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Lessons Learned from Matt

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Lessons Learned from Matt

Judge A. Howard Matz*

I tried several cases before Judge Byrne in the mid-1970s, but not until I became a judge in 1998 did I begin to interact with him when he was "sans black robe." I wish I had more time to grow closer with him, for he became a powerful influence. On every occasion I turned to Matt Byrne for advice about judging, he told me what he honestly thought I needed to know, not what I wanted to hear, and he responded fairly . . . after first listening carefully. On *everything* having to do with the court, he approached each issue with one overriding perspective: What's in the best interest of the court and of those who serve it or must rely on it? He accomplished a distinguished record as a trial judge, and as Chief Judge he was largely responsible for renewing the court's sense of mission. And although Matt Byrne was a fiercely proud man, he never let his ego blur his vision.

For me, these were valuable lessons. Lasting lessons. I am grateful to him for imparting them.

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