

(February 22, 2002)

THE MARSHAL: The Honorable Judges of the United States Courts; hear ye, hear ye, hear ye. The United States District Court for the District of Nebraska is now convened in ceremonial session; the Honorable Richard G. Kopf, Chief Judge, is presiding. God save the United States and this honorable court.

Please remain standing for the presentation of colors and our national anthem.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: I now call upon the Girl Scouts of America to present the colors. You may proceed.

GIRL SCOUT: May I have your attention, please. Will everyone please remain standing for the presentation of the colors. Color guard, advance.

Will everyone please join me in honoring our flag by reciting with me the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you, ladies.

I'll now call upon Camille Metoyer Moten to sing our national anthem. Camille?

(National anthem sung.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: You may be seated.

Good afternoon. This is an important day in the life of our court. Before we proceed any further, I want to

introduce my colleagues on the bench. To my far right is The Honorable Warren K. Urbom, Senior United States District Judge. And seated immediately to my right is The Honorable Joseph Bataillon, United States District Judge.

Our other colleague, Judge Shanahan, will not be with us but sends his -- because of illness, sends his sincere regrets. And I know he has corresponded with and spoken to Judge Smith Camp.

A ceremony such as this is unique in that the judge is allowed and encouraged to design the ceremony in such a way that it reflects her own individual personality. And the judge has done this.

In that regard, the judge has indicated that she would like to begin with an invocation. Despite what you've read in the newspapers --

(Laughter.)

-- I am not the Antichrist. And while -- when my -- well, I won't.

(Laughter.)

The Reverend Kathryn Campbell, the Associate Minister of the First Plymouth Congregational Church is present. We would like you to give an invocation. If you would proceed, please?

REVEREND KATHRYN CAMPBELL: I want to say that I am very grateful to be a part of this occasion because as we

become more aware of other parts of the world, the way people live in other parts of the world, I at least become ever more grateful for living in this country that is founded on freedoms and where our freedoms are guaranteed and structured by our Constitution and laws as interpreted by a strong judiciary, and not subject to the inclination of one individual or a small group of people.

And therefore, on a day like this, I think we gather not only to honor Judge Smith Camp, but to honor our system and the ideals on which it's founded. So let us turn to our Creator and bring our needs, our hopes, and our thanksgivings. First with a moment of silence as we become attuned to that presence.

Ruler of all people and all nations, on this occasion we are again aware of the blessings of freedom, to speak and move about, and worship you without fear. And again, we are aware of the challenges of living together peacefully with fairness, economic, political and social, to all citizens.

We remember with gratitude our best times when, forgetful of self, we served only the good of your people and were true to the highest ideals of ourselves, our land, and our faith. May it ever be so.

May each one of us be ever open to your guidance which cherishes each particular person and is captured by no ideology, no judicial or political position. Help us to be

attentive to the nudges and hints, internal and external, by which you point us in the direction of your holy will.

We pray for Laurie Smith Camp. May she each day know that her courtroom is a holy place where a sacred trust has been entrusted to her hands. May she and all of us be given the strength to do your will through our laws and Constitution as best we can discern that; and in that effort be attuned to your presence, your forgiveness, and your steadfast love for which all honor and glory be yours and yours alone. Amen.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you, Reverend Campbell.

Judge Smith Camp has chosen three people who are knowledgeable about her and I think are going to speak about differing aspects of Judge Smith Camp.

The first is Dr. Cindy Melby Phaneuf. Dr. Phaneuf had a little difficulty getting into the courthouse today. She didn't bring her picture I.D. And as a consequence the U.S. Marshals, ever guarding our security, held Ms. Phaneuf at the door until our Clerk of the Court could go rescue her.

Dr. Phaneuf, we're glad to have you here. You're a Professor of Theater at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and founder and artistic director of the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival, and we'd love to hear you. You may proceed.

DR. CINDY MELBY PHANEUF: Well, I'm very happy to

be here and I'm glad they let me in.

I was so honored that Laurie asked me to speak. And I've prepared a speech. We're told three minutes or less and I've done that, so a little more formal than my usual style.

It's no surprise to those of us who know and love Laurie Smith Camp that we are here today celebrating her Presidential appointment as a U.S. District Court Judge. Her insightful and quick mind, her sense of fair play, her grasp of the law, and her understanding of people make her ideally cast in this position. Yes, the Burke High Class of '71 knew what we were doing when we voted Laurie "Most Likely To Succeed".

Laurie and I met in high school and have remained friends ever since. Our friendship was nurtured in the arts, as we did high school plays and musicals together. As we went off to college, it was Laurie who advised me to teach what I love, theater and dance. And for that bit of wise counsel I will always be grateful.

Because of Laurie's wise counsel I have had the privilege of living my life in the arts. As an artist, Laurie, I am grateful to you and your colleagues for protecting our freedoms. Governments have long been aware of the power of the arts to open people's eyes. Artists have long been aware of the importance of the Constitution

and Federal Courts to preserve our freedom of expression and freedom from censorship.

