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# LEGAL AID IN THE UNITED STATES. By Emery A. Brownell. Rochester: The Lawyers Co- operative Publishing Co., 1951.

Gerald Bloom

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LEGAL AID IN THE UNITED STATES. By Emery A. Brownell. Rochester: The Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Co., 1951. Pp. 333. \$4.50.

Among the most pressing needs of our society, one of the most compelling and human is that of 'justice for all' — the strong and the weak — the rich and the poor. Emery A. Brownell having taken full cognizance of this problem deals with it in the most comprehensive fashion to date on this topic in *Legal Aid in the United States*.

This book, although primarily directed toward members of the legal profession should also appeal to anyone interested in humane social problems. Admittedly it does contain a good deal of statistical data, but those figures help to tell the true story, which the author has traced with great care from its earliest days to the present. These, plus many careful analyses of what the various agencies have been able to accomplish, illustrate graphically the absolute necessity for broadening the existing facilities into something approaching effective legal aid. In the words of the author:

No single section is apparently immune to the charge of neglecting to establish Legal Aid facilities, because these cities are geographically well-distributed. It is true, however, that the larger unserved cities — those in which the needs seems to be relatively more acute — are in the Southeast.

He states many times that among the major obstacles to the success of the clinics has been the failure of the Bar to recognize the problem and deal with it realistically:

Whether due to unfounded fear of competition, inherent lethargy, or mere lack of interest, the failure of local bar associations to give leadership, and in many cases the hostility of lawyers to the idea, have been formidable stumbling blocks in the efforts to establish needed facilities.

Mr. Brownell skillfully divides the work, commencing with the historical background, following that with a view of Legal Aid today and then showing what legal services are needed with a listing of typical cases as well. There follows a study of who needs the legal aids in addition to a separate discussion of civil and criminal cases and relates the type of service now available to each. With a view to improving the condition of the service the latter portion of the book looks ahead to an ideal arrangement after showing who can help in the campaign both financially and personally.

Anyone reading this book cannot help but be impressed by the sincerity of the man's approach. A monumental amount of careful data has been incorporated into its pages and has been arranged in readable fashion. The outlines of the entire program and the inner working of the different organizations will prove to be a boon to anyone devoting time to this worthwhile cause. There can be no doubt as to its importance in this day and age for as he so vividly states:

As this report is being completed the forces of totalitarianism are again on the march, subjugating more millions of people to the

tyranny of 'statism.' The providing of adequate legal services is not a matter of small consequence in the face of so ominous a threat.

The individual does not exist to serve the the state. The state exists to serve the individual. The object of the law is to protect the dignity and worth of every human being, whatever his income. American history demonstrates that our national strength is founded on individual opportunity and freedom.

If Law is to fulfill its important mission, the facilities of Legal Aid . . . must be materially strengthened, for here is the tested and exclusive means of assuring that every citizen stands equal before the law.

GERALD BLOOM

LECTURER IN LAW  
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI