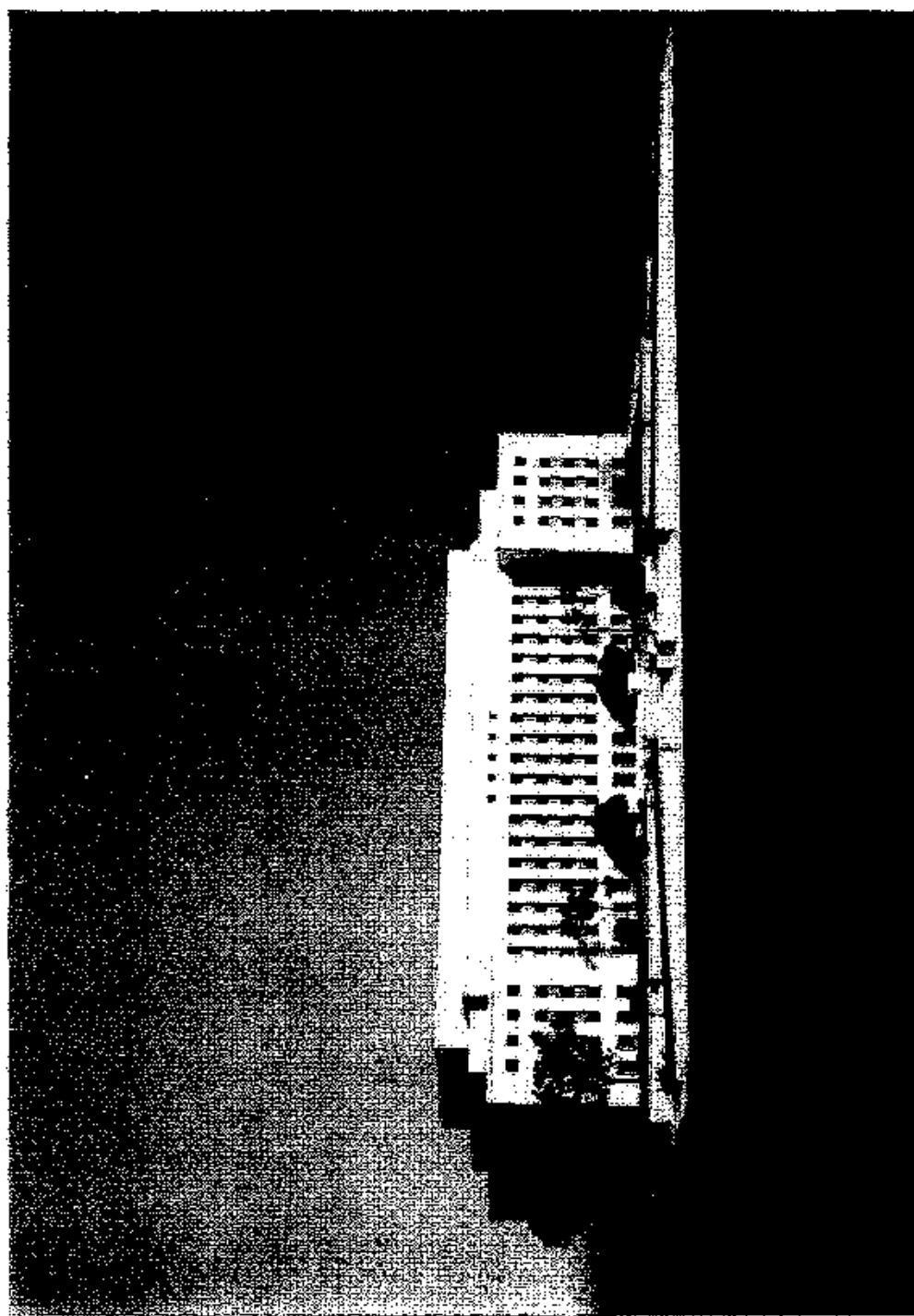


The
Laying of the Cornerstone
United States Courthouse
for the
District of Columbia



Washington, D. C.
June twenty-seventh, nineteen hundred and fifty

CIRCUIT JUDGE HENRY W. EDGINTON



The United States Courthouse for the District of Columbia

The
Laying of the Cornerstone
United States Courthouse
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District of Columbia



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The United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit

Standing, left to right: Charles Fahy; David L. Bazelon; E. Barrett Prentyman; Wilbur K. Miller;
James M. Proctor; George T. Washington.

Seated, left to right: Henry W. Edgerton; Harold M. Stephens (Chief Judge); Bennett Champ Clark.

