

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE
IN AND FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF:)
) August, 9, 2001
CEREMONY OF INVESTITURE) 3:00 p.m.
OF)
DAVID A. WHITE) Superior Court
) Courtroom No. 301
COMMISSIONER) Daniel L. Herrmann
THE SUPERIOR COURT) Courthouse

PRESIDING: HON. HENRY DUPONT RIDGELY,
PRESIDENT JUDGE

SITTING: CHIEF JUDGE SUSAN L. ROBINSON
FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT

HON. JOHN K. WELCH, ASSOC. JUDGE
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

PRESENT: ROGER D. LANDON, ESQUIRE
MURPHY, SPADARO & LANDON, P.A.

INVOCATION: REV. FRANCIS P. KENNEY
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CHILD

Members of the Delaware General Assembly,
Judges of State and Federal Courts,
and Others.

MICHELE L. ROLFE
SUPERIOR COURT OFFICIAL REPORTERS
1020 King Street - Wilmington, Delaware 19801
(302) 577-2400 Ext. 415

1 August 9, 2001
2 Courtroom No. 301
3 3:00 p.m.

4 PRESENT:

5 As noted.

6 - - - - -

7 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Please remain
8 standing for the Invocation of Reverend Francis P.
9 Kenney, from the Church of the Holy Child.

10 Father Kenney ...

11 THE INVOCATION.

12 FATHER KENNEY: And I ask you to bow your
13 heads and to pray for Gods' blessing.

14 We come before you, Father, and ask for your
15 blessings and peace to come upon David.

16 We thank you, God, for the gift of David's
17 life, a life of service committed to the law and a
18 lover of justice.

19 As husband and father, colleague and friend,
20 David has offered his presence, knowledge and love.

21 And now, Father, as David begins his new
22 profession, a ministry of service as a Commissioner,
23 we ask for your gifts of wisdom and guidance, and
insight and a desire for truth and justice.

1 May David's robes lay heavy upon his
2 shoulders so that he may always remember the
3 responsibility of his office.

4 May David always seek Your assistance and his
5 faith be alive in Your work. Together we lift David
6 to you, Father. Come Holy Spirit, bless David today
7 and every day of his life.

8 We ask this through Christ our Lord, amen.

9 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Please be seated.
10 I would like to welcome you all to this special
11 session of the Superior Court for the Investiture of
12 Commissioner David A. White. I'd like to begin as
13 well by introducing the judges on the bench with me,
14 this is a day of unusual or special, I suppose,
15 Federal and State cooperation, and as well as
16 cooperation among Courts of this State.

17 To my right is the Honorable Sue L. Robinson,
18 United States Chief Judge of the Federal District
19 Court here in Wilmington; and to my left is Judge John
20 K. Welch, of the Court of Common Pleas.

21 These Judges will be speaking to you in a few
22 moments to tell you more about their past association
23 with our Commissioner White.

1 I'd like to extend a very special and warm
2 welcome to Commissioner White's family: His wife
3 Susan; his daughter, Jennifer, who's ten years old;
4 his stepdaughter, Noelle, who's older than that, and I
5 won't say; His parents, Jane and George White; to his
6 in-laws, Ed and Agnes Mulrooney; his older brothers,
7 Steven and Peter, who could not be here today. And
8 again Father Kenney we welcome to you as well. I
9 understand there have been problems at your parish
10 lately to keep you occupied with.

11 The first order of business today -- and also
12 I want to recognize the Judges and the Commissioners
13 of the Superior Court who are here as well as all of
14 David's many friends and family, again, welcome to you
15 all.

16 Our first order of business today will be
17 speaking on behalf of Commissioner White, and I would
18 invite Judge Welch to address you first.

19 JUDGE WELCH: President Judge Ridgely, Judge
20 Robinson, Judges of the Superior Court, Commissioners,
21 Court personnel, public officials, distinguished
22 members of the House and Senate, members of the
23 Delaware Bar, friends and family, the White family

1 especially; his wife Susie, his parents, Noelle and
2 Jennifer. I'm very pleased to speak on behalf of
3 David A. White's formal Investiture to the Superior
4 Court of the State of Delaware.

