

A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR COVEY T. OLIVER

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During my first year and a half or so at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Professor Covey T. Oliver was on a sabbatical, serving first as U.S. Co-Ordinator of the Alliance for Progress, and thereafter as Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

In the law school, Professor Oliver's very considerable reputation as an "Internationalist" only served to accentuate the vacuum arising from his absence. In particular, his course on international business transactions was sorely missed by the relatively small group of students interested in a legal career in this field.

Thus, as the only English J.D. candidate, and as one tentatively planning on practising in my own country in the general field of transnational business transactions, I eagerly awaited the return of Professor Oliver with emotions which can only be described as a mix of interest and self-interest. At the same time, Professor Oliver's reputation was such that one could not help wondering whether he would prove to be aloof and unapproachable to a degree which would be disappointing to those students interested in taking his courses.

In the event, Professor Oliver turned out to be easily approachable, interested in his students far beyond the call of duty, and willing to befriend them. Moreover, he had the ability to implant in his students something of the wealth of personal experience which had been his. As a teacher, he was "untraditional" to say the least, being ever willing to deviate from the "prescribed text" with observations drawn from his own career and prefaced by phrases such as "In practice, what was really at issue was . . ." or "In practice, the way it is really done is . . ."

In sum, before Professor Oliver rejoined the faculty, I felt that the legal education which I was obtaining was invaluable, but deficient in that it ignored to a large degree the requirements of an aspiring international practitioner. This deficiency was more than remedied by Professor Oliver's presence. In addition, I had the honour to be befriended by him, which was both a privilege and, in itself, an education.

If the casual reader suspects from the above remarks that they are intended as unreserved praise for a former professor by a grateful student, he or she will suspect correctly.

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