

THE SUPREME COURT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

FAREWELL TO THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE STEYTLER  
PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
AT PERTH ON FRIDAY, 30 JANUARY 2009, AT 9.30 AM

**MARTIN CJ:** The Court sits this morning to mark the retirement from the Court of Justice Christopher Steytler, President of the Court of Appeal, and to acknowledge and pay tribute to his Honour's outstanding contribution since his appointment on 4 October 1994.

Before addressing that contribution I would like to welcome and acknowledge our distinguished guests commencing, of course, with the Governor of Western Australia, his Excellency Dr Ken Michael and Mrs Julie Michael, who do the Court great honour by their presence this morning.

I would also like to particularly welcome his Honour's wife Georgina and his son David. Unfortunately, his other son, Ian, is unable to be present this morning. I also welcome his Honour's grandsons Samuel and Lachlan and his granddaughter Caitlin and other members of Justice Steytler's family.

We are also joined this morning by Justice Neil McKerracher of the Federal Court of Australia, Justice Stephen Thackray, Chief Judge of the Family Court of Western Australia, Judge Antoinette Kennedy, Chief Judge of the District Court of Western Australia, Judge Denis Reynolds, President of the Children's Court of Western Australia, his Honour Mr Steven Heath, Chief Magistrate, Mr Robert Meadows QC, Solicitor General and Ms Cheryl Gwilliam, Director General of the Department of the Attorney General.

I would also like to welcome this morning many other distinguished guests, too numerous to name, including former members of this and other Courts. I would also like to particularly welcome those who will address the Court this morning, being the Honourable Christian Porter MLA, Attorney General of Western Australia, Mr Dudley Stow, President of the Law Society and Mr Craig Colvin SC, President of the WA Bar Association.

Unfortunately, we are unable to be joined this morning by all the Judges of the Court as inevitably leave and other requirements will always preclude a complete muster, but I am sure that those members of the Court who are unable to be present this morning endorse the sentiments which I am about to express on behalf of the Court as a whole.

Justice Steytler was welcomed to the Court at a ceremonial sitting held on 4 October 1994. As is customary on such occasions, his Honour's career prior to judicial appointment was charted at some length. It is therefore unnecessary to go over that furrowed ground. Rather, the focus of my remarks this morning will be his Honour's contribution to the work of the Court over the 14 years he has served as one of its members.

I venture to suggest that if those assembled this morning were asked to identify one, but only one, characteristic of his Honour's judicial career, the overwhelming majority would refer to his Honour's enthusiasm and commitment to extraordinarily hard work. He has voluntarily and willingly assumed a judicial burden which would have disabled others. This shouldn't come as a great surprise to anyone as it was, of course, a characteristic of his Honour's professional career prior to appointment.

If I can be forgiven a brief personal observation in this regard, I can well remember calling on his Honour back in 1994 to congratulate him upon his appointment. This was not a particularly arduous exercise on my part as the doors to our Chambers were about seven metres apart at Allendale Square. At the time, his Honour had only fairly recently taken silk and had both before and after arriving at the Bar acquired a formidable reputation as a commercial lawyer. His assistance was invariably sought in all the biggest cases. His future career as a senior silk was bound

to be stellar.

I approached the obvious question with my usual tact and diplomacy and asked in a tone of incredulity why on earth he would consider taking up a judicial appointment at such an early age. His Honour's characteristic modesty precluded him from giving me the real answer to my question, which was his entrenched commitment to the service of the public and the community. Rather, he responded by reference to the enormous pressure he had felt as a result of the work he had taken on at the Bar and a desire to improve the balance between work and life.

I am afraid that I replied by making a reference to leopards and spots and suggesting that moving from the Chambers of a Barrister to the Chambers of a Judge was unlikely to change the work habit of a lifetime. Fortunately for the Court but perhaps unfortunately for his Honour, that is one of the few occasions upon which my predictions of the future were accurate.