5 When I went through the process about five
6 years ago, my colleagues at the Bench and Bar reminded
7 me that only twice in our life do people really say
8 nice things about you. They reminded me they are at
9 your Investiture to the Court and your funeral. And
10 they also reminded me to enjoy the first because you
11 can't hear the second.

12 I've known Commissioner White, who I'll refer
13 to as "David," for almost 15 years. He was a
14 colleague of my twin brother, Jeff. And I served with
15 David as a Deputy Attorney General. David, as you all
16 know, through members of the Bar or the Court was an
17 excellent litigator, always gave excellent legal
18 advice to the Executive Branch agencies; he's well
19 known for scholarly briefs; and he was generally well
20 liked and respected as a lawyer both in the Bar and
21 the Courts.

22 I would have to say David served with
23 distinction at the Department of Justice, and while he

1 was in private practice with my namesake, and some of
2 you have always confused us, I believe he has always
3 enjoyed public service.

4 David and I also share a bond. We both
5 worked for United States Senator Joseph R. Biden.
6 Myself, I worked in Wilmington, David in Washington.

7 When David originally came to me and told me
8 he was considering working as a Master in Superior
9 Court, I was a little skeptical, based upon the fact
10 that there was a really long tender in the bar about
11 whether the Court would utilize his talents. After
12 speaking with David, and having heard all the good
13 things he said about the Court, the staff, his fellow
14 Commissioners, President Judge Ridgely, his
15 colleagues, and members of the Superior Court, and his
16 optimistic attitude, I'm convinced that he's going to
17 thoroughly enjoy and revisit the public sector in a
18 way he didn't enjoy the first time as a Deputy
19 Attorney General.

20 Before I close, and my remarks are brief, I
21 wanted to share a short story with you.

22 When I was a Deputy Attorney General I headed
23 up a group called the Government Services Group. And

1 my father, who was former president of the State
2 Board, called me up on behalf of Paul Fine, and asked
3 me for a list of lawyers who would serve the State
4 Board and deal with it. At that time it was a pretty
5 complex issue in education. I naturally gave my
6 father and Mr. Fine a list of Deputy Attorneys
7 General.

8 And a couple weeks went by, and my father
9 called me and said, There's a fellow you haven't given
10 us his name, a David White fellow. Why haven't you
11 given us his name? Out of my own self-interest, I
12 didn't give David White's name to my father and Paul
13 Fine because there would be a void in the legal talent
14 in my unit.

15 Having said that, David sat down with
16 President Fine and in about 20 minutes became their
17 lawyer. So I praise David for that decision.

18 If you would speak with some of the Executive
19 Branch agencies, Stan Taylor from the Department of
20 Corrections, Paul Fine from the Educational Board, his
21 colleagues at the Department of Justice, my brother,
22 the myriad of State agencies and boards and
23 commissions that he represented. You will only hear

1 good things about David A. White.

2 So I'm going to wish him well today, I'm
3 going to wish his family well. His parents are here.
4 I know he'll enjoy this appointment to the Superior
5 Court as a Commissioner and I'm sure that my
6 colleagues at the Bar and Bench will have the same
7 respect and admiration for David that I've enjoyed for
8 the past 15 years.

9 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: At this time I'd
10 like to welcome to the podium Roger D. Landon,
11 Esquire, of the firm of Murphy, Spadaro & Landon, P.
12 A. Please come forward.

13 MR. LANDON: May it please the Court,
14 President Judge Ridgely, Judge Robinson, Judge Welch,
15 other members of the Delaware Judiciary, our
16 colleagues, David's family, our friends.

17 I'm extremely honored to be able to speak on
18 behalf of David here today. I feel a great privilege
19 to count Dave as one of my closest friends. We've
20 known each other since we both started law school back
21 in 1983. And I just want to let David know that you
22 do mean a lot to me, and I wouldn't put on a suit on
23 the hottest day of the year for just anybody.

1 While still a young man, although a little
2 older than I am, Dave has already enjoyed a very
3 distinguished career as a lawyer in the State of
4 Delaware, in both the public sector and the private
5 sector.