*The United States Judges
for the
District of Columbia Circuit*

THE CIRCUIT JUSTICE

The Chief Justice of the United States, **FRED M. VINSON**

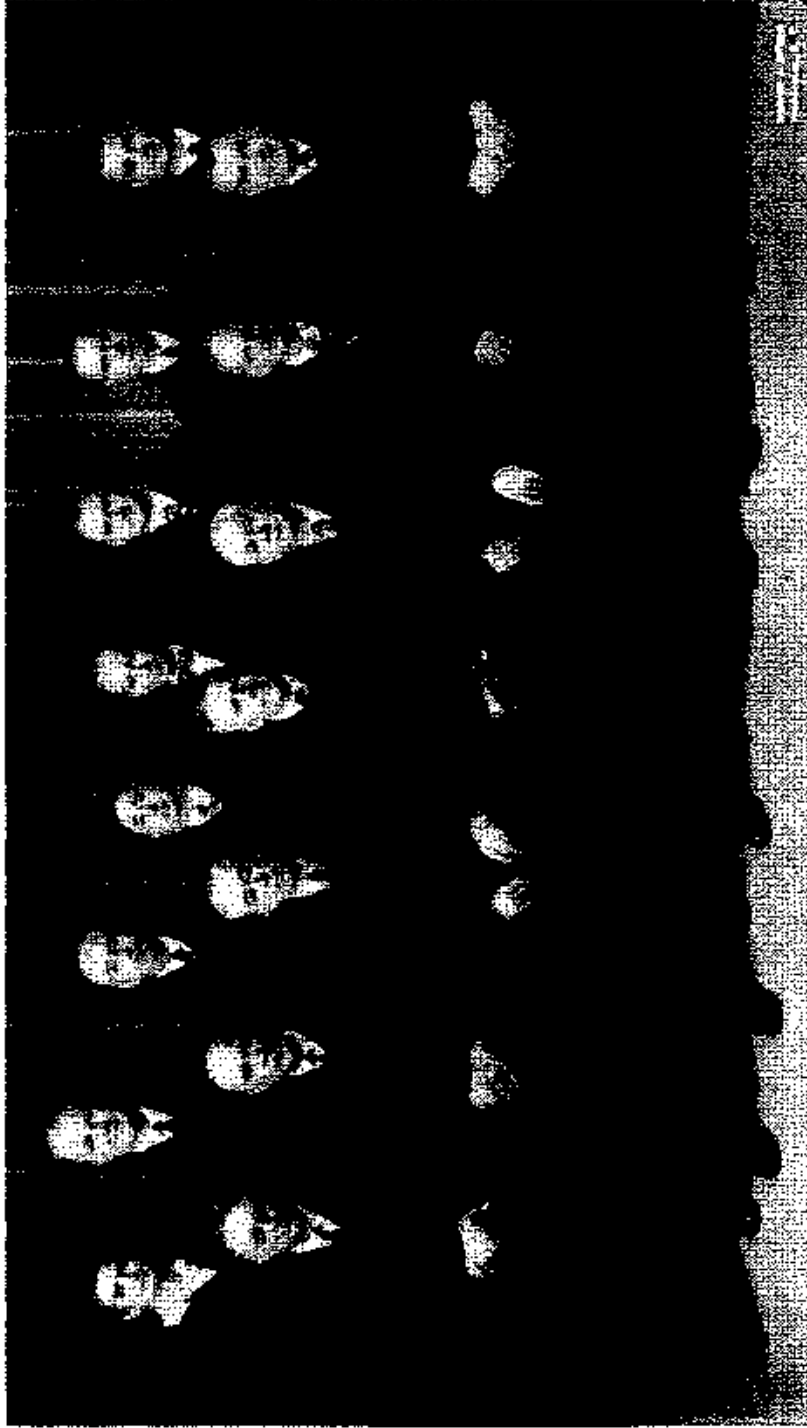
THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

The Chief Judge, **HAROLD M. STEPHENS**

The Circuit Judges

HENRY WHITE EDGERTON	JAMES M. PROCTOR
BENNETT CHAMP CLARK	DAVID L. BAZELON
WILBUR K. MILLER	CHARLES FAHY
E. BARRETT PRETTYMAN	GEORGE THOMAS WASHINGTON

D. LAWRENCE GEORGE, *Retired*



The United States District Court, District of Columbia

Clerk: (left to right) Mrs. Pyrites Gibson Mathews; Charles F. McLaughlin; Edward M. Chesnut;
 Alexander McCall; Henry B. Cabot; Robert C. Johnson; P. Howard U. Keating; Edward A. Tamm; Louis B. Nichols;
 Judges: (left to right) A. Bruce Tamm; George R. Brown; Robert H. Taylor; Robert L. Taylor (Chief
 Judge); V. C. Anderson; John W. Moore; Manning P. McHugh.

*The United States Judges
for the
District of Columbia Circuit*

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

The Chief Judge, BOLITHA J. LAWS

The District Judges

JENNINGS BAILEY,	ALEXANDER HOLTZOFF
F. DICKINSON LETTIS	RICHMOND B. KEECH
T. ALAN GOLDBOROUGH	EDWARD M. CURRAN
JAMES W. MORRIS	EDWARD A. TAMM
DAVID A. PINE	CHARLES F. McLAUGHLIN
MATTHEW F. MCGUINE	JAMES R. KIRKLAND
HENRY A. SCHWEINHAUT	BURNITA SHELTON MATTHEWS

JESSE C. ADKINS, *Retired*

*The United States Officials
for the
District of Columbia*

United States CommissionerCYRIL S. LAWRENCE
United States AttorneyGEORGE MORRIS FAY
Referee in BankruptcyJOHN A. BRESNAHAN
Probation OfficerEDWARD W. GARRETT
Domestic Relations CommissionerPHILIP M. HAMILTON
Register of WillsTHEODORE COGSWELL
Mental Health CommissionTHOMAS GILLESPIE WALSH, *Chairman*
Clerk of the United States Court of AppealsJOSEPH W. STEWART
Clerk of the United States District Court HARRY M. HULL
United States Marshall W. BRUCE MATTHEWS

Program of Ceremonies

HAROLD M. STEPHENS

**Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals
For the District of Columbia Circuit
Presiding**

Invocation

THE REVEREND JOSEPH MORAN

Address and Introductions

THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Address on behalf of the District of Columbia Bar

WALTER C. CLEPHANE

Address on behalf of the Judiciary

**BOLITHA J. LAWS,
Chief Judge of the
United States District Court
for the District of Columbia**

Address by the President of the United States

Laying of the Cornerstone

Benediction

THE REVEREND ABIEL NATHANIEL WARNER

Articles Placed in the Cornerstone

Photograph of the President of the United States.