But, of course, prodigious hard work has not been his Honour's only judicial attribute. An intellectual capacity which outstrips that of mere mortals can sometimes lead to hubris or even, I have heard it said of a Judge, to rudeness to counsel, although I am sure that has never been said in Western Australia. Despite his Honour's razor sharp intellect, he has never succumbed to either rudeness or to hubris but has always been unfailingly polite and courteous in his dealings with counsel and with litigants. The sharpness of his intellect has, however, been conspicuously displayed in the many judgments which will provide a lasting legacy of contribution to the development of the jurisprudence of the State.

Most recently, his Honour has of course served as the inaugural President of the Court of Appeal, having taken up that position on 1 February 2005. At the time of the creation of that Court my predecessor, Chief Justice Malcolm, described it as one of the most significant events in the history of the Court. If significance is measured by reference to the quality of justice provided and the efficiency with which justice is provided, the Court led by President Steytler has amply justified that observation.

Comparisons of judicial work over different periods of time are necessarily invidious because of fluctuations in the quantity and complexity of our case load which are beyond our control. However, the figures, construed with some caution, can provide at least a crude measure of performance. In terms of the quantity of work discharged by the Court of Appeal, the backlog of cases waiting to be heard which was inherited by the Court of Appeal when it commenced operations has been dramatically reduced as a consequence of the rigorous judicial work practices encouraged by his Honour.

On the civil side of the Court's work, the number of civil appeals waiting to be finalised has dropped from 201 in the period ending June 2005 to 131 in the period ending June 2008. On the criminal side of the Court of Appeal's work, the equivalent drop has been from 180 to 113. Because of his Honour's insistence upon timeliness when dealing with criminal appeals, the number of criminal appeals not finalised after the set standard time of 32 weeks has halved.

In terms of the quality of the Court's work, the rate at which the High Court grants special leave to appeal from intermediate appellate Courts is an unreliable guide to the quality of the work of those Courts for many reasons. However, it does at least provide an external and impartial view of the perceived rate of judicial error.

In the year ending June 2004, of the 27 applications for special leave from the Supreme Court of Western Australia decided, 11 were granted. In the year ending June 2005, of the 43 applications from the Supreme Court of Western Australia decided, six were granted. By contrast, in the year ending June 2008 there were 22

special leave applications from this Court decided, of which only one was granted. In the last six months of 2008 there were 13 special leave applications decided, all of which were refused. Despite their obvious imperfections, I venture to suggest that these statistics do provide an evidentiary base for the view that the Court of Appeal under the leadership of President Steytler has improved both the quality of justice and the efficiency with which justice is delivered in this State. That is an achievement in which his Honour is entitled to take considerable pride.

This morning is the first occasion upon which his Honour's portrait, which you will see over there, has been publicly displayed. The Court has adopted the practice of securing the portraits of its Chief Justices and I am pleased to advise that this practice is to be extended to the Presidents of our Court of Appeal. This extension of practice was not achieved without a struggle due to the modesty of our inaugural President. However, with considerable reluctance his Honour agreed to the process.

The artist is Mr Andrew Daly. It could not be said that he had a willing subject. Indeed the subject refused to sit for the artist because it would interfere too much with his work. A compromise was reached between artist and subject in which the subject agreed to the artist taking a large number of photographs which he then used as the basis for the work.

Differing views are of course always held on the extent to which any portrait accurately reflects the subject, but my own view is that the process which I have just described has led to this artist being a little harsh on his subject. I must say that I have seldom seen his Honour's demeanour as stern as depicted in that portrait, although the artist's view is that the face portrays "a judicial character that is firm, but fair".

