

DAROLD L. HEMPHILL

by Thomas E. Butterfield, Jr.

I bring to the Court official notice of the untimely death on August 23, 1974 of Darold Lee Hemphill, a member of the Bar of this Court since his admission in 1967. The memory of "Buck Hemphill" will not soon fade from the minds of those who knew him.

Buck was born June 14, 1936 in Tarentum, Pa., the son of Kenneth and Martha Hemphill, of Sarver, Pa., who survive him. He was married June 9, 1961 to Mary Jane Hillstrom, of Corry, Pa., who also survives.

Following his graduation from Winfield-Clinton High School, Cabot, Pa. Buck volunteered for service in the Army of the United States. After two years of service he entered the University of Miami. His final three years of college training were spent at Allegheny College from which school he graduated with an A.B. degree in 1960. Graduate work at Lehigh University led to his M.A. degree in 1962 with a major in government. Temple University granted him the J.D. degree in 1967, after he had distinguished himself academically and as Chief Justice of the Moot Court.

Before deciding on a legal career Buck, in June of 1962, joined the new administration in Bethlehem just embarked on a pioneering experience under the optional charter form of government. An incident in August of 1962 provided insight into the strong moral and political convictions which motivated the newly appointed Assistant Business Administrator of the City. Buck and Mary Jane were arrested for loitering in Albany, Georgia. Their action had been to enter a bowling alley in the company of four friends, two of whom were black. The belief which these two shared and which led them to take a personal stand and to spend a night in jail was a burning commitment to the cause of the under-dog and of good government. Their judgment in this case has since been ratified by the United States Supreme Court and by public opinion.

My contact with Buck originated from our joint service with the City of Bethlehem. From this service Buck became convinced, and so did I, that he could more effectively carry out his ideas in the practice of law. Nor during his all too brief career at the Bar did he ever depart from this motivation.

Through his service with the Bar Association he provided much of the impetus leading to the formation of an effective Legal Aid Society, its incorporation, funding, and eventual union with the Lehigh County group. Much of his practice involved helping the poor. He was accessible to all and his warm sympathy for the little man led him to accept many difficult and financially unrewarding assignments. Both with the Public Defenders Association and on his own Buck represented those accused of crime who could not afford to pay for their lawyer.

His interest in good government led Buck to serve with enthusiasm and effectiveness as Solicitor for Williams Township and for Bushkill Township. When in 1971 he was persuaded by the Republican party to be its candidate for District Attorney, he put his whole heart and energy into the campaign. Tirelessly and at great personal sacrifice he gave his message throughout the county. That he failed to win the election reflected neither on his zeal nor his integrity.

A true environmentalist Buck served both those citizens attempting to prevent the routing of Federal Highway I-78 through Lower Saucon Township and those fighting the proposed oil pipe line to Martins Creek.

His prodigious energy led Buck to carry a load which would have burdened two less dedicated lawyers. In the past two years he frequently worked 24 hours or more continuously. Saturdays and Sundays were not immune when he knew that legal deadlines had to be met. It sometimes seemed that Buck was always pushed for time. Despite the pressures of his busy practice, he found it difficult to turn down new assignments. People learned that Buck generally returned to the office after 5. With piled up messages and new calls he was invariably on the telephone until long past 6.

Despite this over-busy schedule, Buck gladly served many public causes. Whether it was for the Red Cross or Jacobsburg Historical Society or Valley Youth House, he served gladly and effectively.

The wife of a busy young lawyer makes many sacrifices. To understand a husband's complete commitment to the law requires much love and understanding. Mary Jane provided both for Buck.

Many of us have lost a friend in Buck's tragic death. The Bar and the community have lost a tireless champion of good causes. The many people whom Buck served have lost his selfless work in their behalf.

It is respectfully suggested that when the Court adjourns this day, it do so in tribute to our departed member Darold Lee Hemphill.

November 18, 1974