The Address of the President*

To the Bar Association of the District of Columbia:

Following my election as your President, I made the statement to you, through the medium of our Journal, that it should be my purpose to make progress in the affairs of the District of Columbia Bar Association and that I hoped I might be able to obtain your cooperation and assistance in working out and pursuing a program which I hoped to inaugurate. Since then I have given the matter of such a program careful consideration, after seeking the suggestions and advice of many of the members of the Association. I recognize the difficulties which might arise from the announcement of a program, yet I feel no better plan of reaching definite objectives can be adopted. I may say I believe in constructive criticism and it is my hope that if my recommendations shall prove to be either unwise or ineffective, I may have the benefit of your friendly counsel and advice by way of suggestions for improvement.

There have been occasions when, after I have witnessed and participated in the proceedings of our organization, I have felt proud to be a member of it. There have been other occasions when I have gained the impression that our Association has utterly failed to measure up to its possibilities. The impressions which I have had in both of these connections have not been confined to me, because frequently I have heard both favorable and unfavorable talk from members of our profession concerning the attitude of the lawyers in general towards the meetings of the Association and the promotion of its affairs. There have been times when serious problems have been disposed of in light vein. There have been other times when matters requiring candor, frankness and impartiality have been disposed of by way of the wishes of certain organized groups who have worked to attain their ends. A number of our members believe the result has been that the Association has lost prestige in various fields where it might have valuable and useful contacts, such as in Congress, in the Department of Justice and to a certain extent

* Address delivered by Bolitha J. Laws, President, the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, at the meeting held March 8, 1938.

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in the Courts themselves. In the study which I have made incident to inaugurating a program, I have given careful thought to possible methods of improving these situations.

MEETINGS

I am thoroughly convinced that we should give particular attention to the manner of conducting the meetings of the Association. It has been at the meetings where an intellectual and carefully thought out discussion of important problems has been held, and order and courtesy has been maintained, that those in attendance have been impressed and have been proud of their membership in the Association. Disorder and clamoring for position of advantage in debate with uproar of members present is not at all conducive to light or to progress. Whenever it is possible it shall be my aim to arrange in advance the important problems which will come before the Association for discussion and if time permits to give advance notice to the members. I feel that those who are primarily interested in a discussion of the problem should give it study prior to the meetings, and arrange in advance to be given time for appropriate discussion. Of course this does not mean that an extemporaneous discussion may not be held, but it does mean that members of the Association who are not conversant with the subject matter should not occupy the time of the Association with utterly trivial and immaterial discussions, some of which might be accomplished largely because the member of the Association seeking the floor has a voice of sufficient volume so as to be sure to obtain the attention of the chair. I feel convinced that lawyers as a general rule prefer to have intellect, reason and order prevail and if there are those in our organization who feel to the contrary, I beg of them, in the beginning at least, to cooperate to the extent of trying out the program in this regard recommended by me.

In this connection, I have recommended to the Committee on Nine, which, as you know, has charge of investigating proposed laws which affect the District of Columbia, to prepare written reports for submission to the Association and if possible that in advance of the actual discussion of the proposed legislation, notice of the salient provisions and possible objectionable features be given you through the JOURNAL, or otherwise. I do not
feel the vote of the Bar Association on pending legislation will be given effective consideration before the Congress of the United States unless the subject has been fully and fairly presented to the Association and passed upon after the merits and demerits have been intelligently discussed and considered. If this policy is followed, I believe the Bar Association will obtain better recognition in its hearings before Congress.

COMMITTEES

Careful study has been given to the selection of Committees both as to the work to be done and as to personnel. My observation of the work of the Committees in the past has been that frequently excellent work has been done, but that in many instances the reports have not been adequately submitted to or considered by the Bar Association. In other instances, Committees apparently have existed in name only with no work accomplished. In still other instances, the burden of a particular Committee has fallen upon one or two of the members. It also has been my observation, during my membership on the Board of Directors of the Association, that frequently a subject has been transmitted to the Board of Directors for consideration when no member of the Board has been sufficiently conversant with the problems involved to make possible the desired consideration of the problem by the Directors.

I have written a special invitation to the Chairman of each Committee which thus far has been appointed to be present at tonight’s meeting. In some instances, where I have appointed Committees, I have undertaken to write out a brief resume of the particular work which I thought the Committee should undertake. However, as to all Committees, it is my belief that meetings of the Committees should be held at fixed intervals and that in order to obtain proper consideration of the problems studied, written reports should be submitted to the Bar Association. My experience has been that extemporaneous oral reports seldom are adequate or effective.

In this connection, there has been discussed with the Board of Directors the advisability of having each officer and director assigned to collaborate with certain designated Committees so that the Director may be kept fully informed with developments and might be in a position to report to the Board concerning the
affairs of those Committees. I am pleased to report each officer and director has signified his willingness to work in this behalf.

I am convinced that Committee work in a Bar Association of the importance of ours necessarily should be given active attention. If I personally were Chairman or member of any Committee and did not respond to doing the work involved I should expect to resign or be removed. Accordingly, I shall expect Committee members to work and not simply accept their appointments as honorariums. I trust the members of the Bar Association will accept in good spirit any changes which the President or Board of Directors may find expedient to make in Committees during the course of the year by reason of the fact that such lawyers have not had time to perform their Committee work, or for other reasons.

COMMITTEES ON RELATIONS WITH VARIOUS COURTS AND OTHER AGENCIES

In previous years it appears that Committees have been appointed to serve in relation to the various Courts in the District of Columbia. The Board of Directors has authorized the appointment of such Committees for the current year. None of these Committees as yet has been appointed for the reason that a careful study is being given both to the matter of the duties which such Committee should perform and the personnel which shall be selected.

I have decided views with regard to how these Committees should function. It is my judgment that the relations between the Bench and the Bar can only be effective where full, frank and tactful discussions are held between representatives of the Court and representatives of the Bar Association. This has not been the practice in the past. It has been my observation that too often the members of the Bar have confined their relations with the Court to the point of entertaining the judges, passing compliments to them and making their adverse criticisms, valid or otherwise, to others than members of the Courts themselves. I have heard many lawyers state they felt that the judges of our Courts in many instances were holding themselves aloof from the lawyers. I have also heard many lawyers state that the Bar Association has no effective standing with the Courts. The Bar
Association members are not honest if they do not admit that during the past there have been any number of complaints about the manner in which the Courts have been conducted. There has been widespread gossip and talk amongst lawyers and others that written decisions have not followed the transcripts of record, that motions have been passed over without adequate consideration, that judges have kept cases under advisement for an unreasonable length of time with serious consequences, that the judges have not been industrious, and at times there have been suggestions that the irascible attitude of some of the judges during the course of trials have influenced juries and have hurt the interests of their clients. Perhaps most of these criticisms have been unfounded, but some of them have had merit. I am convinced that on no occasion have any of them been frankly, sincerely and tactfully discussed with the representatives of the Court involved.

I recognize the fact that the Courts also have their complaints concerning attorneys. I have heard it suggested by judges that counsel are not rendering the type of assistance to the Court which their duties require. In many cases, the attorney has not diligently looked up the law, and that in some cases the arguments of serious points in Court have been extemporaneous and not well considered. The judges at times have noticed slovenly manners, dress of counsel, and an unbecoming attitude which is not in keeping with the dignity or welfare of the Courts or the judicial system. Occasions have arisen where cases have been cited by counsel when obviously they have no application. On other cases, controlling cases about which counsel have had knowledge have not been suggested to the Court. It is my belief that if the judges observe these situations where counsel are not fulfilling the duties of their office, they should be in a position to take up the matter with a Committee of the Bar Association to the end that these practices, which might grow to a point of being vicious, could be stopped. Respect for law and for the administration of justice is needed now perhaps more than ever. If it became known that matters of friction between the Bench and Bar were frankly dealt with, carping and unjustified criticism would be more effectively silenced and respect for the administration of justice in this jurisdiction would be enhanced.

I also feel that from a practical point of view these matters in
most instances cannot be made the subject of discussion in open forum. However, I am absolutely convinced that the Committees on Relations with the various Courts and the Courts themselves should discuss these matters and collaborate on means to correct them.

In addition to the possibility of making constructive criticism, as between the Bench and the Bar, it is apparent that there are any number of subjects in which the Court and counsel have an intimate common interest. For example, I have felt the Bar Association would be vitally interested in the appointment of three new Justices of our District Court and one in the Court of Appeals, as now is being advocated before Congress. Accordingly, at the request of the Department of Justice and under the direction of the Board of Directors of the Association, I took this matter in hand and after making a careful investigation, appeared before the Judiciary Committee in the Senate in support of the bill. In assembling this information I was fortunate in obtaining the complete cooperation of the Court of Appeals, the District Court, the Clerks and the Department of Justice.

As another example, the Grievance Committee of the Court lately has been quite active in investigating certain types of cases, and through cooperation with the District Court, a plan has been worked out whereby witnesses may be subpoenaed and put under oath as a part of the investigations of the Committee. This is a significant forward step. As a further example, the District Court has a Committee of its members giving consideration to the Rules of the Court which should be adopted for our District in the event, as seems to be quite certain, the pending new Rules of Civil Procedure for the District Courts of the United States generally shall become effective. A committee of the Bar Association will be appointed to confer with the Judges on this subject. These are but a few of the many matters in which the Bench and the Bar have a common interest.

Having in mind the desirability of bringing about active cooperation between the several Committees on Relations with the Courts, I have written to the presiding Judges of each of the Courts, suggesting a program of active discussion of matters such as have been herein mentioned. Already I have had responses from the Chief Justice of the United States Court of Appeals and the District Court of the United States, indicating
their approval of such a plan. However, it is my belief that this plan will utterly fail unless the Committees on Relations with the various Courts shall set about to appoint a definite time or times when these discussions may be held and I further believe that the discussions will not prove to be effective unless the subjects for consideration shall be worked out in advance. In the meantime, it is suggested that any members of the Bar who have any problems they wish taken up with the Court should submit their requests in writing to the Chairman of the respective Committees as soon as they are announced.

COMMITTEE ON CONSIDERATION OF JUDGES AND OTHER OFFICIALS CONNECTED WITH THE COURTS

As of the time of my assumption of office as President of the Bar Association there had been designated an Acting United States Attorney for the District of Columbia. Obviously it was quite desirable to bring about the prompt appointment of a District Attorney who would have full and complete power to cope with the serious crime wave in the District of Columbia. In addition to this, it appeared like there would be additional offices of judgeship creating in the District Court and possibly one in the Court of Appeals and the Police Court.

I am positive every member of our Bar Association is vitally interested in these appointments and that it is desirable the Department of Justice should have the benefit of the recommendations of the Association. Within the past several years the Bar Association has had little voice, if any, in the selection of Judges.
or other officials of the Courts. Singularly enough, it has been my opinion the fault has been largely that of the Bar Association. Several years ago a cumbersome system was followed by which the Board of Directors was made a Committee on Judicial Selection, with the duty to notify each member of the Association inviting suggestions as to candidates; the Directors thereupon were to confer with the Attorney General of the United States, consider the qualifications of those suggested by the members of the Association and such other names as might be suggested by the Attorney General. Thereafter the Directors should recommend to the entire Bar Association the names of such persons as the Committee might think qualified and a special meeting of the Bar Association should be called for the purpose of acting on the matter. In the meantime, the Directors could not give out any report.

As a practical matter, it developed that before this elaborate and long drawn out program was accomplished, the judge or other official would be appointed and the wishes of the Bar Association would never get to be known. It also developed that certain ambitious candidates might be good enough politicians to get the vote out at the special meeting of the Association and thus obtain the endorsement when he might not in any sense be a capable man for the position. The Department of Justice knew this situation as well as we knew it.

Within the last several years, the Bar Association has not been very active concerning the selection of Judges or other officials. As I understand, the policy has been simply to say we want District of Columbia men appointed. The result of this policy has been disastrous. I believe it is not effective and that it will never prove so. To say we want a District of Columbia man as Judge or District Attorney without giving endorsement to District of Columbia men admirably equipped to be a Judge or a District Attorney is neither cooperative nor efficient.

I am convinced we can obtain cooperation in the Department of Justice and at any other point if we do our part of cooperating. I have given this matter careful study and have talked it over with leading members of our Association. I have also talked it over with Attorney General Cummings. In the case of the appointment of a District Attorney I believe we made substantial progress.

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Your Board of Directors has authorized me to select a Committee on the appointment of Judges and other officials connected with the Courts. Pursuant to this authority, a representative Committee of the Association, consisting of Roger J. Whiteford, Chairman, Frank J. Hogan, John E. Laskey, G. Bowdoin Craighill, James C. Wilkes, T. Howard Duckett, Norman Frost, J. J. Cotter, C. M. Charest, Frank J. Wideman, and Raymond Beebe, were selected for this purpose. This Committee held two meetings. At one of them, every member was present and at the other only two were absent. These meetings eventuated in the unanimous recommendation to the Board of Directors that David A. Pine should be endorsed. The Board of Directors thereupon unanimously endorsed Mr. Pine. Your President and Mr. Whiteford, Chairman of the Committee, had a personal conference with the Attorney General concerning this matter, urging the importance of an immediate appointment. Shortly after the unanimous report of the Special Committee and the Board of Directors, the appointment of Mr. Pine as United States Attorney was made. It is believed a valuable service to the District of Columbia has been accomplished through this appointment.

I have received a personal letter from the Attorney General expressing his cordial thanks for the cooperation of the Bar Association with him in this matter and I am firmly of the opinion that this step, together with others which have been taken, gives rise to the hope that the Bar Association will have a more potent voice in the program of the Department of Justice so far as it affects the District of Columbia.

CRIMINAL CASES

The Attorney General of the United States lately has made public announcement that crime condition in the District of Columbia are deplorable. I have been informed by the Department of Justice that of twenty-nine cities of relative size to Washington, our fair city is twentieth from the top and ninth from the bottom in the number and serious character of crimes committed. The situation is most grievous and when Mr. Whiteford and I talked to the Attorney General on the subject of cooperation with the Department of Justice, we were asked
to work out a plan to assist the United States Attorney in solving crime conditions.

I am convinced that if an epidemic of disease swept over our City, leading physicians would immediately give their services to relieve the conditions. I also feel that where a grievous situation brought about by law breaking is involved in this jurisdiction, our leading lawyers will lend their assistance. Accordingly, I assured the Attorney General that the Bar Association would cooperate with the District Attorney. However, as I previously have said, cooperation is more than good will. It requires definite energetic steps to be taken along constructive lines. With a view to working out a program, conferences have been held with various parties in interest.

The various agencies which seem to be interested in the administration of criminal affairs in the District of Columbia other than the Judges of the Criminal Courts, are the United States Attorney, the Department of Justice, the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, through the Police Department, and an active organization in this District known as Washington Criminal Justice Association. The Bar Association doubtless is familiar with all of these agencies, but possibly the work of the Washington Criminal Justice Association is not as well known to the lawyers as might be. Its purpose is to promote the administration of criminal justice in the District of Columbia through cooperation with the officers, departments and tribunals charged with law enforcement. Its work has consisted of making findings of fact, analyzing such facts and reducing them to records, in respect of all major criminal cases in the District of Columbia. Through obtaining these records and analyzing the actions of various officials at certain points, the strength or weakness of the system at a given point is ascertained and made known. This organization has been a power because of its effective work and also because of the interest of leading newspaper publishers in the District of Columbia. At our conference with the Attorney General, the suggestion was made that the Bar Association might work in conjunction with this Washington Criminal Justice Association.

Several conferences have been held with Dr. James A. Nolan, President of this Association, and while the Association has not definitely committed itself to all of the plans herein suggested,
yet its cooperation has been obtained and it is felt a program eventually will be worked out in conjunction with this and the other agencies interested.

The Commissioners of the District of Columbia and a special Committee of the Bar Association which your President appointed, have inaugurated a plan for the concentration of the administration of all criminal cases within one building. The idea is to bring about the completion of all of the eight court rooms in the new Police Court Building, change the name of the building to "Criminal Courts Building," move the offices of the United States Attorney, the Grand Jury and the Probation Office of the District Court into the new Police Court Building, and also arrange to have the Judges of the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia who are handling criminal cases sit in the Court rooms of the new Criminal Courts Building. It is believed this can be accomplished without any legislation except possibly the determination of the share of the cost of Criminal Courts Building which the United States Government shall bear.

If the plan suggested is followed, the trial of criminal cases will be greatly facilitated. It is well recognized that in a great number of cases policemen have been called in attendance upon the Criminal Division of the District Court and at the same time have had a case or several cases in which they are interested called in the Police Court. Because of being compelled to await being called in the District Court, it has not been possible to try the

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case in the Police Court. This has led to any number of continuances of cases, with great inconvenience to witnesses and expense to the Courts. It also has been true that where lawyers who have been engaged in Criminal practice have been held in attendance upon the District Court awaiting trials about to be commenced or verdicts of juries in such Court, they could not be used for the hearing of cases in the Police Court. If the administration of criminal law were handled within the same building, it is believed arrangements readily could be worked out whereby both policemen and lawyers could dispose of cases in the Police Court and not require expensive continuances and delays while such policemen and lawyers were about to be called in the District Court. I may say that Major Brown, Superintendent of Police and Chief of Detectives Thompson are decidedly in favor of this plan. The wisdom of uniting the Probation officers of both the District and Police Courts within one building is apparent.

I have been told that at present there is little coordination of the work of the District Court Probation Officer and the Probation Officer of the Police Court; that seldom the records of one are consulted by the other. I also have been told that it has been found in some instances the same man has been released on probation by both Courts and has been reporting to both probation officers at the same time. I know the probation officers are badly overworked and undermanned. The fault is not personal. It is with the system. It would seem no argument is needed that the two offices should be close together both in proximity and in consultation.

From the investigation I have made into what disposition will be made of space in the new Police Court Building unless the plan herein recorded is adopted, I have learned that it is likely the District Commissioners will assign to this Court Building certain agencies of the Municipal Government which have no relation whatever to the Courts. Amongst the agencies suggested have been the Refuse Department and the Sealer of Weights and Measures. It is believed this would be an unfortunate assignment and it has been encouraging to those working in behalf of the Courts that the Commissioners have shown a willingness to give up this space if it will assist in speeding the disposition of criminal cases.
In addition to aiding the efficiency of criminal administration, the proposed plan of consolidation also will solve an immediately serious housing problem in the District Court. If any additional Judges are obtained in the District Court, and it is hoped there will be as many as three new Judges granted by Congress, there is now no space whatever for the accommodation of such Judges either for their offices or for their Courts. If the District Attorney, Grand Jury, Probation Officer, and Criminal Division of the District Court are moved to the new building, abundant space will be available for new Judges and for several Civil Court rooms.

The lawyers of this Bar do not need to be convinced that the removal of the Criminal Division of the District Court would create a highly desirable improvement in the District Court Building. When one enters the building, he finds a Criminal Court on each side of him, the corridors frequently filled with curious spectators, witnesses and an atmosphere which is entirely apart from the major civil problems which the Court conducts. The toilets and other facilities of the Court are quite undesirable under the present plan. It is believed if the concentration of the criminal work is accomplished as recommended, not only the entire orderly administration of the Criminal Branch but also of Civil Branch of the District Court will be facilitated, and the District Court Building will be greatly improved. The Board of Directors of our Association has approved this program and I earnestly advocate your sponsoring it by your vote at this meeting.

In order further to bring about the cooperation with the United States Attorney, the Board of Directors has authorized your President to appoint a Committee to be known as the Committee on Relations with the United States Attorney. Both the Attorney General and the United States Attorney himself have expressed deep appreciation of the prospect of obtaining tangible assistance from the Bar Association. As heretofore stated, several conferences have been held with parties in interest so as to determine how the cooperation might be most effectively accomplished. As yet no complete program has been adopted. However, it is believed the Association will be interested to learn that amongst the suggestions made have been the tying in of all agencies interested in the enforcement of criminal law, such as the Department of Justice, the United States Attorney, Judges of
the Criminal and Police Courts, the Police Department, the Washington Criminal Justice Association and the Bar Association, so that the various agencies will work in harmony. Also there have been some suggestions that the Bar Association might appoint outstanding members who would be available to the United States Attorney, upon his request, to prosecute criminal cases without compensation. Other plans discussed have included the possibility of outstanding lawyers familiar with criminal practice joining with other leading citizens in a plan to educate the public in general to the crime situation in our city and work towards its solution. Whatever may be the ultimate program, it is the determination of those in charge of the affairs of the Bar Association that the cooperation with the United States Attorney and others in the matter of ridding the city of crime shall be tangible, vigorous and determined.

THE LIBRARY

Incidental to the program of concentration of criminal cases in one building, is the matter of obtaining adequate space for the efficient maintenance of our Library. The Bar Association now has one room on the second floor of the building, at the head of the stairs, and a portion of another room which adjoins the office of the Assignment Commissioner. Within the last month we have lost space in the room next to the Assignment Commissioner's office, due to the fact that space was required for a Motions Commissioner and there was no other space for him available in the building. Partitions were installed in this room, which has left the Bar Association Library badly cramped for space.