I will leave it to other speakers to say what they can of his Honour's life outside work. His dedication to his work has been such that there are, I fear, slim pickings in that area. Encouraged by Georgina, he has displayed an enthusiasm for travel to locations which would not be described so much as exotic but rather as downright dangerous. An outbreak of hostilities or serious political instability or pestilence or plague usually results in Georgina and his Honour packing their bags so as to get there as soon as possible before life returns to normal. Hopefully retirement from the Court will enable that hobby to be pursued with greater vigour but perhaps also with greater prudence.

However, it is typical of his Honour's commitment to public duty that he has agreed to take up appointment as the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission. It is also typical of his Honour that he is taking up that appointment on Sunday without any break whatsoever following his retirement from the Court at midnight tomorrow, although I believe that there is some prospect that he may not be working for at least part of tomorrow. On behalf of all of his Honour's colleagues on the Court, both past and present, I thank his Honour for his camaraderie and support, and for the enormous contribution which he has made to the work of the Court. We all wish him well in what we hope will be a long and healthy pseudo-retirement. Mr Attorney?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** May it please the Court. As is noted in today's programme, I am to officially farewell the first President of the West Australian Court of Appeal Justice Christopher David Steytler on behalf of the Government of Western Australia. This, your Honours, is to say that as attorney general I am to convey the appreciation of the Parliament of Western Australia on behalf of the people of the state who elected its members, and whilst I am invited to perform this function as the first law officer of the State, I am also very respectfully aware that I am in temporal terms a junior member of the profession.

Accordingly, I sought and received advice from some excellent civil servants who are mysteriously well versed in matters of protocol and public etiquette and by them I have been reliably informed that I should have noted that the Chief Justice was scheduled to speak for five minutes; that I should divide that total time in seconds by his 31 years' practice since admission and then being cognisant of the fact that good form would be a self-allocation of about 10 seconds per year of post-admission practice, speak only for approximately one minute and 40 seconds.

In my one minute and 40 seconds I should like to make three simple and brief observations regarding the retirement of Justice Steytler. They pertain in order to his skills, his service and the nature of his retirement. With respect to his skills, my observation generally is that the practice of the law requires methodological devotion to accuracy unique amongst the professions. This slavish accuracy to facts which must be recorded and relayed and the pinpoint precision with which complicated concepts of legal theory must be understood and applied makes the law an excruciatingly difficult atmosphere in which to work. The discipline that this requires is beyond the comprehension I think of most of those outside the profession who have not had the experience of it.

Justice Steytler was admitted to practice in Western Australia on April Fool's Day 1980 which alone may not have been notable but he was also made a partner of Parker & Parker on that same day. Since that time he has chosen to take a leadership role in the profession which culminated in being appointed to the Supreme Court in 1994 and as the first President of the Court of Appeal in 2005. In effect, Justice Steytler has chosen to work in the most difficult position, in the most difficult of professions on earth and has done so flawlessly and with a voracious appetite for hard work. To have travelled so far at such a height in this most difficult of professional atmospheres is testament to a colossal intellect.

For my part, having briefly taught criminal law to young law students at UWA, Justice Steytler's minority judgment in *Palmer v Ostowski* which was adopted in its entirety by the High Court at least gave me some slim hope of the possibility that some mortal lawyer somewhere at some point in time in the future may have some chance of understanding the distinction between mistake of law and mistake of fact.

Since 1994 Justice Steytler has served the public of Western Australia and in so doing he accepted a dramatic decrease in income and a "frog in boiling water" type of ever-increasing workload. Indeed, this retirement marks what predicted logic will tell us will be a period in which the State of Western Australia will make calls on several others, as it did Justice Steytler in 1994 to serve the profession and more widely the public by accepting elevation to the Bench. Perhaps the truest acknowledgment of Justice Steytler's service might be achieved if today's celebration encourages growth in the kernel of service that I am sure is in others.

