

SUPREME COURT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY  
STATE SQUARE, DARWIN

WELCOME CEREMONIAL SITTING FOR  
THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE TREVOR RILEY

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

COURTROOM 1, MONDAY 4 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9:36 AM

PRESIDING JUDGES

The Hon Chief Justice T Riley  
The Hon Justice D Mildren RFD  
The Hon Justice S Southwood  
The Hon Justice J Kelly  
The Hon Justice J Blokland  
The Hon Justice P Barr  
The Hon Justice J Reeves

In attendance:

The Hon Chief Justice Robert French AC  
The Hon Chief Justice Terence Higgins AO  
The Hon Justice Michael Murray  
The Hon John Toohey AC QC  
The Hon Austin Asche AC QC  
The Hon Brian F Martin AO MBE QC  
The Hon Brian R Martin QC  
The Hon John F Gallop AM RFD QC  
The Hon John Nader RFD QC  
The Hon Sally Thomas AM  
The Hon Trevor Morling QC

Transcribed by:  
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SHERIFF'S OFFICER: Silence. All stand and remain standing.

All persons having any business before this Full Court of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, now draw nigh and give your attendance and you shall be heard.

God save the Queen. Please be seated.

THE ASSOCIATE: The Court's welcome to his Honour, Chief Justice Trevor Riley.

MILDREN J: Chief Justice French, fellow Judges of the Court, former Chief Justices Asche, Martin and Martin, Chief Justice Higgins, Justice Murray from the Supreme Court of Western Australia, former Judges of this Court and of the High Court of Australia and of the Federal Court of Australia, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Honourable Delia Lawrie MLA, the President of the Northern Territory Bar Association, the Vice President of the Law Society, members of the Bar and of the legal profession, ladies and gentlemen, a warm welcome to you all on this happy occasion when we formally welcome Chief Justice Riley as this Court's sixth Chief Justice.

It is somewhat remarkable to observe that this Court has had six Chief Justices in 31 years. In the time between the appointment of Sir Samuel Way as Chief Justice of South Australia in 1876 and the appointment of Chief Justice King in 1978, 102 years later, South Australia had had only five Chief Justices. One may pass this difference off as a reflection of the old habit of appointing Chief Justices when they were young and not forcing them to retire at age 70, or one may attribute this to the tropical heat.

Whatever may have been the case in years past, the office of Chief Justice is now a very demanding one requiring special talents beyond that of merely being a great Judge. Chief Justice Riley has these talents in large measure and the announcement of his Honour's appointment was received with almost as much enthusiasm and warmth by all the Judges of this Court as was felt by the Collingwood Football Club's fans last Saturday.

We look forward to sharing with your Honour the burdens of your office and wish you well.

Chief Justice.

RILEY CJ: Your Honours, I present my commission as the Chief Justice of this honourable Court. I took the prescribed affirmation before his Honour, the Administrator on Monday, 27 September 2010.

MILDREN J: Master, will you read his Honour's commission, please.

THE MASTER: *The Honourable Trevor John Riley.*

*Know ye that, reposing full trust and confidence in your loyalty, learning, integrity and ability, I, Thomas Ian Pauling, Officer of the Order of Australia, Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia, acting with the advice of the Executive Council of the Northern Territory of Australia in pursuance of section 32(1) of the Supreme Court Act (1979) do by this, my commission, appoint you, Trevor John Riley, Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, learned in the law of the Northern Territory, to be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory of Australia from and including the twenty-seventh day of September in the year of our Lord 2010 to have, hold, exercise and enjoy the said office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory of Australia under and subject to the provisions of the Supreme Court Act (1979), as amended from time to time, during good behaviour with all rights, powers, privileges, advantages and jurisdiction thereto belonging or appertaining.*

Given under the seal of the Administrator.

MILDREN J: Master, would you please place his Honour's commission in the records of the Court.

I now call upon Mr Nigel Browne to give a welcome on behalf of the Larrakia people.

NIGEL BROWNE: May it please the Court. My name is Nigel Browne. I am a proud Larrakia and Wulna man.

As a member of the Browne/Talbot/Kenyon family group, one of the nine major family groups that make up the Larrakia people, I have the pleasure of welcoming you all here today for the Chief Justice's ceremony.

Larrakia country encompasses all of Darwin and its greater surrounds including the sea, from the mouth of the Finnis River in the west to the mouth of the Adelaide River in the east, up to 50 kilometres inland in parts and including all of Darwin Harbour.