As I think of the fate of art and artists under repressive regimes such as the Taliban where theaters are closed and works of art are destroyed, I am grateful to a country that places faith in the individual to sort through divergent points of view.

I am also grateful to members of the judiciary who, like you, have an appreciation of the humanities -- art, literature, music, and theater -- to help them understand the human dynamic of cases that come before them, rather than engaging in a computer-like application of the law. And once the work of art is created, I am grateful to copyright and intellectual property laws that allow the artist to make a living.

In conclusion, it occurs to me that art and law have much in common. Both are engaged in discovery, both are involved in a search for the truth. Both art and law in their own ways seek to make the invisible visible. Art can nourish the roots of our culture and give us images of what we might be only if the Constitution and judiciary allow artists to live in a world where they are free to follow their vision - wherever that may take them. Art can astonish, intrigue, and delight, but only in a society that sets us free, nurtures our dreams, and preserves our

individual rights.

Laurie, knowing you are mindful of these issues, and with your integrity, sensitivity, intelligence and passion for your work, we know we will be well served. Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you,
Dr. Phaneuf.

The hardest job in the world -- and it isn't, although we whine about it all the time, being a judge -- the hardest job in the world is what Harold Clarke does. Being responsible for a prison system in these times is an enormous responsibility. And Director Clarke has just done a magnificent job. He's had help along the way and he's going to speak to us about that. Director Clarke?

MR. HAROLD CLARKE: I feel like I ought to swear in first.

(Laughter.)

Members of the judiciary, distinguished guests, ladies, gentlemen, and colleagues: I am privileged and honored to stand here today in praise of Laurie Smith Camp, the newest federal judge in the District of Nebraska, and may I also add the first female federal judge as well.

I have long admired Judge Camp for her grace, her humility, and concern for others, and have valued her wise counsel over the years. In the decade of the 1980s, I was

negotiating the career ladder within the Department of Correctional Services. Along with success came many new challenges. One of the unwelcome challenges was litigation.

In 1981 I was the assistant superintendent of the trustee dormitory of the state penitentiary when I received my first summons. It caused a period of anxiety which ultimately ended with a verdict in my favor.

Today, unfortunately I am no stranger to the courts because of the volume of litigation that I've been involved in over the years.

In 1987 while I was a warden at the Nebraska State Penitentiary, Laurie Smith Camp was a legal counsel for the Department of Correctional Services. I recall that she and I were involved in a meeting with members of the Attorney General's office, the plaintiffs, and their counsel. I was expecting my attorney to mount an aggressive defense in response to the litigation at hand.

I was initially dismayed and concerned with Laurie's performance because as opposed to the aggressive posture in my defense that I expected, she was kind, and friendly, and gentle towards the plaintiffs. Very troubling, I must say.

(Laughter.)

She seemed genuinely interested in what they had to say and treated the plaintiffs and their counsel with the utmost respect. To make a long story short, we prevailed in that

case; and I developed as a result a whole new, improved perspective of the adversarial process. Such a process need not be contentious but marked by civility.

Laurie also demonstrated in another setting that she can also be firm. A few years ago she was called upon to represent the Attorney General's office before a committee of the Legislature. A senator asked her a question and then proceeded to answer the question while Laurie sat patiently and listened to him. The senator was not being complimentary of the Attorney General's office. After he got through answering his own question, Laurie attempted to respond to the original question only to be told by the senator that he did not wish to hear her response.

Laurie Smith Camp firmly and with all due respect said, "Senator, you asked a question and I want to answer it." She then proceeded to calmly and deliberately respond to the question. I don't believe that the Attorney General's office could have found a better representative to address the Legislature on that occasion, perhaps with the exception of Marie, my wife.

(Laughter.)

Character is not a matter of outward technique but of inner reality. I'm impressed by Judge Camp's authenticity. I believe that she's an individual who will keep her oath, even when it hurts. It is my experience that she can be

counted on to consistently make the right choices, choices that are just, fair, and moral. The fruits of such a person, as it is written, are kindness, justice, and self-control. Against such attributes, there is no law.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you, Director.

We'll now hear from Mike Mullin, the President of the Omaha Bar Association. Mike?

MR. MICHAEL MULLIN: Thank you, your Honor.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: You're welcome.

MR. MICHAEL MULLIN: Members of the judiciary, elected officials, distinguished guests, and most importantly Judge Smith Camp, Abby, and Jonathan, good afternoon.

I'm here today as President of the Omaha Bar Association. My name is Mike Mullin, and I'm here not to just introduce the newest member of our federal judiciary here in Nebraska, but more importantly the newest member of the Omaha Bar Association.

(Laughter.)

It is, indeed, an honor to be a part of this wonderful ceremony.

The Omaha Bar Association has had a long tradition of service to the profession, to the public, and to the civil justice system. I'm extremely proud that the federal

judiciary in Nebraska has played a strong role in carrying on that tradition from Judge Lyle Strom who was president of the OBA in 1980 to Judge Riley who was my predecessor in office just last year.

