

## JUSTIN D. JIROLANIO

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Remarks by Costas J. Douvanis

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May it please the Court:

I came to know Justin Jirolanio rather late in his life and spent the last five years of my practice in his office. "Jerry," as he was known, practiced law up until the very end of his life, took an active interest in both the law and in the careers of many young lawyers.

Jerry was born in 1904 in New York City and moved to the Lehigh Valley in 1916. He was educated in the local schools, in Saucon High School and in Bethlehem High School Steve Shields, with whom I shared an office with Jerry, and I often joked with him that he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Nothing could have been further from the truth. After leaving high school in 1918, Jerry worked as a laborer in a coal mine, he worked as an ironworker on the Hill-to-Hill Bridge construction, he worked as a laborer at Bethlehem Steel, and at various other jobs.

In 1923, Jerry decided to go back to school and went to the Perkiomen Prep School, in Perkiomen, Pennsylvania, which he attended from 1923 to 1925, graduating with honors in 1925. He then attended and graduated from the College of Franklin and Marshall, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1929. Again, he graduated with honors. In addition to going to Franklin and Marshall and obtaining his bachelor's degree, he met a young lady who later became his wife, Dorothy. They were married on June 4th of 1928, while Jerry was still at school. Upon his graduation from Franklin and Marshall, he went to Temple University Law School, where he graduated in 1931, and began the practice of law in 1934. At the time of his death, Jerry had been practicing for 50 years, and I can tell you that that meant a great deal to him, that he was able to practice for 50 years.

He was admitted to the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County and to the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, which he was very proud of because he was one of the founding sponsors of that Court during his time in the Pennsylvania legislature. He was a member of the Superior and Supreme Courts of Pennsylvania and the United States Federal Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

In addition to his interest in the law, Jerry was very involved in politics. He started very early as a committeeman

in his home area of Lower Saucon Township, served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for four years, from 1936 to 1940, he was an Assistant District Attorney for Northampton County, and served in the Pennsylvania Senate from 1966 to 1968. He was a frequent member of the Democratic National Convention, he was a member of the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention, and was a long-time chairman of the City of Bethlehem Democratic Party and Northampton County Democratic Party.

He and his wife, Dorothy, had one daughter, Mary Louise, who is married to Harrison Wright, both of whom are here with us today. They had three children, of whom Justin was very, very Proud: Amy, Michael and Melissa; and his granddaughter, Melissa, is also here with us today, with her husband, Joseph Kozlowski. In addition to his three grandchildren, Jerry doted on his two great grandchildren, the son and daughter of Michael, who is in Pittsburgh and, regrettably, cannot be here today.

In addition to his many professional and political affairs, Jerry was an active clubman, including his membership in many fraternal, religious and political clubs, many of which he served as solicitor and almost all of which he served without pay.

I will not speak to Jerry's personal and social life. I believe that Mr. Cohn, who he was very close to, will speak to that, but I will say that in the last six years of his life that I knew Justin, I knew him to be alert to the very end. He loved a good fight, he loved a good argument, he loved the law, he loved the people that he served, and he especially loved his wife and his family. It was a pleasure and an honor for me to know Justin and to be associated with him. Whether he liked you or disliked you, he always said one thing: that his word was his bond. That was true to anyone who knew him.

I think that all of us who knew Jerry and who had contact with Jerry and had the privilege of knowing him are better people for it.

Thank you.

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Remarks by Leonard M. Cohn

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MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT, Dorothy, Mary Louise, other members of the family and friends of the late Justin D. Jirolanio, members of the Northampton County Bar.

I have been requested to participate in these Memorial Services for Justin D. Jirolanio and I consider it to be a great honor.

I first met Jerry, and, if you will forgive me, he has always been and always will be Jerry to me, in the year 1938, the year in which I was admitted to this Bar. If memory serves right, Jerry was at that time serving in what was known as the General Assembly. Some of you who are present today will recall that the Depression was still with us and I needed a job. Indirectly, I had learned that a position was open in one of the State Departments and, upon the advice of my preceptor, paid a visit to Jerry's office. Unfortunately, I was too late; the position had already been filled but, fortunately, I met Jerry and entered into a friendship that lasted until his untimely demise. I believe that, with the exception of Lewis Long, who also is no longer with us, I was closer to Jerry than any other so-called senior member of the Bar. We spent many pleasant moments together and the term "we" certainly would include his wife, Dorothy, and my wife, Irene.

