

Natural Law and the United States Constitution

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The Natural Law and the United States Constitution

The Natural Law Conference

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the Guild of Catholic Lawyers of New York will be held on Saturday, December 15, 1956 at the Association of the Bar, 42 West 44th Street, New York City. The Conference is presented to the members of the judiciary, legal profession and to the general public as a forum wherein the application of Natural Law principles to specific current problems will be examined.

Presiding officers will be the Honorable Charles E. Murphy, Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department, and the Honorable Joseph A. Cox, Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department.

The Conference will be concerned with the Natural Law, and the First and Fifth Amendments of the United States Constitution will be singled out for special consideration. Professor Edwin P. McManus of Georgetown University Law Center will discuss the Natural Law in its application to the Fifth Amendment, and Professor John Cornelius Hayes of Loyola University Law School will speak upon the Natural Law in its application to religious schools under the United States Constitution.

The vital importance and interest of these topics to American lawyers is self-evident. Today, violent domestic and foreign attacks are being launched against the fundamental principles upon which our country stands. Their survival, in the face of this onslaught, depends upon a true understanding by the American bench and bar of the immutability of Constitutional principles as interpreted under the Natural Law.

Economic exigencies may not enlarge or restrict constitutional power, although they certainly make necessary the re-examination of first principles. The Conference will seek to establish that a Natural Law approach fully justifies an interpretation of the Constitution in order to cope with emergencies or changed conditions to effectuate new habits of life or thought. The limitations of such an interpretation will have to be well defined however, since it must not be inconsistent with the plain unmistakable mandate of the Constitution.

The limitation of the Conference to two subjects of the application of the Natural Law to current problems will offer greater opportunity for participation by all present.