We have law books and other equipment valued in excess of $80,000.00. This Library is one of the greatest assets, not only of the Association but also of the Judges themselves. I have been told not only by Judges of the District Court but also by two of the Judges of the United States Court of Appeals that the removal of the Library from the Courthouse would be a distinct loss to the Judges. Of course, also it would be a decided disadvantage to lawyers themselves, who would not be able to produce quickly important precedents in Court at the time of a hearing. In the event the administration of criminal law should
be concentrated in another building, opportunity will be made available to the Bar Association to recapture the Library space in the Courthouse, which it has lost during the past five or six years. If this space is obtained again by the Bar Association, your President will hope to secure financing, by the Standing Committee on Endowments or by the Association itself, for the installation of sound proof rooms where attorneys may dictate briefs without disturbing others. Other improvements in appearance and conduct of the Library will be made possible. We may also consider employing a stenographer at the Library, to be available for members at reasonable charges.

Those who have had occasion to visit the Library lately doubtless have noticed that an extensive program of cleaning the books and the shelves has been under way and is now about completed.

The New Library Committee has held a number of meetings at which careful consideration has been given to filling out the Library with important law books for which there is demand. In pursuance of this program, the Committee has communicated with the Judges of the various Courts asking their suggestions as what law books are most needed. It also has included a similar invitation, directed to the members of the Bar Association, in the March edition of the Journal. Since the Library, books and equipment represent the most useful tangible asset of our Association, your careful consideration and suggestions with respect to its improvement are invited. Suggestions should be put in writing and promptly sent to the Chairman of the Library Committee.

UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF LAW

Under date of February 1, 1938, Justice Bailey, of the District Court rendered a decision in favor of the American Security and Trust Company in the case brought at the request of the Bar Association to question certain practices of trust companies which were claimed to have constituted the unauthorized practice of law. At two meetings of the Board of Directors of the Bar Association, the question of taking an appeal from this decision has been discussed and the former Committee on Unauthorized Practice has been authorized to take the necessary
steps to preserve the rights to prosecute such an appeal. Inasmuch as the Bar Association at its meeting held on November 9, 1937, directed the trial of this suit, rather than the acceptance of a compromise agreement which had been worked out and had been approved by the then Board of Directors, the present Board of Directors felt that the question of whether or not this appeal should be taken should be submitted to the Association at this meeting. There is a decided feeling amongst some of the members that the appeal should be prosecuted. I am not informed whether there is any active opposition to an appeal, but if so, the matter should be disposed of at this meeting.

Mr. Richard L. Merrick, who heretofore has served so efficiently as Chairman of the Committee on Unauthorized Practice, has informed your President that he will not be able to serve for another year. However, he, Mr. Leo A. Rover and Mr. William Rowan have graciously offered to carry the American Security and Trust Company case through to a conclusion on appeal.

A new Committee on Unauthorized Practice has been selected, the personnel of which has been chosen with a view not only to a continuation of the establishment of the rights of counsel through the medium of the Courts, but also for the purpose of obtaining needed legislation should it seem expedient to follow this course. We were fortunate in obtaining the services on the new Committee of several members who are fully conversant with the subject and who heretofore have worked in respect of the problem.

POLICE COURT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

The prior Committee which has served the Association and the Courts so commendably for the past six months in respect of complaints concerning the Police Court has asked to be relieved after finally disposing of certain cases which it instituted. This Committee worked on a hard job under trying conditions. The labors required many hours over a period of months. This has meant personal sacrifices to them. In addition they have had to have stout hearts to carry on. I have written the thanks of the Association to Mr. Canfield, the retiring Chairman, with request that he convey our thanks to the others on the Committee.

I have designated another Committee to take up this work and in so doing have turned to some of the best talent in the Asso-
ciation for this work. The names of the members on yesterday were confirmed by the Police Court Judges, inasmuch as the Committee is to be an arm of the Court. The continuation of this important work is assured.

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

There are a large number of members of the District of Columbia Bar Association who specialize in practice before Governmental Commissions, Boards and Administrative offices. Amongst these members of our Association are lawyers of outstanding prominence and distinction. Some of them heretofore have held high positions in the affairs of our Nation, others have extensive practice before the United States Supreme Court and Circuit Courts of Appeals throughout the country, and many of them are outstanding in the affairs of the American Bar Association. Any Bar Association in the United States would be delighted to have even one of them, whereas we are favored by many. Heretofore these members have taken little part in the affairs of our local Bar Association. Rarely have they attended meetings and they have not served to any active extent on committees. I believe this has been due largely to the fact that the program of our local Bar Association in the past has had little of interest to them.

