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## The Bar's Opportunity in the Post-War World

Dicta Editorial Board

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## The Bar's Opportunity in the Post-War World

John Kirkland Clark, New York City attorney, member of the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association for the past ten years, and former chairman of the National Conference of Bar Examiners, addressed the October 7, 1946 meeting of the Denver Bar Association on the above subject. He said in part:

The bar did a good work in rendering legal assistance to the members of the armed services. It is impossible to tell the number of conferences held and the problems solved, but there were numerous problems presented to legal assistance officers. Although we could have anticipated a large number of family dissolutions arising from ill-considered war marriages, the number of dissolutions which have come has been shockingly above expectations.

Educational rehabilitation of returning lawyer-veterans is another job for all bars, and they have been doing this job well. The Practising Law Institute, 57 William St., New York 5, New York, in cooperation with the American Bar Association, has completed several courses which will greatly assist the veteran in this educational rehabilitation. (These courses were described in *Dicta*, June, 1946, p. 139). The bar can be proud of its work in both of the above projects.

We lawyers do not sufficiently recognize the obligations which arise out of the privileges which have been given to us. None of us completely paid for our legal education. Part of our education was financed by taxes supplied by the public, or by endowment funds created by persons who went before us. The people have made contributions to our education, and have granted us an exclusive franchise to practice law. We consider this our right and think too little of what goes with it. There is never a right without a correlative duty, but we don't hear very much about our duties.

I have written a bill of duties, setting out a duty with every right. There are duties imposed on the bar as a result of its exclusive franchise to practice law.

Only a small group of the community has the advantages of the lawyer's services. A small group can pay the fees and customarily seek legal assistance. The legal aid organizations assist the person who has less than the normal living wage. Between this group of persons who customarily seek legal assistance and those who can get service from legal aid, is a large mass of persons who do not realize they have need for legal services or know to whom they can go for legal advice. The plan of a low cost legal service bureau in New York has been approved. There is now being established in New York City a panel of lawyers who are willing to consult with persons for one-half hour for a fee of \$5.00, and to advise whether or not there is a legal problem and to whom one may go for help with it. As chairman of the American Bar Association Committee on Low-Cost Legal Service Bureaus I recommend

that your association see what can be done about this problem. We also have the problem of establishing sound public relations.

We have not fully discharged our duty to the returning veteran. A large number of them have not had access to the available refresher courses. The bar should consider this, and should see that the veterans know about the Practising Law Institute courses.

We must keep up with new developments in the law. Medical men are keeping up with new developments in medicine. In nearly every great center every year medical experts discuss for several days new developments in the medical field. How much time would it take for the lawyer just to glance thru the court decisions, law review articles, administrative rulings and decisions, and new laws. We are trying to work out a plan whereby new developments can be laid before the lawyers in a couple of three-day week-end sessions a year. The thought of keeping the bar abreast of the times has led to the publication of the Annual Survey of American Law by New York University.

We are a privileged group and have a large investment. Are we paying the public dividends on the investment it has in us? Are we furnishing the leadership now that the bar has given in times past—such as at the time of writing the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution? Are we furnishing a real contribution to enlightened public opinion? How can we best furnish this?

This country and the world need leadership today as they have never needed it before. Are the lawyers furnishing this leadership? We are blest as no other country has ever been blest. I appeal to the lawyers to furnish the leadership of which they are capable. Every lawyer should answer for himself whether or not he is furnishing back to the public the service which the public has the right to expect by reason of its investment in him.

### **Denver Bar Association Adopts Minimum Fee Schedule**

At the October 7, 1946 meeting of the Denver Bar Association, the minimum fee schedule presented by the Minimum Fees Committee, of which Hugh B. Kellogg is chairman, which schedule has heretofore been published in the June, 1946, issue of *Dicta*, was adopted, and all Denver lawyers were requested by the association to comply voluntarily with the recommended schedule of fees. It was ordered that a copy of the schedule be printed and distributed without charge to all members of the Denver bar.

It is understood that this is the first time a fee schedule has ever been adopted by the Denver Bar Association, although committees have worked on such a schedule at different times in the past. The present committee was continued to make further studies and recommendations. Although the schedule is now in effect, changes may be made in it from time to time as occasion warrants.