the 24th in the United States since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

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