Finally, your Honours, on the issue of retirement, Justice Steytler was of course originally from South Africa and is also, I understand, an avid cricket enthusiast. Some might consider that this is not the worst time for a former South African and cricket enthusiast to enjoy a little spare time. However, instead Justice Steytler has taken on one of the few positions which has in recent times been involved in an even more exciting spectator sport than cricket, that being the role of Parliamentary Inspector to the CCC, which position he will commence on 1 February 2009. For my own part, if I ever retire, I am hoping for a watch from the government.

Justice Steytler, I very much look forward to working with you in your new role and once again on behalf of the West Australian government and our citizens, I thank you and pass on my very best wishes for your future endeavours.

**MARTIN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Attorney. Mr Stow?

**STOW, MR:** May it please the Court. It is with a great deal of regret that I stand here before the Court today to speak at his Honour Christopher Steytler's retirement, particularly as President of the Court of Appeal. In whatever his Honour has undertaken, he has set an extraordinarily high standard and is an example to all lawyers and the Bench.

I first met his Honour Christopher Steytler either in late 1975 or early 1976. I can't actually remember, but it was when he was interviewed for a job at my old firm Parker & Parker which is of course now part of Freehills. It was before the wave of South African migrants that was to occur later in the 70s and 80s. As part of interviewing and getting to know his Honour, I invited him to have dinner at my home in Nedlands. As we sat on our patio on what I remember was a hot night, I was immediately impressed, as was my wife I might add, by his modesty, thoughtfulness, values, obvious intelligence, interest in the law and justice in the broader sense.

At the time of course, South Africa was in the midst of apartheid and all the issues arising out of that form of government. I won't comment on his Honour's views on that subject but suffice to say he thought it necessary and desirable to migrate to Australia. It was extremely fortunate for my firm Parkers that his Honour accepted our offer of employment and joined my firm in 1976. Up to then, his Honour had been, I believe, a journalist for a short period and then after completing his law degree, was at the Bar in South Africa, in Cape Town.

As a member of the Bar and as part of his duties and obligations of the Bar he undertook a number of "pro deos" - which I think we would call pro bonos - matters in providing legal representation for persons charged with capital offences, usually murder, and facing a death sentence, a relatively common experience in South Africa, but at that time he was obviously a very young counsel and I am sure he performed brilliantly well.

It is interesting to note that his Honour was one of the first South African lawyers to come to Australia or to Western Australia and he has been followed, of course, by Justice Ipp, Justice Siopis, Michael Odes and Harry Dixon, who are all here today other than for Ipp and Siopis.

Unfortunately for his Honour, he was one of the first South African lawyers to leave South Africa and come here when the requirements to be admitted in WA were very strict and he was required to go back to university at the University of WA Law School for two years and undertake a number of courses, including to him novel courses such as equity and constitutional law.

The LPB did not of course then consider South Africans having suitable qualifications in a number of areas. Fortunately, those rules have changed. During that period his Honour worked, he said, part-time but in fact it was full-time at Parkers but before he could be admitted, he was also required to be made an Australian citizen. His Honour, as the Chief Justice mentioned, became an Australian citizen in 1980 and on that day he was made a partner of my firm.

His Honour's impact in Parkers was immediate and my firm attracted major litigation matters, three of which come readily to my mind; the Westham Dredging case, the Key Biscayne oil rig matter and *Fluor v SECWA*. All of them were significant matters and his example and hard work changed my firm's litigation division.

Regretfully, his Honour left my firm in 1991 and went to the Bar where he

quickly became renowned for his hard work and legal prowess which, of course, was recognised very early on when he was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1993. As has been mentioned, shortly after that in 1994 he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court and then, of course, finally as the President of the Court of Appeal in 2005.

I have it on good authority that counsel has learnt, some by bitter experience, I might add, that when appearing in the Court of Appeal it pays to be brief, well-prepared and to the point, all very admirable traits, and in particular not to waste the Court's time on irrelevant and unsubstantiated or insubstantial points.

