

Charles S. Desmond, Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals: A Tribute

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Recommended Citation

Keating, Kenneth B. (1967) "Charles S. Desmond, Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals: A Tribute," *St. John's Law Review*: Vol. 42 : No. 1 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/lawreview/vol42/iss1/9>

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My congratulations to St. John's Law Review for the recognition accorded to former Chief Judge Desmond in this issue.

Of the Judges of the Court who were present on the last day of this past year when we gathered in the conference room of the Court for the traditional farewell to a retiring associate, I had served with the Chief the shortest period of time — a year to be exact. Yet in that relatively short time I developed a deep affection for him personally and a great respect for him as a jurist and administrator.

As the newest member of the Court, I had the pleasure of sitting immediately to the right of the Chief at the round table of the conference room. It was from that vantage point that I was able to view at close range this dynamic, but never domineering, man keep order among seven men of rather determined views whose arguments in the conference room were often more heated than those in the court room.

It was during those battles in conference that I was exposed to the brilliance of his mind, the incisive lucidity of his tongue and the kindness of his heart; to those qualities that made him a most effective administrator of the Court, an outstanding appellate court judge and a close and dear friend.

By command of the Constitution whose provisions he has always so dedicatedly applied, he has retired from the Court but fortunately not from an active role in public affairs. As a Delegate to the Constitutional Convention, he will bring to that body the benefit of his many years of legal experience and a vast store of knowledge. As a man, he will continue to inspire those who are fortunate enough to know him by his spirit and zest for life.

Go mairigh se do!

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