It has developed in Washington that several separate legal organizations have grown up for the purpose of giving consideration to the affairs in which certain specialized practitioners are primarily interested. There is the Federal Bar Association, which has a large membership of attorneys who are in the Government service. There is a strong Patent Law Bar Association. There is also an Association of Practitioners before the Interstate Commerce Commission. The attorneys who have specialized in practice before the Federal Communications Commission lately have become associated to work out problems connected with their practice. There is also a separate group which is giving attention to tax matters, through the medium of the Tax Committee of the American Bar Association. On the other hand, there are a great many of those who are engaging in administrative practice who do not have any organization where they can handle their problems.
It is highly desirable that members of our Association of the type referred to should be given a voice in the affairs of our Association. If not, what is the value to them of membership? I recognize the problem as to how to handle this matter is one which will require considerable study and analysis. On the one hand, our Association should not encroach upon or overlap any of the work done by separate Bar Associations which have organized to promote the interests of those in a particular field of practice. On the other hand, where there are no separate organizations and the members of our Association have problems in their fields of practice, we should make our organization available to them. In addition to this, it seems there are any number of subjects which necessarily are of common interest to all lawyers, regardless of what their field of practice may be. For example, all lawyers within the District of Columbia, whether general practitioners or lawyers of specialized practice, are interested in the type of lawyers who are selected as judges for our Courts. Further, all lawyers are interested in matters of the following character: the rules of practice promulgated in the local District Court and in the United States Court of Appeals; the matter of educational requirements for admission to the Bar; questions of ethics of attorneys and the manner of censure, suspension and disbarment for unethical conduct; legislation of Congress which will affect the Court of original jurisdiction and the Court of Appeals. There are unquestionably any number of other matters where a common interest should be maintained.

The general problem of tying in the administrative practice of law is receiving more and more attention of lawyers throughout the country. It, therefore, seems important that some agency in Washington which is equipped to tie in these various practitioners should be giving the matter careful study and should develop a well-defined program.

I have been fortunate in being able to obtain a Committee of distinguished counsel to give this matter study. This Committee already has done some active work and I understand has a preliminary report to submit at tonight's meeting. The Committee consists of Louis G. Caldwell, Chairman, Arthur H. Deibert, George Maurice Morris, John J. Darby and Clarence A. Miller. At the suggestion of this Committee, I have extended a special invitation to a number of the distinguished counsel who are
engaging in practice before the tribunals and bodies mentioned to be present at the meeting tonight. A number of them have indicated their interest in this matter and stated that they would be present. To them an earnest request is made that this subject matter be given careful study and that suggestions as to how this program might be developed should be submitted to the Committee. It is my belief that if this work is carried forward, a very strong contribution to the welfare of our local Bar Association will be made and in course of time we shall have an organization second in importance and prestige to no other in the United States.

JUNIOR BAR SECTION

I feel a pronounced interest in the work of the Junior Bar Section of our Association. As you probably know, this organization is a unit of our Association consisting of approximately two hundred lawyers under the age of thirty-five years. The membership is open to any members of the Association who come within the age requirements and there are no additional initiation fees or dues required. So far as the District of Columbia is concerned, the Junior Bar Section was organized in 1935, and since that time has actively participated in the affairs of the Senior Bar Association. Within the past several weeks, I have had two conferences with representatives of the Junior Bar Section, with the idea of having this active group take over a leading part in some of the work of the Senior Bar Association. There are three outstanding fields where it is believed this Section may render important service. One of them has to do with the question of maintaining a high standard of ethics by the profession as a whole. There are a great many instances where lawyers do not measure up to the highest ethics of the profession, but the breaches committed by them have not been such as would warrant formal charges being filed in Court. It should be possible to devise methods whereby these practices might be brought to a stop. If nothing more than severe public condemnation of the practices were resorted to, a good influence might be felt. I have requested the Junior Bar Section to study this matter and make its report to the Senior Bar Association as to possible means which might be adopted. In this connec-
tion, the Junior Bar Section has indicated it will be glad to supplement the work of the Grievance Committee of the Courts by looking up law, locating witnesses or other activities which would be appropriate. Second, for some years there has been agitation of the promotion of the integrated bar. Integrated bars are those in which membership in a Bar Association is required in order that a party might be admitted to practice. They are working successfully in eighteen states. The Junior Bar Conference of the American Bar Association has been working on this subject for some time and, because of the excellent manner in which integrated bars have worked in some jurisdictions, I have requested the Junior Bar Section to extend its investigations and activities with respect to any integrated Bar Association to this jurisdiction and to make report to the Senior Bar Association as to its possible feasibility. Third, the Junior Bar Section throughout the country works on a program of publicity concerning topics of timely interest to the profession. The Section in Washington now is engaged in supplying speakers for citizens' associations, schools and other clubs with respect to topics of outstanding interest and for this purpose has selected some thirty-four topics. I commend the work of this Junior Bar Section to the attention of the Senior Bar Association group and suggest that these younger men, to whom the affairs of the Senior Bar Association soon will be committed, shall have the interest and assistance of the Senior members.

COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF LEGAL EDUCATION AND ADMISSIONS TO THE BAR

There has been constant agitation in the District of Columbia, as has been true throughout the United States, of the problem of increasing the educational requirements for those who wish to be admitted to take examinations of admission to the Bar. The report of the Committee which was appointed last year by President Quinn was laid on the table and the incoming President was directed to select a new Committee, which should be composed of those who were not members or otherwise affiliated with colleges or other schools. I have appointed such a Committee and in bringing about its selection, I may say I did not seek to find the views of any of the members. My sole purpose
was to get men well qualified to bring this subject properly before the Bar Association for its determination.

I do not believe the District of Columbia Bar Association can afford to fail to take a position in regard to this problem. There is too much agitation of the subject throughout the country for it to be ignored. Accordingly, I have requested the new Committee which has been appointed to make an early and comprehensive study of this problem and to prepare to present it for the attention of the District of Columbia Bar Association at an early date. I wish to urge the members of the Bar Association to prepare to meet this problem with candor, logic and study, so that its ultimate conclusion, whatever may be the result, will be a contribution to the parties in power in reaching a determination of this question.

SMALL CLAIMS COURT BILL

The District of Columbia Bar Association heretofore instructed its representatives to oppose the passage by Congress of the Small Claims Court Bill, which was proposed to take care of the poor litigant in respect of business in the Municipal Court. It was felt the Bill had many objectionable and unconstitutional features. Prior to the conclusion of his term of office, President Quinn had appointed a Committee of which Leonard J. Ganse was Chairman, to work in opposition to the Bill. Immediately after my election this matter became agitated before Congress and the First Vice-President of the Association, Mr. Munter, was requested to work together with the Committee appointed by President Quinn in opposing the passage of the Bill. Notwithstanding the efforts of this group of the Bar Association, the Bill passed both houses of Congress and on yesterday was signed by the President. It now appears that the District of Columbia Bar Association will have to determine whether or not it desires to continue the paid attorneys in the Municipal Court who heretofore have been designated, at an aggregate cost of $100.00 per month to render help to poor litigants in this Court. I have asked the new Committee which I have appointed, to look after these affairs in the Municipal Court, to submit a report on this subject at this meeting and it seems advisable that this problem should be disposed of at tonight's meeting.
AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS RESPECTING HONORARY MEMBERS

There is pending for consideration at this meeting an amendment to the by-laws making it possible for "any person of preeminent distinction in the legal profession" to be elected to honorary membership by the Board of Directors. If this amendment is adopted at this meeting as anticipated it will be, I am pleased to announce that Homer S. Cummings, the Attorney General of the United States, will be the first honorary member of our Bar Association other than Judges. Mr. Cummings heretofore has applied for honorary membership in the Association and the Board of Directors has approved his application. It is a matter of sincere gratification that our Association thus shall be honored by another distinguished member.

From what has been stated, you will note a large order of work has been undertaken. I have no personal ambition other than to serve the Courts and our profession. I shall work, but without your enthusiastic and energetic help, I have already found I cannot carry through. Other than the American Bar Association we have the greatest opportunity of any Bar Association in the United States. Here in the Capital of our great nation, we, who constitute the profession which, if its principles and ideals are upheld, merits the esteem and respect of those in every field of endeavor, may establish a leadership which will be a boon to our city and an example to our country. I repeat my request for your cooperation in the form of study, work and constructive criticism.

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