



1-1-1969

Notre Dame Law School--The Future

William B. Lawless

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndlr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

William B. Lawless, *Notre Dame Law School--The Future*, 44 Notre Dame L. Rev. 1079 (1969).

Available at: <http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndlr/vol44/iss6/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by NDLScholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Notre Dame Law Review by an authorized administrator of NDLScholarship. For more information, please contact lawdr@nd.edu.

NOTRE DAME LAW SCHOOL — THE FUTURE

*William B. Lawless**

Mr. Justice Brennan, Governor Broderick, Mayor Alioto, Distinguished Guests, Father Hesburgh, Faculty, Alumni, Students and Friends of Notre Dame Law School.



Dean William Lawless

Tonight is the climax of one hundred years of service by the Notre Dame Law School to God, to Country and to Notre Dame. Men of strong heart have worked assiduously to complete this Century of Service. Six prior deans, untold dedicated faculty, enthusiastic students and distinguished alumni have together composed the Notre Dame story of dedication to a learned, indeed, a sacred profession.

Last night we heard Governor Broderick eloquently summarize the past of the Law School. Earlier this evening, we heard James Barba, President of the Student Bar Association, describe the present. I shall briefly sketch what I hope will be the future of the Notre Dame Law School.

The theme song of a delightful play entitled "The Man of La Mancha" goes something like this:

To dream the impossible dream
To fight the unbeatable foe
To bear the unbearable sorrow
To run where the brave dare not go
To reach the unreachable star
This is my quest

Forgive me if I tonight dream what may seem to be the impossible dream in projecting our Law School into the next century.

I envision a new Law Center on campus which will accommodate 600 students, a full-time faculty of twenty-five, facilities for a research institute, a library of 160,000 volumes, two distinguished professors in residence and, most importantly, an elite student body selected nationally and internationally for intelligence, promise and commitment to justice. I envision a Notre Dame Law Center, placed close by the Memorial Library and hopefully connected to it by tunnel so that all its printed treasures are easily available to our law students and our legal journals in return are available to other University students. A model of that complex is on display for your serious consideration and approval. It was designed by Mr. Sinclair Hui from data that we gathered after examining the plans of some twenty-five modern law schools, visiting over one dozen, and estimating our future growth.

* Dean, University of Notre Dame Law School.

I envision strengthening of an academic program that is not narrowly professional and legalistic, but rather one which both teaches the philosophy of the law and law in its everyday setting. I envision a close interplay between law students and students, both graduate and undergraduate, in other but allied disciplines. To study Criminal Law without relating it to sociology, penology and criminology is inadequate for our times. To study Municipal Law without relating it to the problems of our cities, the problems of minority groups and the problems of our poor is unreal in twentieth-century America. To study Family Law without at the same time probing the social aspects of family decline, is not to understand fully the legal problems of juvenile delinquency. Indeed, to study law without some deep understanding of the moral basis for all law is both a futile and hopeless exercise. Hence, the Notre Dame Law Center must, as our speakers have suggested throughout the Symposium, relate law to human morality and human purpose. It is our mission to rise above the new wave of utilitarianism and secularism. It is our hope to provide our students with a unifying vision of the spiritual sources from which western civilization flows. We will attempt, in the words of Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, to "*touch our men with fire,*" but that fire will be both the flame of scholarship and the heat of the Holy Spirit.

Let us not overlook that the future Notre Dame Law Center will really be projection of the many strengths which it now holds: the casebook system introduced by Professor Peter Foote when the School opened in February, 1869; the desire for public service evidenced by Dean Hoynes, who led a commission to deal with Indian problems at the request of the President of the United States, by Professor Timothy Howard, who later served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Indiana, after whom Howard Hall is named, by Dean Konop, who moved the College of Law into its present quarters and had time to serve with distinction in the United States House of Representatives; of the quest for natural law and the proceedings launched by Dean Manion; of the demand for professional competence brought to us by the distinguished former Dean O'Meara.

With all this to draw from, nonetheless we must plan ahead for changing times, challenging problems and new dimensions within the profession. In this regard, I have already arranged a Year Abroad Program for second-year students whereby they are presently reading both American and British law in London at University College London under the supervision of our faculty and are attending classes with British students in courses common to English-American lawmen. We believe they will understand American law better through comparative legal study. They will also be exposed to the British tradition of justice and observe some of the most civilized practitioners in the world. For this we are deeply grateful to George Keeton, Vice Provost and Head of the Faculty of Laws of University College London, who is with us this evening.

In our dream of the future we also dream of having some our second-year men undertake similar programs abroad in Tokyo, where they will observe the Japanese legal system while reading American law, and in one of the South American countries on the same basis. Imagine the excitement with which our

third-year seminars will be conducted when Notre Dame Law students who have studied in England, Japan, and South America rejoin their third-year class. We do not mean to suggest that we are going to abandon the traditional training in American law for the majority who wish to emphasize it; rather we agree with the founders of the program of international legal studies at Harvard Law School that the practitioner of the future must understand in a general way, at least, legal systems other than his own. Twenty years from now commercial legal transactions with persons abroad will be commonplace.

A large portion of the dream is our urgent desire to be able to support in the Law School a substantial number of students drawn from minority groups, from homes where there is no possible means to provide a law school education. It should be noted that at present the Notre Dame Law Scholarship Program is the most intensive in the nation. We offer per capita two-and-a-half times more law scholarships than Harvard Law School. Of the current Law School population of 268 students, 175 receive full or part-time scholarships and cash grants. It is our policy not to deny a high-potential student admission for economic reasons. We intend to expand this philosophy through a new loan program and actively to recruit black students, Mexican Americans, American Indians and other low income and neglected minorities. The life blood of the Law School is its student body and we must draw the most vigorous minds from every sector of American society, if we are to be truly a national and truly a democratic law school.

In conclusion, it may be said that the Notre Dame Law School of the future will be exactly what you enable us to be. It will be Christian in tone, it will stress moral values, it will be highly competitive, it will supply the profession with highly skilled lawyers, legislators, legal scholars, and public defenders and judges: in a word it will train men and women who really care about the shape and structure of this great country. The famous Notre Dame will-to-win will stir in the minds of its magnificent alumni practicing at the bar.

In the words of the late and distinguished Senator Robert F. Kennedy:

Some men see things as they are and say: why?
I dream things that never were and say: why not?

To you, faculty, alumni, and friends of Notre Dame Law School, let us conclude our Centennial Celebration by dreaming together about the Notre Dame Law Center, something that never was and saying together: *WHY NOT?*

If Father Sorin could step into this Indiana wilderness over 125 years ago and in the loneliness of the lakes and the trees with a handful of companions say: *Here I shall build a great university*, are we tonight, in this impressive gathering of distinguished men and women, unable to say with equal faith: *Here we shall build a great law center*.

I think not — we shall say it.

WE WILL DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM
WE WILL REACH THE UNREACHABLE STAR —

simply because we are working and building for Notre Dame —
Our Mother.