

To those critics of the Senate who sometimes say that we are a group of tired old men, Senator Croll is an example that years bring wisdom; the fact that he happens to be a little older does not in any way diminish the intellectual capacity that he and many other members of this chamber demonstrate, even though their hair has turned to silver.

Senator Croll, I am sure I speak on behalf of all fellow senators in extending best wishes to you on this occasion. You will be honoured tonight by a reception held by the Speaker and at that time I am sure many fine things will be said.

● (1410)

I thank honourable senators for giving me the opportunity of putting my remarks on the record today so that when students of history review the great life and contribution of Senator Croll they will see that his colleagues in the Senate recognized and honoured him today on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, I thank our friend, Senator Buckwold, for drawing our attention to this happy occasion. We are, all of us, pleased to join him in extending our best wishes to Senator Croll. As Senator Buckwold has mentioned, later today there is a social occasion, involving not just senators but a large number of friends and admirers of Senator Croll, to celebrate his ninetieth birthday. At that time I will have a bit more to say on my own behalf and on behalf of my friends on this side, as well as on behalf of the Prime Minister and the government.

For the moment let me just say that Senator Croll is a man who, first of all, has given the Senate a good name. All of us in this place rejoice in that, and sometimes, no matter what our political stripe, bask in his reflected glory. When good things are said about the Senate, invariably the name of Senator Croll is mentioned in that connection.

He has also given politics and public life a good name. Senator Croll has not held ministerial office since he left the Ontario legislature; Senator Buckwold has referred to that fact. Yet I saw recently in a newspaper article about Senator Croll that he was associated with just about every piece of social legislation on the books in this country, and that is a fact. Those of us who have followed his career or who have been his colleagues in this place know what a difference he has made to public policy in this country. For him, public policy has never been an abstraction. The essence of it always has been the way in which it touched the lives of ordinary men and women.

Therefore, for all those who are in Parliament, in politics, or interested in politics and public life, it seems to me that the Honourable David Croll stands out as an inspiration and a truly luminous example of what one man, by his efforts and his dedication, can accomplish for the people of the country.

One aspect of Senator Croll's career that Senator Buckwold did not mention—although perhaps he alluded to it in passing—was the fact that Senator Croll had served five years on

[Senator Buckwold.]

active service with the Canadian army. He went in as a private and came out as a colonel.

Senator, it is no wonder they did not put you in the cabinet with a record like that!

I must say that, in cabinet or out of cabinet, in Parliament, as in the many positions he has held in municipal, provincial and federal politics, Senator Croll's example and his deeds will live on in this country for many years to come. It is wonderful that he is with us, active and vigorous, and still playing an important role in a very real sense as the conscience of this place and of Parliament as he begins his ninety-first year.

I shall leave it at that for the moment, honourable senators. I will have a little bit more to say later in the afternoon.

Senator MacEachen: That was a brief speech. He will give his major one later.

Senator Murray: I will give my major address later in the afternoon. For the moment, on behalf of all of our colleagues on this side, I extend best wishes for continued good health, vigour and long life to our friend, Senator Croll.

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, it is a privilege to have been Senator Croll's deskmate for the past five or six years. It has also been my great fortune to have been the beneficiary of much wisdom and commentary from time to time regarding what takes place in this chamber.

However, my acquaintanceship with Senator Croll goes back much further than that. In fact, our acquaintanceship goes back to 1957, when I was first elected to the House of Commons. When I was a member of the House of Commons I worked with Senator Croll on a number of joint committees, one being the Consumer Credit Committee. Indeed, that turned out to be an inquiry into the inflationary prices of a number of goods, particularly groceries. I raise that because it was a pleasure to work with Senator Croll. It was my good fortune, as a green member, to be able to draw on the experience and wisdom of Senator Croll. More than that, Senator Croll demonstrated that he was a good, thoughtful and decent human being.

Some honourable senators may not realize that I lost a couple of elections over the past 33 years. It is lonely after the first ten days, because everybody forgets you are alive. However, I would always get a telephone call or a note from Senator Croll. I do not know whether he ever lost an election during his political career, but he certainly demonstrated to me that he had a human understanding of what one goes through, and he conveyed that to me.

As mentioned in some detail by Senator Buckwold and Senator Murray, Senator Croll is a great asset to Canada. He served in municipal, provincial and federal governments. More important to me, though, is that he has been a good friend for the past 33 years.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I am aware that later in the day I will have an opportunity to make some remarks regarding our colleague and my friend, Senator Croll. I hope I don't get carried away like Senator Murray and extend my remarks