The federal bench in Nebraska has been a haven for respected attorneys who have had a dedication to public service and who have given back much more to their profession than they have taken. This tradition continues in an exemplary fashion with the appointment of Judge Smith Camp to the federal bench.

Dean Roscoe Pound said a profession is a group pursuing a learned art as a common calling in the spirit of public service which is no less a public service because it may incidentally be a means to a livelihood.

Although Judge Smith Camp's livelihood has been that of a lawyer, her commitment to public service has set a standard that very few, if any, can match in Nebraska. Judge Smith Camp has served as Chair of Nebraska's Federal Practice and Civil Justice Reform Committee. She is past president of her local Inns of Court organization. She was director of the Nebraska County Attorneys' Association. She has been director of the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime. She has chaired the Bar Foundation's high school mock trial case committee. And she is also a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association's Committee on Legislation.

Furthermore, two years ago Laurie was named a lifetime fellow in the Nebraska State Bar Foundation which is indeed a high honor.

Now, I could go on and on. That's only a few of Laurie's many accomplishments and a few of her instances of public service. Unfortunately with the two- to three-minute time limitation I was given, I can by no means recite everything she has done throughout her career which shows a true dedication to her profession and to public service.

On behalf of the Omaha Bar Association, we welcome you to our organization as well as to our legal community. The Lincoln Bar Association's loss is the Bar Association of Omaha's gain. We welcome you to our community and to our legal community as well. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: The program now says remarks by honored guests. And when Laurie sent me the program, she said it's up to you to handle that.

(Laughter.)

And by that she meant that I was responsible for trying to figure out how to get this thing over with in less than three or four hours. We have so many honored folks that are here and I'm going to try to do that but briefly.

First of all, I would like to ask Todd Franzen to stand. Todd, would you stand and be recognized? Todd represents

Senator Chuck Hagel. The senator was unable to be here, we're sorry but he sends his best. And Todd has brought along a letter which I'll be happy to read in a moment. Todd, thank you, and thank the senator very much.

Next to Todd is Brian Ennis, our new United States Marshal. Brian, thank you very much. We most particularly appreciate the svelte handling of Dr. Phaneuf in getting into the courthouse.

(Laughter.)

Thank you, sir.

Our acting Bankruptcy Clerk, Diane Zech is here. Diane, thank you very much. It's our pleasure to have you with us.

Craig Saigh, our Chief Probation Officer; Craig, thank you very much.

And Donald Ranheim, our Chief of Pretrial Services; Don, thank you for being here as well.

I want to call upon some additional honored guests and their spouses. And I'll begin with Judge Riley. Judge Riley is the newest -- actually not the newest, the second newest member of the United States Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit. His colleague, Mike Melloy, was just confirmed I'm told. And Judge Riley, we'd love to hear from you, and if you would introduce Norma Riley.

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM RILEY: Thank you, Chief Judge Kopf. I want to introduce my wife, Norma, who is

here.

I also want to congratulate Laurie Smith Camp on this honor, and she's going to do a great job. And as a part -- as most of you know, the 8th Circuit includes a state called Missouri. And in that state there was a wonderful gentleman called Samuel Clemens, Mark Twain. And he had a saying that I think is applicable for judges, and that is, he said, "Always do right. That will gratify many and astonish the rest."

(Laughter.)

And I think you will do that.

I would like to, if I may, Chief Judge Kopf, pass on some words that Judge Lyle Strom gave to me at my investiture which were passed on to him from Judge Robert Van Pelt. And the words go like this: Laurie Smith Camp was the individual that impressed her colleagues, impressed the public, impressed her clients. Laurie Smith Camp was the one who impressed Senator Chuck Hagel, Senator Ben Nelson. And Laurie Smith Camp is the one who impressed the President of the United States.

So as you become a United States District Court Judge, you will do fine and be a great judge as long as you continue to be yourself, Laurie Smith Camp. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you, Bill.

Let me next call upon the Honorable C. Arlen Beam,
Senior United States Circuit Judge.

Judge Beam, would you introduce Betty to us, please?

THE HONORABLE ARLEN BEAM: May it please the Court,
as we approached the door coming in a while ago, a voice
from Professor John Gradwohl of the law school says, "Hello,
your Honor." I looked around, and he says, "I'm not talking
to you, I'm talking to Betty."

(Laughter.)

And he was right.

Laurie, Betty and you and I have been friends for many
years. And I think that permits me to say that you're going
to be a wonderful judge. You have all the attributes and
the people of this district will be as proud of you as they
are of all of your associates and your past associates.

So, from Bill as one of the newest judges in the
circuit, not my age, I'm one of the oldest, welcome to the
federal judiciary and welcome to the art of doing justice.
And I'm sure that you'll do that.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Chief Judge Timothy
Mahoney challenged me to grow a beard, so I'm trying, but
I'm losing.

(Laughter.)

Judge Mahoney, will you give us your remarks.

THE HONORABLE TIMOTHY MAHONEY: Thank you, Chief Judge Kopf. You're doing a fine job, sir.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you.