As a group of people we have continued to grow and diversify in an ever changing environment. An example of this is the contribution that the Larrakia have made to the legal system in the Northern Territory. I would briefly like to make mention of a number of Larrakia who have forged careers within our legal sphere:

- Mr Bernie Divine, of the Cubillo family group, works as a senior Aboriginal Community Police Officer with the Northern Territory Police;
- Ms Shahleena Musk, of the Shepherd family group, works as a senior criminal solicitor for the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and also has worked with the Aboriginal Legal Service in Western Australia;
- Tamika Williams, of the Batcho family group, works as the executive officer to the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Justice;

- Mr Byron May, also of the Batcho family group, is a recently sworn constable with the Northern Territory Police; and finally
- Mr Eddie Cubillo, of the Cubillo family group, is our newest Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commissioner.

We as a group number in excess of 2600 people. The footprint of our influence both in the public and private arenas continues to grow.

It is with a great deal of honour I am pleased once again to welcome you all here today to Larrakia country.

May it please the Court.

MILDREN J: Thank you, Mr Browne.

I record an apology by his Honour, the Administrator, who is unable to be here today.

Madam Attorney.

MS LAWRIE: May it please the Court. It is a great honour to be here today on behalf of the government and the people of the Northern Territory to offer your Honour congratulations and the best wishes on your appointment as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory. Your Honour's appointment to the highest judicial office in the Northern Territory is a fitting recognition of your outstanding contribution to the Territory as a citizen, solicitor, barrister and judge.

Your Honour was born and raised at Bruce Rock in the eastern wheatbelt region of Western Australia. The town is rightly famous for its proximity to the third largest rock in Australia. It is also famous for having Australia's smallest operating bank which measured only three metres by four metres. The bank closed its doors about the time your Honour left the private Bar and went onto a judicial salary, although this may have been purely coincidental.

Your Honour completed a Bachelor of Laws at the University of Western Australia and then practiced in partnership there for a time. While travelling during the course of 1974, your Honour met Ian Barker QC in Darwin and your life changed. With your wife, Jan, and a young family your Honour moved to Darwin and took up work with the firm, Withnall & Barker.

On Christmas morning that year, your Honour woke up disoriented, homeless and unemployed. After the cyclone your Honour was offered a job at Ward Keller by Hugh Bradley. You accepted on condition that you could live in his garage. A fruitful ten years followed. Your Honour took partnership, developing a thriving practice and assumed the role of de facto counsel with the firm and, I dare say, moved out of the garage.

Your Honour joined the independent Bar in April 1985 and took silk in 1989. Your Honour's practice at the Bar was both successful and exemplary. As the then President of the Bar Association observed when your Honour was sworn in as a Judge in 1999, you acted for both the elevated and the relegated.

Your Honour's opening for the plaintiff in the matter of *Bray v The Deutscher Club* is remembered as one of the Territory's most powerful pieces of advocacy. Your Honour had a long stint in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. During your time at the Bar, your Honour appeared in some 121 cases before the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory. Your Honour appeared before the High Court in cases such as *Re Marion*, *GPAO* and *Lim v The Minister*.

Your Honour was frequently briefed to appear on behalf of the Crown in right of both the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory. Your Honour prepared obsessively for all your cases and thought deeply about them. As a result you were always in a position to assist the Courts before which you appeared in the most complete way.

After his Honour, Justice Mildren's appointment to the Bench, your Honour became the acknowledged leader of the Northern Territory Bar and held office as President of the Northern Territory Bar Association between 1993 and 1997. Your Honour was never remote in leadership. You enjoyed the camaraderie and collegiate humour of the Bar, such as when your Honour returned from overseas one year to find a garden gnome anchored into your front yard by a cubic metre of high density concrete, although it has been said that your Honour's humour was tested on that occasion by the gnome's striking resemblance to its new landlord.

Your Honour's temperament as both counsel and as a Judge has been exemplary. Your Honour has always been industrious, incisive and courteous. Your Honour has implemented effective case management procedures while on the Bench. Your Honour exerts a firm but gentle pressure on legal practitioners to ensure that matters are ready to proceed.

Your Honour's proclivities in this respect are no better illustrated than by an exchange that took place in a matter your Honour was case managing but which the former Chief Justice was 'babysitting' in your Honour's absence. Counsel under scrutiny was your Honour's great friend and former colleague, Ian Morris. The Chief Justice inquired whether you had attached any urgency to the matter. Morris replied 'Your Honour, Justice Riley is urgency itself.'

