

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE

CEREMONIES IN CONNECTION WITH) August 15, 1968
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH) 2 o'clock, p.m.
OF OFFICE TO VINCENT A. BIFFERATO) Courtroom No. 1
AS AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE) Public Building
SUPERIOR COURT) Wilmington, Delaware

PRESIDING: HON. ALBERT J. STIFTEL, P.J.

PRESENT:

- HON. ROBERT C. O'HORA, J.
- HON. WILLIAM T. QUILLEN, J.
- HON. GEORGE R. WRIGHT, J.
- HON. JAMES B. MESSICK, J.

- HON. CHARLES L. TERRY, JR., Governor of the State of Delaware.
- HON. DANIEL F. WOLCOTT, Chief Justice of the State of Delaware.
- HON. COLLINS J. SEITZ, J., U. S. Court of Appeals of the 3rd Circuit.
- JOSEPH H. FLANZER, ESQ., President, Delaware State Bar Association.

And others.

JUDGE STIFTEL: I wish to welcome the many distinguished public officials who are present in this courtroom. We are honored by their presence and by the presence of all of you; and we welcome all of you to this special session of the Superior Court.

Today we greet a new member of the Superior Court. It was only a short time ago that James J. Walsh brought him into my office and introduced him as a new graduate of Villanova Law School. At that time Mr. Walsh described him as a fine and very able young man in whose future he had a lot of confidence. This prediction proved conservative. In a span of some four and a half years, our new Judge has had a remarkable and meteoric career.

Soon after he was admitted to the bar, he was elected to the State House of Representatives and was considered a modest and effective representative. Last year he served as an assistant in the Public Defender's Office and remained in that position until he became chairman of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission, a post he assumed after Mr. Handelman resigned. I understand he spent nearly all his working time administering the liquor laws. He was considered to be conscientious and fair minded, attributes which are so important for his new position.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a fine gentleman as Mr. Bifferato join us. He succeeds another gentleman, Stewart Lynch, who genuinely loved this Court and for whom we wish better health.

I know this is a great day for Mr. Bifferato's mother and father and for his lovely wife, Marie. Some day his children will appreciate it also. My best wishes to all members of his family.

Now, I will administer the oath of office to Mr. Bifferato and then I will call upon Joseph H. Flanzer, Esquire, President of the Delaware Bar Association, who will speak for the lawyers. Then I will call on Judge Quillen to say a few words.

Mr. Bifferato, will you please stand and I respectfully request that all in the audience stand.

Please repeat after me.

(Whereupon Judge Stiftel administered the oath of office to Mr. Bifferato.)

JUDGE STIFTEL: Judge Bifferato, it is certainly a pleasure.

Judge Quillen will put on the robe.

(Whereupon Judge Quillen placed the judicial robe upon Judge Bifferato.)

JUDGE STIFTEL: Please take a seat at the end.

Thank you very much. You may be seated.

Mr. Flanzer will now say a few words.

MR. FLANZER: If it please your Honors, Governor, Chief Justice Wolcott, Judge Sitz: It has become the custom in our State for the President of the Delaware State Bar Association to speak at the swearing in ceremony of a new Superior Court Judge. This is a petition which I am glad to perpetuate and in which I am most happy to participate.

The elevation of a lawyer to membership on our Superior Court is an event of importance. Not only to the individual directly involved, but to the bench and bar as well.

Vincent Anthony Bifferato, a native Wilmingtonian, is the second youngest member to be appointed to our Superior Court in the history of our State. He attended parochial schools in the city of Wilmington; was graduated from Villanova University in 1959; and was graduated from the Law School at Villanova University in 1963. He was admitted for membership in the Delaware Bar on December 11, 1963. Within one year of his admission to the bar, he entered the political arena and was elected to the House of Representatives in the Fall of 1964 and was the youngest member of the entire 123rd General Assembly.

It is significant that he was named Chairman of the

House Judiciary Committee of the 123rd General Assembly.

During his service in the General Assembly, he evidenced his interest in the public welfare by sponsoring a bill to turn State lands over to New Castle County for park and recreational purposes. He sponsored a bill which closely regulated the business of debt adjustment in the State of Delaware. At the request of the Superior Court, he introduced and sponsored a bill shortening the term of service of petit jurors for the Superior Court of Delaware.

