

1 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

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4 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

5 M E M O R I A L S E R V I C E S

6 F O R

7 ALEXANDER BREUER

8 JOSEPH M. O'CONNELL

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15 Friday, November 16, 1984

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FREDERICK C. COHEN
Official Court Reporter
P. O. Box 401
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 . . . The Court convened en banc at three o'clock,
3 p.m., there being present Honorable WILLIAM H. McCULLOUGH,
4 Administrative Judge, and Honorable JACOB S. LEVIN,
5 ROBERT H. MASON, Associate Judges. . .

6 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: The Court will recognize
7 Mrs. Nolan, President of the Bar Association.

8 MRS. THERESA A. NOLAN: Your Honors, we are here
9 today to commemorate two friends, Alex Breuer and Joseph
10 O'Connell. Both of these men were very active in our Bar
11 Association, and we miss them. We would like to remember
12 them in a very special way this afternoon, and so I present
13 to you the Chairman of our Memorial Committee, Edwin
14 Hutchinson.

15 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: Mr. Hutchinson.

16 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: Good afternoon, Judge
17 McCullough and Associate Judges of the Circuit Court,
18 distinguished guests, members and friends of the families
19 of the deceased members of the Bar, Alex Breuer and
20 Joseph O'Connell. We welcome you to this service this
21 afternoon. It is customary for the Bar Association and the
22 Court to set aside one day during the month of November
23 for the purpose of having this Memorial Service to acknowledge
24 our friendships and association with the departed members
25 of the Bar who have departed this life since our last Service

1 last November.

2 As the President of the Association has told you,
3 both of these men were active members of the Association
4 while they were here, and they worked on committees of the
5 Association and they were seen in and out of the Court House
6 on many occasions when they were conducting hearings before
7 the Court, and I can tell you that we all miss them and will
8 continue to miss them. I don't know who said it, but someone
9 with words of wisdom said, when anybody that we associate
10 with died, a little bit of us died with them, and I think
11 we all acknowledge that fact.

12 I will ask Mr. James Flynn to come here to the
13 podium and I advise the Court that Mr. Flynn is going to
14 speak to us regarding Alex Breuer.

15 ALEXANDER BREUER

16 MR. JAMES F. FLYNN: Thank you. Your Honors,
17 guests, fellow attorneys.

18 Perhaps the closest attorney to me during my
19 lifetime thus far on a personal basis was Alex Breuer, and
20 it is very difficult for me to believe that he has been
21 dead now for a little over a year.

22 Just to be very informal, I will tell you a little
23 bit of what I knew about him. Many of you probably won't
24 even be aware of the fact that he had died and was buried
25 very shortly thereafter. The Saturday before he died I worked

1 with him all Saturday afternoon getting ready for a case we
2 were going to do in the Circuit Court on the following
3 Friday, and Al was in a good mood. He was himself.

4 I went over to his office on the Tuesday that he had
5 his fatal stroke, which was as a result of a brain tumor, and
6 I spent about three hours with him that afternoon, and the
7 last thing I can recall saying to Al, I said, "Al, you look
8 great". He had all his faculties; he knew everything that
9 was going on; he was mentally alert and he walked with me
10 out to the exit of the Scuderi Building and he said, "Jim,
11 will you come to the meeting with me tonight?" I said, "Al,
12 I can't do it". I forget what the reason was. At any
13 rate, he was in excellent health, looked excellent, but of
14 course, the old saying, "You can't tell a book by its cover".

15 About seven-thirty that evening I received a call
16 that he had what they thought was a heart attack at that time.
17 It turned out to be different.

18 I want to thank, on my own behalf and on behalf
19 of his daughters, who are not here today, I want to thank
20 the Court and fellow members of the Bar -- I just never
21 realized up until this point, last November, the closeness
22 that exists. Sometimes we don't realize it because we are
23 busy -- it is not expressed; it is not, sometimes, felt.
24 But I can recall having to call, even into the District of
25 Columbia and various places, to notify them of the fact that
he was ill. At that time we thought he was just ill and

1 thought he was going to be back. We didn't know he was going
2 to die.

3 There was no problem with anyone getting a
4 continuance -- opposing attorneys were no problem.

5 Al wouldn't want this to drag on. He wasn't that
6 kind of man. I can tell you a little bit about his personal
7 life and then I will sit down and have respect for him.

8 He escaped from the Nazis shortly prior to World
9 War II. His uncle, apparently, was the instigator of the
10 idea to get him out of there. He was raised by his grandmother
11 in New York City. He enlisted in the United States Army
12 at the age of seventeen. He was, due to his ability to
13 speak German fluently, having been born in Austria, he was
14 a translator. He was in the Infantry, but he was a translator.
15 When they went into Buchenwald and these places Al was one of
16 the first ones in there with the colonels, the generals or
17 whoever it might be to interrogate the Germans and so on,
18 the prisoners, and he was an American that was an immigrant
19 to the United States and he was prouder, perhaps -- I can
20 honestly say he felt pride in this country. He would show
21 me pictures of himself sitting on a tank and all this and
22 that over in Germany. He was proud of this country; he
23 was proud of his family. He died not owning a whole lot,
24 but a very proud man, a very respected man, very respected
25 member of this Bar and an individual, no matter what he did,

1 he was proud of it. He was a proud individual, and I don't
2 mean pride in a bad sense. I mean pride in the sense of
3 being respectful of what he had accomplished and pride in a
4 good sense.

