Reading Number 51  
from Simple Justice  
by Richard Kluger

p. 372, ¶ 1, line 9 – “No sector of the nation was less hospitable to both civil-liberties and civil-rights claimants than the segregating states of the South, and it was the South had primarily to deal wit Brown [v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas].

Note: Footnote on p. 372.

p. 373, ¶ 2– “All such bets on the alignment of the Court ended abruptly a few days later when the single most fateful judicial event of that long summer occurred. In his Washington hotel apartment, Fred M. Vinson died of a heart attack at 3:15 in the morning of September 8 [1953].”

IBID., ¶ 3 – “All the members of the Court attended Vinson’s burial in Louisa, Kentucky, his ancestral home. But not all of the members of the Court grieved equally at his passing. At least one did not grieve at all. Felix Frankfurter had not much admired Fred Vinson as judge or man. And he was certain that the Chief Justice had been the chief obstacle to the Court’s prospects of reaching a humanitarian and judicially defensible settlement of the monumental segregation cases.”

IBID., ¶ 6– “Dwight Eisenhower’s principal contribution to the civil rights of Americans would prove to be in his selection of Earl Warren as Chief Justice– a decision Eisenhower would later say had been a mistake.”

p. 374, ¶ 3, line 11– “Without saying it in so many words, the new Chief Justice was declaring that the Court’s policy of delay, favored by his predecessor, could no longer be permitted.”

IBID., ¶ 4– “The more he had pondered the question, Warren said, the more he had come to the conclusion that the doctrine of separate-but-equal rested upon the concept of the inferiority of the colored race.”

IBID., ¶ 4, line 6 – “He was concerned... about the necessity of overruling earlier decisions and lines of reasoning, but he had concluded that segregation of Negro schoolchildren had to be ended.”

IBID., ¶ 6 – “Unless any of the other four Justices who had indicated a year earlier their readiness to overturn segregation– Black, Douglas, Burton, and Minton– had since changed his mind, Warren’s opening remarks meant that a majority of the Court now stood ready to strike down the practice.”

p. 375, ¶ 3 – “He recognized that the Court’s decision would have wide repercussions, varying in intensity from state to state, and that they would all therefore have to approach the matter in as tolerant and understanding as possible.”

p. 378, ¶ 2, line 2 – “Within the hour, the Voice of America would begin beaming word to the world in thirty-four languages: In the United States, schoolchildren could no longer be segregated by race.”