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IN THE DISTRICT COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE CHIEF JUDGE
THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE D PRICE AM
AND JUDGES OF THE COURT

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2014

**SWEARING-IN OF HIS HONOUR JUDGE JOHN HATZISTERGOS AS A
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Honourable B Hazzard MP, Attorney General and Minister for Justice, on behalf of the New South Wales Bar
Mr Gary Ulman, Law Society of New South Wales, on behalf of solicitors

(Commission read)

(Oaths of office taken)

PRICE J CJDC: The oaths will be placed in the Court archives and the bible will be suitably inscribed and presented to you, Judge Hatzistergos, as a memento of this occasion.

Judge, I very warmly welcome you on behalf of all the judges of this Court. congratulations on your appointment and I wish you every success in your judicial career. Mr Attorney?

MR HAZZARD: Your Honour, on behalf of the New South Wales Bar I congratulate you on your appointment to the District Court of News South Wales. You are of course known universally to many of us here anyway as Hatz. Your Honour, Hatz, I warmly welcome you to your new role following upon your long involvement in the legal world, first as a solicitor, then as a barrister and finally as a member of the New South Wales Parliament and, of course, the 53rd Attorney General of New South Wales.

As can be seen by the assembled gathering here today you are held in

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high regard. I acknowledge the many members of your extended family, your friends, your professional colleagues, your former political colleagues from both sides, other members of the judiciary and your community and particularly the former Governor of New South Wales, Dame Marie Bashir AO and also His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of the Greek Orthodox Church. I also acknowledge the former Attorneys General, Bob Debus and Terry Sheahan and many former ministerial colleagues, again from both sides.

Your Honour, as you are well aware, it is one of the functions of being Attorney General to recommend to Cabinet the appointment of individuals for appointment as judicial officers. I am able to assure your Honour that your appointment has been met with wide and strong approval. The level of support is epitomised by one such individual who knows you well saying enthusiastically, and I quote, "May I say what a great appointment". Indeed, she further emphasised that view by saying, "I am very impressed with your choice". Your Honour, that individual was your wife, Maria. I can rely on her evidence as being objective and completely reliable. She also informed me that when you first met it was at a political Christmas fund-raising function and she told me, "He was only invited because the organisers were short of numbers". I'm sure that isn't quite true but nevertheless she clearly showed as well the necessary objectivity in her provision of evidence by informing me, and again I quote, "I wasn't very impressed at first, he was being very forward." Your wife confirmed that one of your characteristics is if you want to achieve something you really go for it. You are, indeed, very forward so it is probably no surprise that within a week you had convinced her to go to lunch with you. That was the start of a lifelong romance and partnership. These many years later you and Maria now have three wonderful children, being Theophilus, now

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21, Constance aged 18 and Irene now 15 who are very proud of your achievements, all of them. Maria tells me, "John loves his family and adores his children." I should also acknowledge that your mum is here today as well.

Your Honour, your appointment has also been acclaimed across the broader community as well as other judges, solicitors and barristers and your former political colleagues. Many have acknowledged that "Hatz will make a great judge". Especially I note that Premier Mike Baird congratulated you and said, "He is a man with understandable reputation for integrity and will be an outstanding judicial officer". Former Premier Bob Carr said, "He was an intensely serious politician who took his responsibilities with all due weight. He is a very good appointment as a judge and it is excellent that he can now continue his public service as a judge". Premier Carr, by the way, also made particular mention that you were extremely proud of your Hellenic/Australian roots. Former Premier Morris Iemma observed, "Hatz is a man of unimpeachable integrity and honesty. He is a law man immersed in the value of the rule of law and principles of justice. He will make an outstanding jurist. He has a sharp, analytical mind." Premier O'Farrell said, "I congratulate John on his appointment as a judge. He will do an excellent job. He is highly regarded by both sides of politics as a person who deals with people fairly and justly". Actually I had a late addition in the coffee shop this morning from former Minister or Attorney General Debus who said, "John has a powerful ethical drive, an understanding of the law and asserts the fundamental principles of law whatever the difficulties politics surrounding him present". Your Honour, you are indeed a great ambassador for the contribution of Greek Australians to our wonderful multi-cultural community here in New South Wales.

