

Profile: Judge Barefoot Sanders

Hon. Barefoot Sanders will appear on **Friday's panel at The Sixth Floor Museum** at Dealey Plaza and will swear in Kent Hofmeister at **Saturday's Presidential Installation Banquet**.

Judge Sanders was U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Texas in 1963 and will participate in a panel discussion on events surrounding the Kennedy assassination at the FBA Convention in Dallas. Jason Marshall, president-elect of the FBA Dallas Chapter, interviewed Judge Sanders on July 11.

Jason Marshall: Judge, how long have you been a resident of Dallas?

Barefoot Sanders: All my life. I was born here at Baylor Hospital. I lived away from here in Washington for about four and a half years during the LBJ administration. Then, of course, I was in the service for three years in World War II. Other than that I've been here.

JM: What are some of your favorite things about Dallas?

BS: Well, Dallas is a very clean city as compared to a lot of other metropolitan areas, as you know. Dallas has also been willing to change its ways, albeit slowly, through the years. It is basically a tolerant city, although there seems to have been, certainly there was in the early '60s, a very vocal element of extreme folks on the right-hand side of the road. There have always been a few of those, and to me they have gotten more attention than they deserve.

JM: Do you see that as the biggest change in the Dallas area?

BS: Yes. I think that the assassination knocked that down. We've still got some — Dallas is a politically conservative town, but it's changing because of the advent of minorities and people who are coming in from outside. Not just minorities but people moving in here from the north and east as well as the west coast.

JM: Do you believe that the Federal Bar Association has an important role in the federal judiciary?

BS: Yes. I worked on the cost-of-living increase for federal judges. I was chair of the committee working on that, and the Federal Bar Association was very helpful on the Washington level. It's been a real asset.

JM: What more do you think that local chapters could do to serve their federal judiciary?

BS: I would say the first thing they should do is coordinate any plans that they have with local bar associations. There is always room for people to do good work in this. You want the Federal Bar and the local bar running in a coordinated way and not on parallel tracks without any communication.

JM: What is your favorite cigar?

BS: Well, I don't want to give free advertising but I'd say, generally, Dominicans.

JM: What is the wildest thing that you've worn under your robe while on the bench?

BS: I don't remember wearing any wild thing under my robe. (Laughter)

JM: In your opinion, how has federal practice changed the most during your tenure on the bench?

BS: Federal practice has changed a great deal with diversity cases leaving the federal court. That has taken out a great deal of trial work, and I can't exactly tell you why that is, but we are having fewer trials. Now, another reason we are getting fewer trials is that we handle a lot more summary judgments than we did when I came on the bench. Mediation has also helped considerably. That has become a standard tool, although we don't automatically refer everything. I just refer when I think it will likely be successful or when both parties request it.

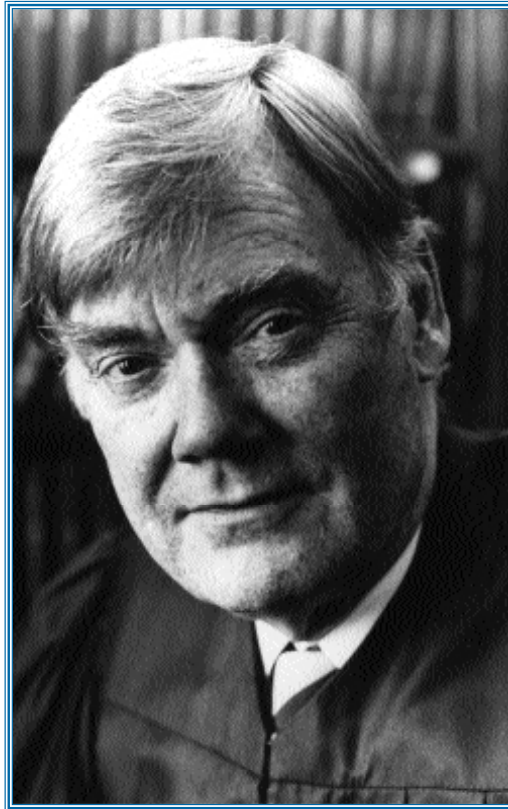
JM: What changes have you noticed in the federal practitioner over the years?

BS: The most obvious is that we have many more women practicing in federal court, and there are some very outstanding women lawyers. I'd say the numbers are about equal as between the women and men.

JM: What types of cases have you enjoyed presiding over the most, generally speaking?

BS: Well, generally, criminal trials. They are more interesting on the facts. Intellectual challenge comes mainly in the civil cases, and once in a while in criminal. →

JM: So would you say that the trial work, whether criminal or civil — presiding over the trials — is that the most rewarding aspect of serving on the bench?



BS: Presiding over the trials, easily. It's most interesting, much more than anything else. The computer, contrary to what I thought when it first came in, has certainly increased the flow of paper in the court by a significant magnitude. I really thought it would decrease the flow of paper. It did not.

JM: In your opinion, what needs to be done to help attract and also maintain federal judges on the federal judiciary today?

BS: Well, I think they ought to consistently receive a cost-of-living increase. Now, it is a year-by-year thing and quite uncertain. I think federal salaries, and I'm not personally hurting, but the situation would be improved so far as retaining judges if salaries were more in line with private practice. That is a difficult goal because the salaries of the federal judiciary are tied to the salaries of the Congress. We haven't been able to change that.

JM: If you had not become an attorney, not taken the federal bench, what do you think your life career would have been?

BS: Probably some form of business. Growing up, I was interested in business but I didn't have any particular kind of business in mind. Maybe oil and gas. When I grew up, that was the big thing in Texas. I might have become a farmer or rancher. I like the outdoors as far as a way to make a living.

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