

IN RE: MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR:

GEORGE WEITZMAN, ESQ.

JOSEPH F. LEESON, ESQ.

Memorial Services held in Courtroom No. 1 in the Northampton County Government Center, Easton, Pennsylvania, on Monday, September 30, 1991.

HONORABLE ROBERT A. FREEDBERG, PRESIDENT JUDGE
HONORABLE JAMES C. HOGAN, JUDGE
HONORABLE WILLIAM F. MORAN, JUDGE
HONORABLE F. P. KIMBERLY McFADDEN, JUDGE
HONORABLE ROBERT E. SIMPSON, JR., JUDGE

THE COURT: Good morning. The Court recognizes Barbara Hollenbach, President of the Northampton County Bar Association.

MS. HOLLENBACH: May it please the Court, members of the Bar of Northampton County, family and friends of George Weitzman and Joseph F. Leeson.

We gather together today to remember and to pay tribute to those of our colleagues who have passed away during the last year. This is perhaps the most solemn and in some ways the most difficult task that the President of the Northampton County Bar Association is called upon to perform each year. It is a time of mixed emotions for all of us, for we are saddened by the passing of our colleagues and our friends even as we remember with joy their lives that touched ours.

We are appreciative of the fact that the Court has set aside this time for us to honor the deceased members of our Bar and we welcome the family and friends of those members who have gathered with us here today.

Someone once said that, "The measure of a man's life is the well spending of it, and not the length." Truly, the lives of George Weitzman and Joe Leeson, whom we eulogize today were well spent. They have left their marks on our community and on our Bar Association. George Weitzman, who died on September 11, 1990, served as President of this Bar Association in 1969. Joe Leeson, who died on April 8, 1991, was President in 1986. We miss them and the continuing leadership that they provided over the years.

Today Attorney Joseph O'Keefe will offer the eulogy for Joseph Leeson; and the Honorable Richard D. Grifo, Senior Judge, will offer the eulogy for George Weitzman. I would ask the Court to recognize first Judge Grifo and then Mr. O'Keefe.

THE COURT: Thank you. Judge Grifo.

JUDGE GRIFO: May it please Your Honor, President Judge Robert Freedberg, members of the Northampton County Bar Association, members of the Weitzman family and friends and members of the family of Joseph F. Leeson.

It is my melancholy yet privileged duty this morning to eulogize George Weitzman who left this life on September the 11th, 1990 suddenly and tragically as a result of an automobile accident on that day while he was doing his duty as a lawyer returning from a Lehigh/Northampton Transportation Authority meeting as the Authority's solicitor.

The community, the Bench and the Bar of Northampton County and his family and humanity have lost a capable and brilliant advocate of everything that is right.

And as I stand under this plaque behind me bearing the Ten Commandments, over the witness box, the results of a gift made to the Courthouse by George Weitzman in memory of his parents, celebrating the 300th year of the immigration of the Jewish people into this Country, George's effort, George's thoughts and George's general idea of what this country was all about is right there in that plaque. George recognized the contribution of all ethnics from all over the world. And to express that in memory of his father and mother, he designed it, he had it attached and it has been there ever since it was put there in 1954. As I stand under that plaque I humbly and sadly pay tribute to him.

Let me review his curriculum vitae. George Weitzman was born June the 4th, 1910, and spent all of his life in Easton. He was educated in the Easton Public Schools, graduated from Lafayette College in 1931. And graduated from the law school of New York University in 1935. And he was awarded a Bachelor of Laws degree, later changed to a Doctor of Laws by the University.

He applied for admission and was accepted by the Northampton County Court as an active practitioner in 1936. He was later admitted to practice in the Superior Court, the Commonwealth Court and the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He was also admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court, the Bankruptcy Court and the Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Judicial District, the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

He practiced law in those Courts from 1936 until his untimely death last year, except for the time spent in the United States Army during World War II.

Mr. Weitzman served in the Army from 1942 to 1946. He served with the Infantry Cavalry Reconnaissance. After his 16 months in the South Pacific as an enlisted man, he was commissioned in the Provost Marshal General Department serving as a company officer and adjutant of a military police battalion.

In addition to his private practice he was area rent attorney for Lehigh and Northampton County for two years, ending in 1947. He served as the First Assistant District Attorney of Northampton County under District Attorney Jack Raub from 1948 to 1951. In 1956-1957 he served as a Special United States Deputy Attorney General.

He was President of the Easton Community Welfare Chest Board in 1953, a member of the Board of Governors of the Easton-Phillipsburg Chapter of Lafayette College Alumni Association, a board member and four years President

of the Jewish Community Center in Easton. He was Judge Advocate of the Easton V.F.W. Post and a member of the National Legal Committee of V.F.W. And he was Solicitor to the Grace Evangelical and Reformed Church. He also was President of the Bar Association and was a member of the Easton High School Varsity "E" Club as well as the V.F.W. Home Association.

In 1962 Mr. Weitzman received a Distinguished Service Award of the Lafayette College Alumni Association Council. He was honored by the Northampton County Bar during its 100th anniversary observance for 50 years as an attorney.

He was active in the Annual Allied Jewish Welfare Appeal since its inception after being elected to the Board of Governors of the Jewish Community Center in 1946. He was re-elected for four terms, during which the center completed a vast renovation program that involved \$100,000.

In 1953 he headed the Easton Community Chest and its fund raising drive in 1952.

The Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity of Lafayette College honored him as its outstanding pledge.

He was a member of the Pomfret Club of Easton and the Country Club of Northampton County.

What a wonderful curriculum vitae to leave behind for posterity. All of us are proud to have known him and to have been associated with him in activities that concerned his community, his church and his profession.

I leave for last another part of George Weitzman. George Weitzman was a family man. His relationship with his wife, Fritz, and his son, Ellis, his relationships with his grandchildren, with his brothers and with his mother and father.

Except for his father I have known all of these people throughout my adult life. And I know the effect that George had on them personally and it's hard for me to speak about it.

George's first passion was for his family. George and Fritz had a marriage envied by all who knew them. And George was totally devoted to Fritz. She was also the greatest companion that George could have. And Rabbi Yudkin at his memorial service at the Synagogue put it so accurately when she said, "Fritz gave George the pleasure of deciding matters that were important to him, while providing a stable home and family he could always rely on and know that they were there." George was always devoted to his son, Ellis, and his wife, Colleen and was very close to them. Throughout their lives they spoke daily about their concerns and relied on each other for support.

George loved and was close to his grandchildren. He loved and looked forward to taking them out to dinner every week, and he talked about their growth and development every opportunity that he had.

George often spoke lovingly of his parents, Samuel and Celia Weitzman, and the constant love of George and his brothers, Frank and Leonard for each other and the attention that they gave their parents during their lifetime demonstrated the strength of their wonderful family that George Weitzman came from.

George's passion for his family was closely intertwined with another side of his life, his passion for his Temple. George spoke often of his fervent dedication to the Temple and spoke of his many experiences with a former Rabbi of that Temple, Rabbi Tractenberg and Rabbi Yudkin.

George was devoted to his friends and he will be remembered for his warm embraces, his sound and caring words of advice and for his unique gifts and errands: the berries that we found on our back porch or the fresh bagels, or cookies, or having been in the Circle in downtown Easton, fresh vegetables that he purchased and delivered to the back doors of his friends. And he will also be remembered so well for his completely indecipherable notes that we found all to have. And also all of us lawyers and friends alike will remember his abrupt, cryptic telephone conversations or calls.

Finally, we will miss his dedication to his profession and to the legal community.

George was widely respected by his legal colleagues, the Bench and the Bar for his strong position in the Courtroom, for his thorough preparation and for his respectful presentations in the courtroom. And we all praise him for his ability to disagree and disagree firmly but with very proper respect for the Court.

The Bench and the Bar trusted George Weitzman's wisdom and concern and felt secure when they called upon George Weitzman for legal or personal guidance.

On behalf of the Bar Association of Northampton County and as your friends of many years, I salute you, George Weitzman, and acknowledge your contribution to the community and to the Bench and the Bar of this County.

I move this Honorable Court that when it adjourns for the day you do so in memory of and in honor of our colleague, George Weitzman, Esquire:

THE COURT: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you for your remarks. Judge Hogan will respond for the Court.

JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you, Judge Freedberg.

George Weitzman and Joseph F. Leeson, barely a generation apart in time, were lawyers who competed daily at the same Bar. This Court notes their successful efforts to surpass themselves—and by earnest advocacy, to best others who challenged the cause of their respective clients.

Mr. Weitzman was a special friend of the Court and the Bar. His deeply honed personality never disguised his fine sense of priorities—full commitment to his wife Fritz, to their son Ellis, and his family, to his religion and his profession.

The trauma one suffers naturally from scores of years at the Bar never interrupted Mr. Weitzman's gracious penchant for cradling young lawyers in the lean and learning years. His active calendar never barred time to help a colleague in trouble. His complete attention to the affairs at hand never dimmed his memory for thousands of incidents—large and small—that together comprise the color of this Court. He spoke as eloquently of the past and present composition of this community and this Bar. His sensitive assessment of his role as a human being is an example to us all.

Joseph Leeson adopted this Bar and matured in this County as a lawyer. His legal career was only one of many efforts. His earlier years in the insurance industry—and his lifelong mission in the United States Navy—blended well with his ultimate goal. He set out to capture the civil defense bar, and people it with his own sailors: his sons, Joseph, Jr., and William, and his daughter, Mary Elizabeth. With his wife, Mary Louise, he is the progenitor of those who people in the respected law firm that will serve his memory well.

Mr. Leeson also had a serenity that comes when accomplishment is accompanied by the good sense to know one who was succeeding. With Mr. Weitzman, the two were quick to allow that life and the practice had been good to them and they both stood up and were counted when it was time to share that good fortune with the community. Their expansive contributions to this Court and County stand with the best.

These two gentlemen of the Bar were successful because they understood change. Change in the times did not mean dilution of their values. They both served in turn during these changes, in service to this Country, as presidents of the County Bar Association; as consultants to our political communities; as dignified advocates before the Court; as municipal advisors; and as men of extraordinary accomplishment.

The Court joins Senior Judge Grifo and counsel in their eulogies to these respected and valued attorneys. They have brought honor to themselves, their families and the law.

The resolutions of the Bar Association are unanimously adopted. A transcript of these proceedings shall be filed and copies sent to the families of those whom we recall today. When the Court adjourns today it will do so in honor of George Weitzman and Joseph Leeson, and out of deep respect for these fine lawyers.

The Court will stand in recess to greet the families and friends of Mr. Weitzman and Mr. Leeson.