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Your Honour was born in Sydney Women's Hospital, Crown Street, of Greek parents, Theophilus and Irene Hatzistergos, who had migrated to Australia in the fifties. You grew up in Redfern attending Bourke Street Public School and Cleveland Street Boys High. You didn't have it easy but growing up in Redfern taught you life skills and was instrumental in creating your passion for social justice.

I note there are some interesting insights into your views on life, and particularly your Greek background, to be found in speeches in the New South Wales Parliament. You referred in both your inaugural speech when entering the New South Wales Parliament in 1991 and your farewell speech when leaving in 2011 to a book entitled "All Too Human" by an author, Stephanopoulos. You were drawing a comparison to Greeks arriving in America and noting it was much the same for those arriving in Australia. The quote to which you referred was, "Greeks came to America from dozens of islands and hundreds of villages but here they formed a single clan united by heritage, language and a need to achieve. Those of us in the second generation understood honouring the sacrifices of our parents and grandparents, the labourers, cobblers, waiters and cooks, meant getting a good education and putting it to good use as doctors, lawyers, professors and politicians". Further you noted that Stephanopoulos said, "Assimilation for Greeks didn't mean blending, it required standing out." Your Honour, your Greek heritage, your profound understanding of the challenges that face immigrants whether they are labourers, cobblers, waiters, cooks or, indeed, as lawyers, professors or politicians, will serve this Court well.

Your Honour, you have also lived, on the observation of Stephanopoulos, by not just blending in but very definitely standing out. Your Honour, you have

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stood out. You continue to stand out. You've been a crusader for justice in our community and you will stand out as a major contributor in your years to come on the judicial benches. Your commitment to public service has been a guiding force in your life. Maria tells me that when you announced that you were thinking of leaving life as a successful barrister and embarking on life as a New South Wales politician at first she wasn't so keen but she understood your passion for serving your community and she joined the journey with you.

Your Honour, Hatz, sadly over the years clearly not everybody has understood you. You observed in your valedictory speech to the New South Wales Parliament that in a parliamentary journalistic parody on the TV show "Celebrity Survivors" you had been nominated for exclusion on the basis of being the most boring. You also said, and I carefully report your own words to ensure that I add not additional excitement, "I was also accused once of making the Easter Island statutes look animated". Your defence was, "I can only respond by saying that at least they are enduring". However, clearly you and those who know you well have a different perspective on your persona. I note that infamous journal of record, "Justinian", once interviewed you and when asked to describe yourself at least one of the adjectives you used was "jovial". When "Justinian" asked what was your most respected talent you replied "my charm". Well, I am pleased to report that there is corroborative evidence to back those otherwise suspect assertions.

I turn again in the first instance to the most credible witness, Maria. Your wife stated to me, and I will speak in the first person to ensure again admissibility, "I found out on that first lunch date he had a wicked sense of humour". Further, she said you were "very dry, very funny, he came out of his shell" and then she said, as if needing a little more affirmation, "with the right

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audience he has a phenomenal sense of humour". Clearly Maria at least was the right audience but sometimes, Hatz, it's obviously been difficult for you to find the right audience. But there is very corroborative evidence from Danny Eid, a solicitor who has instructed you from time to time. He confirmed, and I use again the first person, "John can come across as anti-social" but he qualified his evidence quickly by adding that "John loves to host parties by family and friends. When he does he sheds his anti-social persona and he undertakes all day barbecues. In a social setting he's very hospitable, very friendly".

In the course of gathering the necessary evidence to prepare this address I spoke to a number of fellow practitioners who unanimously confirmed your incredible capacity for work, your integrity and your compassion. A common theme was expressed by one practitioner who said, "Hatz has a sharp wit and is a deeply compassionate person".

Your Honour, the skills you bring to this role are widely acknowledged. You studied law and economics at Sydney University. You graduated in economics in 1982, in law in 1983 and a Master of Laws in 1984. You practised as a solicitor from 1983 to 1987. You then were admitted to the Bar. From 1987 to 1989 you were a senior officer at the Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions. In 1989 you were admitted to the Bar. You practised across a broad range of areas including common law, criminal law, commercial law, appellate jurisdictions and administrative law.

In 1999 you entered the New South Wales Parliament and undertook various senior roles including being the Minister for Citizenship, the Minister for Regulatory Reform, the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Fair Trading, the Minister for Justice and of course the

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Attorney General of New South Wales. Amongst your many achievements as Attorney General you implemented major reforms for freedom of information and privacy. You also facilitated the establishment of the Information and Privacy Commission. You ensured the establishment of the Australian International Disputes Centre in Sydney and implemented uniform domestic arbitration laws, intensive correction orders and forum sentencing. You also implemented major reforms to the Children's Court following the Wood Special Commission of Inquiry. You have served as an adjunct Professor at UTS Law School and an examiner with the Australian Crime Commission.

I understand that whilst you have undertaken your professional and political life you have also been a very committed family man. You have been committed to and made time, as far as is humanly possible, for your immediate and broader family. Indeed, every member of your family including your mum, your dad before he passed away, your son, your two daughters and your extended family. I understand that your three children, Theo, Connie and Irene and of course Maria, are the centre of your world.

I now turn to other interests and skill sets. I understand, which I didn't know before, you are a gym junkie and attend the gym almost daily, although, disturbingly, at least one observer tells me that he's never actually seen you work up a sweat. I'm sure that evidence can be tested. I am also told that you have a strong interest in the arts and very wide tastes in music, everything from the most modern of musical scores, as represented by the current musical, Tony Award winning "New York Playbook of Woman", right through to bands like, interestingly, One Direction. That is quite disturbing, quite disturbing. However, you have developed an abiding interest in art, and particularly Aboriginal art, and tend to collect art on your travels rather than

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traditional souvenirs. I am also told that you collect comics, but I'll leave that one aside.

You travelled extensively with your family when the opportunities arose. Unfortunately I am led to believe that your skills as a handyman may be suspect. Gary McGrath SC tells me that when you moved into his chambers after leaving Parliament you needed a desk. You headed to Office Works - I'm surprised you even found Office Works actually - you headed to Office Works and proudly returned with a do it yourself desk kit. You spent some time and great energy putting it together. Unfortunately, after all your efforts it turned out that the only way to ensure your desk's stability was to jam it against the wall, a practical if unfortunate solution and one that clearly indicated it was a wise choice to stick with your career in the law.

Your Honour, there's no doubt that you bring to this place an extraordinary range of talents, skills and commitment. As a Greek Australian with a profound sense of importance of family and a commitment to public service you will doubtlessly bring special qualities to the New South Wales District Court.

Turning again to rely on the insights from Maria her final words to me in preparation for this speech were, and I had a few conversations with Maria, and she said this in the kindest possible way, she said, "Make him look as good as he really is". I hope I've done that. Fortunately, your Honour, that's not a hard task.

On behalf of the New South Wales Bar I congratulate you and I thank you for your preparedness to accept this next significant step in your further life of public service. I am certain that your time in the District Court will further confirm how good you really are, which should satisfy Maria, and will

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demonstrate that commitment to public service which has been the hallmark of your life. Again, congratulations.

MR ULMAN: Theophilus Hatzistergos was one of seven children who came to Australia in 1954 with the understanding that he would make his fortune and after two years return to his home in the Greek island of Kos. Soon after arriving at Victoria's Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre, hailed by migrants and academics as the founding place of multi-cultural identity, Australia's Ellis Island, Theophilus was lured to Innisfail with a promise of work, a paid train fare and a \$10 deposit. That backbreaking work was cutting cane which he endured for several months. Theophilus did not return to Kos. Instead his then bride to be, Irene, braved the long sea journey on her own to join him in Australia and they were married in 1958. Renting in Redfern while Theophilus worked in various labouring jobs they subsequently became parents to three children, one of whom joins the judiciary today.

On behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales I extend my congratulations to your Honour on your appointment and wish you well as a judge of this Court.

