

Reflections in Print

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FORWARD

We are the children of the law; and we honor our parent. Indeed, it would be unnatural not to do so. If students were to enter their own profession with disrespect, the laymen, a fortiori, would have a genuine right to ridicule both the profession and the student. When a child loses respect for his own parent, the child has suffered the ultimate disillusionment, and the parent, the ultimate degradation.

Foreword, 1 NOTRE DAME LAWYER 30, 31 (1925)

Fifty years ago, in the foreword to the first issue of the *Notre Dame Lawyer*, the editors deplored “modern abuses of legal procedure,” abuses which had generated a popular attitude “on the verge almost of contempt” toward the law and lawyers. Today our frequently castigated profession is again engaged in profound soul-searching, groping through the recent quagmire of scandal and malfeasance in search of its ideals, its honor, and, indeed, its self-respect. No law review can escape its responsibility to share in this self-examination, and we therefore take the opportunity of our fiftieth anniversary to state—as did the editors of fifty years ago—our goals and aspirations.

A law review by its nature stands removed from the workaday maelstrom of legal practice. We write no briefs, decide no cases, administer no agencies, enact no statutes. Yet this very distance provides a unique opportunity to contribute. It is primarily law reviews which provide the forum for American legal scholarship and thereby the theoretical foundation for the necessary development of the law and the current legal examination of conscience. It is here, at the wellhead of our jurisprudence, that the high ideals of our profession must be recalled and maintained.

This has been the constant purpose of the *Notre Dame Lawyer* throughout the fifty years of its existence. We have always sought and continue to demand from our authors—both students and attorneys—scholarship that penetrates the black letter of the hornbooks to treat the weightier concerns of justice and righteousness. Such scholarship has its basis in the simple yet exact phrase of Aquinas defining law as “an ordinance of reason for the common good,” and finds its inspiration in the courageous statement of St. Thomas More on the scaffold: “I die the King’s good servant, but God’s first.” It goes beyond an adherence to things as they are to a concern with things as they ought to be.

This is a responsibility of which we on this law review at this law school in this university are by tradition and training particularly

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conscious. Fifty years after the publication of the first issue of the *Notre Dame Lawyer* we remain “the children of the law,” devoted to its majesty and ideals, committed to the cause of justice. And it is this devotion, this commitment, which motivates us—despite the continued presence of “abuses” in our scarred profession—to dedicate our scholarship to the Mirror of Justice.
