

**Remarks by Justice Peter T. Zarella
Attorney Swearing-in Ceremony
November 4, 2002**

THANK YOU CHIEF JUSTICE SULLIVAN. I AM PLEASED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY. THE CHIEF JUSTICE HAS RECOGNIZED THE PERSONALLY DIFFICULT JOURNEY THAT MANY OF YOU HAVE HAD TO REACH THIS MILESTONE. I URGE EACH OF YOU, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, TO THANK THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED YOU ALONG THE PATH...WITHOUT THEIR REASSURING SUPPORT THE WAY WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE ARDUOUS.

DURING YOUR TIME IN SCHOOL, YOU HAVE LEARNED THE LAW WELL. NOW AFTER YEARS OF STUDY, MONTHS OF CRAMMING, AND SUCCESSFUL BAR RESULTS, HERE YOU ARE – MINUTES AWAY FROM GOING FORTH AS AN ATTORNEY. BUT I MUST TELL YOU THAT YOU HAVE REALLY ONLY JUST BEGUN THE PROCESS OF *BEING* AN ATTORNEY. ALL OF US WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE BAR REMAIN, THROUGHOUT THE LENGTH OF OUR CAREERS, PART OF THIS PROCESS – THE PROCESS OF THE COMMUNAL PURSUIT OF JUSTICE.

IN THE PAST TWO ADMISSION CEREMONIES WE DISCUSSED AN ATTORNEY'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LEGAL WELFARE OF CLIENTS, A LAWYER'S ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES AS AN OFFICER OF THE COURT AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING IN THE PROFESSION. THE POINT OF THOSE TWO ADDRESSES WAS TO INSURE THAT THE APPLICANTS RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OATHS THAT THEY WERE ABOUT TO TAKE AND TO REMIND THEM THAT THOSE OBLIGATIONS CONTINUED FOR AS LONG AS THEY PRACTICED THIS LEARNED PROFESSION OF OURS. WE ALSO ATTEMPTED TO IMPRESS UPON THE CANDIDATES THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATING IN CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION. WE SUGGESTED THAT ANYONE WHO WAS SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR PROFESSION WOULD JOIN AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THEIR LOCAL AND STATE BAR ASSOCIATIONS WHERE THEY NOT ONLY WOULD MEET THEIR FELLOW LAWYERS BUT COULD CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION.

AT THE LAST ADMISSION CEREMONY WE ADDRESSED THE CRISIS THAT EVERY JUDGE AND LAWYER RECOGNIZES AS A GROWING PROBLEM. THAT IS THE LOSS OF CIVILITY. WE DISCUSSED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO RECOGNIZE THAT "GOOD LAWYERING" IS NOT JUDGED BY THE VOLUME OF ONE'S ARGUMENT OR BY THE CRAFTINESS OF ONE'S ACTION BUT RATHER THE LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF A WELL THOUGHT OUT LEGAL STRATEGY BASED UPON SOLID RESEARCH AND DELIVERED IN AN UNDERSTANDABLE AND APPEALING MANNER. RESPECT FOR THE PROFESSION, YOURSELF AND OTHERS AND RESPECT FOR THE COURT ARE THE TRADEMARKS OF A LAWYER WHO UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVILITY.

THESE TOPICS REMAIN OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE TO THIS COURT. ESCALATING INCIVILITY CONTINUES TO HAVE THE UNFORTUNATE EFFECT ON THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE ROLE OF AN ATTORNEY AS A PERSONAL GLADIATOR AND OF THE CONCEPT OF OUR JUSTICE SYSTEM AS AN ARENA FOR BATTLE.

THE RECENT SPATE OF BUSINESS SCANDALS CALLING INTO QUESTION THE INTEGRITY OF THE WAY THAT WE CONDUCT OUR AFFAIRS HAS CAUSED LAW SCHOOLS, AS WELL AS BUSINESS SCHOOLS, TO REVIEW THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

SOMETIMES, HOWEVER, EVEN THE BEST EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION CANNOT PROVIDE AN ANSWER TO THE KNOTTY PROBLEMS YOU WILL ENCOUNTER. OFTEN THE NUANCES OF THE PRACTICE OF LAW REFUSE TO FIT NEATLY WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE ETHICAL ISSUES THAT YOU SO READILY IDENTIFIED IN LAW SCHOOL CASE STUDIES.

BEING UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT FOLLOWING A PARTICULAR COURSE OF ACTION IS OFTEN A FAIRLY GOOD INDICATION THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT ITS ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS. REFER TO THE RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT. DISCUSS YOUR CONCERNS WITH MORE EXPERIENCED ATTORNEYS IN YOUR FIRM OR WITH THE CONNECTICUT BAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS. BE GUIDED BY THEIR ADVICE. BY THE SAME TOKEN, VOICE YOUR OWN CONCERNS WHEN COLLEAGUES SEEK YOUR COUNSEL ABOUT ETHICAL DILEMMAS.