It is widely suspected that your Honour devised the annual spring offensive in which all civil cases on the books were listed for hearing back to back in multiple Courts over a period of six weeks. The strategy had a remarkable purgative effect on settlement and clearance rates in the civil jurisdiction, not to mention on counsel. In the criminal jurisdiction, your Honour has demonstrated similar efficiency and a deeply felt concern for the social issues that underlie many of the cases before the Court.

It has been noted elsewhere that your Honour's appointment together with other appointments such as Julia Gillard as Prime Minister, Cameron Ling as captain of the Geelong Football Club and Justice Blokland to this Court forms part of a stealthy takeover of Australia's public institutions by the redheads, but this is no new development. Your Honour now forms part of a long tradition of successful redhead leaders such as Richard the Lionheart, Elizabeth I, Thomas Jefferson and Winston Churchill - and some less successful ones such as General Custer.

We are honoured today by the presence of the Chief Justice of Australia, the Chief Justice of the Australian Capital Territory and Justice Murray of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Of course Chief Justice French and Justice Murray, together with your Honour, do form part of the stealthy takeover of Australia's judicial institutions by the sandgroper. We suspect that this is part of a plot that was hatched some time after 1933 when 68% of Western Australians voted in favour of secession but were rebuffed by the British government.

As Chief Justice French observed at the time he was sworn in by Governor-General Jeffrey, Western Australians then occupied positions at the head of the legislative, executive and judicial arms of Australian government but this was not a matter about which Western Australians had any concern. We too have no concerns as after 36 years your Honour is first and foremost a Territorian.

We are also honoured to have three former Chief Justices of this Court join your Honour on the Bench today. They all made great and distinctive contributions to the work of this Court. We have no doubt that your Honour will do the same in what you described when first sworn in as a Judge as 'the great and sacred task of the administration of justice'.

Your Honour, I look forward to working with you. We have a great many challenges ahead but I certainly welcome you in this ceremonial sitting. It's great to see a long term Territorian take the judicial lead in the Territory.

May it please the Court.

MILDREN J: Thank you, Madam Attorney.

Madam President of the Northern Territory Bar Association.

MS WEBB QC: Thank you. May it please the Court. It is with great pleasure that I convey to your Honour the congratulations and good wishes of the Northern Territory Bar Association in your Honour's appointment as the sixth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory.

On occasions such as this, tradition requires the rehearsal of your Honour's achievements, many of which have already been conveyed by Madam Attorney. It is also an occasion for the telling of anecdotes, although I detected a reluctance amongst my colleagues to convey any embarrassing tales, perhaps a response to your Honour's new position on the Court. So I am largely left to my own devices in

this welcome. And like my colleagues, I too am hesitant to tell embarrassing tales, if indeed there are any.

Instead let me recall your Honour's diligence and hard work as a member of William Forster Chambers, your diplomacy and gift for consultancy during your period as President of the Northern Territory Bar Association from 1993 to 1997, and perhaps the greatest gift of all in the profession of the law, a genuine humility. All of these admirable qualities your Honour brought to your position as a puisne Judge of the Supreme Court and I have no doubt you take with you to your new role as Chief Justice.

Your Honour's journey from Bruce Rock has seen your Honour appointed as silk in the Northern Territory in 1988, 11 years later as a Judge of the Supreme Court in 1999 and yet another 11 years later in 2010 as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Another notable event for your Honour and your wife, Jan, in 2010 was to welcome your first grandchild. If your Honour was a Collingwood barracker rather than supporting West Coast Eagles, it would have been a trifecta of achievement or as they say, two out of three is not bad.

Madam Attorney has already commented on the takeover of other redheads in positions of power. Might I add that in some published photos the Chief Justice of the High Court almost gets into that category too and if that's the case, your Honour is in excellent company. I'm told that your Honour once, in giving directions to a jury, assisted the jurors in identifying a witness as 'that one that has hair the colour of mine'. It's not a comment most Judges could use to assist a jury.