Photograph of the Vice President of the United States.

Photograph of the Chief Justice of the United States.

Photograph of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Photograph of the Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, 1950.

Photograph of the Judges of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, 1950.

Copy of the plans of the new courthouse.

Photograph of the model of the new courthouse.

A metallic sheet inscribed with the names of the past and present judges of the United States Courts of the District of Columbia.

A metallic sheet supplied by the Bar Association of the District of Columbia and inscribed with the names of its past presidents.

A metallic sheet supplied by the Federal Bar Association and inscribed with the names of its past presidents.

A metallic sheet supplied by the Washington Bar Association of the District of Columbia and inscribed with the names of its past presidents.

A metallic sheet supplied by the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia and inscribed with the names of its past presidents.

Articles Placed in the Cornerstone—continued

A copy of each of the special courthouse editions, dated June 27, 1950,
of the following newspapers:

The Washington Daily News.

The Washington Evening Star.

The Washington Law Reporter.

The Washington Post.

The Washington Times-Herald.

A copy of this program.

A copy of the invitation to the ceremonies.

A copy of each of the addresses at the ceremonies.

A copy of the architect's plans for the arrangements of seats and
stands for the ceremonies.

A copy of the latest volume of reports of decisions of the United States
Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Reports of recent decisions of the United States District Court for the
District of Columbia.

A replica of the Seal of the United States Court of Appeals.

A replica of the Seal of the United States District Court.

The current Congressional Directory of the 81st Congress, 2d Session.

A copy of the Report of the Judicial Conference of the United States,
1949, and the Annual Report of the Director of the Admin-
istrative Office of the United States Courts, 1949.

Two editions of the history of the United States courts of the District
of Columbia and the present District Courthouse entitled "The
Courthouse of the District of Columbia," the first by F. Reg-
is Noel and Margaret Brent Downing covering the period
from 1800 to 1920 A. D., and the second a continuation until
1939 A. D. by F. Regis Noel

Articles Placed in the Cornerstone—continued

Copies of legislative documents in reference to the new Courthouse:

Act of May 29, 1947 (Public Law 80, 80th Congress) authorizing the acquisition of the site and the preparation of plans for the new courthouse.

Act of May 14, 1948 (Public Law 827, 80th Congress) authorizing the construction of the new courthouse.

Act of July 30, 1947 (Public Law 271, 80th Congress) making an appropriation for the site and plans for the new courthouse.

Act of June 25, 1948 (Public Law 785, 80th Congress) making an appropriation for the construction of the new courthouse.

Act of August 24, 1949 (Public Law 266, 81st Congress) making an appropriation for the construction of the new courthouse.

S. 2418, 79th Congress, by Mr. Andrews, to provide for plans and a site for the new courthouse.

H. R. 6917, 79th Congress, by Mr. Lankam, to provide for plans and a site for the new courthouse.

S. 450, 80th Congress, by Mr. Revercomb, to provide for plans, a site, and construction of the new courthouse.

S. 2284, 80th Congress, by Mr. Cain, to provide for the construction of the new courthouse.

H. R. 3029, 80th Congress, by Mr. Dondero, to provide for plans and a site for the new courthouse.

H. R. 5969, 80th Congress, by Mr. Dondero, to authorize construction of the new courthouse.

Silver replica of the seal of the National Capital Sesquicentennial Commission.

A block of the first edition of the special United States Postage Stamp issued in June 1950 to commemorate the National Capital Sesquicentennial.

The Holy Bible.

Inscription on the Trowel

THIS TROWEL WAS USED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN LAYING THE CORNERSTONE OF THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ON JUNE THE TWENTY-SEVENTH, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY.

The trowel is presented by the Bar Association of the District of Columbia in honor of its former presidents (1871-1950).

It is of antique silver and has a handle of aged yellow pine from the present building of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, dating about 1872.

*Committee of
the Bar of the District of Columbia
Appointed to Assist in
Arrangements for the Ceremonies*

For the Bar Association of the District of Columbia:

JOHN L. LASKEY
PRESTON C. KING, JR.
JOHN J. WILSON

For the Federal Bar Association:

JAMES E. PALMER, JR.

For the Junior Bar of the District of Columbia:

JOHN L. GRABER

For the Washington Bar Association of the District of Columbia:

LEROY H. MCKINNEY

For the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia:

OLIVE G. FAIRCLOTH

United States Court of Appeals
for the
District of Columbia Circuit

The Laying of the Cornerstone
of the
United States Courthouse
for the
District of Columbia

*Washington, D. C.
June twenty-seventh, nineteen hundred and fifty*

PROCEEDINGS

(The proceedings commenced at 3:00 p. m.)

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: The invocation for this occasion will be by the Reverend Joseph M. Moran, Pastor of the St. Thomas Apostle Roman Catholic Church of Washington.

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INVOCATION

FATHER MORAN: Almighty God, Kindly Creator and All-wise Ruler of this world, we beg Thee to shower Thy blessings on all who are gathered here today for the laying of the cornerstone of this new Citadel of Law and Justice. Grant the special protection of Thy all-wise Providence to all who enter here, and keep them mindful of the sovereignty of Thy Supreme Government.

Bless our Judges with the participation of Thy divine wisdom in the decisions so momentous that they will be called upon from time to time to make; and bless our citizens with some measure of the obedience to law shown by Thy Divine Son, Jesus Christ.