THE TRUST OF THIS COURT IS THAT AS WE BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE OFTEN UNINTENDED EFFECT THAT THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF ATTORNEYS HAS ON SOCIETY WE WILL EACH BECOME MORE COGNIZANT OF OUR INDIVIDUAL DUTY TO APPROACH OUR COLLEAGUES OF THE BAR AND THE COURT ITSELF WITH GREATER RESPECT. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT CONSIDERATION OF ETHICAL ISSUES AND OBLIGATIONS WILL BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF YOUR DAILY PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO DETOUR FOR A MOMENT INTO AN AREA ABOUT WHICH FEW REMARKS ARE EVER OFFERED.

THE LAWYER-POET ARCHIBALD MACLEISH OBSERVED THAT "THE BUSINESS OF LAW IS TO MAKE SENSE OF THE CONFUSION OF WHAT WE CALL HUMAN LIFE - TO REDUCE IT TO ORDER BUT AT THE SAME TIME TO GIVE IT POSSIBILITY, SCOPE, EVEN DIGNITY."

IN LAW SCHOOL MOST OF YOU, LIKE THOSE OF US WHO WENT BEFORE, TUNNELED YOUR VISION TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR END. THE STUDY OF LAW CAN BE ALL-CONSUMING. THERE SEEMS TO BE AN UNENDING AMOUNT OF MATERIAL TO DIGEST AND UNDERSTAND. BEING PREPARED FOR CLASS TAKES ON A MEANING THAT FEW OF US COULD HAVE CONCEIVED DURING OUR FREE-WHEELING COLLEGE DAYS. IN ADDITION TO SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES, MANY OF YOU HAD DEMANDING JOBS AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS AS WELL.

BUT, IF WE ARE TO BE HONEST, FAMILIES AND JOBS TOO OFTEN TOOK A BACK SEAT TO THE LAW. WE LEARNED QUICKLY THE MEANING OF THE ADAGE "THE LAW IS A JEALOUS MISTRESS".

TODAY YOU CAN RELAX AND CELEBRATE WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY ALL YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED. TOMORROW, HOWEVER, THE PURSUIT OF NEW GOALS BEGINS. LOOKING FOR A JOB OR BEGINNING A NEW JOB, LEARNING HOW TO ACTUALLY PRACTICE

LAW, TRYING THAT FIRST CASE, BECOMING PARTNER, AND SO ON AND SO ON. THE SPECIFIC END OR GOAL CHANGES, BUT THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING THAT MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED.

THIS PRESENTS YOU WITH A DILEMMA. IF YOU APPROACH THE PRACTICE OF LAW WITH THE SAME TUNNEL VISION THAT SERVED YOU SO WELL IN LAW SCHOOL YOU WILL NOT BE THE BEST LAWYER YOU CAN BE NOR WILL YOU BE A VERY INTERESTING PERSON. THE FINAL ADVICE GIVEN BY ONE OF MY LAW SCHOOL PROFESSORS ON HOW TO BE A GOOD LAWYER WAS "DON'T FORGET TO READ THE GREAT BOOKS". TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO, I HAD VERY LITTLE IDEA WHAT HE MEANT. I THINK I KNOW NOW. ALDOUS HUXLEY ONCE SAID IN TALKING ABOUT LITERATURE, "THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IS BOOKS". IN MY OPINION, LITERATURE IS ONE WAY TO KEEP YOU CONNECTED TO THE REAL WORLD - THE WORLD IN WHICH YOUR CLIENTS ARE TRYING TO NAVIGATE. SO TOO DOES, READING A STORY TO A CHILD, WASHING YOUR CAR, OR COACHING LITTLE LEAGUE.

THE CLIENTS WHO WILL COME TO YOU ARE REAL PEOPLE WITH REAL PROBLEMS. THEY ARE IN THE MIDST OF THE CONFUSION OF HUMAN LIFE. LAWYERS ARE TRAINED TO ARGUE, TO DISSECT, AND TO ANALYZE. WE ARE NOT TRAINED TO UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN EMOTIONS THAT OUR CLIENTS ARE COPING WITH. IF YOUR VISION REMAINS TUNNELED, IF YOU ARE DISCONNECTED FROM ALL SOCIETY EXCEPT A LEGAL ONE, YOU WILL NOT TRULY UNDERSTAND THOSE WHO COME TO YOU IN DISTRESS. YOU WILL NOT SEE THEIR WORRY OR FRUSTRATION. THEY WILL SIMPLY BE A FIRST IMPRESSION ISSUE OR AN INTERESTING CASE. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO BECOME PART OF THE WORLD AGAIN. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO, AS MY FORMER LAW SCHOOL PROFESSOR EXHORTED, "READ THE GREAT BOOKS". ACQUIRING THE SKILLS NEEDED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR CLIENT, OPPOSING COUNSEL AND THEIR CLIENTS ARE EXPERIENCING WILL MAKE YOU A BETTER LAWYER AND WILL HELP TO GIVE SCOPE AND DIGNITY TO YOUR LIFE AND TO THE PROFESSION.

YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER A NOBLE PROFESSION. TO UPHOLD ITS HONOR WITH EMPATHY, HONESTY, COURAGE AND RESPECT IS TODAY, AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN, THE

WORTHIEST OF PURSUITS. I EXTEND TO YOU, ON BEHALF OF THE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT AND THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH OUR SINCEREST CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES.