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# ST. LOUIS — PIONEER CATHOLIC LAW SCHOOL

JOHN E. DUNSFORD\*

**I**T WAS OCTOBER 15, 1842, when the first session of the School of Law convened at St. Louis University with an opening enrollment of only eighteen students. During the next five year period, however, the school grew in numbers and greatly broadened the scope of its endeavor. Unfortunately, the untimely death in 1847 of Judge Buckner, who was the dominant figure in the early pioneer school, caused a complete cessation of operations, and it was not until 1908 that the law school was reactivated. Nevertheless, what happened yesterday is more important than what happened in the last century. What happens tomorrow is still more important.

Though the School of Law at St. Louis University is proud to note that its initial establishment in 1842 gives it claim to being the first law school established in the western part of the United States, it is much more concerned with the events of the last decade and the prospects for the future.

Of primary importance is the goal of the school, which is, as it has always been, to produce a man educated in the law — not merely one who is prepared to pass a course, to graduate, or to qualify for admission to the bar. Education is more than knowledge. And as the law cannot be isolated from life, neither can its study be fragmented into the pursuit of rules.

A goal, of course, is not enough. To succeed, an institution must have a learned faculty, alert to the constant evolution of the law. An atmosphere must be created which promotes a critical analysis of the

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philosophic, economic, sociological, psychological and cultural forces which influence the standards that distinguish a social order.

Since 1946, the full-time teaching staff has been enlarged to its present total of eleven men and women, including Dean J. Norman McDonough, with law degrees from eleven different American Universi-



DEAN J. NORMAN McDONOUGH

ties. The diversity of the faculty's educational background and training has produced a stimulating and dynamic attitude toward the law, its functions and possibilities. Supplementing the regular faculty are 15 part-time men drawn from the practicing bar in the St. Louis area.

Over fifty courses are now offered in the curriculum, and the traditional diet of study (including public law courses) has been enriched with seminars on such subjects as Church and State, Marital Property Interests, Legal History, Estate Planning, and Problems of Local Government. Noteworthy is a continuing stress on courses in Jurisprudence, two of which are

required for graduation. Lectures on legal ethics are given each year to seniors by leading attorneys from the St. Louis area.

Since the end of World War II, library facilities have steadily grown under a program geared to the changing emphases of the law. A feature added to the library in 1953 is the micro-reader and micro-card collection of Supreme Court decisions and legislative histories of selected federal acts. First in St. Louis, the collection has been made available to all practicing attorneys.

The establishment of a Law Journal has given added impetus to student interest in scholarship and research as well as providing a forum for the views of legal authorities and experts. The Woolsack, student honorary association, was organized to show graphically the school's respect for the scholar.

Inauguration of weekly student-faculty coffee hours has increased the amount of personal attention given to the individual and his problems outside the classroom. A beautiful Moot Court Room for appellate and trial practice courses, and completely remodeled student lounges have added the physical facilities necessary for better student development.

An active Student Bar Association plans an annual program and series of lectures to introduce the freshman students to their field of study.

One of the major efforts of the Student Bar is the Law Day celebration which each year brings outstanding speakers to the campus, and offers the opportunity for alumni and friends to renew their ties with the school. In the past few years, speakers have included Senator Paul H. Douglas, Judge Henry J. Westhues of the Missouri Supreme Court, Circuit Judge William H.



*Meeting of the full time law faculty of St. Louis University. Clockwise: Miss Eileen H. Searls, Librarian, James E. Higgins, Rev. Carroll M. Boland, S.J., Joseph J. Simeone, Richard J. Childress, Assistant Dean John E. Howe, Dean J. Norman McDonough, Oval Phipps, Henry G. Manne, Rev. Joseph A. McCallin, S.J., Hector G. Spaulding, and John E. Dunsford.*

Hastie of the Third Circuit, Howard L. Barkdull, former president of the American Bar Association, the Honorable Kurt von Schuschnigg, former chancellor of Austria, and the Honorable G.C.S. Corea, Ceylonese ambassador to the United States. Panel discussions at this year's events featured distinguished speakers on "Censorship in a Democracy," and "Opportunities for the Law Graduate."

The Reverend Carroll M. Boland, S.J., student counselor, is available throughout the semester to advise the students on personal problems, and closed retreats at Hazelwood, Jesuit retreat house near St. Louis, are offered to the Catholic students.

Programs of Continuing Legal Education, offered in cooperation with the Bar

Association of St. Louis, have met the obligation which the school feels to the community and bar which it serves.

The school will benefit in the near future from construction of the University's Pius XII Memorial Library, a repository of microfilmed manuscripts of the Vatican Library. Containing the treasures of centuries of man's thought, the library will be located next to the School of Law. Legal documents never before available to American scholars will thus be brought to the school's doorstep.

From its first class of 18 the school population has grown to its present number of 200. In the past three years, four graduates of the school have received appointments in the Attorney General's Program

for positions in the Department of Justice. Other graduates have joined outstanding firms in the St. Louis area and other parts of the United States. The evening division has from its initiation achieved a solid reputation by the abilities of its graduates. Competition is severe, and an average of 70 per cent of those who undertake the course of studies find that they cannot keep up the pace. When the law school applied for membership in the Association of American Law Schools in 1923, it was inclined to drop the evening division since no school with such a program had ever been admitted to the Association. However, at the request of the Executive Committee of the Association, an evening

schedule was presented for consideration. St. Louis University became the first law school in the United States to be admitted to the Association with a night section. At the present time, the evening classes include business executives, professional men, and government officials who would never have had the opportunity to pursue the study of law during the day.

Faculty participation in matters of public interest has always been extensive. When the National Labor Relations Board was established, Dean Alphonse G. Eberle became the first trial examiner appointed in this area. (Still teaching part-time, Dean Eberle is presently a member of the Board of Police Commissioners of St. Louis.)



*Moot court session.*

*St. Louis University School of Law.*

Labor-management arbitrators are drawn from the faculty, and teachers of the school have likewise participated in adoption of the Missouri Plan for the selection of judges, procurement of higher pre-legal standards, and organization of the office of Public Defender in St. Louis. In addition, faculty members have served on examination committees for the offices of Public Defender and Parole Officer of the Juvenile Court, have been active in local, state and national bar associations and their committees, and have served on committees of the Association of American Law Schools. Dean McDonough is now serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Society for the city and county of St. Louis.

The school is indelibly Catholic. For this it feels need to offer neither explanation nor justification. In law as in life the Catholic effort is toward finding truth in both its oneness and diversity. No obstacle exists to sharing that goal with others.

The school recognizes that while the

law of nature does not pre-empt the field of legal art it has a definite place there. Effort is made to give proper place to both the irreducible principles and the essential adaptability of a successful legal system.

St. Louis University's School of Law accepts a philosophy which recognizes the divine origin and destiny of man and his responsibility to guide his actions by revealed truth and the natural law. A part of that natural law is the necessity of formulating rules for society; here is where the state comes in.

The purpose of the state is to preserve basic rights of the individual and establish a peaceful public order. The great bulk of law is only indirectly related to revealed truth; the means society chooses toward accomplishing its ends is in most areas properly an analytical, experimental or pragmatic process — most laws and precepts are not unchangeable, but depend upon the contingencies of time and place.

This is the underlying approach to the study of law at the University.

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