



HONORABLE JOSEPH WEINTRAUB

**SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY**

**State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey**

**PRESENTATION of a PORTRAIT**

**of the**

**FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE**

**JOSEPH WEINTRAUB**

**Before:** Chief Justice Richard J. Hughes

**Appearances:** Harold J. Ruvoldt, Sr., President  
New Jersey State Bar Association

Octavius Orbe, Committee Chairman  
New Jersey State Bar Association

Robert B. Meyner, Former Governor  
of the State of New Jersey

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## INDEX

### Introduction

	PAGE
CHIEF JUSTICE HUGHES for the Court	XXIX
HAROLD J. RUVOLDT, Sr., President of the New Jersey State Bar Association .....	XXIX
OCTAVIUS ORBE, Committee Chairman of the New Jersey State Bar Association who made the presentation	XXX
ROBERT B. MEYNER, former Governor of the State of New Jersey	XXXIII
Former CHIEF JUSTICE JOSEPH WEIN- TRAUB .....	XXXV

CHIEF JUSTICE HUGHES: (Sound of gavel) — ladies and gentlemen, the Court is assembled for a very pleasurable and I would think, unprecedented occasion, and that is the presentation of the portrait of our distinguished former Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub. The Court would hear from Harold Ruvoldt on behalf of the State Bar Association.

MR. RUVOLDT: Chief Justice Hughes, Justices, Chief Justice and Mrs. Weintraub, members of the judiciary, Governor Meyner and distinguished guests.

The New Jersey Bar Association expresses to the Court its appreciation for having been permitted to cause to be placed in this Honorable Court the portrait of our Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub. In its seventy five years of history of our State Bar Association the State Bar Association has been honored to be part of the legal history of the State of New Jersey. Time has never recorded greater achievements in the development of law than during the tenure of Chief Justice Weintraub as he presided as Chief Justice of this Honorable Court from August nineteenth, 1957, until his early retirement in August of 1973. Chief Justice Weintraub gave a breath of life to the law of our State that has established the New Jersey Supreme Court as the beacon light of justice and understanding of the law, not alone in the State of New Jersey, but throughout the nation. Rich in years of experience, constantly alert to the ever moving chemistry of the law, with a piercing eye on the future and his finger on the pulse of the present, Chief Justice Weintraub has been enshrined as a renowned jurist and a great American. The legal community as well as the people of our State will beckon him to continue to give of his God-given talents to guide us today to build a greater tomorrow. Chief Justice Weintraub will, as he is already doing, answer the call, for within him is a love of justice and a dedication to the present and the future of our nation that will ever fire within his heart. The unveiling today of

the portrait of Chief Justice Weintraub will mark the beginning of a new life for him. Generations present and future will pass through this temple of justice. They will pause and view the portrait of Chief Justice Weintraub, and in him they will see a true symbol of justice, a documentary of the ever moving legal history of our State. It has been said by the prophets of old that life never ends but rather it is always a beginning. May this beginning bring to you, Chief Justice Weintraub and Mrs. Weintraub, deserving years of happiness as your words of wisdom, your kindness, understanding and love of your fellowmen continue to make contributions in dedicated service to the people of our State and nation.

And now, may it please the Court, it is my privilege to present to you, the Trustee of the New Jersey State Bar Association, a past president of the Bergen County Bar Association, who is the Chairman of the Portrait Committee. I am pleased to present Octavius Orbe, of Bergen County.

MR. ORBE: Mr. Chief Justice Hughes and associate Justices, may it please the Court, this is a very pleasant occasion for the New Jersey State Bar Association for it has been afforded the honor of presenting to the people of our State before Mr. Chief Justice Hughes and the associate Justices of this Honorable Court, a portrait of retired Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub. We are proud, indeed, of this fine work of art, for we feel that the artist, Paul Burns has captured those lifelike qualities of Chief Justice Weintraub that will be preserved in this Court Room for future generations. If it please the Court, I would like to make a few brief remarks concerning this illustrious lawyer.

