

State of the State Judiciary
Chief Justice Ross W. Dyer, Tennessee Supreme Court
Message to the State Bar meeting
June 5, 1974

This will be my last time to address you as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, but before I bid you farewell, I wish to challenge you as lawyers and judges to create a greater judicial system for our state; to become involved in not only who is elected to the judicial offices of our state, but to seek out candidates for the State Legislature who will support a better judicial system.

I hope to see the day in Tennessee when the bar and the bench join hands and take an active role in the disciplining of its members.

I hope to see the day in Tennessee when the Attorney General of our state is not selected by the Supreme Court of Tennessee.

I hope to see the day in Tennessee when our courts will be redistricted to allow all the people of Tennessee to have an equal opportunity for a speedy trial.

I hope to see the day in Tennessee when the state Constitution can be amended to allow a more modern application of justice, and, most of all, I hope to see the day when the judiciary of our state is removed from the politics of partisanship, and this includes the reestablishment of the Modified Missouri Plan for all appellate courts and trial courts.

Wednesday of this week, I sat for the last time as Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court. I have served on this court thirteen years, the last five years as Chief Justice, and during this time I have never missed a day of court, nor a court conference. In September I will close out my term as Chief Justice of the court.

I had a life-long ambition to be a member of the legal profession and member of the judicial system of this state, and it has been a great honor for me to serve as a Justice, and also as Chief Justice of the highest court in our state.

To paraphrase the famous words, "Old Justices never die, they just fade away." I hope to quietly fade away as Chief Justice on September 1, 1974, but I plan to re-enter the practice of law, and as a lawyer I do not plan to quietly fade away but to continue to work constantly for the improvement of our judicial system.

As Chief Justice I bid you farewell with the hope that as Chief Justice I have left the judicial system of our state in a better position than I found it. I tried to do my best with the tools that God provided me.