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Editorial Comment

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

This issue of *THE CATHOLIC LAWYER* features the papers presented at the eleventh annual meeting of the Diocesan Attorneys held in May, 1975 in Washington, D.C. Of particular interest to readers should be the material on the taxation of otherwise tax exempt organizations as treated in three separate comments.

These papers appear annually in *THE CATHOLIC LAWYER* in line with its editorial policy that wider distribution of the information made available to diocesan attorneys in these meetings will result in greater awareness among all Catholic lay attorneys of the legal problems presently facing the parishes across our nation. Reader comment on the content of these papers is therefore invited and will be published in subsequent issues.

The introductory remarks given at the meeting by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Jean Jadot, have not been included in this issue since they were given in the form of a greeting to the group. The following excerpt from these remarks deserves repetition, however, since it set the keynote for the whole meeting:

As lawyers, you have the duty to promote mutual understanding between Church and State and, when necessary, to defend the right of any citizen to act responsibly according to his own conscience as well as the freedom of the Church to preach the gospel in season and out of season.

As lay men and lay women in the Church, you also have a duty which is summarized in the definition of your role as given in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: "Secular duties and activities belong properly, although not exclusively, to the laity. Therefore, acting as citizens of the world, whether individually or socially, they will observe the laws proper to each discipline, and labor to equip themselves with a genuine expertise in their various fields. They will gladly work with others seeking the same goals. Acknowledging the demands of faith 'and endowed with its force,' they will unhesitatingly devise new enterprises, where they are appropriate, and put them into action (n.43)."

The Council clearly states that the laity are to look to their priests for spiritual light and nourishment, but not for expert solutions to every problem that arises. It is the distinctive role of the laity, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, to seek solutions for the concrete problems of the communities of which they are a part.



Edward Tagan

Editor