I recall walking into this very Courtroom some years ago and having Jerry beckon to me as I entered the door. I moved over to his side and he then introduced me to John Choma who had recently been elected to one of the row offices. By way of introduction he said to John, "Meet your new Solicitor." Need I say that this came as a surprise, but a welcome one nonetheless. I relate this story to indicate that Jerry frequently did things without requesting or expecting anything in return. It did, however, become a matter of frequent joshing between us since each time we went to dinner thereafter he insisted that I owed him the dinner, although I can assure you he picked up the check more frequently than I did.

I was aware at all times that Jerry was a man of unusual attributes. Becoming an attorney for him was not an easy path. While some of us were luxuriating in college, Jerry was working at the Bethlehem Steel Company as a laborer and, even while attending law school, it was necessary for him to work in order to sustain himself. If I may employ a hackneyed phrase, "He did it the hard way" and he never forgot his humble beginning and the manner in which he achieved his goal.

Jerry and Dorothy were married on June 4, 1928. They had only one daughter, Mary Louise, who is married to Harrison W. Wright. Mary Louise and Harrison have three children and

I have heard the names, Michael, Melissa and Amy, on many occasions. I can recall stopping at Jerry's house many years ago only to learn that he was on his way to see his grandchildren. This, apparently, was a daily visit for he was truly a man devoted to his family.

Jerry was a lawyer with courage. He never hesitated to undertake representation of a client accused of a heinous crime if he believed that his legal position was sound. For many years he represented the so-called "dregs" of our society because he had taken an oath to serve all who needed his help. At times he acted for so many unwholesome characters that, in the eyes of a large portion of our society, he was being tarnished by the same brush, but that never deterred him. Every trial was a battle which he fought to win and, as you know, he won many. Here was a man who was deceptive, and I use the word not in a derogatory fashion but in an admiring fashion. By his manner and by his speech, he could lull an opponent into a false sense of security, but his knowledge of the law was so vast that at the appropriate time he could lower the boom.

Many of the younger members of the Bar may not have known Jerry, for during the latter years of his life he spent only limited time in his office except, of course, for his pinochle games. Frequently, I would stop at his office and find a game in progress and the other participants were busy men who willingly gave of their time so that Jerry's time would be occupied. Many of us will remember that this was a man of integrity. No attorney ever asked Jerry to put an agreement into writing nor was there ever any need to do so. When he made an agreement or a commitment to another lawyer, writing was unnecessary.

I submit that it was indeed a great commentary upon the life of Justin D. Jirolanio when the Bethlehem Globe-Times, which does not normally favor lawyers, on October 29, 1984, printed a very lengthy editorial entitled "Party Leader Jirolanio Lived an American Life."

If it is any consolation to you, Dorothy, and your daughter and grandchildren, I want you to know that Jerry's absence is felt by many people, for his friends were multitudinous; and, in closing, I will say to the Judges of this Honorable Court, and to the members of the bar, we have lost a giant.

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Remarks by Elias W. Spengler

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May it please the Court:

I don't know that I can add to what has been said. I know that Jerry wouldn't want this to be a solemn occasion.

I can't help but recount one personal experience I had when I was an Assistant District Attorney and Jerry was for the defense. We were in front of Judge Woodring and I was questioning one of the witnesses and had a document in my hand in this fashion. Jerry came up behind me and grabbed the paper, and I took off after him, and we circled the courtroom three times before Judge Woodring was able to stop us.

As Chairman of the Committee of the Northampton County Bar Association appointed to memorialize Justin D. Jirolanio, and as one of those who has known Justin D. Jirolanio as a close personal friend and as a traveling companion, as well as in the political field and in the legal arena, I am honored to present to the Court a motion honoring this outstanding and illustrious member of the Bar of Northampton County, a former First Assistant District Attorney, Assemblyman and State Senator.

