



# Department of Justice

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REMARKS

BY

THE HONORABLE GRIFFIN B. BELL  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

AT

THE INDUCTION CEREMONY

OF

EDWARD D. RE

AS

CHIEF JUDGE

OF

THE U.S. COURT OF CUSTOMS

3:00 P.M.  
FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1977  
U.S. COURT OF CUSTOMS  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

It is an honor to add my congratulations on the elevation of Edward D. Re as chief judge of the Customs Court.

I have talked recently about the need for merit selection of judges. In Judge Re's case, merit was at work well in advance of any formal new selection system. He has had a distinguished career as a professor, Executive Branch official, writer, and judge.

Edward Re served on the St. John's University Law School faculty from 1947 to 1961, the final 10 years as full professor. He was chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission from 1961 to 1968, receiving appointments from Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

He then was named Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs and became a Customs Court judge in 1969. President Carter on March 9 announced the designation of Edward Re as the Court's chief judge.

I have a special interest in court improvements -- both personnel and procedures. Let me briefly mention a few of the many court-related projects underway in the Justice Department.

We have prepared a bill to expand the authority of Federal magistrates. Another bill is being prepared to limit diversity jurisdiction. A third measure is being drafted to set new fees for jurors and witnesses and guarantee their re-employment.

One of the major court studies is examining an experiment with arbitration. Improvement of class action procedures is also receiving major attention.

President Carter recently created a Circuit Judge Nominating Commission to help improve the quality of the appeals courts.

Finally, one new effort relates to the Customs Court. As I mentioned recently in Washington, we are drafting legislation to end the split jurisdiction between the Customs Court and Federal District Courts on certain kinds of cases. The new legislation would eliminate the difficulties by expanding the Customs Court jurisdiction.

The Customs Court is, of course, of great significance to the Nation. The effects of its decisions are widely felt -- as any recent newspaper reader knows.

The Court's importance is just one more of the many reasons why I know we are all so delighted that Edward Re has been named its chief judge.