THE HONORABLE TIMOTHY MAHONEY: Judge Smith Camp, congratulations on your appointment and welcome to the judicial family here in the District of Nebraska.

See you later.

(Laughter and applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Seated next to Judge Mahoney is Magistrate Judge Kathleen Jaudzemis who will be assisting the judge with her civil docket. And she and Judge Thalken will be assisting the judge with her criminal docket. Judge Jaudzemis.

THE HONORABLE KATHLEEN JAUDZEMIS: Judge Smith Camp, congratulations. It is with great delight that we all have welcomed you to the Court. And I look forward to working with you as you continue what has been a lifetime career of public service that has brought both great honor to you and great happiness to all of us who have been on the other end of all of your good work.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Judge Thalken.

THE HONORABLE THOMAS THALKEN: Well, Judge Smith Camp, welcome to the judiciary here in Nebraska.

Congratulations on your appointment, congratulations to the Nebraska delegation for their wisdom and their recommendation, for the President in his appointing you, and for a Congress and for the Senate in confirming you.

And you do have the distinction of beating Judge Riley already by receiving more confirmation votes than he did. I congratulate you on that fact.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Judge Kenneth Stephan from the Nebraska Supreme Court and his wife, Sharon. Judge, will you give us your remarks, sir?

THE HONORABLE KENNETH STEPHAN: Thank you, Judge Kopf.

Judge Smith Camp, on behalf of my colleagues at the Nebraska Supreme Court, we offer our congratulations and best wishes as you begin this new phase of life.

We'll miss you in the Capitol, but we hope you'll stop in and say hello once in a while.

I'd like to introduce my wife, Sharon. For those of you who may not know, her father, Senior Judge Don Ross, practiced law for many years with Judge Smith Camp's late father, Edson Smith. So it's a special privilege for us to be here today.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Indeed.

Chief Judge John Irwin of the Nebraska Court of Appeals

is here. John, will you tell us something about your views of Judge Smith Camp?

(Laughter.)

THE HONORABLE JOHN IRWIN: Good afternoon. First of all, everyone should know that we -- at least everyone up here was not aware of the fact that we were going to make remarks, probably because Judge Kopf has heard me talk and knows I go on forever if I have enough time.

For those of you who are directly involved with the legal system, you may understand somewhat the life of an appellate court judge. Suffice it to say it's monastic. I used to be a trial lawyer until ten years ago. Now I've been a Court of Appeals judge for ten years. So Laurie, whenever I get an invitation, I come.

(Laughter.)

Obviously kidding. It's wonderful to be here on behalf of the Nebraska Court of Appeals. Welcome and congratulations.

Laurie appeared in front of us several times and was a wonderful person, always prepared, excellent arguments. I don't believe I could surpass some of the compliments and comments that have been made, so I won't try that.

But from a personal standpoint, I did want to say this: In my immediate family my wife and I have two daughters. And I have been totally impressed by this program and the

involvement of young women, the involvement of all women. And I think you're just a wonderful role model and deserve a ton of congratulations for that.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you, John.

We have with us Laurie's former boss, the Attorney General of the State of Nebraska, Donald Stenberg. Don?

ATTORNEY GENERAL DONALD STENBERG: Thank you, your Honor.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: You're welcome.

ATTORNEY GENERAL DONALD STENBERG: First, let me offer my congratulations, Laurie. I know you'll make an excellent federal judge. We're very pleased to have you on the bench.

I know in the future I'll be referring to her as "Your Honor," but since I've been calling her Laurie for the last seven years... I know I'm not supposed to do that.

I do have two brief stories that I'd like to share. And the first is how it came about that Laurie was the first female Deputy Attorney General in our state's history. And it really all began with an inmate's missing Playboy Magazine which was 1982.

I probably met Laurie in the late 1970s, but I first saw her professionally when I was the Director of the Department of Administrative Services. And in that capacity, I chaired

the State Claims Board. And Laurie was a lawyer for the Department of Corrections at that time. And one of her duties was to appear before the Claims Board and present the claims that inmates were making and then to present the Department's views. And time does not permit all of the excellent stories that come out of those.

(Laughter.)

But one of my favorites was the inmate that put in a claim for his missing Playboy Magazine. And Laurie made an excellent argument on the thing as she always did. She was about 99 percent on these inmate claims. But we finally decided that he should have known that he was surrounded by people that weren't all that honest, and it was kind of an assumption of risk and contributory negligence thing. We denied the claim.

(Laughter.)

When I became Attorney General, I organized the office and I wanted to specialize. And one of the sections that I created was inmate litigation because we have several hundred lawsuits filed against the State each year by inmates.

And I remember Laurie's work as well as the fact that she had been summa cum laude at Stanford and editor-in-chief of the Nebraska Law Review and counsel of the Department for about ten years. And I asked her to join our

office and she did. When Sam Grimminger left after my first four years, I promoted Laurie to be Deputy Attorney General. And she was later named as the Outstanding Manager in State Government of the Year by the National Management Association. So we were very pleased with that.

The other is Laurie's work has actually in the Attorney General's office well reduced to some extent her case load in the federal courts. A number of years ago I chaired the Corrections Subcommittee of the National Association of Attorneys General. And the problem that we identified at that time was all the federal court inmate cases that the states were dealing with. So I volunteered to address that problem. And whenever the Attorney General volunteers, it means one of his staff will be helping.

(Laughter.)

And so Laurie put together a paper on concepts of how we could reduce inmate litigation in the federal courts. That was eventually presented to the Congress and adopted and is now the law. It reduced in the first year our inmate cases in the federal courts to one-third what they had been previously. And there were similar results in many other parts of the country, so you've helped yourself as well as helping the Attorney General's office. So all our best, Laurie.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Another friend of Judge Smith Camp and an elected official, Kate Witek, our state auditor is here. Ms. Witek.

STATE AUDITOR KATE WITEK: Thank you, your Honor.

This is my first investiture, I don't know if it will be my last. I didn't know all these things about Laurie Smith Camp when I met her. I was a first year state senator carrying a huge crime bill that the Attorney General wanted to put in. I knew very little about the law at that time and Laurie Smith Camp had the patience and the grace to work with me all that session to learn as much as I could, even though she stood there knowing that she could do a much better job than I could have.

So, everybody who gets to work with her, she makes you look good. Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Another close friend of the judge is Mike Heavican, our new United States Attorney. Mike?

MR. MICHAEL HEAVICAN: Thank you, your Honor.

I have known Judge Smith Camp for many years and worked with her on many projects. I know she does a wonderful job as everybody indicated on everything she does.

And on behalf of the United States Attorney's office, we look forward to working with you again in your court. Best

of luck.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: David Stickman, our Federal Public Defender. David?

MR. DAVID STICKMAN: Thank you, Judge. And thank you for saving the best for last.

(Laughter.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: I thought you were going to plead not guilty.

MR. DAVID STICKMAN: I was going to convince all these people that I need to plead not guilty. I don't know.

Judge Smith Camp on behalf of the Federal Public Defender's office, I'd like to offer our assistance in whatever way that we can.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Be careful, Laurie.

(Laughter.)

MR. DAVID STICKMAN: The wisest words perhaps I could give you are that when you listen to the defense counsel's arguments in a criminal case, know first of all that they're always right; but second of all, know that it's important to listen to defense counsel's remarks, especially in a criminal case, because the government in this country has an enormous amount of power. And our whole system is geared towards allowing the government to exercise that power against an individual.

It's through you as a judge, a defense attorney, that a person is able to exercise the constitutional rights which we all hold so dear. And so I encourage you to remember now that your role as a judge is going to be to make sure that justice is done and make sure that you listen to us. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Judge Smith Camp's colleagues, three of us, are here. Judge Lyle Strom is in Montgomery, Alabama, trying a case, helping the federal court in Alabama. And he wishes he could be here rather than in Montgomery. I imagine he wishes he could be anywhere other than Alabama.

As I indicated Judge Shanahan desired to be here, was supposed to be here, and he's been into the office a couple of days this week and is just tired. And so he thinks it better that he not be here and we understand. But he is so excited to have you here, as you know. I think he told you that on Tuesday.

We have Judge Warren Urbom here who is a special man. And he told me that one of the first things you wanted to do was to go get your Dutch uncle talk from Judge Urbom. And I'm going to let him give you another one now. Judge Urbom?

THE HONORABLE WARREN URBOM: Laurie, Abby, Jonathan, friends of Laurie's, as the most senior of all the

senior judges of the District of Nebraska -- there are two of us --

(Laughter.)

-- I welcome you, as the least senior of all United States District Judges in the district, to the best job in the world. At least it has been called that by knowledgeable people. It is called that because of what it offers and what it demands. And it offers and demands the same thing: The doing of justice.

You will soon be receiving your robe. And that robe will be a symbol of the doing of justice and your commitment to it. There will be occasions, countless ones, when you feel the weight of that robe. One of the scenarios I can suggest to you that will be over and over in your experience is where two or more advocates appear before you and present their positions with intensity and passion and reason. And you will be entranced by all of them, by the humanity, the logic, the sensibility of those positions.

The lawyers will speak. And suddenly they will stop and be seated, and all eyes will turn to you. The transitional moment has happened. The shift is from them to you, from lawyer to judge. And what you know is it is decision time. You will know there is nobody else to make the decision but you; no boss, no board, no conferees, it's just you.

What you will also know is that the words you use after

that transitional moment will say to the people who the lawyers represent: This is what justice is. In a larger sense, what you say after that transitional moment will let all of us take from the pool of knowledge and experience your contribution in determining whether this job will continue to be the best job in the world.

Welcome to it.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Joe, you get to follow that.

THE HONORABLE JOSEPH BATAILLON: I'm thankful that I'm no longer the junior member of the bench, Judge.

I've had the opportunity of working with you in the last few months, and I look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you very much for joining the bench.

