Justice Wiley W. Manuel

Rose Elizabeth Bird†

It is difficult to put into words the deep feelings of loss that the untimely death of Justice Wiley Manuel has brought to all his friends. Although his tenure on our court was relatively short, he shall not be soon forgotten.

He was not only a fine justice, but a sweet and gentle man who was a friend to all. Although he was noted as a symbol for the black community, he was also a role model for all of us since the meanness of spirit that sometimes evidences itself in life was a stranger to Wiley.

He will be remembered for the strength of his character, his love of the law, and his dedication to fairness and justice. The court has lost a beloved colleague and friend.

Our court's loss may best be expressed in the words of Longfellow.

There is no flock, however watched and tended;
But one dead lamb is there!

There is no fireside, howso' er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

I believe that if Justice Manuel were here, he would say to all of us,

There is no death! What seems so is transition;

This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

Wiley, may you find that peace.

† Chief Justice of California.