

MEMORIAL FOR
JAMES R. D. CHARRON

Remarks by Joseph F. Leeson, Sr.

MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT, members of the Bar, friends and family of attorney James R. D. Charron.

I first met James Charron many years ago while we were both serving as Officers in the U.S. Naval Reserve. Over the years, both in the naval and legal professions, I came to know Jim and developed the greatest respect for him.

Jim Charron served his country well both in war and in peace. He achieved the respect of his colleagues both in military service and in the legal profession.

James Charron was born on November 8, 1914 on a farm in Kemmerertown, Monroe County. At an early age Jim and his parents moved to Pen Argyl and he attended the schools of Pen Argyl, graduating from Pen Argyl High School in 1933. While working on reporting and advertising jobs with the Easton Express, he attended Lafayette College, graduating in 1940.

With the onset of World War II, Jim volunteered for duty with the U.S. Navy and attended Naval Officers classes at Columbia University in New York. Of the 1100 members of the officers class, Jim Charron received an award for being the outstanding student in that class. He served his country with the U.S. Navy throughout the Pacific during World War II. He commanded a landing craft gunboat during the invasion of the Marshall Islands and received a bronze star from Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander of the Pacific Fleet. The citation signed by Admiral Nimitz reads that Jim Charron "constantly exposed himself and his ship to ensuing fire without regard to his personal safety." In addition, he was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for action above and beyond the call of duty.

In his personal life Jim was a devoted husband and father. He married the former Carmel Curcio and they had three children, Cheryl Charron Cusano, James R. Charron, Jr., and Jeffrey R. Charron. His service to God, his country, his home,

his family and his abiding faith in the highest ideals of education, and moral fiber of the finest degree, were the hallmarks of his life. His love for learning and service to others was thoroughly outstanding.

His many activities during his professional career as a member of the Bar demonstrated clearly his dedication to the community. He was involved in Boy Scouts of America, Lehigh Valley Society for Crippled Children, Exchange and Rotary Clubs, Masonic Lodges and director for the Northampton County Association for the Blind. In recognition of his distinguished service to Scouting, in 1950 Jim was awarded the Silver Beaver Award, Scouting's highest honor.

His legal career highlighted his life. He was an ardent advocate of the U.S. Constitution. He was constantly aware and made others aware of the effects, protection and rights that all of us have under the U.S. Constitution.

When he graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1948 he began his career with J. Lawrence Davis of Bangor. In later years he served as a sole practitioner in Wind Gap, the town where he lived. He served as the solicitor for the Pen Argyl School District, the Pen Argyl Joint School System Authority and many municipal authorities over the years. He represented his clients with vigor and skilled advocacy, which gained for him the respect of all members of the Bench and Bar of Northampton County. Jim was noted for his expertise and knowledge in the field of education law. For many years he rendered distinguished service as legal counsel for the Pen Argyl Schools and as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Northampton County Area Community College.

Jim was also active in politics. He was a Republican candidate for State Senator in 1950 and was a candidate for a Northampton County judgeship in 1956.

I received a letter from his daughter, Cheryl Charron Cusano and I take the liberty of quoting from this warm tribute of a daughter to her father:

"It is overwhelming when I think of all my Daddy has done, and at the same time know with every loving memory and stirring of the heart and soul, what a wonderful...father he has been. I do not use the past tense, because Daddy's love and spirit are with us still; the lessons taught will forever be ingrained in our very being; we are one, and the greatest gift

we can give those we love is the gift of carrying on those best of values, those words of wisdom, those measures of complete devotion and dedication which mark a truly honorable person. And my Daddy was an honorable man, a man who as a boy had nothing but dreams of becoming a lawyer. Yes, at twelve years of age, Daddy determined to be a lawyer;... the secretary to Dr. William E. Muth, Superintendent of Pen Argyl Schools, recalled how Daddy would spend every spare moment in the school library, reading and studying. It was [the] depression era and with patches on his graduation trousers Daddy went on to plead with all his heart and soul for his clients; Daddy was known for his bow ties and this became his trademark. I always associated in my mind the Abraham Lincoln qualities in Daddy, still marveling at how a small town lad grew up to share with others, giving away his last dime as a true matter of fact, to someone in need. And, despite . . . poverty in youth, the struggle to walk and work his way through college and university with the help of my totally devoted and hard-working mother, Daddy entered worlds and shared, always shared, with his family and children. Daddy gave anonymously when he gave, for he believed that one must give and do for others and not look for pats on the back . . . but I must praise my father to you, for we love him with all our heart and soul, and we must "carry on" for Daddy. As he lay so ill, his words to us were "Carry On" and indeed my little brother, Lieutenant Jeffrey R. Charron, salutes with pride as an officer today in the United States Navy."

Jim Charron was held in high regard by his family, his friends and by members of the Bar. He was reliable, loyal and had an unimpeachable record as an attorney.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to have known him, can vouch for the fact that he was universally liked, admired and respected.

I request of this Court, that when the Court adjourns this day, that it be done in honor and in memory of James R. D. Charron. (September 4, 1987)