

**REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE LORETTA E. LYNCH IN
RESPONSE TO THE AWARD OF THE EMORY BUCKNER
MEDAL FOR “OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE”**

FEDERAL BAR COUNCIL ANNUAL THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

**WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL
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GOOD AFTERNOON. THANK YOU SO MUCH, FRANK FOR THAT
WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION.

I WANT TO THANK THE FEDERAL BAR COUNCIL FOR THIS AWARD. I
THANK THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR RECOMMENDING ME AND THE
LEADERSHIP FOR SELECTING ME. IT MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO ME. TO BE
CONSIDERED IN THE SAME VEIN AS SO MANY OTHER RECIPIENTS, MANY OF
WHOM ARE MENTORS AND FRIENDS, ALL OF WHOM ARE INSPIRATIONS, IS
TRULY HUMBLING. I ALSO WANT TO THANK THE DEDICATED ATTORNEYS AND
STAFF OF THE US ATTORNEYS OFFICE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW
YORK, ON WHOSE WORK AND SHOULDERS I STAND WHENEVER I RECEIVE
ACCOLADES. MY GREATEST THANKS GO TO MY HUSBAND STEVE, WHO IS HERE
WITH ME TODAY, AND UNDERSTANDS MY DESIRE TO DO SOME GOOD IN THIS
WORLD PERHAPS BETTER THAN I DO MYSELF, AND SUPPORTS ME IN ALL MY
ENDEAVORS.

WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN AWARD LIKE THIS, NAMED FOR A LUMINARY OF THE BAR WHO LITERALLY CHANGED THE PRACTICE OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION, IT CAN BE A BIT OVERWHELMING. I KNOW WHAT LED ME INTO PUBLIC SERVICE. BUT WHAT MOTIVATED EMORY BUCKNER? WHAT LED HIM TO CHOOSE PUBLIC SERVICE OVER PECUNIARY GAIN ON SEVERAL OCASIONS? HOW DO MY CHOICES COMPARE? MORE TO THE POINT, HOW DO I WRITE A SPEECH ABOUT IT?

AS I WAS HAVING THOSE MUSINGS ABOUT A MONTH AGO, A PACKAGE FROM OUR OWN JEANNETTE REDMOND LITERALLY LANDED ON MY DESK. I OPENED IT, AND LO AND BEHOLD, A BIOGRAPHY OF EMORY BUCKNER! WHAT PROVIDENCE! THEY HAD READ MY MIND! OR POSSIBLY MY E-MAILS.... NOW I COULD READ ABOUT EMORY BUCKNER'S LIFE AND WHAT HAD INSPIRED HIM. I FELT MY CONNECTION TO HIM GROW STRONGER. IN ADDITION, NOT ONLY WAS I LINKED TO PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS BY THIS STAGE AND THIS EVENT, I WAS LINKED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING ABOUT EMORY BUCKNER, OF PERUSING THIS BIOGRAPHY AND HAVING THE SAME TOME IN MY LIBRARY AS WELL.

AND THEN, UPON A CLOSER INSPECTION OF THE BOOK, I NOTICED IT WAS NOT EXACTLY IN PRISTINE CONDITION. "NO MATTER," I THOUGHT, "I MYSELF

HAVE SHOPPED THE AMAZON USED BOOK CATEGORY MANY A TIME.” AND THEN I ACTUALLY READ THE LETTER FROM JEANNETTE, WHEREIN SHE INFORMED ME THAT SHE WAS LOANING ME THE BOOK, AND I SHOULD RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS EVENT. “OH,” I THOUGHT. “I ACTUALLY WILL BE PERUSING THE SAME VOLUME AS PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS!” OF COURSE, THIS ONLY INCREASED THE PRESSURE – NOT JUST TO WRITE A SPEECH BUT TO RETURN THE BOOK ON TIME, SO THAT NEXT YEAR’S RECIPIENT CAN BE SIMILARLY INSPIRED.

