

1 ) SUPERIOR COURT OF CONNECTICUT  
2 ) JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF LITCHFIELD  
3 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ) (AT LITCHFIELD)  
4 RE: STROM THURMOND ) JUNE 27, 2003  
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BY THE HONORABLE JOHN T. DOWNEY, JUDGE

1 (Court opened at 10:00 a.m.)

2 THE COURT: Good morning. You may be seated.

3 I did want to take a moment just to reflect upon a  
4 great American who has recently passed away, and that  
5 was Senator Strom Thurmond. The senator was a person I  
6 knew and met in South Carolina, when I was going to  
7 graduate school and law school many years ago, and he  
8 was a man who went through an amazing transformation as  
9 a politician. He was a man who also participated in  
10 the D-day invasion, in Normandy, in the airborne.

11 He was not as big a person, physically, as you  
12 might think. He only stood about five six or five  
13 seven, very slightly built man, but whenever you saw  
14 photographs of him in Washington, D.C., he was always  
15 standing looking up at him. He looked like he was a  
16 big man, but in person he was a man of small stature,  
17 but a tremendous athlete, even in his seventies he was  
18 running five miles a day and was capable of doing  
19 seventy push-ups at a time.

20 I'm particularly grateful for him helping me when  
21 I was pursuing my master's degree in graduate school,  
22 at the University of South Carolina, because he gave me  
23 a chance to do some research and through his office  
24 allowed me to be introduced to several people in the  
25 Pentagon and State Department where I did my research.  
26 Years later, I was lucky enough to have him officiate

and hand me my law school diploma at the University of

1 South Carolina.

2 Now, he went through quite a transformation. He  
3 was a man who seemed to be, by many, to be a bigot and  
4 a racist because of his position on race relations in  
5 the United States. But one thing that I observed about  
6 Senator Thurmond was that he was able to see life and  
7 reality and to grow with life and reality. In fact, he  
8 became one of the most responsible and helpful people  
9 in terms of race relations in South Carolina,  
10 appointing federal judges who were black and doing much  
11 for the black community. He also changed his political  
12 affiliation from Democrat to Republican. He was an  
13 example, I think, of Americans -- to Americans of  
14 people who can see that the truth in life sometimes we  
15 only see it later in life, but he was a person who  
16 seemed to transform in that regard. So he was a great  
17 American, I thought, and a person who was able to  
18 change his life in so many ways.

19 Now, at the graduation -- I'll tell you a side  
20 story. Now, at the graduation from law school it was  
21 mid year. I went to law school, it took me about  
22 two-and-a-half years, I went summers, also. But his  
23 wife was then, at one time, Ms. South Carolina, and she  
24 was -- she happened to sit in the audience, and she sat  
25 next to my mother and father, and she is a lovely  
26 person, a very nice person, and I remember hearing the

story about the senator how at, you know, here he was a

1 man in his seventies marrying a woman some forty years  
2 his junior. And at one point, his friends took him  
3 aside and said, Senator, you know this age difference  
4 could be fatal. And the senator allegedly said, Well,  
5 she dies, she dies.

6 Well, today a great American is remembered for his  
7 contributions to our society, and I'm especially  
8 grateful for the things he did for me, and I wanted to  
9 share that with you today.

10 (Advisement of rights takes place.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

This is to certify that I, Barbara J. Miller, a Notary Public and Court Reporter in and for the State of Connecticut, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript transcribed from the notes and tapes of Susan Dunn, Court Monitor, heard at the Litchfield Superior Court on June 27, 2003.

Dated at Litchfield, Connecticut, on this 31st day of July, 2007.

Barbara J. Miller, RPR, CSR