Early in 1967 Vincent Anthony Bifferato joined the Public Defender's staff. After serving as a Public Defender for about six months, he was appointed by the Governor of Delaware as Chairman of the Delaware Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. He served with distinction in this capacity until his very recent nomination for membership in this Court.

He has given much of his time and efforts to charitable organizations, being very actively affiliated with the formation of the Greater Newport Youth Center, Inc., the Sheridan Square Civic Association and the Parish Council of St. John the Beloved Church.

He has engaged in the general practice of law in the City of Wilmington as a member of the law firm of Walsh and Bifferato.

Our Governor recently declared, in a talk given before the Conference of the Chief Justices in Philadelphia, that the Governor's duty was to appoint persons, "legally and temperamentally qualified as Judges." It is the feeling of the members of the Delaware Bar that Vincent Anthony Bifferato is imminently legally and temperamentally qualified to serve as a Judge. Soft of voice, friendly in nature, and firm in decision, he will help to continue the fine tradition established by the present and past members of this honorable Court. All of us take pride in Vincent Anthony Bifferato donning the judicial robes.

On behalf of the lawyers of Delaware, I extend to him and to his family our warmest congratulations. I know that he will serve well, act fairly, and temper justice with mercy.

JUDGE STIFTEL: Thank you, Mr. Flanzer.

Judge Quillen, please.

JUDGE QUILLEN: Today we note a significant occasion. There is a new Judge. It is significant because, once again, our constitutional process in all its grandeur has functioned. The people elect. The Governor appoints. The Senate advises and consents. The Judge is invested. The State continues. We should not let this occasion pass without noting that each such occasion is a tribute to American Constitutional Government, the finest governmental process ever devised by mankind.

There is a second significance of all occasions of investiture of new Judges. In this country, the mechanics of government and the separation of powers are merely tools of service. Our country is not the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches. America is we the people. It is the most significant continuing undertaking in human brotherhood in the history of mankind. It is based on the twin premise of the absolute equality of all men before God and the responsible liberty of each individual within society.

This Court, as other American institutions, stands as a monument to the American experiment of a free and open democratic society. In this country of ours, positions of public trust do not rest upon the accident of birth or conformity to state imposed religious beliefs. One need only name the last three President Judges of this Court to demonstrate the success of our experiment in human brotherhood: Terry, Duffy and Stifftel. Today there is added a new name, the name of Bifferato, and the experiment continues to succeed. Some may mark our setbacks and scoff at our efforts, but where else in this world is the battle for the brotherhood of man fought in a society of ordered liberty. We are all aware that the American dream faces a fresh challenge in our time. We should not fear the continuing battle. We should continue it with gratitude for the opportunity.

But above all, the significance of this particular ceremony rests on one man, Vincent A Bifferato. Today Judge Bifferato becomes an instrument of our ideals. For, if our society means anything, this Court must be more than a Court of law. It must be a Court of justice, and the purpose of all law, statutory and judge made, must be dedicated to the maintenance of that precarious balance which marks the fairness of justice. The burden of such maintenance is carried to a large degree by the men who occupy positions as trial Judges.

As Judge Bifferato undertakes this responsibility of a trial Judge, we, the Judges of the Superior Court, welcome him with confidence and happiness. He enters a distinct occupation with unique responsibilities. He will be called upon to make difficult decisions, many of which may be misunderstood by segments of our society. His task will be demanding and his burden heavy. But in this task, he will have the constant support and companionship of eight fellow Superior Court Judges. Indeed, the Judges of this Court have in recent years formed an exceptionally close judicial fraternity of mutual respect and mutual affection. Our welcome today goes not only to a new occupant of official position, but also to the friendship of this judicial fraternity. We know of Judge Bifferato's competence and dedication. We know that his personality will add a new

dimension to the unique society of trial judges. And if this profession of judging has one eternal truth concerning the quality of its members, it is simply this: A judge becomes a good judge by his experience on the bench. The one essential ingredient in this calling as all others is work. We are grateful that the Governor and the Senate have sent us an able man who has a well earned reputation as a dedicated and hard working public servant.

Today we note a significant occasion. There is a new Judge. Judge Bifferato, the Court welcomes you.

JUDGE STIFTEL: Thank you very much, Judge Quillen.

These proceedings are now at an end, but Judge Bifferato will remain here to greet his many friends.

Thank you kindly for coming. We all sincerely appreciate it.

The Court is in recess.