Joseph Weintraub became Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court on August 19, 1957, and served in that office for sixteen years. Before assuming the mantle of chief justice he had enjoyed an extremely successful and exciting career as a lawyer serving in various capacities where his unique talents were employed to the great benefit of this State and to its citizens. To mention only a few, he served with distinction as a special member of the Bi-State Waterfront Commission. He was personal counsel to

the Governor of New Jersey; and finally, he was appointed to serve on the Superior and the Supreme Court Benches. As head of the judicial branch of government in his capacity as Chief Justice he was in charge of and constitutionally made responsible for the administration of all the Courts of our State. As a worthy successor to Chief Justice Arthur Vanderbilt (often referred to as the architect of our present judicial system), Chief Justice Weintraub was to preside over the judicial branch during a period of time which historians hereafter (I am sure), will record as one of the most turbulent in the history of our nation. It was a period of time during which all institutions in Federal and State Government including the judicial system itself were to come under serious criticism and even attack from groups of virtually all political persuasion. Many of these groups were comprised of well intentioned, highly motivated people who strongly believed that our institutions no longer were able to serve and enhance individual freedom and, therefore, outlived their usefulness. An additional challenge was thrust upon our judicial system in New Jersey, for our State in the post World War II years had witnessed tremendous growth, and this growth was reflecting itself in an enormous increase in litigation funnelling through our redesigned judicial system. At times the swell of litigation was so great that the capacity of the Courts to keep abreast of it was sorely taxed and the system seemed in danger of breaking down. Fortunately, administrative power to marshal the Courts had been, constitutionally provided for, and that power was in the strong hands of Chief Justice Weintraub. He met the challenges both intellectually and as a man of action. In dealing with the confrontation of individual rights v. the rights of the community, his sensitivity to the needs of today came into balance with his perspective and devotion to the fabric of the law and permitted him to enunciate clearly that individual rights must be secured and protected, but they are not absolute and they must be weighed and balanced against society's rights. He valued individual freedom and privacy as precious rights but also knew that without security of law and order, freedom had no meaning.

During his years on the high Court he expressed his philosophy in virtually every field of law preserving the best of the past but unafraid to reappraise the common law and to innovate and adjust when his reason told him it was necessary to do so to meet the needs of today. As a man of action he led the judicial and legal community. He insisted on the highest standards of judicial conduct and procedure, mandating that judges refrain from any action which might impair the system, or which might even appear to do so. He fought for additional judges and insisted that they be men of competence and integrity. He demanded from the bar high standards of conduct and long working hours to reduce the burgeoning trial list. He imposed severe work loads on all his judges, but on himself first. He constantly adjusted and readjusted the Rules of Court and the procedures of the system ever seeking to strike out the unnecessary and burdensome, and to promote speed and efficiency in order to assure not only a reasonably prompt but also a fair and thorough hearing to every litigant. Under his leadership, our judicial system came through the severity of the storm and matured as a more effective mechanism than ever before. If Chief Justice Vanderbilt is known as the architect of our judicial system, Chief Justice Weintraub surely will be known as its efficient administrator. Perhaps because of the overwhelming alacrity of his mind in grasping the legal issues in any argument, there were those who appeared before him who came to hold him in awe, and while recognizing his capacities as a superbly brilliant scholar and as a jurist without peer failed to perceive his other equally fine human qualities. Yet, to his colleagues on the high Court, the men who knew him best, he was viewed as a man of great sensitivity, warmth and compassion. These men not only respected his great intellectual gifts but had deep affection for him as a man. We do not have the perspective to really weigh the impact of this man on our law, our judicial system, our State and nation, except to know that his influence was in the best interests of humanity. Suffice it to say, he was a great leader, a great lawyer, a great jurist. Unborn generations of our profession will come to know him through his

legal writing. Jurists, legal scholars and lawyers of future generations will be able to evaluate better than we, the wisdom of his philosophy. Others, not of our profession, in future years will hear of this remarkable man and perhaps they will come in quiet to view this portrait of him in the Court which he served so well. Thank you.

CHIEF JUSTICE HUGHES: Thank you very much, Mr. Orbe, your fine remarks will be spread on the minutes of this Court. The Court recognizes and appreciates very much the presence of Governor Byrne. It's a busy legislative day, and I know from experience that governors become very hoarse on such days and for that reason, the Governor's asked to be excused from speaking. But it's very much a compliment to Chief Justice Weintraub, Mrs. Weintraub and to the Court that you would be with us, Governor. I've also seen some of the former colleagues of the Chief Justice, Justice Francis, Justice Proctor and Justice Schettino are here, as well as Judge Mintz, Judge Conford and Judge Kolovsky of the Appellate Division. In New Jersey, my predecessor, Governor Robert Meyner left many outstanding marks of distinction on the history, the life of this State and few, I think, of more significance, than his appointment as steward of the great Court system, as Chief Justice, his friend, Chief Justice Weintraub. I want to ask him if he will say a few words. Governor Meyner?