6 He served as a law clerk for two former U.S.
7 Magistrates, now Judge Robinson being one of those.
8 He served, as you just heard, Deputy Attorney General
9 in the Department of Justice, and he served as a
10 partner in not one, but two excellent law firms, one
11 more excellent than the other, and I'll let you decide
12 which one that might be.

13 I was able to see Dave's work firsthand as we
14 practiced together in what was then called Murphy,
15 Welch & Spadaro; and Dave, as probably most of you
16 know, was involved in banking litigation along with
17 Jeff, Jeff Welch. And I think David was universally,
18 at least from where I stood, he was universally
19 respected by clients, by the Court, by the Bench, and
20 also even by his adversaries.

21 And not only was he universally respected,
22 and is he universally respected, I think he's
23 universally liked by those people, including opposing

1 counsel in litigation that he's been involved in. And
2 that, unfortunately, from my viewpoint, is a fairly
3 unusual trait for a litigator, and I think it is a
4 mark of distinction and it's a tribute to Dave's
5 professionalism, something that he and his family
6 should be very proud of.

7 Those of you who know Dave well, know that he
8 has the qualities that the Delaware Judicial Officers
9 traditionally possess. He certainly has the smarts
10 for the job of Commissioner, he has a sense of
11 fair-mindedness, he has a sense of the practical, and
12 he has a great enthusiasm for hard work.

13 I think these qualities are reflected in the
14 very high caliber of the Judiciary in Delaware, and
15 I'm not just saying that because I have to practice
16 before most of these Judges who are here with us
17 today. I think with Dave's appointment as
18 Commissioner in the Superior Court, an excellent
19 Judiciary just got a little better.

20 And David, now that you are embarking or are
21 about to embark on this new portion of your career, I
22 thought it might be appropriate to share with you a
23 comment once made by Chief Justice John Marshall as

1 you think about your goals in your new position. And
2 Chief Justice Marshall said, and this is a quote, "The
3 acme of Judicial distinction means the ability to look
4 a lawyer straight in the eyes for two hours and not
5 hear a dammed word he says."

6 Now, I know, David, you're a modest fellow
7 and probably just a little bit uncomfortable with all
8 this attention here today, but with all of the
9 accolades that are being bestowed upon you today, I
10 thought it might be appropriate if some of our law
11 school pals were able to offer a few comments just to
12 keep you grounded in case you felt your head swelling
13 just ever so slightly today.

14 So what I did was I notified a few of our
15 friends who have moved on and are practicing in other
16 jurisdictions on what was about to happen here today,
17 and I did receive some e-mails back from them with
18 some comments that they'd like me to read here today,
19 so I thought I'd try to share those with all of you.

20 I haven't had a chance to read these yet. I
21 just had my secretary print them out before --

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Should we go off
23 the record? We'll stay on the record.

1 MR. LANDON: These are all honorable people.
2 I'm sure they have very professional things to say.

3 This one is from Pete. All right.

4 This one is from Art. I think Art is in the
5 room here today. This should be appropriate. Well --

6 This one is from Mike Stanton. I think Mike
7 always knows the right thing to say. Except today.

8 Well, rather than do that, let me basically
9 summarize what I think they would say if they actually
10 were here and had to do what I'm doing now.

11 I think that what they should say, Dave, is
12 that we're all really quite proud of you, we all knew
13 that you were destined for great things, and we all
14 feel very fortunate to have you as a friend. And
15 David, whether you think so or not, this is a big
16 deal. Congratulations.

17 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: I now invite Chief
18 Judge Robinson to address.

19 CHIEF JUDGE ROBINSON: That's a tough act to
20 follow so probably we would be better off if you
21 didn't hear what I had to say. I just have a few
22 remarks. It looks like a lot because I had to print
23 it big so I didn't have to bring my reading glasses,

1 so I really won't be all afternoon.

2 I do want to wish a good afternoon to my
3 esteemed colleagues and the honored guests here. It's
4 a pleasure to be here in celebration of yet another
5 milestone in the professional life of David White.