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Remarks By The Honorable Michael V. Franclosa

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President Judge Williams, Judge Grifo, Judge Freedberg, Judge VanAntwerpen, members of the Northampton County Bar, family and friends of Justin D. Jirolanio, Esquire:

I consider it a great honor and privilege to speak for the Court on this occasion. Although the word "Memorial" carries with it a connotation of sadness, the purpose of this ceremony is not to perpetuate the feelings of grief in those left behind. Instead, as always, we are making a record for future use. In this specific case, an entry which adds one more name to the list of attorneys who have left a lasting imprint on this Temple of Justice. It is right and just that we put aside current business and pause long enough to make such a record. In that way, a new generation of lawyers will come to know about the career of Justin D. Jirolanio and why he was so highly regarded by this Court.

Fortunately, the members of this Bar were able to honor "Jerry," as he was affectionately known to all of us, during his lifetime. In February, 1984, we paid tribute to his 50 years in the practice of the law. During that grand evening at Saucon Valley Country Club, we shared his fellowship and, together with him, we relived the memorable events of his professional life. Today, we are most grateful that Jerry's devoted wife, Dorothy, is here as we take one more trip down "Memory Lane." We are pleased that his daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter Melissa are able to share this moment with us. Additionally, we welcome and acknowledge the presence of Jerry's surviving brother and sisters. Finally, we wish to express our appreciation for the attendance of all those who worked with him or for him.

Obviously, this Court is deeply indebted to Messrs. Spengler, Cohn and Douvanis. As a Memorial Committee, they have delivered both a moving and admirable account of Jerry's personal life, his professional accomplishments and his record of public service. The make-up of the Committee tells us something about the breadth of Jerry's personality. It is not surprising that Elias Spengler and Leonard Cohn were among his life-long friends. They were his contemporaries -- so to speak. But, Costas Douvanis, a man much junior to Jerry, was just as eager to cultivate his friendship. Likewise, I felt privileged to be admitted into Jerry's inner circle of friends; and, I cannot recall a single incident which caused us to become self-conscious about our age differential of nearly thirty years.

It is not necessary for me to recount Jerry's career as I knew it. The committee already has given excellent coverage to the many noteworthy chapters of his life. Perhaps, a few more remarks on my part will help tie it all together so that we can capture and retain a true picture of the man.

His life spanned slightly more than eighty years. However, it is the kaleidoscopic nature of those years which is remarkable rather than the length of his days. He was no ordinary man and he did not, therefore, lead an ordinary life. Some of his days were saturated with the turmoil of legal and political battles. Other days were amply blessed with successes in his legal practice, in political caucuses, in the halls of the state legislature; and whether there were good days or bad days, nothing could either increase or decrease the joy he derived from fifty-six years of happy married life with his beloved Dorothy; his contentment was further enlarged by

three grandchildren; and, the knowledge that his own daughter's married life was on a solid footing.

His character and personality cannot be analyzed in separate pieces. All his actions reflected the joint impact of the four things he loved the most: family, the law, politics and fellowship. Moreover, within this framework, he was a man of contrasts.

For example, the effect the great depression of the 1930's had upon him and his family led him into the Democratic Party. In his early political life, he found himself on the outside of the party hierarchy more often than being included in it. Later, he gained a place in the party's leadership -- first as Bethlehem City Chairman and ultimately as County Chairman. Yet, a life spent in the thick of the fight for F.D.R.'s "New Deal", Truman's "Square Deal", Kennedy's "New Frontier" and L.B.J.'s "New Society", did not change some very conservative leanings. This was particularly true with regard to family life. For him, a wife's place was in the home; he enjoyed so called "stag affairs" and he encouraged Dorothy to be active with her own organizations. But, he firmly believed that too much "doing of your own thing" would tear a marriage apart. When we discussed the growing number of domestic cases, juvenile cases and the generally rising crime rate, he would invariably comment: "you cannot have an orderly society without an orderly home." An over-simplification for many people, but not for Jerry.