BUT NOT TO WORRY; UNKNOWINGLY, JEANNETTE SENT THIS BOOK TO THE DAUGHTER OF A LIBRARIAN. IN FACT, THE ONLY TIME MY MOTHER EVER RAISED HER VOICE TO HER THREE CHILDREN WAS WHEN ONE OF US WAS LATE RETURNING A LIBRARY BOOK. SO JEANNETTE, YOU WILL GET THIS BOOK BACK ON TIME OR MY MOTHER WILL DEAL WITH ME. YOU HAVE UNLEASHED THE GREATEST MOTIVATOR OF ALL.

THANKS TO JEANNETTE’S TEMPORARY GENEROSITY, I WAS ABLE TO READ ABOUT EMORY BUCKNER – HIS LIFE AND TIMES, HIS FAMILY, HIS CASES, AND WHAT LED HIM TO FOCUS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE VALUES HE BROUGHT TO THE US ATTORNEY’S OFFICE DURING HIS TENURE.

I WAS CURIOUS TO FIND THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HIM AND ME, THE COMMON THREAD, IF YOU WILL. I FOUND WHAT YOU WOULD THINK, AND MUCH MORE.

IF YOU WERE TO OUTLINE WHAT YOU WOULD THINK WERE THE GREATEST SIMILARITIES BETWEEN EMORY BUCKNER AND MYSELF, YOU WOULD PROBABLY START WITH THE FACT THAT WE HAVE BOTH SERVED AS US ATTORNEYS IN NEW YORK CITY. YOU MIGHT FOCUS ON THE FACT THAT WE BOTH STRESSED TRAINING, PROFESSIONALISM, AND REAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUNG LAWYERS IN OUR OFFICES. SOME MIGHT NOTE THAT HE SERVED AS US ATTORNEY IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT FOR TWO YEARS, AND MY INITIAL TENURE IN BROOKLYN WAS ALSO TWO YEARS. ALL OF THAT WOULD BE TRUE, YET I FOUND A DEEPER CONNECTION THAN THAT.

YOU MIGHT BE PUZZLED BY THAT STATEMENT. WHAT ELSE COULD CONNECT A DAUGHTER OF THE SOUTH TO THE MIDWESTERN LAWYER?

I LEARNED, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND I ARE ACTUALLY NOT AS DISTANT AS THAT. IN FACT, BOTH OF US HAVE OUR ROOTS IN NORTH CAROLINA. BUCKNER'S FAMILY LIVED THERE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, ACTUALLY LIVING FOR A TIME ON A FARM WEST OF RALEIGH UNTIL THE MID

1830'S. I GREW UP IN DURHAM, NOT ON A FARM BUT WITH THOSE ROOTS, ALSO A LITTLE WAYS WEST OF RALEIGH.

I LEARNED, HOWEVER, OF AN EVEN DEEPER CONNECTION, WHICH MADE ME UNDERSTAND HIM EVEN MORE AND WHICH, DESPITE THE DIFFERENCES IN OUR LIFE AND TIMES, WOULD MAKE HIM KNOW ME AS WELL.

EMORY BUCKNER AND I ARE BOTH THE CHILDREN OF PREACHERS, AND THE GRANDCHILDREN OF PREACHERS, AND THE SIBLINGS OF PREACHERS.

BUCKNER'S BROTHER WAS THE THIRD GENERATION OF PREACHERS IN HIS FAMILY, WHILE MY BROTHER IS THE FIFTH GENERATION IN OURS.

BUCKNER'S GRANDFATHER, WHO MOVED FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO MISSOURI AS A YOUNG MAN, WAS PRIMARILY A FARMER BUT SERVED AS A LAY PREACHER DURING CAMP MEETINGS. MY GRANDFATHER WAS A MINISTER AND A SHARECROPPER IN RURAL NORTH CAROLINA. LIKE ALL GOOD PREACHERS, BOTH WERE DIRT POOR.

BOTH OUR FATHERS BECAME ESTABLISHED MINISTERS AT SETTLED CHURCHES. BOTH OUR FAMILIES DETERMINED WE SHOULD HAVE THE BEST EDUCATION POSSIBLE, EVEN IF IT MEANT LEAVING HOME.