Your Honour is an acknowledged teacher of practical advocacy and has written extensively on the subject over many years. The Little Red Book of Advocacy written by your Honour has assisted many legal practitioners. I puzzled over the name of the book. Is it simply a reference to the hair colour of the author? But perhaps it is a mark of generations. I can recall two previously memorable little red books. The first was the most printed book of the twentieth century, The Little Red Book Containing the Quotations of Chairman Mao. The other was the Little Red Schoolbook, a subversive reference book for young people. Both were circulated widely in the 1970s and are remembered with some fondness by those of left leanings and with distaste by those more conservative. Your Honour's own little red book will, I am sure, be remembered gratefully by all lawyers who are concerned with their advocacy skills.

Speaking for myself, I am everlastingly grateful for one lesson I learnt in junioring your Honour: never to write or say 'I submit' when making submissions. It's also when I learnt the meaning of otiose. I also learnt, whilst in Bangladesh several years ago as part of the Australian Bar Association advocacy team, that your Honour has an alias. On several social occasions local dignitaries would become quite animated to hear I was from Darwin. And they would invariably ask if I knew Trejun Rillum who was also from Darwin and taught advocacy in Bangladesh. I

would smile enigmatically so as not to disappoint my hosts, mumble something positive and move onto the next topic quickly. It was only with some master sleuth work and the assistance of Dan Gorman SC that I later discovered that Trejun Rillum was indeed our own Trevor Riley QC. Your Honour, Chief Justice Trejun Rillum, your memorial tree in Bangladesh continues to grow strongly.

Your Honour, the law makes heavy demands on those who practice it well, as you have and the burdens of the office of Chief Justice that you are undertaking are even greater. We have faith that you will carry out your duties with great energy and effectiveness. As Abraham Lincoln observed 'Nearly all men can stand adversity. But if you want to test a man's character, give him power.'

We are confident that the power of the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory rests exceedingly well with your Honour.

May it please the Court.

MILDREN J: Thank you, Madam President.

Madam Vice President of the Law Society.

MS CHEONG: May it please the Court.

On behalf of the Law Society of the Northern Territory, I congratulate and welcome your Honour's appointment as the Chief Justice of this honourable Court. It is also with pleasure that I note that your Honour's elevation as a local appointment acknowledges the talent in the profession in the Territory.

Although I have known your Honour for a long time, I have found that I did not really know that much about you. Your Honour is a somewhat private individual and family man and tends to downplay your successes and your various effects and contributions in the legal arena. Suffice it to say that your Honour is modest about your achievements to date.

I did Google the reference to Justice Trevor Riley and to my surprise there were some 423,000 articles over 40 pages. Although I was aware of your Honour's hard work and influence in the Territory and beyond, I must confess even I was surprised at the number of results. There were over 40 pages setting out the 423,000 results and, although not all were related to your Honour's hard work, however I can confirm that up to at least page 10 the articles were related one way or the other to your Honour's influence in the Territory.

I did obtain the usual background information, most of which has already been alluded to by Madam Attorney and the President of the NT Bar Association. Only a couple of matters have not been noted, your Honour. You were the former Vice President of the Northern Territory Law Society and a former councillor of that society. You were also a former member of the Legal Practitioners Complaints Committee, the Law Reform Committee, the Public Purposes Trust and the Legal

Practitioners Admissions Board. You were and I think still are a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Law at the Northern Territory University and you are occasionally a lecturer in advocacy.

What is clear is that your Honour is extremely keen on advocacy, as Madam President of the Bar Association has indicated the Little Red Book of Advocacy which is affectionately known to Northern Territory practitioners. Your Honour continues to teach and participate in advocacy workshops for local practitioners annually. I have to confess your Honour, I've always been afraid and continue to be afraid to attend such workshops for fear that my deficiencies would become so obvious that your Honour would find me impossible to teach.

Your Honour was appointed as a Justice of the Supreme Court in the Northern Territory in 1999. Your Honour has worked tirelessly through your career in advocating for your clients when you were at the Bar and then as a lawmaker as part of the judiciary of the Supreme Court.

During your time as a Justice of this honourable Court, your Honour has presided over a great number of cases. Your Honour is deeply community orientated and continues to be concerned about Aboriginal communities generally and the effect of drugs, in particular alcohol, on such communities. Your Honour has spoken up frequently on the need for controls and changes in the system for these problems. In particular I'd just like to note your Honour's heartfelt sentencing remarks in a matter in February 2009:

For the good of the town, for the good of the victims, for the good of the offenders and for the good of the innocent children of Tennant Creek, it seems to me that a system must be devised to limit the amount of alcohol made available to the people whose lives are being devastated in this way and to educate and rehabilitate those already abusing alcohol.

