

DEAN ROGER C. HENDERSON

Joseph M. Livermore*

Because much of what a dean does for a law school is invisible and intangible, it is hard to convey to those outside the school why the school is well-administered. Often, successful deans appear to have done very little. Roger Henderson was a superb dean. Yet, in view of this visibility factor, there is a tendency to let Roger's many visible accomplishments overshadow what I consider to be his even more significant contributions to the College.

The visible accomplishments are many. First, of course, is his role in securing our new building. Our students believe it a fine building; our faculty, its judgment affected by having lived for so long in the old building, is even more enthusiastic. The building has created an environment in which teaching and scholarship can flourish. In every decision Roger has made concerning the building, those interests have been served. Only those who have attended or taught at other law schools will realize how important the cumulative impact of those decisions, great and small, has been on the educational life of this institution.

A second major accomplishment has been Roger's effort at involving the practicing bar in the process of improving the program of the College. Beginning an enormously successful trial advocacy program, reinvigorating the moot court program, and devoting more resources to continuing legal education evidenced Dean Henderson's commitment to making significant improvements in the program. Equally important were his efforts to tell those in practice what was being done at the College and to teach his faculty the concerns of the profession about legal education. Shared professional goals are vital to both the bar and the College; they can exist only when nurtured by a dean such as Roger.

Deans are rarely appreciated by their students. Instead, they are perceived as the placers of senseless hurdles between the student and a rich and satisfying career. Through fund-raising activities with our alumni, Roger was able significantly to increase our financial aid resources. The same sources brought art to the College, including the magnificent sculp-

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ture by Dennis Jones, and substantially improved our library holdings. Roger's concern for students was also evident in his emphasis on good teaching and a solid curriculum. Students, here for a short time, may take these things for granted. Those with a longer view realize the effort that went into achieving them.

Important as these tangible accomplishments have been, even more important has been the restoration of civility within the faculty and return of a sense of shared mission. Disputes about an educational program are bound to develop. Seeing that those disputes are resolved without rancor and with an overriding purpose adequately to prepare our graduates for practice should be easy. It is not. Only one with Roger's skill could keep our faculty operating in tandem. Perhaps the easiest way to convey this intangible accomplishment is to note the stability of our faculty despite many offers to teach at other law schools. Only when a school is really well administered, as our school has been for the last six years, can that kind of stability be achieved.

This emphasis on Roger's administrative successes, of course, slights his personal qualities. Now that he has returned to teaching, his colleagues and students will be the beneficiaries of Roger's sense of humor and warmth in greater measure. We are delighted. For all that he has done and for all that he will yet give to the College and to the state, we are grateful.

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William E. Kimble*

In the non-academic community, a law school is judged not so much by the number of volumes it has in its library, or the grandeur of its buildings, or the number of articles published by its faculty in leading law journals, as it is judged by its dean.

No one will argue that a good library is not essential to a good legal education, or that comfortable surroundings do not make the learning experience less painful, or that the key to excellence in legal education is not the excellence of its faculty, but the dean not only provides the leadership and direction the law school will take, he *is* the law school in the eyes of the community. In most cases he is the only real contact the community has with its law school. Thus, the way the dean is perceived and received in the community determines, to a great extent, the relationship that will exist between the community and the law school.

Wholly apart from the excellence of his leadership at the College of Law, which is recognized by all who have been associated with the school and which is perhaps better addressed by others, Roger Henderson's tenure as dean resulted in a warm and cordial relationship with a spirit of cooperation between the bar and the school. Both institutions have benefited immeasurably from it.

A law school exists to serve its profession. As dean, Roger served his profession very well indeed. He brought the law school to the community in countless ways, but none more important than by his own presence.

He moved confidently and comfortably in the company of practicing attorneys, who recognized him as one of their own. This perhaps accounts for his remarkable success in his relationship with the alumni. While dealings with alumni may often be considered an onerous, albeit necessary function of college administration by many, Roger seemed to have genuinely enjoyed it—a joy, I think, that flowed from his love of his profession and his respect for those who practiced it with skill and dedication. He enjoyed the company of lawyers, and they enjoyed him; they could relate

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to what he was trying to accomplish on behalf of the law school. The support of the law school has never been greater.

The legal community recognized Roger Henderson as a skilled lawyer who had chosen to apply his talents to the field of legal education, rather than to the active practice of law. Lawyers and judges appreciated his understanding of the practicalities of the practice and his resolve to train lawyers in the skills they would need to represent their clients honorably and competently. He was particularly dedicated to developing the skills of advocacy. Having practiced as a trial lawyer, he respected the role of the advocate—a role that is sometimes not fully appreciated in the many-faceted world of legal education.

Just as the dean is the visible symbol of the law school, so also the trial attorney is frequently the visible symbol of the legal profession. His failings and his inadequacies are viewed as the failings and inadequacies of the profession. Conversely, his skills and his dedication to principle are viewed as the skills and dedication of the profession. Thus, to increase those skills and to develop that sense of dedication in the student, as Roger has striven to do, is to benefit the entire profession, both as a profession and in the manner the profession is perceived in the community.

The legal profession, like all callings, seldom lives up to its potential. None of us is as adequate as we should be. All of us fall victim to the pressures of daily practice. But Dean Henderson has demonstrated not only to his students and his faculty, but to all with whom he came into contact, that the practice of law is a good and honorable profession that demands and deserves the best that we can give.

The law school surely has profited from his administration, but clearly his influence did not end there. His stewardship as Dean of the College of Law will be remembered fondly by all of us who share his pride in our profession. He will be remembered personally as a warm, personable and able representative of the law school, the university and the legal profession.