As a result of the standards his Honour has imposed on himself and others and by his leadership and judicial skills, judgments, the standing of the Court of Appeal is outstanding and, undoubtedly, one of the leading Courts of Appeal in Australia. It is a testament to his Honour. I would make it quite plain that in making the above comment, I do not in any way impugn the work or the standards of the other Judges in the Court of Appeal but refer, of course, to its leadership.

In the 2007-2008 review of the Supreme Court published in December last year, the statistics which the Chief Justice mentioned set out the achievements and the work of the Court of Appeal. I won't give the examples that I have but they are effectively the same as the Chief Justice's.

As mentioned, it is with real regret that I am here making this speech. The Court can ill-afford to lose Judges of the calibre of his Honour. While I have not spoken directly to him on this subject, I have been, and the Law Society has been, gravely concerned that the Supreme Court has been inadequately resourced with Judges and other resources, together with inadequate, old-fashioned and out-of-date accommodation.

I have raised this many times with the previous government and last year in other speeches I have made. If we as a society are to attract and retain the brightest and best persons as Judges, they need to be adequately remunerated and have sufficient resources and other Judges so that the pressure that is, for example, on the Court of Appeal can be met without the Judges having to work inordinate hours.

I know, for example, that his Honour at one stage deliberately took three weeks' annual leave to write judgments. This is not an acceptable practice and is not attractive for persons being appointed to the Bench. The Supreme Court itself operates from two premises, neither of which provide adequate or suitable accommodation. So it is with regret that the Society and myself wish his Honour and his wife Georgina a long and happy retirement from the arduous of the Court of Appeal, but I am sure he will still retain an interest in the law and continue to lead by example.

The well-publicised appointment as the Inspector of the CCC is an indication that his Honour will not retire completely and be away from the law. I also trust that he continues to enjoy cricket and rugby so long as he supports Australia. May it please the Court.

**MARTIN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Stow. Mr Colvin?

**COLVIN, MR:** May it please the Court. It is truly a privilege to appear, your Honour, on behalf of the Western Australian Bar Association today to mark the occasion of your Honour's retirement from judicial office. It is traditional on occasions such as these to say something nice about your Honour. I should say immediately that I am not overly-fond of tradition. It is also traditional to resort to occasional overstatement.

Today I propose to adhere to the first tradition but not the second. I do so for two reasons: the first is because in the presence of your Honour, hyperbole is an invitation to immediate correction. The second is because on this occasion embellishment is not necessary. A good brief, as your Honour knows, does not require the distraction of adornment.

I follow this course in the knowledge that it should sit well with your Honour's active interest throughout your career in raising standards of advocacy through teaching and encouraging advocates to develop their skills. Your Honour has been both a leader by your own practice, but also an instructor throughout your career and that marks much of what your Honour has done in relation to advocacy. It would not be fitting in those circumstances to risk committing the advocate's offence of gilding the lily through inappropriate use of adjective.

We have heard this morning of your Honour's career highlights. Your Honour has indeed been an outstanding servant of the law and the people of this State. However, I wish to speak, with respect, not so much of what your Honour has done but of who your Honour is seen to be.

I suspect by now your Honour may be characteristically discomforted by the prospect of nice things being said about you. You are not one to blow your own trumpet. However, I make no apology. Today, on behalf of the Bar and in this place, I simply repay a favour. So many of us have been discomforted to the point of alarm in this very Court by your Honour's questioning that I must admit I take some small delight in my task.

I begin with understatement. Your Honour is held in the highest esteem at the Bar and in the wider profession. It is hard to capture in a few words the true extent of your Honour's service to the administration of justice in this State. May I say simply that if your Honour were an Australia Rules footballer, your skill and commitment would be legend around the barbecues and in the bars of this great State. You are, may I say, amongst Judges a Hall of Fame certainty.

Your Honour has a particular understanding of the seriousness of the task, nevertheless, that is undertaken in the administration of justice. It is born, I suspect, of your Honour's experiences as a young Barrister in South Africa, witnessing first-hand how fragile the institutions of justice and democracy may become.

