

Tributes to Deceased Members

reputation in our legal profession and as a citizen interested in the welfare of our fellow Canadians.

Tom Ross' death also grieved all his friends, and he had many, inside and outside this chamber. He was first elected to the House of Commons in the general election of 1940 to represent the constituency of Hamilton East and the record shows that since that time he has never been defeated at the polls. Tom Ross' mission in life was to make friends and this came quite easy to him because of his personality and because of his wide experience in public relations.

He was born in Woodstock, Ontario, where a good many new Canadians have settled, and because of his daily contact with them he had from the outset a genuine and sincere interest in their welfare in our country. The importance of their great contribution to the economic and cultural patrimony of Canada was encouraged by him and he never ceased to be their champion.

Although Tom Ross did not participate as often as a number of us in the debates in the house, his long experience in parliament made his services most valuable on numerous committees of the house and he always served both his country and constituents with the utmost devotion and sincerity.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that I speak for all hon. members of the house in saying that these two hon. members will be remembered with genuine affection and respect and that we wish to extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Ross and to Mr. Arnold Bennett, the brother of the late hon. member for Halton.

Hon. W. Earl Rowe (Acting Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I join the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) in extending sympathy to the families and friends of the two deceased members. It had been my privilege to know them both for many years.

As the Prime Minister has so well said, Miss Bennett was very active in many activities in this country. Some years ago she was president of the Conservative women's association of Canada and I believe was the first lady to be made a K.C. at the bar. She was a member of the women's bar association and was highly regarded in her profession locally, being I believe the first woman to practise law in a rural district in Ontario.

As the Prime Minister has said, she showed a heroic courage even from the early days when she put herself through university until she attained such great distinction at the bar. During her last few years she suffered ill health but very few knew of this. I understand that those who

[Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East).]

were closest to her in her immediate family and in her party activities in the riding never heard a word of complaint. Up to the hour she lost consciousness she showed a continuing interest in the affairs of her district. She was active in church work and in club and social activities in her community.

Miss Sybil Bennett will be missed greatly in the county of Halton. She will be missed especially in Georgetown where she practised; she will be missed by her brother and immediate relatives; she will be missed greatly by the party which she belonged to and served so well and so effectively.

I know that all members of this party and, as the Prime Minister has said, all members of the house will join in extending to her brother and her relatives our sincere sympathy and our appreciation of her loyal devotion to duty in this country.

I had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Tom Ross for many years, even before he became a member of the Canadian House of Commons in 1940. He was a most genial member who had many friends on both sides of the house. He was active in almost every activity around Hamilton and in many other places. He never missed an opportunity to speak on behalf of Hamilton, and his interest in sports and other activities marked him as one who was well known by young and old and whose company was enjoyed by a great many.

He will be missed greatly in this house and I know he will be missed greatly in the Hamilton district. I join with the Prime Minister in extending to Mrs. Ross and the members of the family, as well as to his riding and party, the deep sympathies of this party and I am sure of all members of this house.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggan): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) has said, I think we all hoped that at this session of parliament we might be spared having to record the passing of any of our members. We join of course with others in the house in the expressions of sympathy to the friends and relatives of Miss Bennett and to the family of Mr. Ross. We join too in the expression of sympathy to the Liberal party in the loss of one of its members and colleagues and to the Conservative party in the loss of a very charming lady in the person of Miss Bennett.

Mr. Ross, as has already been said, was known to all of us in the house as a very friendly member, always willing at any time to help anyone who needed his help. I wish to record our personal appreciation of the