This uncomplicated view of family life did not limit his vision as a public official. He knew he was living in a changing world. But, he was not afraid to face the future. In 1967, we both travelled to Chicago as delegates to the Democratic National Convention. There, we helped to nominate Herbert Humphrey despite the demonstrations of groups opposed to the Viet Nam War. Some of the demonstrations were ugly. Jerry deplored such tactics. In addition, he believed the party platform under Humphrey had to contain a provision supporting L.B.J.'s policies in Viet Nam. In explaining his position, he borrowed a slogan uttered by Stephan Decatur way back in the War of 1812: "Our Country, may she always be right, but our Country, right or wrong."

In spite of these strong feelings, he lined-up with those delegates favoring a moderate plank which would not completely drive the anti-war faction out of the Democratic Party. Puzzled, I asked him how he could quote Stephan Decatur and overlook the conduct of the young protesters who

were rioting in the streets of Chicago. He replied: "you cannot hold them entirely responsible; after all, they don't teach kids patriotism like they taught you and me." His capacity to adjust to new ideas was revealed again in 1970. As a delegate to our State's Constitutional Convention, he directly sponsored changes in the judicial article which paved the way for retention of judges and an improved minor judiciary.

Another contrast came to light during his years as a legislator. He was a State Representative from 1936 - 1940. In that period, it was easy for him to fight for the little guy because he was still at the "ladder climbing stage" in his own life. By the time he returned to Harrisburg as a State Senator in 1966 - 1968, he had made it; and, he was well-off financially. Notwithstanding his good fortune over the intervening years, he never forgot his humble origins. In the Senate, he quickly returned to his role as a spokesman for the average citizen.

The contrasts in his personality were not as evident in his legal career. Without question, he was an outstanding attorney who built a very successful practice. His career began at a time when the trial bar was of major-league caliber. The legendary Everett Kent was still going strong. Formidable advocates such as Francis Ede, Charles Hogan, Maxwell Flitter and Edward Fox were in their prime. There were many others of equal skill whom I have not mentioned, and who could be given just as much recognition.

Jerry served as First Assistant District Attorney. His most celebrated cases occurred, however, when he was engaged in the role of defense counsel. The acquittal he won in the Kresge murder case stands as a classic example of exceptional defense advocacy.

He maintained many close friends because he worked at it. He truly enjoyed himself in the company of his friends. If he had not seen you for awhile, he let you know that you were missed. I found that beneath all the noise and bluster lay a warmth of feeling. He took life seriously; but, he did take time-off for some fun. Until his health failed him, he seldom missed a World Series, or a Masonic event. He loved to travel and to find good restaurants. And, could he get excited over a pinochle game.

All in all, Justin D. Jirolanio enjoyed a superb life. In so describing his eighty years, I do not mean to say that his life was full of happiness. Many of us were at his side when he experienced the bitterness of defeat in the courtroom and in his



political campaigns. Worse than that, many present here today witnessed the cruel setbacks of a physical nature which were handed to him, especially those afflictions he endured in the senior years of his life. What was superb was the way he handled everything. Defeat never kept him down. And, he never yielded an inch in his battle to overcome his physical handicaps. The lyrics of a popular song sums it up: Jerry truly understood that nobody promised him life was going to be a "Rose Garden."

In recognition of the distinguished career of Justin D. Jirolanio, the resolutions presented by the Memorial Committee are unanimously adopted. The record of these proceedings shall be transcribed, filed and made part of the Court Minutes. Copies thereof shall be sent to the family of our deceased colleague.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I leave you with this concluding thought to explain why you have been requested to participate in this Memorial Ceremony:

"The killing frost has touched our brother, but we go on until, beneath some Summer sun or Winter blast, friendly lips shall do for us as we for him."

What I have just quoted was uttered at a Memorial conducted by this Bar Association approximately one hundred years ago. I believe the words remain appropriate to every continuation of this tradition.

This Court now stands recessed so that we may personally greet the family of Justin D. Jirolanio. And, when the Court adjourns this day, it will do so in deep respect for his memory.

April 17, 1985