While your late father was not spared to celebrate today with you he would be immensely proud of your achievements, as is your mother, Irene, brother Nicholas and sister Poppy, your wife Maria and children, Theo, Constance and Irene. Your parents instilled in your Honour the importance of a good education, hard work, honesty and integrity. They have imbued in you the Greek spirit and the values that have guided you and which have sustained and enriched your community life.

Being more reserved than your brother, Nick, I am told that your Honour suffered more from the schoolyard taunts and jibes about your religious and

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cultural differences during your years at Bourke Street Primary. While brother Nick would go into battle, your Honour was more likely to avoid conflict. I am also told that the highlight of the week was buying the latest Marvel comics to share with Nick. By the time your Honour entered Cleveland Boys High your interests had progressed from super heroes to Abba albums, debating and drumming in the Police Citizens Youth Club pipe band. A chance to audition for Young Talent Time never came to fruition after your father thought it would detract from your studies.

Your interests have also gravitated towards politics and larger world events and aged just 16 your Honour joined the Redfern East branch of the Australian Labour Party. It was through the Labour Party that your Honour met and later married your wife, Maria. In 1977 your Honour was the dux of Cleveland Street. With the advantage of the Whitlam era free tertiary education you studied law at university and graduating Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws and, as we've heard, your Honour also gained a Master of Laws degree in 1994.

Your Honour was admitted to practice as a solicitor in July 1983. You worked at HV Grech & DS Bannerman first as an employee and then as a principal from October to May 1986 when you moved to Beston & Riordan and, as we've heard, your Honour joined the Commonwealth DPP as a senior officer and then set up sole practice under your own name. In December 1988 your Honour was called to the Bar where you read with David McGovern.

Your Honour has an extensive page in "Who's Who" which gives some idea of the depth and breadth of your career, political affiliations, community activities and contributions to the law and the profession, I won't list them all. However, I do want to highlight your contribution to the education of both law

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students and lawyers at the Law Society, in addition to the College of Law and as adjunct Professor at the University of Technology. Your Honour has presented at Young Lawyers CLE seminars and since coming to the Bar has presented on common law practice and procedure and advocacy for the Wollongong and District Law Society. Your Honour has also written articles for the Law Society flagship journal, "LSJ", on such topics as federation and culture, reflections on the Australian constitution and intensive correction in the community.

Your Honour is the only lawyer in the family, although Constance, who is in her final school year, may be contemplating such a career, as may Irene. Theo is undertaking a Bachelor of Business while brother, Nick, is managing director of William Buck Chartered Accountants and Poppy, your sister, is a fashion designer. Interestingly, Nick is also a director of the 2014 NRL grand final winner's, South Sydney. Your three children also are keen Rabbitoh supporters and I suspect they're still celebrating that victory. It seems your Honour's move from Redfern to Canterbury in 1984 may have influenced your decision to support the Canterbury Bankstown Bulldogs. Some might say after their loss to the Rabbitohs it is time to return to your Redfern roots.

One of the solicitors who regularly briefed your Honour at the Bar described you as extremely committed and thorough with an excellent reputation as a lawyer and advocate. You were known as incisive, analytical, focused and quick on your feet and for running a very balanced practice. Your early Parliamentary career saw you head the committee which oversaw the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Your Honour's first significant promotion was when you gained the Justice portfolio. It was the late Jeff Shaw who took you under his wing when you entered Parliament in 1999 and who

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rightly predicted that you would become Attorney General.

With more than 25 years in the legal profession and 12 years in Parliament, coupled with your community and local government roles your Honour brings wealth of experience to the Bench. Your thorough and serious approach to the application of the law and consistency in interpretations will also serve your Honour well in your new role. On behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales I wish you a rewarding and fulfilling career as a member of this Court.

JUDGE HATZISTERGOS: Chief Judge, your Honours, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Thank you, Mr Attorney and Mr Ulman, for your kind words and somewhat exaggerated praise. It was observed on the occasion of the bi-centenary of our country that the eleven ships of the first fleet brought with them not only their wretched cargo of human misery but also the twin treasures of the St James Bible and Blackstone's Commentaries, but for countless centuries before 1788 this was already a country of laws and so I begin by acknowledging the first lawmakers, the law keepers of this land upon which we gather today, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and, indeed, the entire indigenous community of New South Wales. I hope that in the fairness and courtesy shown from the Bench I may continue to play a role in the long journey of reconciliation which we all share.

It is customary for many who come to the Bench, in their opening remarks, to reflect on the rule of law during these ceremonies. It is in fact our nation's greatest achievement, but my attention was recently drawn to a remarkable old case of the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission of New South Wales v Browning, an appeal from the Full Court of the Supreme Court of New South Wales to the High Court of Australia. It concerned an

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Italian born Australian, Antonio Carbone, who was naturalised in 1934 and who sought to acquire a water licence by assignment in 1946. The Commission had a firm policy of not transferring licences to Italians because, first, Italians had recently been enemy aliens, secondly, they were not good farmers under irrigation methods and, thirdly, it was undesirable to permit the aggregation of Italians in irrigation areas. The criteria were explicit. The Commission's policy was overturned by the Full Court of the Supreme Court of New South Wales but an appeal by the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission of New South Wales was successful in the High Court. The Commission's policy was upheld in what has been described as one of the worst decisions of the High Court and a low point in its jurisprudence. Chief Justice Latham even stated that he agreed with the Commission's policy.

We may pride ourselves on having come a long way since then but it's also a profound reminder that the rule of law is a work in progress and that those who administer it from the Bench from time to time must bring humility and circumspection as well as knowledge and experience to this precious task, a task which now falls upon me to share.

Chief Judge and friends, it's been amazing to be in this position and I express my gratitude to be able to come particularly to this Court. I was proud to serve it as an advocate, prouder still to protect it and defend it as Attorney General but in truth my pathway to this place was less exalting. I first commenced practice essentially in criminal law. I assisted Judge Peter Zahra of this Court from time to time doing the duty lists in Western Sydney. Later on I briefed members of this Court both past and present and then to the Commonwealth DPP. As I noted to the Director, Robert Bromwich, whose presence I'm pleased to acknowledge here today, it is interesting to see how

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many of the alumni of our vintage have fared in the years that have followed as judicial officers or, in his case, senior practitioners. It is also significant for me in another respect. It was my first encounter with the Chief Judge, then sitting at the St James Local Court as a magistrate. Since then each of us have had a number of swearing-ins for different roles. Dame Marie might correct me as she signed most of the commissions, however, I think I might be just ahead in numbers.

In any event, I'm delighted to be coming to this Court and to enter a new phase of my working life and this Court's history under a new Chief Judge and joining what is undoubtedly an outstanding team of judicial officers, but no attainment such as this is achieved alone and so I pay tribute to the many members of the profession, the professional association and their respective leaders with whom I've had the pleasure of working with over the years.

I commenced my reading at 11 Garfield Barwick under Jim McIntyre and David McGovern and from there I went to the 7th Garfield Barwick where I remained until I entered into the Ministry in 2003. It was also where I first met Gary McGrath whose friendship with me extends practically through all of my working life. Some very cruel commentators have suggested the McGraths complemented my grossly underestimated sense of humour. Be that as it may, I entered the Parliament in 1999, almost in a dreamlike fashion, no pre-selection, no pre-selection campaign and no pre-selection nomination form even or even a deposit and of all places on a ticket for the Legislative Council, the oldest legislature in this country.

On those rather uncomfortable red leather benches I was deeply conscious of the relationship between the Legislative Council and the courts which has proven to be a most interesting one. In 1856 with the advent of

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bicameralism the judges of the Supreme Court constituted part of its membership. Sir Alfred Stephen, with hopes of becoming a lord chancellor figure, accepted the presidency whilst the Chief Justice. The unhappiness of the relationship and what in retrospect can only be viewed as a failed experiment is a matter of historical record. In all, judges' presence in the legislature lasted three years. It ended following popular opposition to their presence.