FROM THIS WORLD, EVEN IF ONE IS NOT DEVOUT, ONE GAINS A SENSE THAT WE ARE ALL HERE TO WORK FOR SOMETHING GREATER THAN

OURSELVES. ONE IS TAUGHT THAT SERVICE IS THE RENT WE PAY FOR LIVING HERE ON THIS EARTH, AND THAT HELPING SOMEONE ELSE IS THE BEST WAY TO FEEL BETTER ABOUT ONE'S SELF.

EMORY BUCKNER KEPT A PICTURE OF HIS FATHER IN HIS OFFICE, AND OFTEN REFERRED TO HIM IN ORAL ARGUMENT. SO TOO, HAS MY FAMILY BEEN AN INSPIRATION FOR ME.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THAT PUBLIC SERVICE REQUIRES GREAT SACRIFICES, AND IT DOES.

BUT WHEN I COMPARE THE SACRIFICES OF SALARY AND TIME TO THOSE MY FAMILY HAS MADE OVER THE GENERATIONS, ALL SO THAT THE NEXT GENERATION COULD HAVE A BETTER LIFE, THOSE PALE BY COMPARISON.

MY FATHER TELLS THE STORY OF MY GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER, THE FIRST GENERATION OF PREACHERS WE CAN IDENTIFY IN THE FAMILY, WHO WAS A FREE BLACK MAN IN ANTEBELLUM NORTH CAROLINA. WHILE IT IS UNCLEAR HOW HE CAME TO HAVE HIS FREEDOM, IT CERTAINLY GAVE HIM A LIFE THOSE STILL ENSLAVED DID NOT HAVE. HE WOULD HAVE LIVED HIS LIFE AS A FREE MAN, BUT HE WAS TO MEET MY GREAT GREAT GRANDMOTHER, THE WOMAN HE WANTED TO MARRY. AND WHILE HE WAS FREE, SHE WAS NOT, BUT WAS STILL

ENSLAVED. UNABLE TO PURCHASE HER, IN ORDER TO MARRY HER HE HAD TO STAY ON AND RE-ENTER BONDAGE.

THAT'S A SACRIFICE.

AND I WILL CONFESS I NEVER UNDERSTOOD IT, UNTIL I MET MY OWN HUSBAND, AND I REALIZED THAT WHEN YOU FIND THE PERSON WHO TRULY HAS YOUR HEART, NOT ONLY ARE YOU ALWAYS HOME, YOU ARE ALWAYS FREE.

MY GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER SACRIFICED HIS FREEDOM FOR THE WOMAN HE LOVED AND THE FAMILY HE WANTED. IF HE COULD DO THAT TO HAVE THE FUTURE OF HIS CHOICE, THEN NOTHING I HAVE GIVEN UP FEELS LIKE A LOSS TO ME.

SOME SAY THAT PUBLIC SERVICE CARRIES SOME RISK. ONE IS IN THE PUBLIC EYE OFTEN TAKING UNPOPULAR POSITIONS. THESE COULD IMPACT ONE'S CHANCES TO RETURN TO PRIVATE LIFE. SOMETIMES THERE IS PHYSICAL RISK AS WELL, AS WE HAVE SEEN WITH RECENT CASE INVOLVING THREATS TO BOTH A JUDGE AND AN AUSA IN MY OWN DISTRICT.

MY GRANDFATHER, THE SHARECROPPER IN RURAL NORTH CAROLINA WHO BUILT HIS CHURCH BESIDE HIS HOUSE, RISKED A LOT FOR OTHERS. IN RURAL NORTH CAROLINA IN THE 1930'S, THERE WASN'T A LOT OF JUSTICE FOR

BLACK PEOPLE CAUGHT UP, AS HE USED TO SAY “IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE LAW.” AN ACCUSATION COULD MEAN YOUR LIFE, WHETHER TRUE OR NOT. WHEN PEOPLE WERE IN TROUBLE THEY WOULD OFTEN COM E TO MY GRANDFATHER, AND HE WOULD HIDE THEM UNTIL THEY COULD LEAVE TOWN. MY FATHER RECALLS THAT THE SHERIFF WOULD OFTEN COME TO HIM AND ASK,” GUS, HAVE YOU SEEN SO AND SO?” AND MY GRANDFATHER WOULD STAND UP AND SAY “NO,” WHEN SO AND SO WAS HIDING UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS. HE HAD 8 CHILDREN AND NO MONEY AND AS A SHARECROPPER WAS DEPENDENT ON BEING HIRED TO WORK BY WHITE MEN IN THE COUNTY. HE RISKED A LOT BECAUSE HE BELIEVED IN JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS. IF HE COULD RISK SO MUCH FOR OTHERS AND FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, SO HARD TO ACHIEVE IN AN UNJUST WORLD, NOTHING I COULD FACE RAISES ANY FEAR WITHIN ME.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THAT PUBLIC SERVICE CAN BE UNCERTAIN, FRUSTRATING AND UNFULFILLING. ONE CAN GRIND AWAY FOR A PRINCIPLE OR FOR A CAUSE AND ULTIMATELY NOT EFFECT MUCH REAL CHANGE.

