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*Consumers Per Company*

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## ALLAN SMITH — A PERSONAL HISTORY

*Lawrence B. Lindemer\**

Allan Smith was born in Belgrade, Nebraska, which today has a population of 210 hearty souls. For those who may be motivated to journey to the site of Allan's birth, I can offer some guidance by relating that it is southeast of Primrose, west of Genoa, east of Greeley, and north of Fullerton. The road (singular) through Belgrade is designated by Rand-McNally as "Other roads (local conditions vary, inquiry suggested)."

The Smith family was notable indeed. Allan was one of four brothers: Earl, who has retired from Dow-Corning at Midland; Donald, whose career paralleled that of Allan's — he served as academic vice president of both the University of Minnesota and the university system in the State of Wisconsin; Harold, a much loved family physician in Kearney, Nebraska, who died last year; and Allan.

Allan graduated from Kearney State Teachers College with a degree in English. Students in his property courses who wonder whence cometh his great fluency and insight might be interested to know that at one time Allan spent a year teaching Shakespearean tragedy. But Allan discovered that teaching jobs were difficult to find, and he worked as a clerk in his brother-in-law's law office, acquiring the desire to study the field in which he has since excelled.

Allan attended law school at the University of Nebraska. He graduated as the top student in his class, and thereby received a fellowship for graduate studies at either Yale University or the University of Michigan. He chose Ann Arbor. At the conclusion of his first year of graduate study he went to work for the Office of Price Administration (OPA) until the Army, specifically the infantry, got him. Something about the government's use of Allan's talents should give us pause. In the OPA he was chief of the section which set prices for winter hog's hair and used bags. I kid you not. When the Army got Allan — this top man in his law class at Nebraska, this student for his Masters in Law at the University of Michigan, this brilliant man who knew all about hog's hair and used bags — he found that he was stationed with G2 in the Pentagon where, according to unveri-

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\* General Counsel, Consumers Power Company. Regent, University of Michigan, 1968-1975. — Ed.

fied but well regarded rumor, the duty he performed with greatest regularity was serving hot chocolate to his general each morning. In any event, Allan eventually returned to Michigan and completed the work for his Masters Degree in Law. He then headed west for one year teaching at Stanford. Dean E. Blythe Stason, rest his soul, enticed him back to Michigan, and Allan F. Smith has been here since. The respect and veneration with which he is regarded by those who have witnessed his contribution to this University and its students over the years need no gloss from me.

I came to know Allan well as his roommate on a memorable trip to China in February 1976. I experienced with him the thrill of standing on the Great Wall. I witnessed his pleasure at the taste of a delightful rice wine in Nanking. I discerned also his one great failing: he suffers regents poorly. On our journey into Peking, the guide, who kept up a constant patter, repeated everything at least three times. I asked Allan if he could understand why. He surmised that she had been told there were regents in the group.

The personal man is as fine as the public man is talented. He instills, in those who know him, admiration and respect. And he is a valued friend.