

“Nothing Urgent Here” (1952)

*John Q. Barrett**

Copyright © 2012 by John Q. Barrett.
All rights reserved.

On Monday, December 22, 1952, the Supreme Court of the United States announced six decisions and then recessed for the holidays.

Justice Robert H. Jackson delivered the Court’s opinions in two of the cases. One involved the measure of damages to recover from chain stores that had sold, unwittingly, cocker spaniel statuettes that had been copied from a copyrighted work of art, “Cocker Spaniel in Show Position.”¹ The other decision involved the federal Declaratory Judgment Act.²

During that 1952 Term, Justice Jackson employed two law clerks, William H. Rehnquist and Donald Cronson. I do not know where Bill Rehnquist was on December 22, 1952—at work at the Supreme Court, I suppose. But Don Cronson was not on the job. He was in New York City, maybe interviewing for a post-clerkship job, apparently staying on Fifth Avenue across from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Cronson’s absence was just fine with Justice Jackson. From the Supreme Court, he sent Cronson a telegram. It was something of a holiday gift:

Donald Cronson
995 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Return this week only for personal reasons. Nothing urgent

* Professor of Law, St. John’s University School of Law, New York City, and Elizabeth S. Lenna Fellow, Robert H. Jackson Center, Jamestown, New York (www.roberthjackson.org). I emailed an earlier version of this essay to the Jackson List on December 20, 2012.

For an archive of selected Jackson List posts, many of which have document images attached, visit www.stjohns.edu/academics/graduate/law/faculty/profiles/Barrett/JacksonList.sju.

To subscribe to the Jackson List, which does not display recipient identities or distribute their email addresses, send “subscribe” to barrettj@stjohns.edu.

¹ See *F.W. Woolworth Co. v. Contemporary Arts, Inc.*, 344 U.S. 228 (1952).

² See *Public Service Commission of Utah v. Wycoff Co., Inc.*, 344 U.S. 237 (1952).

"NOTHING URGENT HERE" (1952)

here. Best wishes.

Robert H. Jackson³

In this holiday season, I thank you very much for your interest in the Jackson List, including how you share these posts and encourage people in your networks to become Jackson List subscribers. And I hope that you will have very happy, urgency-free days away from your work chambers.

³ See Telegram from Robert H. Jackson to Donald Cronson, Dec. 22, 1952 (sender's carbon copy), in Robert H. Jackson Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C., Box 177, Folder 3. An image of this document is the following page.

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram	
FULL RATE TELEGRAM	SERIAL
DAY LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

WESTERN UNION

1206

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	LETTER TELEGRAM
VICTORY LETTER	SHIP RADIOGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED
			Justice Jackson	

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

December 22, 1952

Donald Cronson
995 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Return this week only for personal reasons. Nothing urgent here. Best wishes.

Robert H. Jackson