The separation of powers and the development of the State's institutions as we know them owe much to these events as well as to the evolving role of the Attorney General as a bridge between the judiciary and other arms of government. These developments occurred long before similar changes in the United Kingdom brought about by the Constitutional Reform Act in 2005.

I know that for some lawyers and indeed for some members of the broader community political behaviour is seen as unworthy. On this Chief Justice Gleeson said in his 2000 Boyer Lectures the will of the people will rarely be uniform, it is almost always diverse and a large part of government is concerned with making decisions about matters of which there are conflicting interests and opinions. It is political legitimacy emerging from political debate and struggle which in a democracy makes such decisions tolerable to people adversely affected by them, to despise politics is to despise democracy. Despite some of the recent revelations that have been made elsewhere and the ongoing adversarial contest that our political system embraces, my own encounters with many members of Parliament with whom I previously served on all sides is a dedication to their communities and their respective causes.

It is however a very different environment. Too often as an MP I found

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myself drifting into what one of my former colleagues described as "typical lawyer habits". I was once told to forget reasoning and explaining because this is show business. I'm not sure that the two are necessarily mutually exclusive. On another occasion, again at the beginning of my ministerial career, I was advised by a media officer as I was going into a fully heated up press conference, she said this to me, "Minister, you know all those practice notes, the rules, the regulations, the laws of evidence and the procedure you were used to, yes, well forget them because none of them apply out there, you're going to the New South Wales press gallery, not the Court of Appeal, they can ask you about anything anyway they like." So after a few weekends of media I got called up by someone who thought it was their job to do these things and was told to stop wearing skivvies. It was asserted that I looked too much like one of the Wiggles. Now I always thought the idea of an Hellenic-looking Wiggle wasn't a bad thing but isn't it amazing that there are people who monitor such things and isn't it much easier to come to a place like the District Court with its uniform attire policy.

Hence, I had an early introduction into the political dark arts, not that I'm suggesting I was any good at them. Early on in my career my brother, Nicholas, thought that I could do with a copy of Dale Carnegie's book "How to Win Friends and Influence People". More recently, thinking that I had thus far lived an unfulfilled life, he followed up with a book titled "Things to Do In Your Fifties". Despite many difficult moments and pressures Parliament for me was a rewarding experience, not in positions I held, but in things I was able to achieve.

I learned very early however that the things that some people might regard as trivial mattered. One day I might be negotiating the

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Commonwealth/State agreement on industrial relations or the Commonwealth/State health agreement and the next day have to be answering as to why a hospital ran out of toilet paper. There is always some trepidation in a meeting between a minister and a departmental head but I remember each of them very well. Ron Woodham in Corrections settled me down, telling me that his job was to see that at the end of my term I was bruised, not battered. Robyn Kruk in Health started our first conversation by saying, "It's okay, I've checked you out and you are clean." I can't tell you how reassuring that was. My response was, "Is Health under control?" She said, "Are you kidding?" and after running me through the various issues I slumped into semi-depression for a moment only to be told, "Don't worry, one day this will all be over" and indeed it was.

After the 24/7 whirlwind I went to the Attorney General's portfolio. Laurie Glanfield told me that I could relax a bit because the courts close at 4pm and they have a break over summer, not much can happen when the courts are closed. Beyond that, however, it gave me exposure to moments of triumph and despair in the lives of others. I attended prize givings and acknowledged individual achievement at Government House investitures. I have spoken to victims, inmates in just about every correctional centre, families of prisoners, persons afflicted with mental illness, persons across the multi-cultural landscape of the State. I've been inside indigenous communities, I've sat around the camp fires, I've been to refugee centres and detention centres. I've seen persons battle addictions to illicit substances and I've seen people who use the medically supervised injecting centre. I've gone on police patrols, served the meals to the homeless and I even went on one night going around in an ambulance picking up the outcomes of a late Friday night. I visited

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correctional staff and nurses, amongst others, seriously injured in the line of duty. I've spoken to many grieving families of lost loved ones and attended some funerals. All of this goes well beyond most people's daily encounters and it is a stark reminder that the work of justice under law is but one part of a wider task of creating a society that is not simply legally just but socially and economically as well.

