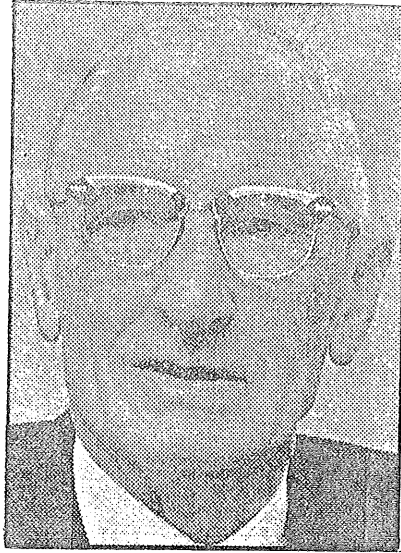


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Wright in 1962

Donald O. Wright

Donald O. Wright, who entered Minnesota politics as a young lawyer during the Roaring Twenties and 40 years later ended his political career as a courtly but crusty patriarch in the state Senate, died Tuesday at a nursing home in St. Louis Park. He was 92.

Wright represented a portion of Minneapolis in the House of Representatives for eight years before serving in the Senate for 35 years. He retired in 1970.

He led the Senate's tax committee for many years and controlled its work so closely that he was said to "walk around with the tax bill in his pocket."

Before he retired, he was one of a few "old guard" conservatives who ran the Senate with such tradition-bound dignity that it was called the "Old Club."

Wright was noted for his colorful phraseology, once describing a governor from his own Republican party as "wooden-headed." He called rival DFLers "political hair-pullers" because of their proclivity to fight among themselves. And he defended a state law, saying it protected the citizenry from being inflicted with political candidates who were "nin-compoops."

Once he was asked to respond to a survey question, which stated:

"Do you favor continued transfer of income-tax money to the property tax relief fund in order to maintain the property tax reductions made possible through the sales tax law?"

His succinct reply: "This question is out of order."

Wright was proud of having served as president pro tempore in the Senate and having been lieutenant governor briefly in 1954 when he filled a vacancy created by the resignation of Republican Ancher Nelsen.

He was a critic of the spoils system in state government and played a key role in instituting the state's civil service system.

Survivors include his wife, Virna, and a son, Charles, of Minneapolis.

Services will be Saturday at 10 a.m. at Plymouth Congregational Church Chapel, 1900 Nicollet Av. S.

S.T.

7.26.85