This we beg of Thee in His name. Amen.

ADDRESS AND INTRODUCTIONS BY THE HONORABLE HAROLD M. STEPHENS, CHIEF JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT.

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: There is an ancient Latin proverb which, translated, is to the effect:

"Let justice be done though the heavens fall."

In view of the temperature and the inconstancy of Washington weather, I think the proverb should be altered to read:

"Let justice be done lest the heavens fall."

Accordingly, I shall be very brief in justice to you in the audience and my fellow speakers.

This building is to house the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, together with the officials and agencies which assist the Courts in the administration of justice; namely, the United States Attorney, the United States Commissioner, the Referee in Bankruptcy, the Probation Officer, the Domestic Relations Commissioner, the Register of Wills, the Mental Health Commission, the Clerks of the Courts, and the United States Marshal. The total personnel, not attempting to count the large numbers of jurors, witnesses, lawyers, and litigants who transiently occupy the building, is some 540 persons.

New United States Courthouse

The present United States District Court building proper dates back in its original construction almost a century and a third, and it has undergone no substantial enlargement since 1916. The Court of Appeals building proper is less ancient. But the increased responsibilities and case load of the two Courts have so far enlarged their personnel that it has erupted from the two court buildings into some portions of nine others; and the efficient functioning of the Courts has been impeded by lack of space and of appropriate facilities. The Congress and the President took note of this, and by an Act approved May 29, 1947, authorized the preparation of plans for a new building to be located upon this site, and by an Act of May 14, 1948, provided funds for the project. Construction commenced August 1, 1949. It is expected that the building will be ready for occupancy by November 1, 1951.

The plans for the building were prepared by the Supervising, Assisting, and Contracting Architects of the Public Buildings Service under the direction of and subject to the approval of a committee of six created by Congress, composed of three Judges, a member of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia, the Commissioner of Public Buildings Service, and the Architect of the Capitol. The design of the building has been approved, also under the requirement of Congress, by the Commission of Fine Arts. It is believed by those who have thus been concerned with the preparation of the plans that the building will not only have a beauty and dignity appropriate to judicial use, but will also in room arrangement, furnishings, lighting, and acoustics function for the needs of judges, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, litigants, and the public more efficiently than any other court building thus far constructed in the United States. The building site is not only accessible, and fitting in outlook, but is historically appropriate in that upon it was the home of Chief Justice John Marshall and nearby the homes of Chief Justice Roger B. Taney and of Chief Justice Salmon B. Chase.

It is not necessary to emphasize to this audience the importance of the functions of the United States Courts. As said by the late Mr. Justice Sutherland: Liberty and order are the most precious possessions of man, and the essence of the problem of government

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is in reconciliation of the two; order must not be sacrificed in the name of liberty, for that would be anarchy; liberty must not be lost in the name of order, for that would be despotism. The judicial branch of government must protect society against the individual who attempts to interfere with its peace and order and must, at the same time, be fearless and independent to protect the individual against unjust demands of society. It is an independent judiciary which preserves for the people, in whom ultimate sovereignty rests, the structure and functions of the Government as expressed in the Constitution, and the rights of the individual as recognized and guaranteed in that instrument.

It is fitting, therefore, that the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia—whose jurisdiction in national and local matters combined transcends in extent and importance that of any of the other Courts, either State or Federal, except the Supreme Court itself—should be housed in a manner suitable for both the efficiency and the importance of their function. They will be so housed in this new building, the cornerstone of which we lay today.

Before presenting the speakers, I take occasion in behalf of the Judges of both Courts to thank the Chief Justice of the United States for attending the ceremony as our Circuit Justice and for his characteristically generous waiver of rank in order that those of lesser seniority might speak for themselves and their Court at this ceremony.

We thank the Chief Justice's Chief Justice—Judge D. Lawrence Groner—retired on account of ill health, for appearing here today.

We thank the Bar Associations and their committees and members for their aid.

We thank Mr. Henry P. Chandler and Mr. Leland Tolman of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts for managing the details of today's arrangements, and Mr. Thomas E. Waggoner, Marshal of the Supreme Court of the United States, for his assistance.

New United States Courthouse

We thank Mr. W. E. Reynolds and Mr. Allan S. Thorn of the Public Buildings Service, Mr. Louis Justement, the contracting architect, and the Charles Tompkins Company, building contractors, for their cooperation.

We thank Mr. Regis Noel and Mr. Julius Peyser for furnishing, in honor of the presidents of the District of Columbia Bar Association, the trowel with which the President will spread mortar for the cornerstone. The wood of the trowel is from an ancient timber in the United States District Court building.

We thank the Police Department and the Secret Service for their protection.

Finally, we thank the Marine Band for its music. It is of interest to note that at the ceremony of August 22, 1820, when the cornerstone of the present United States District Court building was laid, the Marine Band was present and furnished the music—then as today, *Semper Fidelis*.

The first speaker, Colonel Walter Collins Clephane, has been a member and a leader of the Bar of the District of Columbia for 61 years. He is an author of legal treatises of recognized merit, has been a member of the Faculty of The George Washington University Law School, of the National Railway Labor Panel, and of many Railway Arbitration and Presidential Emergency Boards, as well as a Judge Advocate in the United States Army in the First World War. In his high character, distinguished ability, and extended experience he fittingly speaks for the Bar of this jurisdiction.

I am pleased to present Colonel Clephane. (Applause.)

ADDRESS OF WALTER C. CLEPHANE, ESQUIRE.

Mr. President, Mr. Chief Justice of the United States, Mr. Chairman and Justices and Judges of our courts, and distinguished guests who have honored this occasion by your presence, we of the Bar of the District of Columbia extend to you a hearty welcome.

This is the day when dreams come true! It is noteworthy also, because of all the lawyers present, that they are in entire accord

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and that they completely agree with the courts. What is still more remarkable, there is no dissenting opinion by any of the Judges. Furthermore, the laity, who have contributed their time and effort to make possible the happiness we all experience at the culmination of the labor which has entered into this building, unite with us in the feeling of satisfaction that the business is well in hand. And so, I express the gratitude of the Bar of this District to the laity for the able manner in which they have done their part, to the Members of Congress who have recognized our needs and provided for them, and to you, Mr. President, who by a stroke of the pen have transformed a dream into a law.

Among all those who have so effectively labored it is difficult and perhaps unjust to single out one for special mention, but I feel sure that the Bar would never forgive me if I should not refer to our beloved Chief Judge Bolitha J. Laws, who has worked in season and out of season, sacrificing his time and endangering his health, to make possible this courthouse. (Applause.) To him unanimously and enthusiastically we voice our gratitude.

History informs us that 130 years ago, when our present courthouse was dedicated, the orator of the day was one John Law, an Englishman. It seems quite a coincidence that on this occasion another Law of English descent and possibly a relative should be a prominent figure. The addition of the letter "s" to his name is immaterial. This is due, no doubt, to the fact that the laws are more complicated in these days.

In August of 1820 a parade of frock-coated and silk-hatted men climbed the hill from Pennsylvania Avenue over a road no longer existent, and dedicated our present courthouse. This statement may be a trifle misleading, because that building was not then known as or expected to be used for a courthouse. It was called City Hall and intended to house the administrative offices of the District of Columbia. Its use as a courthouse was an afterthought. When it became necessary to move the Court from its then location on Capitol Hill the city government leased to it two rooms in the building for court purposes. The tenant gradually outgrew the landlord and the latter eventually was forced to secure quarters elsewhere. I well remember, and it was not so long

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ago, when some of the administrative offices were still lodged in that building.

(It is said that one early English writer, in communicating with his home, described that building as the District of Columbia Hospital for the Insane; but it is believed that this description was not wholly accurate.)

The early judicial records contained in that old building are interesting as contrasted with those of today. Instead of now concerning ourselves, as our ancestors did, with litigation pertaining to runaway slaves and rights of their owners, we find the descendants of those slaves occupying, most honorably, seats on the bench of the courts throughout the land and high positions in the United Nations. We are not now disturbed with indictments and convictions of women for being common scolds, punishable by subjecting them to the ducking stool. On the contrary, we find women also seated in the judicial chairs, making the men behave, and likewise participating in the activities of the United Nations in adjusting international affairs of moment. This old world in its writhings and twistings has turned completely upside down, a rather undignified posture, by the way, and one suggesting and provoking a good sound spanking; and believe me, it has been spanked, or more accurately speaking, thrashed; and that thrashing has been administered in some degree by the descendants of those who 130 years ago were at the bottom of the heap.

It has been suggested that a change in judicial procedure consists of the increasing tendency to file dissenting opinions. Without attempting to argue whether this is good or bad, any candid observer must admit that throughout those dissents there has been manifested a spirit of almost crusader-like zeal in the effort to insist that the law should be decided to be what the dissenter believed it should be. As long as this spirit asserts itself in these dissents and as long as they are not animated by selfish interests, no fear need be felt that the supremacy of the law is being endangered from this source.

But there is danger from another quarter, and that may be found among the lawyers themselves. There are certain immut-

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able, intangible values, principles of right and wrong, which are the same today as they were 130 years or 1300 years ago, and will be the same when, generations hence, this cornerstone which is being laid today will be opened for the purpose of discovering what manner of men and women we people of 1950 were.

I well remember the day, 61 years ago, when I, in company with others who had passed the bar examination (now all gone to the Great Beyond except myself), appeared before the bar of our court and took the oath of office as attorneys and counselors at law, an oath which has been taken by every lawyer practicing here. We vowed that we would demean ourselves as members of this bar, uprightly and according to law, and that we would support the Constitution of the United States. I wonder what proportion of us have analyzed the elements of that oath. I think I never did so as searchingly as when I saw the oath of office administered to the great Chief Justice of the United States on the South Portico of the White House a few years ago, and heard his response: "I do, so help me God." From that moment I have known that the administration of justice is in competent hands.

May I detain you for a few moments to briefly analyze the lawyer's oath? We as attorneys have pledged ourselves to demean ourselves uprightly. How much meaning is contained in that word "Uprightly"! A clergyman perhaps would give it one signification, a judge another, and the average man on the street still another; but all would agree that it requires of us considerably more than obedience to any man-made law. It will be noticed that the obligation to live uprightly is mentioned first. Secondly, with all that is implied in that word, we must conduct ourselves lawfully; and the framer of the oath singled out among the various laws one which he evidently considered as of paramount importance, namely, the obligation to support the Constitution of the United States. All of this is followed by an invocation for help from Almighty God, without which the recital of the vows would be a hollow mockery. Have we lived up to our pledge? If not, then we inevitably incur the danger to which I have heretofore alluded. If we deviate in our professional conduct from a single element of that oath, then the foundations of the temple of the administration of the law will tremble; and if

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we disregard them all, it may be that this building whose cornerstone we are laying today, no matter how well planned and built, will utterly fail of its purpose.

Any applicant for admission to the Bar whose beliefs and actions make it impossible for him to consistently and conscientiously take this oath must be barred from admission; and any already admitted who have demonstrated by their professional conduct that they have become indifferent to these obligations must be disbarred, and in this every lawyer and judge must cooperate.

I commend this thought to my fellow members of the Bar for your earnest consideration today when we are about to transfer our activities from the old courthouse to the new. Is it not an appropriate time to re-evaluate the meaning of these vows which we took on our admission and reappraise our professional conduct in order that we may determine whether and how far the latter had diverged from the former; and if there has been such divergence, then to make every endeavor to bring the two into harmony? I invite my colleagues at the Bar to join me in the solemn pledge that THIS WE WILL DO.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: The second speaker is the Honorable Bolitha J. Laws, a member of the Bar of this jurisdiction since 1913, a Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia since 1939, of the United States Emergency Court of Appeals since 1943, and Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia since 1945. While he has had the assistance of others, including members of the Bench and Bar, and of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia and of the Board of Trade, to him, more than to any other single individual or official, must be extended the credit for the effective presentation to the Congress of the needs of the two courts for this new building.

I am honored to present Chief Judge Laws. (Applause.)

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ADDRESS OF THE HONORABLE BOLITHA J. LAWS, CHIEF JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. President, Chief Justice, fellow members of the Bench and Bar:

This is an important event to the city of Washington. In a larger sense, it is an important event to the nation. The two courts which will occupy this building when it is completed have the broadest jurisdiction of any in the nation except the Supreme Court of the United States. Situated at the seat of the Government of the United States, we are called upon to decide cases the types of which usually are heard in the state courts and also those which are customarily heard in the United States courts; and in the latter class there are brought to our attention some that are of the most vital concern to the nation itself. The Cabinet officers are called before our courts in a challenge to the actions of those of their departments. The Attorney General of the United States institutes in our courts some of the major litigation, both civil and criminal, which comes under his control. We are called upon daily, almost, to hear and determine the validity of Acts passed by the Congress of the United States. When we find any litigant in the courts, we are faced by a momentous problem; but when we are confronted by a challenge between an individual and his Government, the case takes on an import which often reaches to every point in the nation. Cases of this type are not rare in our courts.

In recognition of the national character of this event, we are delighted to have present today the Chief Executive of the United States and the Chief Justice of the United States; also Members of the Congress of the United States. Seldom in history is it that the leaders of our nation gather together on one occasion. We are grateful to them and honored by their presence today; and we want to express to them our profound thanks for the part which they played in bringing about the granting of this building. And at this moment I want to pause to join with Chief Judge Stephens in paying thanks to our modest Chief Justice of the United States, who has forced himself into oblivion today, for his unflagging in-

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terest and his inspiration to us as we carried forward our efforts to bring this building to a state of realization.

(Applause.)

We are grateful also to the high officials and the prominent citizens of the District of Columbia who assisted us in this project. We cannot let this occasion pass without expressing to them our thanks. In behalf of our courts, officials of the City of Washington, and laymen who helped on this project, we express our thanks.

In the construction of this building we have not forgotten the layman and the fact that he is the central figure in the court process. His fortune as a litigant, his family interests, his liberty, indeed sometimes his life, are at stake in the courts. As a witness his testimony will guide the court to a just or unjust decision. As a juror he passes upon some of the most important questions—those of fact—which in many instances resolve the controversy.

On occasions, we have heard complaints from the layman. It has been said by litigants that delays have occurred in the courts and that trials have been expensive. We have found jurors sometimes reluctant to serve, by reason of the quarters which have been turned over to them and by reason of the fact that they have been forced to spend long hours of waiting in idleness without being able to attend to their business. We have heard that witnesses have said never again will they come into court voluntarily, because of the long, tiresome waits which they have suffered. These complaints are not new. They have existed as long as the courts themselves. Some of them are not well founded, but others are; and when they are, an enlightened judiciary must meet them and deal with them.

In Washington our courts have pioneered in dealing with the laymen. We have brought them into cooperation with judges and lawyers in improving the court machinery. Five years ago there was organized, and now exists in a full state of activity, a group of leading laymen and laywomen from every branch of business in the District of Columbia, who meet with the judges and lawyers to work on the vast business problems and great humanitarian problems of the courts. They have served, and have served well,

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working with us on these projects. They have come to understand some of our vicissitudes and difficulties. They have been helping to correct some of our faults. We have originated this organization in the District of Columbia and now it has begun to spread through the United States.

One of the most momentous contributions of the layman in this field of endeavor in cooperation with the courts and lawyers has been his part in bringing about this structure; and when the happy news came that the structure was authorized, we called upon him to have a part in planning the building. He has had a material part in it. In this building we have had in mind prominently his interests.

From the point of view of the juror who has had difficulties and who often has hesitated to serve and has been full of excuses from service, sometimes coming from the most well equipped prospective jurors, we have heard complaint of lack of housing accommodations. But in this new building we have provided for him a luxurious waiting room, one comparable to those in club quarters. We have provided parking for his automobile, which is no small item. We have provided for him during the necessarily enforced periods of his idleness, which no court system has been able to work out a means to prevent, a private, soundproof room, where he can bring his secretary or his associates and carry on business uninterruptedly, perhaps for hours in the day, until he is called as juror to serve in a specific case. We have provided for him a message center, where a message can be delivered to him by an officer of the court at any time. We have provided for him private sleeping quarters, where he can spend in comfort the overnight sessions which jurors oftentimes are compelled to hold. With this lessening of inconveniences and burdens of jury service in the building of the new structure, we are hopeful that jury service in the future will not be so obnoxious and that we shall not hear so many excuses from outstanding men and women called for jury service.

And we have not forgotten the witness layman. In each case he is provided a room near the court where he is to be called to serve; but when he is an expert or has to spend a long period of time in working out statistics or in figuring our accounts during

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the course of the trial, he may have a private room to himself, where he can work in comfort and without interruption. He too may have access to this message center provided by the court. It will be possible to work out a program, now being worked on by some of the laymen of Washington, to have many of the witnesses called to court on short notice through this message center, so that those long waits may be obviated.

These works of designing this building are pioneering efforts in the United States and exist, I am sure, in no other court structure in the entire nation; and coming as they do to supplement the comfortable quarters of the judges, the lawyers who are engaged in practicing, and the court attachés, we feel there has been and is being provided for us the finest physical structure of any courthouse in the United States. We want to thank the architect of the building and the Public Buildings Administration for a job well done in this connection.

At this time, while we rejoice over the culmination of a building long sought, we are mindful of the serious responsibilities laid on us by the court system. At any period the courts are concerned with momentous problems; but as in another age it was said all roads lead to Rome, today it may be said all roads lead to Washington. The eyes of the world look upon the United States, our own capital of the United States, where almost daily the courts are called upon to resolve major problems of interest not only to those in the District of Columbia, not only to those in the nation, but to those in the uttermost parts of the earth. At such a time it is imperative that the courts must meet the full measure of efficiency. No matter how adequate the court structure or how pleasant the surroundings, it is necessary in such a period as this for us to have able judges, able jurors, and able court officials. Where litigants are arrayed in conflict and represented by stalwart lawyers, intense antagonism nearly always prevails. Sometimes prejudices may arise in the course of a trial. Important issues may become threatened to be subordinated to false issues. The weak may be tempted to yield to aggression. In such an atmosphere the courts must be just. They must be strong. They must be wise. And they must function with expedition.

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On this occasion, then, shall not all of us who have a part in the court process rededicate ourselves to our responsibilities, determined to hold high our ideals of justice and mercy? Let us fit into the magnificence of this temple of justice spiritual strength which will well serve our nation and its citizens and be a stabilizing influence, commanding the respect and admiration of those of our city, our nation, and the people of the world.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: History records that when the cornerstone of the present United States District Court building was laid, on August 22, 1820, the day was an unusually hot one. President Monroe did not attend the ceremony. President Truman, not deterred by either the heat of the day or the critical state of international affairs, is here on this occasion. His presence evidences his faith and his interest in the judicial branch of the Government and his recognition of the national as well as the local importance of the two courts which will be housed in this new building. We are grateful to him indeed for honoring us on this occasion.

The President of the United States. (Standing applause.)

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Mr. Chief Justice of the United States, Your Honor the Chairman, Mr. Chief Judge Laws, Honorable Judges of the Courts of the District of Columbia, and ladies and gentlemen:

I appreciate the privilege of being here. Judge Laws, almost thou persuadeth me to be a juror. (Laughter.)

We are meeting here today to lay the cornerstone of a new courthouse.

This building will house the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. The increasing importance of these courts is indicated by the fact that they have long since outgrown the historic old building that served them so long.

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These courts hear cases which are not only important to the private parties concerned, but which involve issues vital to the welfare and growth of the Nation. Nowhere else, outside the Supreme Court of the United States, will so many legal questions of national magnitude be decided as in this building before us.

It is fitting that these courts should have a building which is modern and suited to their needs. Our law courts play a key part in our national life, and their surroundings should be expressive of the respect which we have for them.

But the vitality of our courts is separate and apart from the buildings we create for them. The spirit and the meaning of our courts do not lie in the material settings we provide for them, but in the living ideas which they enshrine.

To our forefathers, the courts were the distinctive symbol of the kind of government—the kind of society—which they were creating in the wilderness of this continent. This new Nation was to be a democracy based on the concept of the rule of law. It was to be a society in which every man had rights—inalienable rights—rights which were not based on creed, or rank, or economic power, but on equality. In such a society, the courts had the function not only of dealing out justice among citizens, but of preserving justice between the citizens and the state.

The founders of this country had a very clear conception of the corruptibility of power—of the innate danger in all human affairs of the selfish or arbitrary exercise of authority. To guard against this ever-present danger, they adopted the principle that there is a fundamental law—expressed in the Constitution, and particularly in the Bill of Rights—to which every exercise of power has to conform. The purpose of this fundamental law is to protect the rights of the individual. To apply this underlying law became the special task of the courts.

This concept of justice based on individual rights is so familiar to us that we take it for granted. Yet, in essence, it is a revolutionary concept. It has always been a threat to absolutism and tyranny. It was the great weapon in our own Revolution, and the basis of our Republic. Today, in a world where absolute power is again on the march, this concept of justice has tremendous

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strength. It is a challenge to the new forms of tyranny as it was to the old.

In our lifetime, we have witnessed a world-wide attack on this ideal of justice. Fascism, Nazism, Soviet communism, all have tried to convince people that our concern with individual human rights is false and fraudulent.

In the areas under their control, these totalitarian movements have swept away all restraints on their own power. They have subjected their own people to all the evils of tyranny—to kidnaping, torture, slavery, murder—without hope of redress or remedy. They have made a mockery of the forms of justice. Their judges are prosecutors; their prosecutors are hangmen; their defense attorneys are puppets. Their trials are coldly calculated displays of propaganda, based on torture and designed to spread falsehood.

