



DEDICATION OF THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI COLLEGE OF
LAW ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE COLLEGE OF LAW

Remarks of
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Supreme Court of the United States

Cincinnati, Ohio
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It is my very great pleasure to address you on the occasion of your 150th anniversary and to dedicate the beautifully renovated and expanded Alphonso Taft Hall. In 1925, then Chief Justice William Howard Taft dedicated the original Taft Hall, which was named in honor of his father. In 1958, Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered an address at the 125th anniversary of the College of Law and the centennial celebration of the birth of William Howard Taft. I am honored that you have added me to the company of these speakers who have in the past helped you to celebrate historic occasions in the life of this marvelous law school.

Rather than abandoning the original Taft Hall, you have built a new structure that surrounds, and contains, the original school. I hope that this architect-

tural design is symbolic of your intention to retain, and to build upon, the traditions that have made your school a beacon for others in American legal education. Just as each individual builds upon his earlier experiences and acquired knowledge, so has this law school built upon and around its origins. It is a fitting and wonderful concept. Today, I wish to comment briefly on the people and the ideals that have made you justifiably proud of your College of Law.

When the "Cincinnati Law School" was founded in 1833, there were only eight law schools in the United States. In 1897, the Law School merged with the Law Department of the University of Cincinnati. The product of that merger, your College of Law, is now recognized as the fourth oldest law school in the country.

The early years of the law school were marked by the selfless effort of outstanding lawyers of national repute, who labored to establish the school as a center for creative legal education. These included Timothy Walker, Maskell Curwen, Rufus King, and Jacob Cox. This tradition of strong leadership of the College persisted throughout its history and continues into the present era with such fine scholars and administrators as Roscoe Barrow, of whom my colleague Justice Potter Stewart has written: "Even the briefest summary of his accomplishments bespeaks a man of uncommon versatility, intelligence, and drive."

Your College of Law has contributed far more than its fair share of lawyers who have dedicated their professional careers to public service. William Howard Taft was the only man in history to serve both as President and as Chief Justice of the United States. Willis Van Devanter served as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court from 1910-1937. Charles Drake served as Chief Justice of the United States Court of Claims and as a United States Senator. Judson Harmon served as Attorney General of the United States, and Lawrence Mitchell served as Solicitor General. Champ Clark, Joseph G. Cannon, and Nicholas Longworth, all graduates of this College of Law, were members of the United States House of Representatives, where they served our Nation with great distinction. These leaders represent only a handful of your graduates.

Of special interest to me is the fact that in 1891, when it was still rare for women to be admitted to law schools, much less to the practice, this institution graduated its first woman law student, Florence O'Leary. Her Irish surname may have had something to do with it.

However, it is not merely dedicated legal scholars and distinguished graduates that have made your law school what it is today. Rather, your institutional vision and devotion to educational ideals have also accounted for the success you have achieved. In his 1958 address, Chief Justice Warren rightly praised you for the important work you had done to improve standards of judicial administration. Today, I would like to focus on another distinction you enjoy, one in which I have a particular interest. I am referring to your emphasis

on "operational skills" to ensure that your graduates master the practical, as well as the theoretical, tools of our profession.

In his essay published in 1953, Judge Robert S. Marx, who had created a course called "Facts" at this law school, wrote that "most law students graduate without having had any practical legal experience in the laboratories of the law similar to the experience which medical students receive in medical laboratories and hospitals." In 1961, Professor Irvin Rutter of this law school published his now-famous essay, "A Jurisprudence of Lawyers' Operations." In that essay, Professor Rutter described in fascinating detail what had come to be called the "applied skills" program, oriented toward training students in practical skills and techniques that went beyond doctrine. Professor Rutter explained the philosophy of this approach in the following way:

"The question of 'practical skills' training is not one of a choice between 'theory' and 'practice,' nor is it simply a matter of adding one of more courses to the existing curriculum. The larger problem, obscured by the limiting terms in which 'practical' training has been discussed, involves a re-examination of the consequences flowing from the fact that law schools have been concerned substantially with the teaching of doctrine, with only incidental attention to professional legal operations. Legal doctrine, embodying the rules of law, is one essential ingredient of lawyers' operations, but only an ingredient, greatly sterilized by its divorcement from professional operations."

This concern for professional competence, a constant feature of the law school from its inception, continues to the present day as your "operational skills" program. This program combines applied-skills courses, and a clinical program and externship, in order to provide a "complete" legal education. Your historical concern for training professionally competent lawyers is certainly unique in the scheme of American legal education.

In addition to your concern for professional competence, you have also displayed an admirable concern for the social and moral responsibility that must be a part of the life of every good lawyer. In recognizing the importance of a lawyer's responsibility to society before such recognition became "fashionable," the law school began a legal aid program in 1917 to assist indigent persons. This program has continued and expanded. In addition, you are to be congratulated for the establishment of your new Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights. The Institute provides a unique opportunity for you to do research and render assistance in implementing protection for the basic human rights of all people.

Today, you celebrate your 150th anniversary, and you look forward to continuing your traditions of excellence in a new facility. However, I urge you not to lose sight of the fact that your "new" Taft Hall is literally built upon the original Taft Hall. Let that serve as an inspiration to remind you of where you have been and what you have done. Continue to seek creativity and innovation in legal education as you have in the past, and you will do credit to the people and to the ideals that have made this Law School what it is today.