For your Honour, each case has a significance that is not a function of the status of the parties, nor the presence or absence of the media, nor the fees paid to those arguing the case, nor indeed the particular subject matter. For your Honour, justice requires that each case be adjudicated fairly and properly. As a result, if the system has not delivered the best representation, or the case requires great effort to adjudicate, or if delay in an already over-burdened court list would be unfair to the parties, your Honour cannot ignore the call to redress the consequences despite the personal burden.

The result has been, as we have heard this morning, that your Honour has led the way in assuming a prodigious workload with an uncompromising commitment to the quality of decision-making in all cases.

On my assessment, your Honour has published almost twice the number of judgments that might reasonably be expected in a person holding your office in the Court of Appeal. However, I do not quote statistics because it is not just in number of judgments but also in quality that your Honour's decision-making has been outstanding. The result has been that the people of Western Australia have had exceedingly good value from your Honour's judicial service.

Moreover, under your Honour's leadership as its first President, the Court of Appeal has been established as a Court with modern and efficient processes. It has the highest of reputations, thereby contributing greatly to public confidence in our Court system. It is to be noted that the High Court did not sit in Western Australia this year due to the absence of appeal work from the Court of Appeal.

In the press this week your Honour was reported as being a workaholic. Some, indeed many, have spoken to me of your Honour's uncompromising commitment as reflecting a sense of duty. I venture to suggest that neither of these sentiments are entirely accurate. I suggest rather that your Honour thinks deeply and with concern about the things that matter to the fabric of a civil society.

There is evident in your Honour such a sense of personal responsibility for ensuring that the fundamental rights, freedoms, privileges and protections that keep us together as a society are upheld and enforced that for you there can be no ignoring the work that must be done. Your Honour upholds the highest standards in the administration of the law and expects others to do the same.

Despite all this in an age of networking and constant updating of CVs, your Honour is not a self-promoter. On the contrary, your Honour is more likely to be a promoter of others. Your Honour was a mentor to many younger lawyers before moving to the Bench, being always willing to assist with advice and guidance in the case of a difficult problem. It is common for your Honour to speak fulsomely of the attributes of others where merited.

You have encouraged by personal example, private conversation and public statements a commitment to the same ethics and standards that you have applied to your work as an advocate and Judge. Where others may have followed a different path, you have not allowed the important judicial office that you hold to infect your perspective on the importance of others, particularly those outside the legal profession and indeed those outside this State.

This aspect of your personal character is attested by a short anecdote. Despite an established practice at the Bar in South Africa, after migrating to Perth you were required to begin your work in Perth as a law clerk and, as we have heard, your Honour was subjected by us to the requirement to complete an extensive further education before being admitted to practise. We are sorry about that, your Honour.

It is no easy thing to move to a new country. I am told that at this time with characteristic humility you would introduce yourself at Parker & Parker simply as a law clerk. As a result, young lawyers starting at the firm found it very unnerving as to how bright the law clerks were. Which brings me to something that Tony told me this week. Tony has cut the hair of many barristers over the years. Quite a number of his customers have become Judges, including your Honour. Some provide less of a challenge for his hairdressing skills than they once did.

This week Tony volunteered to me a comment on your Honour's imminent retirement. I had not, I must say, mentioned the fact of your Honour's retirement or the fact that I would be speaking today. Tony simply expressed to me the sentiment that you were a great bloke. I asked him what he meant. His response was to the effect that your Honour treated him as a fellow human being - apparently not a universal characteristic amongst lawyers. That I think is testament to the fact that your Honour adopts a particular approach to all of us in terms of our common humanity.

May I say that your Honour has brought that very perspective to every case you have decided and it reflects your Honour's fundamental insight into and respect for our common humanity. May I say simply that in your service as a member of this

Court, your Honour has had every reason in intellect and effort to make plain your superiority, yet you have not done so. It is an especially judicial mark of your character.