MY OWN FATHER, AS A YOUNG PREACHER IN GREENSBORO NORTH CAROLINA, OPENED HIS CHURCH TO STUDENTS AT A&T COLLEGE AND THE NAACP AS THEY PLANNED THEIR BOYCOTTS, MEETINGS TO WHICH HE USED TO

TAKE ME AS A TODDLER, RIDING ON HIS SHOULDERS. WE OFTEN FORGET THAT IN THOSE DAYS NO ONE KNEW HOW THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT WOULD TURN OUT. THE ACHIEVEMENTS WE LOOK BACK ON TODAY AS INEVITABLE WERE NOT ASSURED IN THE MINDS OF EVERYONE. IT WAS A TIME OF GREAT UNCERTAINTY. BUT THERE WAS NEVER ANY DOUBT AS TO WHAT MY FATHER WOULD DO. HE FOCUSED NOT ON THE CHANCE OF VICTORY, BUT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE CAUSE AND THE NOBILITY OF THE EFFORT.

MY FATHER HAS ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT ACTION SHOULD MATCH THOUGHT, WHICH IS HOW, ONE SPRING AFTERNOON IN THE MID 1970'S MY MOTHER PICKED UP THE AFTERNOON PAPER TO LEARN THAT HER HUSBAND HAD DECIDED TO RUN FOR MAYOR OF OUR TOWN. THE INCUMBENT WAS UNOPPOSED AND MY DAD DIDN'T THINK HE'D DONE A GOOD JOB. RATHER THAN CRITICIZE FROM THE OUTSIDE, HE FELT HE SHOULD MATCH HIS PRINCIPLES WITH ACTION.

IF HE COULD STEP OUT ON PRINCIPLE WITHOUT REGARD FOR THE CONSEQUENCES, THEN I HAVE NO IMPEDIMENT TO THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE, WHICH IS NOT DEPENDENT ON ANY VERDICT, OF EITHER A JURY OR POPULAR OPINION.

PEOPLE OFTEN NOTE THAT PUBLIC SERVICE WORK IS HARD, IT IS DIFFICULT AND ONE COULD WORK AS HARD FOR GREATER COMPENSATION OR GREATER FAME.

THE WOMAN WHO PICKED UP THAT AFTERNOON NEWSPAPER, MY MOTHER, IS ALSO MY INSPIRATION. LIKE EMORY BUCKNER, SHE KNEW THAT EDUCATION WAS THE WAY OUT OF HER RURAL NORTH CAROLINA LIFE, AND SHE PINNED HER HOPES ON COLLEGE. SHE WORKED PART TIME JOBS. SHE SAVED HER MONEY. SHE TALKS OF PEOPLE FROM HER CHURCH COMING UP TO HER TO GIVE HER A DIME OR A QUARTER, TO PUT TOWARDS COLLEGE, BECAUSE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WAS COMMITTED TO SEEING HER SUCCEED. SHE WAS DETERMINED THAT HER CHILDREN WOULD HAVE DIFFERENT CHOICES. ONE SUMMER WHEN SHE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, SHE EVEN PICKED COTTON TO MAKE MONEY. PICKING COTTON IS HARD, BACK BREAKING WORK. COTTON IS SOFT, BUT THE BOLLS ARE SHARP, AND WILL SLICE YOUR HANDS TO RIBBONS, AND THE PICKING IS DONE IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY AT THE HEIGHT OF THE SUMMER. YOU ARE BENT OVER WITH THE SACK OVER YOUR BACK, TRYING TO FILL IT AS FAST AS YOU CAN BECAUSE THAT'S HOW YOU MAKE MONEY. I WAS A CHILD WHEN SHE TOLD ME THIS STORY, AND AS I RECALL I TURNED UP MY NOSE AS ONLY A TWELVE YEAR OLD DAUGHTER CAN, AND SAID "EEUW, WHY

WOULD YOU EVER PICK COTTON?" AND SHE LOOKED AT ME AND SAID, "SO THAT YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE TO."

AND I NEVER HAVE.

IF SHE COULD DO THAT FOR ME, THEN THE LATE NIGHTS, THE PRESS OF RESPONSIBILITY, ANY BURDENS OF LEADERSHIP I MIGHT FEEL ARE ABSOLUTELY WEIGHTLESS.

MY OWN TWO BROTHERS – ONE A MINISTER LIKE BUCKNER'S, THE OTHER A NAVY SEAL LIKE NO OTHER – ALSO HAVE GIVEN ME A GREAT DEAL TO LIVE UP TO.

ALL OF WHICH EMORY BUCKNER, SON AND GRANDSON OF FARMERS AND PREACHERS, PUSHED NOT JUST TO EXCEL BUT TO ALSO LIFT OTHERS UP, WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD.

HE WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD WHY I WENT TO THE RWANDAN WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL, WHERE I MET OTHER ROLE MODELS, ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO LIVED THROUGH EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL AND TRIBULATION, WHO MADE ANY SACRIFICE I HAVE CONSIDERED AS SUCH COMPLETELY INCONSEQUENTIAL. I LEARNED TO BE A PROSECUTOR IN BROOKLYN, AND I RECALL SPENDING TIME WITH PEOPLE WHO TOLD ME HOW THEY'D BEEN TRAINED IN THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO KILL SOMEONE, AND DISPOSE OF BODIES. I SPENT TIME

WITH THE FAMILIES OF MURDER VICTIMS, AND SAT WITH THEM AND
SOMETIMES CRIED WITH THEM. YET NOTHING CAN PREPARE YOU TO HEAR THE
STORY OF A WOMAN WHO SURVIVED AN ATTACK CARRIED OUT ON A CROWD
OF PEOPLE IN A CHURCHYARD BY HIDING UNDER A PILE OF DEAD BODIES AND
PRETENDING TO BE ONE OF THEM. OR TO HEAR THE STORY OF A WOMAN
WHOSE EMPLOYER PROMISED TO SMUGGLE HER OUT OF THE COUNTRY, AWAY
FROM THE GENOCIDE BUT INSTEAD TOOK HER MONEY AND BETRAYED HER TO
THE KILLERS. SHE NARROWLY ESCAPED WITH HER LIFE, AND SHOWED ME THE
MARKS STILL ON HER SKULL WHERE THE MACHETE NEARLY ENDED HER TIME
ON THIS EARTH. STILL MISTRUSTFUL OF THE TRIBUNAL SYSTEM, THESE PEOPLE
AND SO MANY MORE TOLD THEIR STORIES TO ME IN THE HOPES IT WOULD HELP
SOMEONE ELSE AND BRING JUSTICE TO OTHER VICTIMS. IN THAT WAY, I WAS
GIVEN BOTH THE GIFT OF THEIR TRUST AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE.

ALL OF THAT EMORY BUCKNER WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD.

HE WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD AS WELL THE PRIVILEGE I WAS GIVEN
WHEN I WAS ASKED TO RETURN TO THE EASTERN DISTRICT.

THE MAN WHO WROTE “CIVIL OFFICE IN TIME OF PEACE IS THE GREATEST
HONOR WHICH CAN BE CONFERRED UPON A CITIZEN BY HIS COUNTRY”¹

¹ Martin Mayer, *Emory Buckner, A Biography*, 32 (1968) (quoting SDNY office newspaper Scraps 5/21/1925).

UNDERSTOOD THAT WHEN YOU ARE AT THE HELM OF AN OFFICE OF DEDICATED PUBLIC PROFESSIONALS, YOU ARE NOT JUST RUNNING AN OFFICE, YOU ARE SHAPING A GENERATION. YOUR OBLIGATION IS NOT JUST TO PROCESS CASES, BUT TO TAKE YOUNG LAWYERS AND GIVE THEM THE TOOLS AND THE UNDERSTANDING TO SEE THE WHOLE CASE AND FOCUS NOT JUST ON WINNING BUT ON DOING THE RIGHT THING, BECAUSE THAT WAY NOT ONLY IS JUSTICE IS TRULY SERVED, IT IS MADE A PART OF THEM.

MY RETURN TO THE EDNY HAS BEEN WONDERFUL. I WORK WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY GROUP OF PEOPLE – MANY OF WHOM ARE HERE TODAY – WHO WORK ALL DAY AND WELL INTO THE NIGHT TO KEEP THIS CITY, OUR DISTRICT, THIS COUNTRY SAFE. I AM SO PROUD OF ALL THAT THEY DO – FROM A NATIONAL SECURITY PRACTICE THAT HAS TRIED MORE TERRORISM CASES SINCE 9/11– IN ARTICLE III COURTS – THAN ANY OTHER OFFICE IN THE COUNTRY, TO THE LEADING MS-13 GANG PROGRAM IN THE COUNTRY, THE CRAFTING OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HERE IN NEW YORK, THE PROTECTION OF THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, THE DEFENSE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN LITIGATION, THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TO SO MANY MORE AREAS WHERE THEY ABSOLUTELY SHINE.

EVERY TIME I HAVE ASKED THEM TO DO MORE, THEY HAVE RISEN TO THE OCCASION. WHEN I HAVE ASKED THEM TO FOCUS ON OUTREACH TO OUR ARAB AND MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN THE WAKE OF INTENSE BACKLASH FROM SOME OF THE VERY WORK WE DO, THEY HAVE ANSWERED THE CALL. WHEN I HAVE MOVED TO INSTITUTIONALIZE OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING, FROM WORKING WITH RE-ENTRY PROGRAMS TO STARTING OUR OFFICE'S HIGH SCHOOL MOOT COURT COACHING PROGRAM.

I COULD GO ON, BUT I HAVE TO SAY THAT I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE PROUD OF THEM THAN IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS, AS WE HAVE ALL STRUGGLED TO RESPOND TO THE DEVASTATION WROUGHT BY SUPERSTORM SANDY. WE HAVE COLLEAGUES STILL DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF EVACUATION, FLOODING AND POWER OUTAGES. SOME ARE LITERALLY HOMELESS. YET FROM THE MINUTE THE WATERS RECEDED, THE RESPONSE WITHIN OUR OFFICE WAS TREMENDOUS. FROM VOLUNTEERING AT SHELTERS AND RELIEF LOCATIONS, TO HELPING FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES PULL TREES OFF THEIR HOMES OR SALVAGE POSSESSIONS, TO COLLECTING MONIES AND CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES FOR COLLEAGUES AND FOR THE COMMUNITY, MY OFFICE HAS BEEN THERE EVERY STEP OF THE WAY. IT HAS BEEN INSPIRING TO SEE.

I STRIVE EVERY DAY TO BE THE LEADER THEY DESERVE. THIS IS A CHALLENGE, BECAUSE THEY DESERVE THE WORLD. THEY HONOR ME WITH THEIR DEDICATION. THEY INSPIRE ME WITH THEIR COMMITMENT. AND EVERY DAY THEY TEACH ME ANEW THE JOYS OF PUBLIC SERVICE.

ALL OF THAT EMORY BUCKNER - PREACHER'S SON, LOVER OF JUSTICE, TEACHER OF YOUNG LAWYERS AND DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANT - WOULD HAVE ABSOLUTELY UNDERSTOOD.

THANK YOU FOR HONORING ME WITH THIS AWARD IN THE NAME OF EMORY BUCKNER. LEARNING MORE ABOUT HIM TOOK ME BACK TO THE CORE OF MYSELF, AND WAS A GIFT INDEED.

AS WE BEGIN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, I WISH YOU ALL THE LAUGHTER OF FRIENDS, THE EMBRACE OF FAMILY, AND A HAPPY THANKSGIVING. THANK YOU.