

The day was a celebration of what Nokwe had come to represent regarding the ideals of the law and its true purpose. President Jacob Zuma said:

'He belonged to a tradition of lawyers who fought for democracy. He used his knowledge of the law as an instrument to fight for human rights. Following in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and many others, he represented a generation of the legal fraternity who used the law to push boundaries of what constituted human rights.'

In his speech Michael Kuper said the following regarding the following of Nokwe's legacy at the Bar:

'In my true belief it is the great virtue of the Duma Nokwe Group, and it is the true significance of today's celebration, that this generation of advocates has chosen to learn from the bitter lessons of the past and to rededicate itself to the creation of an institution of which both Duma Nokwe and Issy Maisels would have been proud.'

A group that bears the name of Duma Nokwe does not justify itself if it was simply another group of advocates. A group that bears that name has a special mission to fulfill. It is not enough that such a group proudly takes it place in the mainstream of the Bar and includes, as it does, many of the outstanding

advocates of this country.

This Group will only justify its name and its heritage when it takes up its legitimate portion in the leadership of the advocates' profession and carries the message that this Bar, in this generation, will achieve the ideal for which the previous generations strove: unity in the service of justice, a shared tradition of moral and professional excellence and a vigorous independence of mind.'

The day was a celebration of Nokwe's humanity and it was recounted in his family's tribute how:

'... [w]hen the Soweto uprisings began and he was so agitated and yet excited repeatedly stating that "the children had done it and they were going to change the path of the struggle in a decisive way". As the young fighters streamed out of the country to Lusaka I recall him always rushing to meet each contingent then writing furiously into the night and asking my mother to buy sweets as he said and I quote "they are but children after all and they have been forced by the system to forego their childhood in the quest for a free south Africa. It is only just that we allow them some part of their childhood as we can do that."

We, his children knew him as Daddy, Tata, as the man who always had a smile, a joke a

warm word or gesture an omnipresent Father despite his total commitment to the movement his travels to far off countries on behalf of the ANC.

It was his engaging manner that was unique about him. The way he always reasoned in depth and encouraged you to challenge him and challenge issues but to always stand for that which is right. The premise that you cannot argue about something unless you have researched it and know it thoroughly, then you can begin to articulate your argument such that you convince even the most discerning protagonist.'

By all accounts Nokwe was a man whom Celus (Digest 1.1.1 pr, 1.) would have described as a priest of the law, one who pursued the art of goodness and fairness, who cultivated the virtue of justice and claimed awareness of what is good and fair, who was able to discriminate between what is fair and unfair, who was able to distinguish lawful from unlawful and one who lived a philosophy that was not a sham. The day was a celebration of Nokwe, the priest of the law, and that this may rightfully be said of Nokwe he is attested to by the most striking feature of the day: white and black members of the Bar celebrating the life and contributions of Nokwe and claiming him as a hero of our Bar. 

South African takes silk in Canada



Former Johannesburg Bar member, Josef Krüger, has taken silk in Canada.

Krüger articulated at Fleischacks in Potchefstroom and was admitted as an attorney in 1983. In the early 1990s he was a founding member of the group formed by Jules Browde SC at National Board House. In 1996

Krüger joined Group 621. In 1998 he emigrated, joining Howard Mackie, a Canadian law firm in Calgary which subsequently merged with four other firms. He is now a partner at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP in Calgary (the largest law firm in Canada) and manager of the commercial litigation group. He is currently the co-chair of an IBA subcommittee on reorganisation and workouts.

Krüger says:

'During my career as a member of the Johannesburg

Bar I was fortunate to be guided by excellent mentors such as Fanie Du Plessis SC, Hiram Slomowitz SC, Schalk Burger SC, Jeremy Gauntlett SC and Dennis Fine SC.

Having to re-qualify as a lawyer in Canada at the age of 42 was the hardest thing I have ever done, but with the challenge also came great satisfaction and reward. The members of the Alberta Law Society were very welcoming, and I regard it a privilege to appear in front of the outstanding Bench which we have in Alberta.

Being appointed Queen's Counsel in January 2010 by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council of Alberta is a great honour which I did not imagine possible when I joined the Law Society of Alberta ten years ago. I ascribe a significant part of my success in Canada to the excellent training and experience I received as a member of the Johannesburg Bar.'

Josef Krüger is married to Coenie, a music teacher. They have three sons and live in Calgary. 