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In Memoriam

Remembrance of Judge Myron Bright

Samuel A. Alito, Jr.[†]

The passing of Judge Myron Bright was a great loss to the federal judiciary and to our country. Judge Bright was a unique man whose warm, lively, and generous spirit made an indelible impression on all he met.

I first met Myron nearly twenty years ago, when we sat together on a Third Circuit panel. At the time, I was a relatively new judge, and Myron had decades of experience. He had taken senior status after seventeen years of active service on the Eighth Circuit, and he was sitting by designation in circuits around the country. By my count, he sat on nine circuits. The various courts of appeals competed with each other to persuade the best senior judges to visit, and Myron was in universal demand—both because of his legal acumen and because it was such a delight to spend time with him. Our chief judge at the time, Ed Becker, was a friend of Myron's and was therefore able to convince him to make regular visits to sit in Philadelphia—a great benefit to our court. I learned a lot sitting with Myron, and he, Ed, and I enjoyed good times during those sittings.

When I joined the Supreme Court, I was fortunate to be assigned as the circuit Justice for the Eighth Circuit—Myron's home circuit—and I was therefore able to see him and catch up at the annual circuit conferences. Myron also honored me by stopping by my chambers when his work brought him to the Court. Those visits were always most enjoyable.

Myron was an outstanding judge who left his mark on the case law of many circuits. And he was an inspiring human being. I will always remember the little smile that he had on his face on every occasion I can recall. I thought it captured his embrace of life and his friendly and outgoing spirit. His memory will live on with those who had the privilege to know him during his long and fruitful life.

[†] Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the United States.