TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE ALBERT G. SCHATZ

THOMAS F. HOARTY, JR.†

Judge Albert Schatz is remembered fondly by all who knew him, but especially so by those of us who began our legal careers as his law clerks. The warmth with which the Judge welcomed each of us into his judicial “family” is something that will never be forgotten. Judge Schatz was to each clerk a learned teacher, a compassionate critic, and above all, a good friend.

Judge Schatz had the utmost respect for the American judicial system and for the United States District Court on which he served. He welcomed the challenge of the many complex legal questions presented to him. However, the Judge took particular enjoyment from the contact which he had as a federal trial judge with the people involved in the judicial process. He made both veteran trial attorneys and brand-new lawyers handling their first cases feel at ease in his courtroom. He received the testimony of all witnesses with consideration and attention. But most of all, the Judge treated with courtesy and respect those indispensable private citizens who gave their time and effort to sit as jurors on his cases. Perhaps it was his background as a trial attorney which caused him to give us this philosophy of life: Be sure to treat each person you meet as though he or she were going to be sitting on your next jury.

This deep concern and respect for the people affected by his decisions caused Judge Schatz to take particular care when he was assigned the task of implementing an integration plan for the Omaha Public School System. His creation of a broad-based citizen advisory committee, and his careful concern for the children and parents of all races, fostered in all parties a resolve to reach a fair plan, which was later renowned nationwide for its peaceful and cooperative implementation.

It was Judge Schatz’ privilege to serve the judicial system as an advocate and as a trial judge, and it was the privilege of his law clerks to see put into practice in his courtroom on a day-to-day basis the principles and ideals upon which that system is based.

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