Tribute to Joseph Weintraub

W. David Curtiss
A TRIBUTE TO
JOSEPH WEINTRAUB

CHIEF JUSTICE JOSEPH WEINTRAUB—
CORNELLIAN

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The dedication of this issue of the Cornell Law Review to Joseph Weintraub upon the occasion of his retirement as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey is a richly deserved tribute. A quarter century of private practice as one of his state's leading lawyers, captain in the Judge Advocate General's Department of the Army in World War II, New Jersey's representative on the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor, personal counsel to the governor of New Jersey, judge of the state's Superior Court, Associate Justice and for sixteen years Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey—these are highlights of his distinguished career in the law. And Cornell University has played an important part in making these achievements possible, for it was here at Cornell that he received both his undergraduate and legal education.

Joseph Weintraub was born on March 5, 1908, in Cranford, New Jersey. After graduation from Barringer High School in Newark, he entered the Cornell College of Arts and Sciences in the fall of 1924. During his undergraduate years, he achieved an outstanding academic record which resulted in his election to the national honorary scholastic societies of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi. Interested in public speaking and debating, he won the Class of 1886 memorial prize in public speaking and was a finalist in the Class of 1894 memorial contest in debate.

In September 1927, Mr. Weintraub began his studies at the

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Cornell Law School under the then operative Arts-Law double registration program. This practice permitted seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell, with the approval of the Law School as well as the college of Arts and Sciences, to elect the first year of law study and thus qualify for both the A.B. and LL.B. degrees in six rather than the usual seven academic years. Mr. Weintraub was therefore awarded his Bachelor of Arts degree in June 1928.

Joseph Weintraub’s record at the Cornell Law School is one of the most brilliant in the history of the School: winner (with Charles M. Zelkowitz) of the first-year moot court competition; Boardman Scholar (ranking student at end of second year); Editor-in-Chief of the Cornell Law Quarterly; Order of the Coif; graduation with honors and first in his class. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree in June 1930.

The major part of Chief Justice Weintraub’s legal writing is to be found, as would be expected, in the New Jersey Reports. But his first published work appeared in Volume 14 of the Cornell Law Quarterly where, as a second-year law student competitor, he was the author of casenotes on the subjects of “Constitutional Law: Regulation of fees of employment agencies,”¹ “Damages: Interstate carrier delivers without taking up bill of lading,”² and “Sales: Fictitious bill of lading: Effect of subsequent delivery to carrier.”³ A leading article on “The Joint Enterprise Doctrine in Automobile Law,”⁴ which he wrote as a member of the New Jersey Bar, appeared in the first volume of the Quarterly to be published following his graduation.

Throughout the years, Chief Justice Weintraub has remained a staunch supporter of the Cornell Law School. He has served continuously as a member of the School’s Advisory Council from its inception in 1958 to the present time. Despite competing demands in his own busy schedule, he has regularly attended the Council’s annual two-day meeting in Ithaca and has generously shared his rich insights on legal education with faculty, students, and administration alike. In January 1958, he was the guest of honor and principal speaker at the luncheon of Cornell lawyers held each year in New York City in connection with the annual meeting of the New York State Bar Association. His topic—“A New Look at Legal

¹ 14 Cornell L.Q. 75 (1929).
² 14 Cornell L.Q. 210 (1929).
³ 14 Cornell L.Q. 370 (1929).
⁴ 16 Cornell L.Q. 320 (1931).
Education"—dealt with the need for correlating law school training with the practical skills required in private practice. In April 1970, Chief Justice Weintraub addressed the fifty-fifth annual banquet of the Cornell Law Review in Ithaca. His remarks included an eloquent plea for restraint on the part of the federal courts in reviewing state court decisions in criminal cases.

The faculty of the Cornell Law School conveys to Joseph Weintraub the hope that he will enjoy good health and happiness in the years ahead and that he will continue his active interest in the Law School. The faculty also expresses to him its appreciation for the distinction which he has brought to Cornell through his career as one of the truly great lawyers and jurists of our time.