5 I will never forget the day they buried him.
6 He was Jewish, and they buried him the next morning, and I
7 couldn't get word to everybody, obviously, it was impossible.
8 Some people couldn't change their schedules to be at the
9 funeral, but many of you were there for that, and on behalf
10 of the family, I thank you. Those that couldn't be there,
11 I thank you, too, because you wouldn't be sitting here today
12 if you didn't have the intention of being there, had you been
13 able to. So, as I said the day we buried him, we will see
14 you later, Al.

15 Thank you.

16 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: Thank you, Mr. Flynn.

17 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: Your Honor, I move that
18 these remarks be made a permanent record of the Court and
19 copy of the same be sent to the family of the deceased,
20 Alex Breuer.

21 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: Thank you, Mr. Hutchinson,
22 that will be done.

23 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: The next party to be
24 memorialized today is Joseph M. O'Connell, and Mr. Beamer,
25 the County Attorney's Office will address the Court.

JOSEPH M. O'CONNELL

3 MR. JOHN T. BEAMER: May it please the Court,
4 family members, fellow members of the Bar, friends:

I feel sorry somehow for those of you who did not
know Joe O'Connell. I say "sorry", because I believe it is
safe to say that Joe was one of the most, if not the most
unique person I have ever had the pleasure to know -- gifted
with a keen sense of humor and a sincere interest in the
welfare of each and every person that had the great, good
fortune to cross his path.

12 Joe's life bears witness to the principle that
13 you can't keep a good man down.

14 I believe it is normal on these occasions to
15 recall the individual's past accomplishments, his former
16 jobs and the like. When you think of Joe in this regard
17 I believe one word also comes back to mind again, and that
18 is, unique.

19 Joe spent over ten years of his life engaged
20 in the Priesthood of the Catholic Church, engaged in tasks
21 ranging from lecturing at Catholic University, Georgetown and
22 American Universities, to managing a large parish, to running
23 a soup kitchen within the District of Columbia -- tasks so
varied, they are almost too numerous to mention here.

After Joe got the Catholic Church in order he

1 next applied his energies to a profession he obviously
2 felt was sorely needed, that being the law. After
3 graduating from law school in 1957 Joe came to the Office
4 of Law in 1976 under then County Attorney Jim Chapin.
5 Over the course of the next seven and a half years Joe
6 worked for many of the agencies within the County Government
7 from the Fire and Police Departments to even the Animal
8 Control Commission. At each agency that Joe was fortunate
9 enough to advise you would find him becoming almost like a
10 member of the family. He was their lawyer, certainly.
11 But also, he was their confidante, their advisor, their
12 friend, someone who understood both the intricacies of each
13 department he advised, but more importantly, he understood
14 the people that staffed those departments.

15 I believe that the one factor which most impressed
16 me about Joe was his ability to persevere, to turn whatever
17 misfortune life dealt him into something more real positive.
18 Joe's life offers a real model for those who find day to
19 day existence taxing. He never lost faith. He never stopped
20 caring for or about the problems of others.

21 On the fifteenth day of this past year God called
22 Joe home, but with his passing we are left with a legacy
23 of humor, of caring, of selfless dedication to one's fellow
24 man. I feel honored to have been Joe's friend, but I also
25 feel certain that the seeds of compassion and goodwill which

1 he planted during his lifetime will bear fruit far into
2 the future.

3 I thank the Court.

4 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: Thank you, Mr. Beamer, for
5 those remarks.

6 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: Thank you, Mr. Beamer.

7 Your Honor, I move these remarks be placed, and a
8 copy of same be sent to the family of Mr. O'Connell.

9 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: That will be done, Mr.
10 Hutchinson.

11 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: One other thing.

12 These flower arrangements are for the families
13 of the deceased who are being memorialized today, and I would
14 request that any member of the family here see to it that it
15 gets to the proper place.

16 Your Honor, I think at this point we are ready
17 to hear from the Court.

18 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: Any other speakers?

19 MR. J. EDWIN HUTCHINSON: No, sir.

20 JUDGE MC CULLOUGH: All the Judges of the Circuit
21 Court are grateful to the Prince George's Bar Association
22 and the members of the Committee on Memorials for the
23 presentation of these memorials today and making the
24 arrangements for this ceremony. It is a very fine tradition
25 that we have maintained in Prince George's County for many,

1 many years, that we pause from the usual adversary matters
2 taking place in the courtroom to honor our departed brothers
3 and to pay tribute to their memories.

4 So the Court, all of those members who have
5 enjoyed a very pleasant and warm personal relationship with
6 those who have been memorialized today, will direct that
7 the memorials presented will be spread upon the permanent
8 records of the Court and that copies will be sent to the
9 families of those colleagues we are honoring today.

10 Mr. Bailiff, in honor of our departed brothers,
11 you may announce the adjournment of this Court.

12 (Whereupon, at 3:17 o'clock, p.m., the
13 Memorial Services were concluded.)

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