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TALBOT D'ALEMBERTE

REUBEN O'D. ASKEW*

FLORIDA is indebted to Dean Talbot "Sandy" D'Alemberte for his outstanding contributions and leadership as a lawyer, legislator and educator.

As Governor, I had the privilege of appointing Dean D'Alemberte as a member of the Board of Trustees of Miami/Dade Community College (1976) and of the Florida Supreme Court Judicial Nominating Commission (1975) and as Chairman of the Florida Constitutional Revision Commission (1977). He served with distinction in each capacity.

Sandy played a major role in drafting the Florida "Sunshine Amendment"¹ which, in 1976, became the first successful attempt to amend the Florida Constitution by direct initiative of the people. Among its provisions, the Sunshine Amendment established a constitutional commission on ethics and designated the then existing and newly statutorily established Florida Commission on Ethics as the constitutional body. Sandy served as the first chairman when the Commission on Ethics was initially created by statute.

What may have been Sandy's most lasting contribution to Florida was his tenacious leadership in revising the judicial article of the Florida Constitution. I had a frantic visit from Sandy in the fall of 1971, during a Special Session of the Florida Legislature, asking for my personal intervention to help get Senator Dempsey Barron's assistance with judicial revision in the Florida Senate. Senator Barron had been a staunch supporter of trial court reform but was for some reason reluctant to assume the primary leadership role in the Senate. My wife and I asked Senator Barron and his wife to be our guests for the weekend and I pushed hard to persuade him of the crucial role he

* Governor of the State of Florida, 1971-1979.

1. FLA. CONST. art. II, § 8.

needed to play for it to pass. He left the mansion committed to help. He was later quoted—with a smile—that he had not been a guest, he had been a prisoner. We did not serve alcoholic beverages in the mansion and, he said, the only way he could get out and get a drink was to agree to help. Well, whatever the reason, he did help and, together with Sandy in the lead, guided the proposed revision through the Legislature. The people approved it the following year. Without Sandy's and Dempsey's leadership we would not have accomplished this long sought and overdue reform.

Few people have been able to accomplish so much as Sandy and I am confident that there are still major accomplishments ahead for him as he serves our state and country. He possesses vision; he knows what to do; and he knows how to motivate people to do it. His personal leadership has been outstanding, and I congratulate him and wish him well.