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EUGENE GRESSMAN: A COMMENT ON HIS RETIREMENT

KENNETH S. BROWN†

Although Professor Eugene Gressman has taught at the University of North Carolina School of Law for only ten years, his impact on this institution has far exceeded his years here. He has become a tradition at the school, in many ways a symbol of what the school has been and what it needs to be in the future. He is a highly effective teacher, a great scholar of the law, and a warm and sensitive human being with a keen sense of humor.

Gene Gressman came to the University of North Carolina Law School as a William Rand Kenan Professor of Law after five years of clerkship at the United States Supreme Court and almost thirty years of practice before that Court. When he came here in 1977, he was recognized as the nation's leading practitioner before the Supreme Court. (He has now argued thirteen cases before the Court, a record for lawyers in private practice, and has filed hundreds of briefs and petitions with it.) He was the co-author of the "bible" of Supreme Court practice and procedure, Stern and Gressman's, *Supreme Court Practice*. He was highly recruited; as they say in the world of sports, the kind of recruit who can turn a program around. Simply his presence at the Law School has given us all added prestige and has helped the school achieve substantially greater national prominence.

But Gene Gressman has meant much more to the Law School than simple prestige. Ten years of students have enjoyed his classes in constitutional law, federal jurisdiction, professional responsibility, and a highly popular Supreme Court practice seminar. His teaching has been marked by exhaustive preparation and deep insight. He has made the school a better place by consistently challenging us all on legal matters, and by setting an example of hard work and thoroughness.

His scholarship increased after joining the faculty. Stern and Gressman's *Supreme Court Practice* is now in its sixth edition. He has completed numerous other articles and contributions to treatises. In addition, he has continued his involvement with the practical application of his expertise and has found time to appear in the Supreme Court and lower courts since joining the faculty. An especially notable achievement was his representation of the United States House of Representatives in the landmark litigation, *INS v. Chadha*,¹ the "one-house veto" case. His reputation as the nation's leading authority on the Supreme Court has only grown in the last ten years.

Yet even these accomplishments do not tell the full story of Gene Gress-

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1. 462 U.S. 919 (1983).

man's contributions to this Law School. Gene has set a tone of decency, of consideration for others, and of good humor that has made the place significantly better than it otherwise would have been. His quick wit and sense of what is funny in an otherwise unfunny political scene have kept students and faculty colleagues alike laughing with him.

Gene's regular presence on the faculty will be missed as much for his human qualities as for his brilliance as a scholar and teacher. We wish him well and only hope that he will elect to spend as much time in Chapel Hill after retirement as is possible.