6 I first met David in February 1988, when I
7 became the United States Magistrate Judge for the
8 District of Delaware. David was serving as a law
9 clerk for my predecessor, Judge Powers. As I
10 recollect, by February 1988, hundreds of cases had
11 been referred on a standing basis to the Magistrate
12 Judge, including Social Security disability cases,
13 prison conditions cases, and habeas corpus cases. To
14 help diversify the Magistrate's case load, the
15 District Judges referred on a case-by-case basis
16 discovery disputes in patent cases and various matters
17 arising in asbestos litigation.

18 Needless to say, when I walked in the door of
19 my chambers in 1988, I had no idea what I was facing.
20 I was lucky to have David there as an experienced law
21 clerk familiar with that almost overwhelming caseload.
22 With his patience and diligence, we worked hard to
23 organize and move the papers.

1 I can't remember him ever complaining, like I
2 did on more than one occasion, about the amount or
3 repetitiousness of the work. No matter how many
4 prisoner complaints he reviewed, he looked at each of
5 them with a fresh eye and a view towards justice. He
6 conducted himself as though he were appreciative of
7 the opportunity to help and happy to be there.

8 From my chambers, David went on to work for
9 the Department of Justice and then entered private
10 practice, where he continued to work conscientiously
11 and with an honesty and earnestness that, in my
12 experience, are rare qualities, at least in legal
13 circles which tend to be peopled by cynics,
14 egocentrics, and whiners. And, of course, I'm not
15 referring to any lawyers present here today.

16 I suggest that the qualities that I described
17 and that David brings to the position of Commissioner
18 of the Superior Court are the essence of a good judge,
19 and will serve him well and the public well. As
20 always, my colleagues on the State Court have made a
21 wise decision in their selection of David as the
22 Court's newest Commissioner.

23 David, my congratulations and best regards to

1 you and your family. May you find professional and
2 personal happiness and satisfaction in your new
3 endeavor.

4 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: I'm going to step
5 down now to administer the oath of office.

6 Are you prepared to take the oath of office?

7 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Yes, I am.

8 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Place your right
9 hand on the Bible and repeat after me.

10 I, David A. White ...

11 COMMISSIONER WHITE: I, David A. White ...

12 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... do proudly
13 swear ...

14 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... do proudly swear ...

15 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... to carry out
16 the responsibilities ...

17 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... to carry out the
18 responsibilities ...

19 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... of the office
20 of Superior Court Commissioner ...

21 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... of the office of
22 Superior Court Commissioner ...

23 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... to the best of

1 my ability ...

2 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... to the best of my
3 ability ...

4 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... freely
5 acknowledging ...

6 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... freely acknowledging
7 ...

8 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... that the powers
9 of this office ...

10 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... that the powers of
11 this office ...

12 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... flow from the
13 people...

14 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... flow from the people
15 ...

16 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... I'm privileged
17 to represent.

18 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... I'm privileged to
19 represent.

20 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: I further swear ...

21 COMMISSIONER WHITE: I further swear ...

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... always to place
23 the public interest ...

1 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... always to place the
2 public interest ...

3 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... above any
4 special or personal interest ...

5 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ...above any special or
6 personal interest ...

7 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... and to respect
8 the right of the future generations ...

9 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... and to respect the
10 right of the future generations ...

11 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... to share the
12 rich, historic and natural heritage of Delaware.

13 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... to share the rich,
14 historic and natural heritage of the State of
15 Delaware.

16 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: In doing so ...

17 COMMISSIONER WHITE: In doing so ...

18 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... I will always
19 uphold and defend ...

20 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... I will always uphold
21 and defend ...

22 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... the
23 Constitutions of my country and my State ...

1 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... the Constitutions of
2 my country and my State ...

3 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: ... so help me God.

4 COMMISSIONER WHITE: ... so help me God.

5 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Congratulations.

6 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Thank you.

7 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: This way.

8 COMMISSIONER WHITE: This is all a bit
9 overwhelming.

10 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Just a moment,
11 Commissioner.

12 COMMISSIONER WHITE: This is all a bit
13 overwhelming for me, and I do thank everybody for
14 being here: President Judge Ridgely, Chief Justice
15 Robinson, distinguished Judges of the Superior Court,
16 distinguished members of the Assembly and the Bar,
17 Father Kenney, my loving family, my dear friends,
18 colleagues and coworkers.

