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Paul M. Hebert

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Statement of Welcome

Paul M. Hebert

President Middleton, Chief Justice Fournet, and other honored visitors and guests, my colleagues of the Faculty, members of the student body, and friends of the Law School:

As we gather this morning to commemorate fifty years of legal education at Louisiana State University, it is a happy privilege for me to bid you welcome and to express to our distinguished guests, some of whom have come from afar, our keen appreciation for their presence and for their participation in today's program. Our Law Faculty is honored that you are here and is grateful to each of you for the contribution we know you will make to the day's survey of varied aspects of the responsibilities of legal education in our time. We welcome also the alumni and friends of the Law School who are with us. We acknowledge with gratitude numerous expressions of congratulations and good wishes that have come to the Law School in connection with this Golden Anniversary from those who would like to be with us but could not be here today.

Turning back some fifty years, may we briefly recall that it was on May 10, 1906, that the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution for the establishment of a department of law at this university. Classes actually began on September 24th of that same year, with an enrollment of 19 students. Establishment of the Law School was according to a plan that had been originally proposed by the late beloved Arthur T. Prescott, Professor of Political Science and Constitutional Law. Professor Prescott's keen interest in the field of public law caused him to be a strong advocate for the establishment of the Law School. Thus we know that President Thomas D. Boyd's report of 1904 submitted Colonel Prescott's recommendations to the Board of Supervisors with the following comments:

"I heartily endorse the proposition to create a law department in this institution, wherein systematic professional training will prepare students for the bar. If organized with professional teachers, as well as professional lawyers, men as anxious to satisfy the requirements of systematic instruc-

tion as to elucidate the principles of legal science, such a department would offer advantages to be had no where else in Louisiana. When we recall the fact that the best law schools in America command the services of men devoted to teaching alone, and that such men, after the great expounders of the law on the bench, have contributed most to the development of the profession, we realize the necessity for exclusive professional teaching. The Professor of Political Science and a scholarly lawyer as Professor of Law could start the work under favorable auspices. Outsiders could deliver courses of lectures from time to time, as Judge Howe at Yale when he prepared his well known studies in Civil Law. In this connection it would be well to remember that the courses in law now given to our commercial students constitute an important part of the courses prescribed by the Supreme Court for applicants for admission to the bar. They are, therefore, an excellent foundation for a professional department."

Colonel Prescott's idea took root. From the modest start of half a century ago, the Law School of Louisiana State University has progressed through successive stages of development all of which bear testimony to the strength of the ideals of legal education which gave it birth. In keeping with the policy emphasizing the role of the full-time law teacher as expressed by President Boyd, the Law Faculty throughout the School's history has been predominantly a faculty of full-time professional legal educators.

Many are the names that might be appropriately mentioned if we were to call the roll of those who have served our Law School with distinction, adding to its strength through the years. Time permits us to cite only a few.

We recall the early work of Dr. Joseph J. Kelly, the initial dean, who established the first curriculum with its emphasis on the Roman and the Civil Law. From the Department of Archives, the Law Librarian has assembled a few of the interesting original items relating to the School's founding, including documents in Dr. Kelly's own handwriting. You are invited to view these documents in the exhibit in the Main Lobby.

Continuing our brief enumeration, we recall the work of Robert L. Henry, first Professor of Common Law, who joined the Faculty in 1908 and served the School in the critical years of this

early period; the work of Professors Fleming and Scroggs, who along with Colonel Prescott brought to bear their broad learning in History, Economics, and Political Science in the appropriate courses in the first curriculum.

Under the leadership and able teaching of Dean Robert Lee Tullis, whose service spanned some twenty-seven years, between 1907 and 1934, the Law School matured, achieving new laurels, including necessary accreditation by both the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools. The imprint of Tullis on the Law School and on the Civil Law, whose exponent he ever was, is truly indelible. Quite early in his administration, Dean Tullis brought the late Professor Ira S. Flory to the Faculty. He thereby added a pillar of strength to the growing Law School.

Professor Flory was one of the ablest teachers I have ever known. His thirty-eight years of devoted association with the Law School, including the expansion of the library collection, constitute debts of a magnitude to defy adequate acknowledgment.

The earlier accomplishments of these great men made possible the Law School's subsequent expansion, which began in the middle thirties. Under the driving leadership of Frederick K. Beutel, who served as Dean from 1935 to 1937, this magnificent Law School Building was planned and erected, the budget for Law School operations was augmented, the curriculum was reorganized, added faculty appointments were made, funds for book purchases and professional library staff were greatly increased, and added emphasis was placed on the responsibility of the Law School in legal research as well as teaching. The impact of Dean Beutel's vision has affected mightily the progress of legal education at L.S.U.

The current Faculty and Administration of the Law School have thus become the trustees of a proud heritage of service in Louisiana's system of legal education. Our's has been the mission to build and plan so that, out of the solid foundations thus laid, the progress toward increasing effectiveness may be sustained, constant and attuned to ever-changing needs.

Measured in terms of the professional attainments of its graduates and in terms of their leadership in important affairs

— public and private — in the life of our state, the Law School can, with a measure of pardonable pride, look back upon the accomplishments of the last fifty years. But fidelity to the calling of legal education today makes it more important to take a forward look from where we stand.

We are now in an era in which the demands made on the system of American legal education are multiplying almost in geometrical progression. The complex role of the law in an increasingly complex society makes this so. It is inevitable that the Law School of Louisiana State University, along with the other law schools of the nation, in the years immediately ahead will be mightily affected by the events of which we are a part and by the growing responsibilities which we cannot shirk. We must think no little thoughts when we contemplate the pathway of further progress and achievement that must be charted if our current role as a law school is to be fully appreciated and lived up to in the years ahead.

The time is auspicious, then, for general appraisal. To aid in gaining a clearer appreciation of the present-day responsibilities of legal education, today's sessions are focused at various phases of those responsibilities. There will thus pass in review a panoramic survey of more important aspects of the current scene in American legal education.