I am fully confident that you will have tremendous success in our profession and will be an outstanding judge. And frankly, your unique government background and managerial experience will complement our court and make us a better organization to face the problems that this court is going to have as we transition over the years into the electronic case filing system and the myriad of laws that the Congress continues to heap upon us to judge.

So congratulations very much and welcome on board.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Gary D. McFarland is our Clerk of Court, and Gary will read the Presidential Commission.

Mr. McFarland, you may proceed.

MR. GARY McFARLAND: George W. Bush, President of the United States of America; to all who shall see these presents, greetings: Know ye; that reposing special trust and confidence in the wisdom, uprightness, and learning of Laurie Smith Camp, of Nebraska, I have nominated and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, do appoint her United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska and do authorize and empower her to execute and fulfill the duties of that office according to the Constitution and laws of the said United States, and to have and to hold the said office, with all the powers, privileges, and emoluments to the same of right appertaining, unto her, the said Laurie Smith Camp during her good behavior.

In testimony whereof, I have caused these letters to be made patent and the seal of the Department of Justice to be hereunto fixed. Done at the City of Washington this 24th day of October, in the year of our Lord 2001, and of the independence of the United States of America the 226th.

By the President, George W. Bush; Attorney General, John Ashcroft.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: If that doesn't send a chill up your spine, this will.

Judge Smith Camp, will you stand, please, and repeat after me.

I, Laurie Smith Camp

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: I, Laurie Smith Camp

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Do solemnly swear

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Do solemnly swear

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: That I will administer justice without respect to persons

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: That I will administer justice without respect to persons

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: And do equal right to the poor and to the rich.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: And do equal right to the poor and to the rich.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: And that I will faithfully

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: And that I will faithfully

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: And impartially discharge

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: And impartially discharge

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: And perform all the duties incumbent upon me

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: And perform all the duties incumbent upon me

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: As a United States District Judge

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: As a United States District Judge

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Under the Constitution and laws of the United States.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Under the Constitution and laws of the United States.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: I will support and defend the Constitution

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: I will support and defend the Constitution

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: I take this obligation

freely

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: I take this obligation freely

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: And I will well and faithfully discharge

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: And I will well and faithfully discharge

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: The duties of the office

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: The duties of the office

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Upon which I am about to enter.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Upon which I am about to enter.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: So help me God.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: So help me God.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Congratulations.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Well, Abby and

Jonathan, now is your turn. Would you help your mom on with her robe, please?

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: One of you can take the right and one take the left.

(Jonathan and Abby help with the robe.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Judge Smith Camp, we now call upon you to make such remarks as you care to make.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: You've all heard of a captive audience, here we have captive speakers. We don't tell them ahead of time they have to stand up and say something nice, but it felt good. Thank you.

I thank all of you for participating in this ceremony today. Many of you with your good names and reputations expressed your support for my nomination. Many more of you were contacted by the White House, by the Department of Justice, the FBI, the American Bar Association, and the news media. Thank you for being so tactful.

(Laughter.)

Of the first twelve judicial nominees confirmed by the United States Senate, two were from Nebraska. I will never be able to express my gratitude adequately to Senator Hagel for the outstanding job that he did in ensuring the confirmation. And also Senator Nelson. I appreciate that very, very much. I'll do my best to ensure that their confidence in me was not misplaced.

Kathryn, thank you for coming up from Lincoln today to provide the invocation. Kathryn and I served together on the State Board of Directors of the United Church of Christ. I had never before served on a board of directors that spent so much time praying. Now, I see that was a good business practice.

(Laughter.)

Cindy, thank you so much for coming back early from auditions in New York City to speak today. Cindy knows me better than anyone else in the room, and she was disappointed that the FBI did not contact her because she claims to have lots of stories.

(Laughter.)

Harold wasn't sure he wanted to come and speak today. As you know, he spends enough time in federal court. Harold has been my coworker, my supervisor, my client, and my friend for more than 20 years. I'm very grateful that you did come, Harold. Thank you very much.

HAROLD CLARKE: My pleasure.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: Mike, thank you so much for making me feel welcome in the Omaha Bar. I do feel welcome. It is a wonderful bar association.

The Omaha Bar has a wine tasting party tonight at 5:30. I told Mike that if he would come and make a few remarks, I would make sure that all the Omaha lawyers are out of here

in time to meet their wine tasting obligations.

(Laughter.)

MR. MICHAEL MULLIN: Everyone's invited.

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: When I see Omaha lawyers these days, almost invariably they say to me, I hear you have a wonderful staff. And that's true, I do. So I want to introduce each of them to you now. As I ask each of them to stand up and turn around, perhaps they can remain standing until I introduce all of you because we've got a little video going, and it would be nice to have all of you on the video.

Mary? Mary Buckley, do you want to go first? Mary is a career law clerk in my chambers. She had clerked for both Judge Kopf and for Judge William Cambridge and has seven years of experience in the Federal Public Defender's office.

Pat? Pat O'Leary Kiscoan is another career clerk in my chambers. Pat clerked for Judge Warren Urbom and has ten years of civil litigation experience in Minnesota.

Janet Bartels? Janet was my secretary in the Attorney General's office, she is my secretary in chambers now. She has her degree as a legal assistant, more than 18 years of secretarial and administrative experience, and she served in the United States Peace Corps.

Ed Champion? Ed doesn't work directly in my chain of command, he actually works for Gary McFarland, but he has

been assigned to my courtroom as my courtroom deputy at my request. He had worked for two years as Magistrate Judge Piester's courtroom deputy in Lincoln before I persuaded him to join me up here in Omaha.

Brenda Fauber may not be able to stand up -- I'll leave that up to you, Brenda -- because she's working. Brenda is the court reporter assigned to my courtroom. She is a nationally certified real-time reporter. That means that when I am sitting up at the bench, as there are arguments and testimony proceeding, I have a transcript that appears. She calls it a rough transcript, but it looks like a pretty clean transcript to me that appears on the computer terminal at the bench. I can make notes of my own on the transcript, in the margins, and I don't have to worry about not being able to read my own handwriting.

So I am very grateful to be working with these five outstanding individuals. I'll let you sit down now.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE LAURIE SMITH CAMP: I don't allow any jokes about who among us is the weakest link.

(Laughter.)

Permit me to step back a little farther in time now to express my gratitude to more of you. Former members of the law firm of Swarr, May, Royce, Smith, Andersen & Ross -- there are several of you in the courtroom today -- thank you

for giving me opportunities to work in your office as a receptionist, a legal secretary -- secretarial assistant, I should say, and as a law clerk in the 1960s and 1970s. During those years I developed a profound respect for legal secretaries and for the work done by others outside the Bar who help our legal system to function.

I also enjoyed very much working with the lawyers in the law firm, although I was partial to one particular lawyer who took me to lunch every day, my father, Edson Smith.

Bob Berkshire, thank you for referring work to me early in my career. Bob referred to me my very first federal case. It was an appeal to the 8th Circuit -- I don't know if he remembers this or not. It was an 8th Circuit appeal. And I worked hard on the brief in the case, but I neglected to obtain a bond to prevent the plaintiff from seizing the client's assets while we were on appeal.

I remember when I sat down to discuss that with Bob, that was the first time I ever heard the phrase, "Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln..."

(Laughter.)

Bob, thank you for your friendship and your help over the last 35 years.

Many of you will recognize Elaine Spire today. I had the pleasure and privilege in the 1980s of working closely with Bob Spire when he served as Nebraska's Attorney

General. I still have my button, my "We Like Bob" button. And I'm proud of that.

I told Elaine that when I moved back home to Omaha, one of the things that I wanted to do was to become active in the Robert M. Spire American Inn of Court. Steve Achelpohl, the president of the Inn, has very graciously welcomed me as a new member to the Inn. I look forward to participating in the Inn's activities to perpetuate Bob's memory and principles by which he lived. Elaine, thank you for coming today and for your support.

Attorney General Don Stenberg, thank you for the many opportunities that you gave me over the years to practice my profession and to serve the State of Nebraska. It was a great privilege to work with you.

I don't know if you're aware of this tradition, but when a new judge is sworn into office, traditionally the judge's former law firm pays for the reception.

(Laughter.)

My father often questioned why I devoted so much of my career to public service. I told him that in the 1980s corrections litigation was on the cutting edge of constitutional law. It was exciting to go to work every day.

When he died in 1988, the articles about his life focused on the first three years of his career when he

served as an Assistant United States Attorney and brought an end to Omaha's notorious crime syndicate. When I read those articles, I had the satisfaction of saying, "I told you so."

(Laughter.)

Two other members of my family are here today: Jonathan Camp; Jonathan, would you like to stand up? Jonathan Camp is a freshman at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. And Abby Camp -- stand up too -- Abby will be a sophomore at Omaha Central High next fall.

It's great to have them both here today, but I'm not going to let either one of them behind the microphone because they're much too comfortable with public speaking. You can have a seat.

(Applause.)

My favorite public speaker is Judge Warren Urbom. Judge Urbom is a master of many things, including the use of poetry in his speeches. So I decided I would like to end my remarks today with a poem. It's a poem I first heard from my father when I was 12 years old. It contains good advice for young people and people of all ages, but especially good advice for a new judge.

If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you; if you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, but make allowance for their doubting too; if you can wait and not be tired by waiting, or being

lied about, don't deal in lies, or being hated, don't give way to hating, and yet don't look too good or talk too wise.

If you can dream and not make dreams your master; if you can think and not make thoughts your aim; if you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two imposters just the same; if you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken, twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools or watch the things you gave your life to broken, and stoop to build them up with worn out tools.

If you can make one heap of all your winnings and risk it on one turn of pitch and toss, and lose, and start again at your beginnings, and never breathe a word about your loss. If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew to serve your turn long after they are gone, and so hold on when there is nothing in you except the Will that says to them hold on.

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, or walk with kings nor lose the common touch; if neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you, if all men count with you, but none too much; if you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run; yours is the earth, and everything that's in it. And, which is more, you'll be a man, my son.

I told my father it's a wonderful poem, but the last line needs a little work.

(Applause.)

Thank you all very much for coming today. I look forward to visiting with you each individually at the reception.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Judge, will you join us on the bench?

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: A couple of letters. The first, Laurie, is to you from Senator Hagel:

Dear Laurie: Sorry I will miss your investiture on February 22nd. We are all very proud of you and know that you will be a role model on the court for all young aspiring jurists. I look forward to watching you develop into one of America's finest federal judges. Best regards to you and your family, warm wishes, Senator Chuck Hagel.

And from the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit, the Honorable David R. Hansen:

Dear Judge Smith Camp: Please let me be among the many who join today in congratulating you as you publicly assume your duties as a United States District Judge. I regret that I am unable to be in Omaha to join you and your many friends and admirers in what will be a memorable day in your personal and professional life.

The office of United States District Judge is one of awesome responsibility. The case load you will be assuming

is a heavy one. But I am very confident that your experience, intelligence, and demonstrated legal ability will enable you to discharge your new duties efficiently and effectively. The people of the United States and of the District of Nebraska will be well served by your tenure.

On behalf of the Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit, I extend a hearty welcome to you to the 8th Circuit's federal court family. We are very glad to have you as a colleague. With every good wish, respectfully yours, David R. Hansen.

I am given the privilege of making the concluding remarks on the program, and I will be brief. The first case I had as a Federal District Judge, Laurie tried and she tried and she tried and she tried... It went on a month. We started at 8 in the morning, went to 5:00 at night. We worked on Saturdays. This was a prison case. It was Klinger. On and on it went.

Well, I wasn't going to be bested by that. This was my first -- well, this was going to be -- I was really going to do it right. So I wrote a 210-page opinion.

(Laughter.)

Laurie lost. She took me up to the Court of Appeals in a ten-page brief that basically said two things: He's an idiot, the answer's Y. The Court of Appeals, in about a two-page opinion, said: He's an idiot, the answer's Y. So

it is.

What is interesting about the case is not that I'm an idiot or the answer is Y, but what Laurie did afterwards. The lawyer on the other side, Gail Perry, a fine lawyer, had taken this case pro bono at the request of the Court. And it was an enormous case. It involved the Nebraska Center for Women and all of its inmates. And she did that without any financial assistance. It was an enormous undertaking.

Before Laurie had gotten into the case, it had been really unpleasant. The lawyers didn't get along, they fought. There were cross-motions for sanctions. And finally Laurie was assigned the case and brought some order to it.

Anyway, after the case was over, guess who nominated the other lawyer for the Bob Spire Award. It was Laurie. That's the kind of grace that we have seated to my left. I don't think anything since I've been a judge impressed me more than that simple acknowledgment of an opponent's value as a person and a lawyer.

If a lawyer can see that in his or her opponent, it seems to me that we will have a truly remarkable judge. And I think we do, and we're very lucky.

Well, Reverend Kathryn Campbell, we're going to call upon you for a benediction. Will you proceed, please?

REVEREND KATHRYN CAMPBELL: Let us again unite our

hearts in prayer.

Oh, God, you have blessed us here today with new hope in the person of Judge Smith Camp, as you have blessed us with a renewal of pride in the ideals and structures of our system of government and with a renewal of humility as we see the difficult and complex task of our nation and our world as you make us ever more aware of the oneness of our world.

As we go from this place and remember and honor this occasion, may we know the blessing of continued dissatisfaction with our imperfect system, confident in your guiding hand to lead us ever toward more perfect justice and freedom for all people. Amen.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Thank you.

Ms. Moten, I call upon you to sing the American Anthem.

(American Anthem sung.)

AMERICAN ANTHEM

All we've been given by those who came before
The dream of a nation where freedom would endure
The work and prayers of centuries have brought us to this day
What shall be our legacy?
What will our children say?

Let them say of me I was one who believed
In sharing the blessings I received
Let me know in my heart when my days are through
America, America, I gave my best to you.

Each generation from the plains to distant shores
With the gifts that they were given were determined to
give more
Valiant battles fought together, acts of conscience
fought alone
These are the seed from which America has grown.

(Chorus)

For those who think they have nothing to share
Who fear in their hearts there is no hero there
Know that quiet acts of dignity are that which fortify
The soul of a nation that never dies.

(Chorus)

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Stand up again.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: That was just
gorgeous.

I will now call upon the Girl Scouts to retire the

colors.

GIRL SCOUT: May I have your attention, please?
Will everyone please rise for the retiring of the colors.

Color guard, advance.

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Our thanks to the Girl
Scouts.

(Applause.)

THE HONORABLE RICHARD KOPF: Let me remind you that
there is a reception in the courthouse atrium. Gina Brazell
and Chuck Pennington will be providing the music.

Marshal, will you adjourn, please?

THE MARSHAL: This court is in recess.

(Proceedings Concluded at 4:23 p.m.)