

**PRESENTATION OF AN INSTITUTE PRESIDENT'S AWARD TO
MR THOMAS MACKENZIE ROSS**

[The Institute of Actuaries, 16 May 2000]

The President (Mr P. N. Thornton, F.I.A.): Tom is a Scotsman and a Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries.

Following his actuarial training at Scottish Life, he qualified as a Fellow in 1970. His career, however, took him away from the traditional Scottish Life office, and he moved into consultancy in Canada for six years, and then back to the United Kingdom where, over the years, he watched his firm change from Clay and Partners to Alexander Clay and then to Aon Consulting. He found himself back on the board of Scottish Life as a non-executive director in 1996, which must have given him great satisfaction, and subsequently he became its Chairman.

Within the profession Tom has been a member of the Faculty Council and various other committees, as well as working on several Association of Consulting Actuaries (ACA) groups. He was an extrovert Chairman of the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) for two years, where he worked hard to promote the value of occupational pension schemes. It was whilst there that he honed his skills as a communicator.

However, it is his work outside the immediate confines of the professional body that I wish to recognise. Tom has a clarity of thought and a clear fundamental understanding of pensions and related public interest issues, which have taken him, deservedly, into the public arena, where he has made a significant contribution to informed public debate.

Tom was a member of the Committee of Corporate Governance under Sir Ronald Hampel, several years ago. It set down some fundamental markers for the governing structures for companies.

Immediately after the last general election Tom was appointed Chairman of the Department of Social Security's Pension Review Group, that set out to provide a clear, easily understandable analysis of the major issues that pension reform had to address. His subsequent press interviews and his own articles were always sharp, informative, and were a beautiful demonstration of how a complex subject could be put across so clearly. He received his OBE for this work in 1999. He even led the Pensions Minister of the day to state that some actuaries were 'cuddly', quite an improvement in our image.

Unsurprisingly, Tom was asked to chair the Stakeholder Pensions Advisory Group, that was asked to advise ministers on the structure of stakeholder pensions. Whether you think that the plans announced so far

reflect the advice given perhaps depends on your political views, but I am in no doubt that the Government asked the right person, who was also the right actuary, to do that work.

Tom, I believe that you are an example to the whole actuarial profession in the way in which you have contributed to the wider public debate on pensions in my two years as President. I would ask you, therefore, to accept this President's Award.