



Ceremonial Sitting to mark the farewell of the Hon Christopher Neil Jessup as a
Judge of the Federal Court of Australia, 13 April 2017

Speech by Will Alstergren QC,
President, Australian Bar Association

1. If the Court pleases
2. I acknowledge the traditional custodian land upon which we meet and pay my respects to their elders past and present.
3. I have the honour of appearing on behalf of the Australian Bar Association and each of the Independent Bars of Australia, to celebrate your Honour's career on this Court and to thank you for the extraordinary service you have provided to the profession and to the public.
4. Your Honour has many admirers Nationally. One has described you as "the clearest thinker in a generation of Australian Industrial Lawyers".¹
5. Your Honour was the quintessential barrister. As we've heard, you came from Monash with Honours Degrees in both Economics and Law, sharing the Supreme Court Prize with Mark Weinberg (now Justice Weinberg). Your Honour served Articles – then, you went to London and earned your Ph D. Upon your return to Australia, you came immediately to the Bar.
6. I will leave to it to my learned friend Ms Batrouney President of your home Bar, to speak more fully about your Honour's career as a Barrister, the extraordinary

¹ Nicholas Green QC – but I would not name him.

contribution you made to the Victorian Bar, and of course also of your role of Chairman of the Victorian Bar.

7. At the Bar Your Honour was a masterful advocate. Your three Readers, and all who appeared with Your Honour as Juniors, all say how much they learned from you. You engaged them in your work. Whilst much of what they drafted for you may have hit the editing floor, but they learned – they learned Your Honour’s style of economic and incisive submissions; they learned how to cross-examine.
8. Your Readers – Geoffrey Giudice Simon Marks and Bryan Mueller – all went on to highly successful careers in the Law. Geoffrey Giudice practised at the Victorian Bar more than 13 years, then served as a Judge of this Court and as President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. Simon Marks is a leading Silk and a member of the Victorian Bar Council. Bryan Mueller practised more than 15 years at the Bar and is now the Melbourne Director of Workplace Litigation in a specialist industrial law firm.²
9. As counsel, Your Honour was well known for your astuteness, steely resolve and self-effacing nature. Your Honour always saw very clearly the other side’s case – a great strength– even if, occasionally, in meeting the case, Your Honour ended up meeting a much better argument than your opponent had seen or made.
10. I will leave it to my learned friend Ms McLeod will elaborate on the detail of Your Honour’s heroic defence of the Independent Bar as Chairman of the Victorian Bar in the face of deadly attack by Competition Theory ideologues. However, it would be remiss of me, not to express the gratitude of the national Independent Bar.
11. Your Honour came to the Bench in June 2006 with a formidable and justified reputation as a first class academic, and a national leader in the profession, especially in the areas of industrial law, commercial law and intellectual property. Over your 18.5 years as a silk, Your Honour led many leading juniors, including now Justice

² Jennifer’s draft does no more than name the three Readers. I don’t have her final settled draft. If you’re going to use this, it would be a courtesy to consult Jennifer to make sure she’s not added this detail.

O'Callaghan, who was appointed in February to replace your Honour in the Victoria Registry.

12. Your Honour is also well known and highly respected for having treated barristers and litigants in person with great courtesy, even when, perhaps at times, it was not always fully deserved.
13. On the bench Your Honour formed great and lasting friendships. One was with an old adversary at the Bar Peter Grey. You both had a love of the law, especially Industrial law, a passion for access to justice and .. Perhaps equally importantly, the Geelong Football Club. Discussions on the weekend's game or recruitment in the off-season would transcend the corridors. It even influenced matters internationally.
14. Justice Gray was at a conference in Hong Kong. A light sleeper, His Honour heard, in the middle of the night – about 2 in the morning – the “ping” of an incoming text on his mobile. It caused him to immediately call the front desk and seek access to Australian television to check if a crisis had in fact occurred, the ping was a txt from Your Honour to tell Justice Grey that Collingwood had beaten Geelong in the finals.
15. His Honour has a long trip home.
16. Your Honour is also well known and highly respected for dedication to your judicial role is a great example to all of us. Your retirement is a great loss to the bench and to the administration of justice.
17. On behalf of the Australian Bar Association, and each of the barristers of Australia, may I wish Your Honour a fulfilling retirement.
18. Thank you for the extraordinary service and honour you have done the Australian profession.
19. May it please the Court.