Wherever nations or peoples have been overcome by totalitarianism, the practice of justice has been snuffed out. But the ideal remains, deep in the hearts of men. Men will always long for protection against the midnight arrest, the slave camp, the torture chamber. Men will never accept these things as right. Today, men feel more deeply than ever that all human beings have rights, and that it is the duty of government to protect them.

Today, we are participating in a great international movement for the better protection of individual rights. New methods of protecting and advancing human rights are being proposed and discussed. Across the world, men of good will are seeking new ways of making human rights triumphant over tyranny.

The first step was taken in the Charter of the United Nations. Weary of the crimes of the Axis tyrants, all the united nations pledged themselves, in the Charter, to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The San Francisco conference ended with the promise that there would be, in time, an international bill of rights, which would be as much a part of international life as our own Bill of Rights is part of our life under the Constitution.

From this point, many steps have been taken toward the creation of an international law and morality which will protect human rights against the misuse of arbitrary power.

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By the judgment of the Nuremberg Tribunal, October 1, 1946, it was established that the highest officials of a government are answerable before the bar of an international court for committing war crimes, crimes against peace, and—in connection with either of these—crimes against humanity. This great principle was further confirmed by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of December 11, 1946.

International action is also being taken against the crime of genocide—the slaughter of entire human groups—whether committed in time of peace or in time of war. One of the most shocking examples of genocide was the Nazi attempt to exterminate an entire religious group deliberately and methodically. The General Assembly of the United Nations has denounced this terrible practice, and has affirmed that genocide is a crime under international law.

To prevent and punish the crime of genocide in the future, a multi-lateral convention on the subject was prepared and approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December of 1948. The convention is now before the various members of the United Nations, as well as some non-member nations, for ratification. Over half the ratifications necessary to bring the convention into force have already been deposited.

I have asked the Senate of the United States to give its advice and consent to the ratification of that convention. I am hopeful that the Senate will do so before this Congress adjourns. We must do our part to outlaw forever the mass murder of innocent peoples.

Another step toward the international protection of human rights was taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December, 1948, when it proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Like our own Declaration of Independence, this document asserts that all members of the human family are endowed with certain inalienable rights. It enumerates and describes these fundamental rights and freedoms.

But the Declaration of Human Rights is only an appeal to the conscience of the world. It offers no means of redress when rights are violated. To meet this need, a multi-lateral convention is now in preparation. This is designed to make binding law out

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of a number of the guiding principles of the Declaration. It will be known as the Covenant on Human Rights.

The task of obtaining general agreement on such a Covenant in the face of existing differences in legal systems and of language barriers is, of course, an arduous one. I have faith, however, that the Covenant will ultimately be adopted, and also that it will be followed by other agreements to give effect to the principles enunciated in the Declaration of Human Rights.

Thus, bit by bit, new concepts of international law and justice are taking form. Through an international society of nations, the concept is developing that the barbarous treatment of individuals by any nation is the concern of all nations. This growth of international law is most important in building for peace.

It is a mistake to underestimate the significance of these developments. In our divided world, it is easy to point to the tremendous gulf between the concept of individual human rights and the attainment of conditions which will insure their enjoyment. It is easy to be discouraged by the difficulty of creating international safeguards against the infringement of these rights.

But we must remember that it is our belief that governments are created to serve human rights. We must understand clearly that our belief in human rights is shared today by peoples all over the world. We must have faith and vision sufficient to realize that this belief is the rock on which the people of the world can build a better and a peaceful future.

In its beginnings, this world movement toward the protection of human rights may not appear particularly impressive. But the courts of the District of Columbia were not very impressive, either, when they were first set up, one hundred and fifty years ago. They were without buildings or physical equipment, and uncertain of their jurisdiction. These courts have grown strong, because they are based on a living truth. And so it will be with the quest for the international protection of human rights. It, too, will succeed, because it is based upon the same great concept.

On us, as a Nation, rests the responsibility of taking a position of leadership in the struggle for human rights. We cannot turn

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aside from the task if we wish to remain true to the vision of our forefathers and the ideals that have made our history what it is.

Above the outward forms of our Government, above our laws and the Constitution itself, there is an eternal law of justice. This is the justice of a God who created mankind to live together in brotherly love. This is the justice by which all the deeds of men are judged. The fundamental purpose of our lives is to strive toward it, to the best of human ability.

As a Nation, we must devote ourselves to that struggle. In the words of the ancient Hebrew prophet, we should say, "Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

In no other way can the nations of the earth endure.

(Standing applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: Mr. President, for myself and my colleagues, I thank you for being here today and for your speech for freedom according to law and reason, and against force and fear.

The President, the Chief Justice, Chief Judge Laws, and I will now move to the adjoining platform, where the President will lay the cornerstone. Thereafter we will hear the National Anthem played by the Marine Band. Benediction and adjournment will follow.

(The cornerstone of the New United States Courthouse for the District of Columbia was then laid by the President of the United States.)

(The National Anthem was then played by the United States Marine Band.)

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: The Benediction will be pronounced by the Reverend Ariel Nathaniel Warner, Associate Pastor of the Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church.

BENEDICTION

DOCTOR WARNER: Now unto Him Who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the Presence of

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His Glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, Our Saviour, eternal, immortal, invisible, be glory and majesty, be dominion and power, both now and forever more. Amen.

ADJOURNMENT

CHIEF JUDGE STEPHENS: The ceremony is concluded.
(At 4 o'clock p. m., the ceremony was concluded.)