GOVERNOR MEYNER: Chief Justice Hughes and associate justices of the Supreme Court, I'm — as I look at the portrait I think of a remark that Governor Driscoll made some time ago. He said that there are three stages of our life. There's youth, there's maturity and there's a millennium of good. Chief Justice, I think you look as though you had achieved maturity and not the latter stage. I don't have too much time for recollection with a busy law practice and with a wife running for public office. I don't have too many opportunities to look back, but I do look back with pleasure at my early association with Chief Justice Weintraub. I knew him as personal counsel. I knew him when he did the job for the waterfront. I knew him when he was on the Superior Court and then the Supreme Court. It's one of



the pleasurable experiences to look back and feel that I've made some contribution to jurisprudence in New Jersey in my appointment of Justice Weintraub as Chief Justice of this Court and I feel sure the realism, the courage and the clarity of thought in his opinions will live for many years to come; and I think his contribution to the jurisprudence of New Jersey has given New Jersey a fine reputation because, as I've gone through the country and I met people, particularly in the law schools, they hold that New Jersey is the finest Court, or at least is amongst the first three Courts in the United States, amongst the fifty jurisdictions. And I think his leadership has made this reputation possible and I trust that his contribution to the jurisprudence — the jurisprudence will outlive even the oil and the canvas. It's a great painting. I know it will be an inspiration to all of us, but more than that, we can appreciate his contribution to the jurisprudence that will live forever.

CHIEF JUSTICE HUGHES: Thank you very much, Governor Meyner. One recalls the statement, I can't trace the authorship of it, but it said that teachers teach for eternity. And I think in many respects the same might be said of a man who occupies his place with such distinction over so many years. Since I have been here, myself, for just a few months, thinking of Chief Justice Joe Weintraub and Chief Justice Vanderbilt, and the short tenure; tragically, of Chief Justice Garven, there keeps running through my mind the phrase, "The place of justice is a hallowed place", and I know that my colleagues on this court join me in expressing to our former Chief Justice the wish that he will be remembered in this State for a very long time as one who brought honor and innovation and a sense of aliveness — of being alive to this Court and to the jurisprudence represented by this Court. I think, if I'm historically correct, that this is the first time that there has been presented and placed in this court room the portrait of a Judge or Chief Justice still living, and we hope that this condition continues, Chief Justice Weintraub, for a number of years, let's say forty or fifty, and that you will continue to be, you and Mrs. Weintraub, in very good health. I don't think that — I'm half

inclined to ask some of my colleagues who sat here during the time of Chief Justice Weintraub, also to respond. They could do it so much better than I, but I think that I can express the affection and the high respect that adheres in this Court for its former Chief Justice. This must have been to a man as humble as Chief Justice Weintraub quite an ordeal, and against his expressed admonition, but I'm going to ask him if he would say just a word or two to those who have gathered in his honor. Would you do that, Chief Justice?

CHIEF JUSTICE WEINTRAUB: Chief Justice Hughes, members of the Court, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I can't really find words to tell everyone here how much I appreciate the contribution of all. To the New Jersey State Bar, my thanks for undertaking to provide the portrait; to Mr. Burns, a very capable artist who, I'm told, has captured me, and it's a little hard for me to judge, but I suspect that that is my look, but I really appreciate the contribution he has made. Mr. Orbe, I want to thank him for his very wonderful and undeserving remarks, but I appreciate them very much; and Governor Meyner, my friend and the fellow who got me into all of this, my special thanks, and everybody here who came for this occasion, I appreciate it ever so much. Thank you.

CHIEF JUSTICE HUGHES: Thank you very much, Chief Justice Weintraub. The Court will rise now, but it would like to invite those who are here and who have a moment, I know that they would like to extend a personal word to Chief Justice Weintraub, and if they would like to do so, we'd be glad to have them join us in the conference room of the Court. Thanks to the State Bar Association and to all of you who have come here and Governor Byrne.

The Court will be recessed. Thank you.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
COUNTY OF MONMOUTH  
SS:

JEANNE M. SILVA, assigned transcriber, does swear that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the recorded proceedings heard in the Supreme Court of New Jersey, in the matter of Portrait of Chief Justice Weintraub, and transcribed from CRS-4, Index 20 to 324.

/s/ JEANNE M. SILVA

Sworn and subscribed to before me  
this 17th day of May, 1974.

/s/ JOSEPH F. MATTICE,  
An Attorney at Law of New Jersey