19 Those of you who know me best do know that I
20 do not like to call great attention to myself, indeed
21 it is sometimes hard for me to even expect a
22 compliment no matter how well deserved it may be.

23 Today, however, I have given into my natural

1 reluctance to shine a light on myself, and I have
2 agreed without too much blushing to allow some of my
3 closest friends and mentors to say some very kind
4 things about me.

5 I want to thank Judge Robinson, Judge Welch,
6 and Roger Landon for their very kind comments.

7 Before I get into my comments any further, I
8 would like to introduce to you my family and close
9 friends.

10 My wife, Susan; and my daughter, Jennifer;
11 and my stepdaughter, Noelle. I would like to have you
12 stand up, please.

13 My mother and father, Jane and George White,
14 if you would stand, please.

15 My mother- and father-in-law, Agnes and Ed
16 Mulrooney, if you would stand, please.

17 And my two oldest brothers, Steven and Peter,
18 who were not able to be here today. My oldest
19 brother, Steve, is in Houston. And my middle brother,
20 Peter, is in the process of selling his old house,
21 going to closing, and buying a new house and moving
22 this afternoon. The timing just was not right, but I
23 wanted to acknowledge them as well.

1 Many of you may know my background. Like my
2 parents, I was born and raised here in Wilmington. My
3 brothers and I both went to schools here in the mid
4 60s and 70s, in what was at that time the old Alford
5 I. DuPont School District, now known as the Brandywine
6 School District.

7 That was a time period when there was what I
8 consider to be feverish construction going on in
9 Brandywine Hundred and constant boundary-line shifting
10 during that period. And, in fact, the four years I
11 was in school, grades 1 through 4, I went to three
12 separate elementary schools, only one of which is
13 still operational today.

14 Shipley Elementary is now a retirement
15 community. And Foulk Road Elementary was, as you
16 probably know, demolished and made way for a big
17 office complex across from Brandywine High School.

18 I was proud that our beautiful daughter,
19 Jennifer, was able to attend Lakeshire Elementary
20 School, one of my schools.

21 My -- And I apologize for getting emotional
22 everybody, but that's me.

23 My junior high school, Forwood Junior High,

1 is also now a retirement community, but my high
2 school, Concord High, is still operational. My wife
3 Susan, my stepdaughter Noelle, my older brothers and I
4 are all proud graduates of Concord High School. And
5 we are hopeful that in year 2009, Jennifer will also
6 be a proud graduate of Concord High School.

7 And you may ask yourselves, what the heck is
8 Dave talking about? What's the point? The point is
9 stability, and that's what I want to echo today. I
10 believe very strongly that family, friends,
11 colleagues, mentors, and faith in God are very
12 stabilizing forces that we all need. Stability is the
13 key.

14 From high school, I went on to the University
15 of Delaware and found out how important stability was
16 to me there. Besides my parents and grandmother, my
17 biggest influences were my college professors.

18 And I'm happy to tell you that one of my
19 professors, Dr. John Kelly, is here today, and I
20 wanted to acknowledge him. And thank him for all that
21 he did for me 20 plus years ago. Dr. Kelly was also
22 instrumental in coordinating an internship I had with
23 Senator Biden in Washington D.C., in 1982.

1 Although Senator Biden is not able to be here
2 today, he's in China, I wanted to acknowledge him and
3 his loyal staff for helping enlighten me about
4 politics as it takes place in our nation's Capitol.

5 I had the good fortune to work and live just
6 three blocks from the Capitol and work in the Russell
7 Senate Office building. And those of you who either
8 have had the opportunity or would like to have the
9 opportunity to work with one of our Senators or
10 Congressmen, know how awe-inspiring it truly is to
11 live and work in that beautiful city.

12 After my experience in Washington, I enrolled
13 at Widener University School of Law. And while at
14 Widener, I worked and met with several new mentors.
15 Thanks to Attorney Kevin O'Connell, a high school
16 classmate and well-known criminal defense lawyer, I
17 met and worked with Professor Fairfax Leery, who was
18 one of the principal drafters of several Articles of
19 the original Uniform Commercial Code. Professor Leery
20 instilled confidence in me, as a young law student,
21 and was really instrumental in guiding me through my
22 three years of law school.