Finally, returning to my football metaphor, your Honour leaves the Court at the peak of your game despite 14 arduous seasons in which you have played every game to the point of personal exhaustion. As President, you have led from the front, asking of other members of the Court no more than you have been willing to give. You have played in every position, dealing with keen insight and fairness with cases from every field of the law.

On behalf of the Bar Association, we wish your Honour well in the future. May you and Georgina have time to travel to those places you have not yet been, to spend time with family, to write for both pleasure and purpose and to fulfil some of those aspirations that have been deferred by the demands of judicial office. May it please the Court.

**MARTIN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Colvin. President Steytler?

**STEYTLER P:** These occasions are typically examples of outrageous exaggeration and flattery, no matter what Mr Colvin may say, and I am very relieved to see that this one has been no exception. I am grateful to each of the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, Mr Dudley Stow the President of the Law Society and Mr Craig Colvin, the the President of the WA Bar Association for staying true to tradition. I am also grateful to our Governor and Mrs Michael for taking the trouble to come down here today.

After 14 years as a judge it seemed to me to be time for a change and when I look at my portrait over there, I know that that assessment was right. Judging is not an easy occupation. Judges never forget that their decisions affect the lives of ordinary people in a very direct and sometimes permanent way. They make their judgments according to the law, even if on occasions their wishes might be different. In the nature of what they do, their decisions will usually upset someone and sometimes everyone. They have to stand firm in protecting the principles and processes of the law, no matter how unpopular that might be. Unless they are members of the High Court, their decisions are subject to appellate scrutiny and sometimes to appellate criticism. The process is a very public one, as it should be, leaving the Courts open to scrutiny and criticism by the media. The workload is intense.

Notwithstanding all of this, I have enjoyed my time as President of the Court of Appeal. It has presented me with an opportunity to implement new processes designed to streamline and improve the quality of the justice that we provide.

Most of the credit for that, however, goes to others and I would like to acknowledge a number of people for having made these reforms possible. First there is you, the legal profession, who have had to come to grips with new and different procedures and a very demanding Court. The profession has extended its full cooperation to the Court and shared directly in the process of reform with a willingness that has made things very much easier for us.

Next, there is the Court of Appeal Registry which has had a large part to play in implementing the reforms. The Registry staff have borne the brunt of the administrative burden connected with the reforms. I am indebted to all of them but particularly want to mention publicly Emma Will and Juliana Loskoska for their invaluable efforts.

The Court has been extraordinarily fortunate to be served by outstanding

Registrars over its four-year term, these being Corryn Rayney, Linda Bush and Pam Eldred. Pam Eldred in particular has done a wonderful job from the inception of the Court. Much of the credit for our new procedures and their efficacy goes directly to her.

Finally, of course, much of the credit goes to the Judges of the Court. I have had unfailing and always cheerful support from each of them. That has been so notwithstanding that each has taken on a load that few others would be prepared to put up with, in circumstances that have sometimes been very difficult. My thanks go to each one of them.

I would like also to express my thanks to all of the associates who have helped me over the years. There are too many of them to mention by name but my thanks go to each one of them. I have had only two orderlies over my time at the Court, being Dieter Medwid and Ray Doyle. I am grateful to both for their assistance and friendship. My thanks go also to each of my secretaries, particularly Marion Spears and Cheryl Sachse.

I would also like to thank all who have taken the trouble to come here today, particularly Harry and Marion Dixon who have travelled here from Sydney, and my sister-in-law, Melissa Parke, who has come here at some inconvenience to herself today.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to my long-suffering family for their patience and support. They are my sons David and Ian, whose children Samuel, Caitlin and Lachlan are here today; my daughter-in-law Kirsty; and above all, of course, my wife Georgina. Thank you all.

**MARTIN CJ:** The Court will now adjourn.

**AT 10.07 AM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY**