

ALLAN SMITH

*Robben W. Fleming**

It is an article of faith in this nation's best universities that the first and foremost position one can hold is that of a distinguished and respected professor. Allan Smith fulfilled that faith in every respect. Generations of students thought him superb. His colleagues intensely admired his abilities. Scholars in his own field acclaimed him.

It is a part of the faith which any faculty has in its own that if there have to be administrators they ought to come from the ranks of those who have first made their mark as professors. And so Allan Smith became Dean of the Law School. He served so well that the University then asked him to be Vice President for Academic Affairs.

It was my great pleasure to serve as President of the University of Michigan in a number of years in which Allan was the Vice President. Whether in the difficult era of student unrest, or in financial crises, or in simply identifying a sensible path through the many issues on which there can never be complete agreement, Allan was without a peer. His keen mind always cut to the heart of the issue, his compassion mellowed his judgment, and he had the courage to stand up to criticism when he knew he was right.

Finally, after coming back to the Law School, Allan was called upon to serve as Interim President of the University. His term was, as everyone knew it would be, a triumph.

Rarely has the University of Michigan had so versatile a member of its family. Perhaps most importantly, he has left with all of us who have had the opportunity to work with him a feeling of great affection, enormous respect, and a conviction that whatever else he touches in the future will benefit enormously from his talents.

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