The people of the Northern Territory cannot sit on their hands and allow what is occurring in Tennant Creek to continue. I accept that it is a complex issue but it is an issue that must be addressed and must be addressed sooner rather than later. Hard decisions must be taken'.

It is clear from your Honour's decisions from this Court to date that your Honour will not shy away from difficult issues and your Honour will continue to seek out options and solutions to problems which are longstanding and complex.

Your Honour is intelligent, hardworking, compassionate and wise. Some may say that your Honour is as wise as you are handsome but I would suggest that your Honour's much wiser than that.

Your Honour has achieved much in the last length of years that you have been in this honourable Court. Your Honour's intellect, hard work, fairness and community focus will continue to serve you well in your new role as the Chief Justice of this Court. Your Honour will no doubt continue to excel and revel in your new role

which will hopefully offer its own rewards to you in changes for the better that may evolve over time.

It is therefore with great pleasure that the Law Society of the Northern Territory welcomes you as the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court.

May the Court please.

MILDREN J: Thank you, Madam President.

Chief Justice, would you like to respond?

RILEY CJ: Your Honours, Madam Attorney, distinguished guests, friends of the legal profession, staff of the Court and members of the public, I am honoured by your presence here in such great numbers. Your presence also of course honours the Court. I am personally particularly honoured by the attendance of the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.

I thank Nigel Browne, a respected member of the local profession, for the welcome to country.

Issues of various kinds relating to the indigenous people of the Territory underlie a significant part of the business of this Court and I am acutely aware of the difficulties to which some of those issues give rise. I will do my best to continue to develop my understanding of the issues and contribute to the efforts being made to resolve them.

I thank Madam Attorney General, Ms Webb and Ms Cheong for the warm and generous words of welcome, or at least part thereof. Madam Attorney, your research work is energetic once more and again, not necessarily accurate. I must say though that my mother who is present in Court will be pleased by the references to Bruce Rock. She is very proud of that town.

In relation to the naming of the red book, that was named by the late Ian Morris whose idea it was and I think it is pretty unsubtle what it was directed towards but I won't elaborate.

The support I have received from within the profession and the wider community is very reassuring as I contemplate the daunting task of following in the footsteps of my predecessor and friend, Chief Justice Brian Martin. I will have succeeded in my new role if the Court is in as good shape when I leave as is presently the case.

Talking about redheads, I have discovered that I was not entirely unknown before this appointment. One of the first messages of congratulation came from a journalist and I would like to read it to you. She said:

I have kind of noticed you along the way, and I hope you don't mind me saying this, because when I first moved to Darwin years ago some lawyers

looked after my beautiful, old red border collie named Riley while I found a home. His hair colour was pretty much the same as yours and so the lawyers called him Trevor, which meant by the time I got him back he answered to both Trevor and Riley.

I am not sure how the dog felt but I was flattered.

We are about to enter a historic period for the Court. First I point out, and I proudly point out, that this is the first occasion in the history of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory that all Judges have been appointed from the local profession. That is a remarkable achievement.

In 2011 we celebrate the centenary of the Supreme Court. There will be significant celebrations, including the publication of a history of the Court written by our resident historian, Justice Mildren. I have read the draft and it is an entertaining and informative record of the early struggles of the Court and of the evolution of a tradition of bringing justice to what was initially a wild and remote part of Australia through to the more mature community of the present day.

The institution has served the Territory well for 100 years. It is a sign of the present status of the Territory and of the Court that we sit in this beautiful courtroom within a solid, permanent and most impressive court building. The building is now almost 20 years old and yet it is one of the most admired court buildings in Australia. It is a credit to the Territory.

Having said that, unfortunately it has some design problems which means we may have to do some significant internal alterations in order to increase the number of jury courts. Madam Attorney, you and I might talk about that on another occasion.

The building is more than just a building. It is a symbol of the position the Court holds in our democracy. It reflects the fact that the judiciary, including the legal profession which supports it, is an independent and vital third arm of government. It is the independent judiciary which operates as a restraint on the power of the executive arm of government. The judiciary ensures, within the legislative framework, the enforcement of legal rights and obligations, the maintenance of personal freedoms and the provision of a fair trial for all, no matter how unpopular the person or how unpopular the cause may be.