I was fortunate in my time as the Attorney to work with Jim Spigelman as Chief Justice, James Allsop as President of the Court of Appeal and for some time Tom Bathurst as President of the Bar Association. People will forgive me if I describe this period as unique and memorable, simultaneously effectively working with three Chief Justices. I gained much from each of them and frankly I don't know that I could have done anything half as well without them, whether it was court renovations, appointments, court procedures, uniform legal professional legislation or enhancing the profiles of the courts. I was enriched and, one might say, overloaded with sound, practical advice.

On leaving Parliament I was invited by Professor Jill McHugh at UTS Law School to become a visitor to the Faculty and take up some teaching duties for approximately 18 months. I enjoyed the role immensely and not surprisingly in the wake of the events leading up to the 2011 election you can imagine it also came as somewhat of a relief. Geoff Holland in particular, but other staff as well, made me very welcome and assisted me with coming to grips with life beyond politics. I am proud that my relationship with the Faculty continues as an adjunct Professor under the leadership of the new Dean, Professor Lesley Hitchens.

In July 2012 I was keen to return to the New South Wales Bar after a short stint at Sparke Helmore and I was fortunate to join 8 Wentworth. The

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generosity of the members of 8 Wentworth is something that I cannot speak highly enough about. Until I got my own room later in the year Gary McGrath and I shared, although I managed to camp elsewhere on the floor when members were away. The open door policy got good use during that time. Beyond that, however, I had a lot of fun dabbling in uncharted waters and sometimes going outside my comfort zone. I will miss the professional interaction and collegiality that I have enjoyed thus far and behind my more formal judicial demeanour be assured that there remains an abiding affection and respect for the profession.

I extend a special thanks to my clerk, Michael Wilcox, and the chamber's staff for all of the assistance they have provided particularly in recent days. Anyone who knows their Rumpole will know that without clerks and chamber's staff the Bar would suffer a prompt and ignominious collapse.

I want to pay tribute to all of the solicitors who have supported me in my career and in particular those brave few who managed still to do so after my return to the Bar in July 2012 despite many years of neglect in between.

In November 2012 I was appointed as an examiner of the Australian Crime Commission. My friend and colleague and former Attorney, John Hannaford, assured me that it would be amongst the most fulfilling legal work I would ever do and he was correct. Working on complex investigations and special operations often international in character was an unique experience. Memory loss was endemic amongst many of those called before the Commission but still the ACC performs an important function quietly and without much fanfare and so I thank the board of the ACC, the CEO, Chris Dawson, his predecessor, John Lawler, as well as all the staff and fellow examiners for the support and friendship that they gave me and I acknowledge

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the presence here today of Warren Gray, the New South Wales State Manager.

These things are all behind me and a new chapter now unfolds. I thank the Attorney and his government for the unique honour bestowed on me by this appointment and I thank all of you for coming and, in particular, those who took the time out to write and send messages. I have received many heartfelt messages from former colleagues and in particular past Attorneys.

John Ryan, a former Liberal MLC, gave me high praise before adding, "I hope we never meet professionally". Lachlan Menzies from my floor sent me a copy of the electronic bulletin board outside the Channel 7 building in Martin Place pointing out that under the illuminated "Hatzistergos goes to the Bench" there was what he assured me was an unrelated fall in the share price last Friday.

Many of the messages that I have received have remarked that appointments across the political spectrum are rare. In my case I do not regard them as speaking as much of myself as of the political maturity of our great community to whose service I now dedicate myself anew.

These remarks of course would be incomplete without again expressing my gratitude to my wife, Maria, and our three children, Theo, Connie and Irene, for supporting me through all of my career and into this next phase. I'm grateful to my parents and my siblings, Poppy and Nicholas, and my in-laws for all of the support that they have given me and my family during all my time in public life. Whatever pride you feel at my appointment can never outweigh the pride and the love I feel for you.

I am thankful for this honour and will strive always to be worthy of it. Those who seek justice in this Court deserve nothing less. If the Court please, thank you, Chief Judge.