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Dear Colleagues,

Serving as your leader and spokesman has been the singular experience of a lifetime. I have criss-crossed Virginia these past 12 months, marking off a triangle with Winchester to the north, Jonesville to the west, and Norfolk to the east. I have visited or passed places with lyrical names like Fancy Gap, Mint Spring and Stuart's Draft, and names resonating with history, like Yorktown, Cold Harbor and Fredericksburg, or evoking bygone eras, like Steele's Tavern, Tobaccoville, and Longdale Furnace. And I have come to know the Commonwealth, and its magnificent lawyers, as never before. At every stop, I have not only been overwhelmed by your warmth and kindness, but I have also discovered among you a touching reverence for the office I held—leaving me with an even deeper appreciation for how truly privileged I am to have been entrusted with that office for this brief period. I depart with a renewed affirmation of the common bonds we Virginia lawyers share, in our essential humanity, our dedication to the rule of law, and our commitment to providing justice to the public we serve.

In addition to owing profound gratitude to you, my fellow members of the bar, for granting me this honor, I will be forever grateful to these others:

- My wife, Chris—advisor, editor, critic, companion and friend—whose unwavering love and countless sacrifices, above those of all others, have made this possible; and my daughters, Morrigan and Andrea, for their love and support, and also for helping to fill many of the long hours I was absent from their mother.
- My partners and associates at Condo & Masterman, who have let me know, in word and deed, that I could do whatever was required to fulfill my duties as president, secure in the knowledge that our firm and my clients would be safe in their capable hands during my absences.
- Tom Edmonds, Mary Yancey Spencer, Bet Keller, Susan Busch, Barbara Williams, and all the rest of our incomparable bar staff, whose energy is limitless and whose dedication is profound; and whose support is essential to whatever successes we volunteers manage to achieve.
- Michael Glasser, for his boundless affection, his encouragement and support, and his genuine friendship; and the other members of the executive committee, for their hard work and wise counsel.

During these months I have not only spoken and written much, but I have also heard much. In all that I have heard, nothing resonates as do these words of John W. Davis, for they eloquently express what has driven and guided me, not only this year, but during all of my life as a lawyer:

*In the heart of every lawyer worthy of the name, there burns a deep ambition so to bear himself that the profession may be stronger by reason of his passage through its ranks, and that he may leave the law itself a better instrument of human justice than he found it.*

The words “thank you” seem inadequate. I am immeasurably enriched.