On taking office, the Judges of this Court promise all, and particularly the people of the Northern Territory, to do right to all manner of people according to law without fear or favour, affection or ill will. Individually and as a Court, we strive to fulfil that promise.

The Northern Territory has been the source of many important and famous cases. There is one significant Territory case not found in the Law Reports which to my mind is a clear example of the wonderful working of the rule of law. The case is Roy James Wright v Malcolm Fraser. You may recognise the name of the defendant. Mr Wright was a prisoner in Fannie Bay Gaol following his conviction for

illegal fishing in a billabong in the Territory. The defendant was, at the time, Prime Minister of Australia. Mr Wright, disconsolately seated in his cell, watched the communal television through the iron bars. To his surprise and, possibly, delight, he saw Mr Fraser with a group of dignitaries fishing in the same billabong. Mr Fraser was a guest of others and had no appreciation that he was committing an offence. From his prison cell Mr Wright launched a prosecution against Mr Fraser. The presiding magistrate is today our Administrator, the Honourable Thomas Pauling. To the credit of Mr Fraser, he pleaded guilty. To the credit of the system, no conviction was recorded in light of the surrounding circumstances. The case demonstrates that no one is above the law and that the law is, as it should be, accessible to all.

Whilst the Court has a broad jurisdiction, it is the criminal jurisdiction that attracts most public attention and there is a particular interest in sentencing. The Northern Territory has the highest rate of imprisonment in Australia by a very large margin. That is not a statistic of which we can be proud.

The causes of crime are of course many and complex. However in the Northern Territory one of the major causes is readily apparent. The Judges of this Court have for years been drawing attention to the destructive role of alcohol which we find is present in most of the criminal cases that come before the Court. It is the abuse of alcohol that underlies much of the criminal activity in our community. The abuse of alcohol is a problem we as a community must be willing to recognise and confront if we are to reduce crime and improve the quality of life of our citizens.

It is now generally recognised that longer prison sentences do not provide the answer. The solution is not in the hands of the Courts. The problem should be addressed before the crime is committed, not at the time of punishment.

There is some cause for optimism in this area. It is pleasing to see that the media has in recent times taken a proactive approach towards identifying the problem as significant and using the power of communication to call on the people of the Northern Territory to address the problem.

I sense a change in the attitude of the community in this regard. It is encouraging to see the government actively seeking new ways to reduce the consumption of alcohol and to assist those who already have a problem with alcohol. It is plain that if we are to reduce crime and particularly crimes of violence, we must address the causes of crime and a predominant cause is the abuse of alcohol.

Confidence in the judiciary is obviously vital to the effective working of our system of government and to the maintenance of our freedoms. Members of the legal profession and of the wider community should all do what we can to ensure that confidence in the judiciary is not unjustifiably diminished. Members of the legal profession in particular should conduct themselves in a manner which confirms and enhances the integrity and independence of our profession.

In the coming years I would like to support greater education of our community as to the significant role the judiciary has in our democracy, as to the nature of the

work of the Court, the importance of that work to our society and how that work is carried out. It is through communication that a better understanding will be obtained and respect for the Courts maintained.

New avenues for communication are developing all the time and we will seek to exploit those avenues. However it will always be necessary to engage with the media. It is through the media that information can best be provided to the wider community. In recent times the Court has undertaken a survey of the local media seeking ideas and input into how we can assist the media to better perform its important role. The information obtained is now being collated and hopefully will be transformed into a meaningful system of improvement which will benefit us all.

I am fortunate to live in Australia where extraordinary opportunities are present. I am fortunate and proud to live in this part of Australia, the Northern Territory, where it is possible for those who wish to do so, and who are prepared to apply themselves, to flourish.

I have been entrusted with a very important role. In performing the role I have the assistance and support of my fellow Judges and of the legal profession of the Territory. I am pleased to note that the Court and I have the support of the Government of the Northern Territory, as has been expressed by Madam Attorney, and we are grateful for that. I will do my very best to fulfil the expectations placed in me.

Before closing I seek an indulgence. I seek to thank my family present in Court for travelling so far to join the occasion. My children and their respective spouses and partners are here. My grandson is here. I am grateful. Finally I thank my wife Jan for her continuing, intelligent and unswerving support.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attendance. The Judges invite you to join us for morning tea.

Please adjourn the Court.

SHERIFF'S OFFICER: Silence. All stand.

This honourable Court now stands adjourned.

God save the Queen.

ADJOURNED 10:11 AM INDEFINITELY