23 I was also very fortunate to have been able

1 to work with Justice William Duffy, who at the time
2 was teaching several courses up at the law school.
3 Justice Duffy was an old friend and acquaintance of my
4 father's from their youth here in Wilmington. Justice
5 Duffy had asked me to assist him in several research
6 projects during my third year of law school, and I
7 have to say, interacting with him provided me with a
8 great opportunity to experience his humor, his wit,
9 and his keen insight as he helped shape law here in
10 Delaware during his many years on the Bench. Justice
11 Duffy's opinions are still cited today for insight and
12 thoughtful attention to the rules of law.

13 Although Professor Leery and Justice Duffy
14 are not here, I would not be able to talk about myself
15 without acknowledging role in me and my development as
16 a law student.

17 While in law school, I also had an
18 opportunity to work with Tom Herlihy, Jerome Herlihy,
19 now Judge Herlihy, and Jim Harper in their firm. And
20 I appreciate that opportunity as well. That served me
21 very well while I was in law school.

22 I also, as you probably got a chance to see
23 from Roger Landon's comments, I remained very close

1 friends with some of my good friends who where
2 classmates in law school. I would liked to have seen
3 what those comments were. However, maybe later.

4 And as Chief Judge Robinson had indicated,
5 after law school, I accepted a two-year clerkship with
6 the District of Delaware, and although I was
7 originally hired by Richard Powers, former Magistrate
8 Judge there, I had the good fortune to work with Judge
9 Sue L. Robinson as her first clerk.

10 Judge Robinson's determined work ethic,
11 influence, and counsel have served me well these past
12 13 years, I appreciate all that she has done for me
13 and I want to thank her again for that.

14 As Judge Welch had indicated to you earlier,
15 after my clerkship in August of 1988, I was hired by
16 Attorney General Charles Oberly and worked for four
17 and a half years in the Civil Division in the
18 Department of Justice. It was at that time, or while
19 I was serving as a Deputy Attorney General, that our
20 daughter, Jennifer, was born in February 1991.

21 While at the Department I had the opportunity
22 to represent several State agencies in some what I
23 would consider to be significant constitutional reform

1 litigation cases: One, a particularly nasty and
2 contested overcrowding case involving several of
3 Delawares prisons; several cases involving contested
4 matters with Delaware State Police and the Delaware
5 State Police Officers; and of course, the ongoing
6 litigation in the desegregation case, which was then
7 pending in the Federal District Court.

8 I want to thank John Welch, Judge Fred
9 Silverman and Charlie Oberly for leadership guidance
10 and support while I was a Deputy Attorney General. I
11 do have the highest respect for that office.

12 I also want to thank Deputy Attorney General
13 Loren Myers and former Delaware Supreme Court Justice
14 Andrew G. T. Moore, for their calming influence which
15 resolved a rather unflattering article that appeared
16 in a local newspaper here one cold Sunday morning.
17 That article which I've since cleared up with the
18 author was factually incorrect, but caused me some
19 great anxiety at the time. Seeking guidance and
20 perhaps a pat on the back, I went to Loren Myers and
21 Justice Moore, who helped me put the article in its
22 correct perspective. Suffice it to say, the fish that
23 I caught the following weekend were never wrapped so

1 well.

2 I also want to acknowledge Mr. Charles Welch
3 and Paul R. Fine. I'm not sure if either of them are
4 here today, but they have both provided me with
5 guidance and support over the past many years. Chuck
6 and Paul, as you probably know, among their many
7 professional and personal successes, both served as
8 presidents of the State Board of Education. And I did
9 have the opportunity to serve as their attorney in the
10 Attorney General's Office. Both Chuck and Paul
11 continue to serve the public in many significant and
12 inspiring ways, and I appreciate their guidance all
13 these years.

14 After four and a half years at the Department
15 of Justice, the lure of private practice was calling
16 me. And in February 1993, I accepted a job with a new
17 firm then known as Murphy & Welch. Soon thereafter,
18 the firm was known as Murphy, Welch & Spadaro. And
19 after suggesting a new home to my good friend and
20 classmate, Roger Landon, the firm soon became known as
21 Murphy, Welch, Spadaro & Landon.

22 I worked with that firm for five years, and
23 will always be grateful to Jeff and Frank for taking a

1 chance in hiring me six weeks after that firm opened
2 for business. I was also very honored to be called
3 their partner in January 1996.

4 After leaving that firm with Jeff in January
5 of 1998 to form Welch & White, I had the opportunity
6 to experience the joys and the heartaches of juggling
7 the practice of law and assisting in the management of
8 a law firm on a daily basis. As many of you may know,
9 that is not an easy task.

10 Although my practice was growing over the
11 past several years, I was always mindful of my
12 responsibilities to my family.

13 In April of this year, I left a partner who I
14 refer to as my best friend. Those of you who know
15 Jeff Welch probably know the intense litigator side of
16 Jeff. A couple years ago in this courtroom, Judge
17 Toliver jokingly referring to the differences between
18 Jeff and John, which was to say, "John is the one with
19 the halo and Jeff is the one with the horns."

20 I had the great opportunity to get to know
21 the warm and generous side of Jeff. He helped me
22 professionally in more ways than I have time to say
23 here. I want to thank him for all that he's done for

1 me. I apologize for getting emotional.

2 I also left behind a staff of dedicated and
3 loyal coworkers, who I consider to be my friends.
4 Michelle C. Harris, Joe Thomas, Missy Thomas, and
5 Shirley Hurt, I want to thank you all for your
6 tireless efforts.

7 As comedian Bill Cosby would say, You could
8 have gone anywhere, but you chose Welch & White.
9 Thank you.

10 Having been with the Superior Court now for a
11 little over three months, I'm struck by the
12 professional and dedicated atmosphere of this court.
13 That includes the Judges, the Judicial staff and law
14 clerks, the bailiffs, court reporters, the
15 prothonotary's office, jury services, the
16 administrative offices, the law library staff and the
17 sheriff's office. You have all welcomed me with open
18 arms and I thank you for that.

19 I think that it might have been that Master
20 D. rap that I did during Employee Recognition Day that
21 broke the ice. I look forward to working with you all
22 here.

23 I also want to thank President Judge Ridgely,

1 Judge Babiarz, and Judge Cooch, for giving me the
2 opportunity to serve as a Superior Court Master and
3 now as a Commissioner. I will not let you down.

4 I want to thank Governor Minner and the State
5 Senate also for their confidence in nominating and
6 confirming me and Commissioner Mark Vavala.

7 I would also like to thank Bernie Conoway,
8 and I'm not sure Bernie is here, but Bernie paved the
9 way for me as an Asbestos Master. Bernie's diligent
10 and effective case management really made my job much
11 easier. Although no one can replace Bernie, I hope to
12 follow his lead and continue the excellent tradition
13 of this Court and its management of its asbestos
14 docket. Bernie, if you're here, I thank you.

15 I also want to thank Commissioner, Mike
16 Reynolds and Mark Vavala for there ongoing assistance
17 as I get more comfortable and acclimated to my new
18 duties. Most of you already know Mike Reynolds and
19 the excellent work that he has done as Commissioner
20 here in Superior Court for the past seven years. Many
21 of you also know Mark Vavala. He has served the
22 Superior Court with distinction in various capacities
23 for over 14 years, most recently as Master and now as

1 Commissioner.

2 Their assistance and friendship have been of
3 great value to me, and I thank Mike and Mark for that.

4 To my wife, my children, my brothers, their
5 families, I want to thank you all. My parents, I am
6 proud to consider us all family. You have provided me
7 with the stability I need. For that you have my
8 unyielding love.

9 I'm almost finished, everybody.

10 Many of you are also here because in many
11 ways, you have positively influenced my life in many
12 ways, many meaningful ways. And I thank God that you
13 have all been here for me. I want to thank you all
14 for coming and for making this a special day for me
15 and my family. Thank you very much.

16 PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Please remain
17 standing. Before we leave, I've asked Father Kenney
18 to give a Benediction. And before I ask him to follow
19 through on that, David, on behalf of all of the Judges
20 of the Superior Court, Commissioners, and staff and
21 everyone, a very warm welcome. You've done an
22 outstanding job so far. We know you will continue to
23 do that and you're going to be a great, great help to