

10-1-1970

A Note from the Editor

Buffalo Law Review

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Recommended Citation

Buffalo Law Review, *A Note from the Editor*, 20 Buff. L. Rev. (1970).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview/vol20/iss1/3>

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dedication to John Lord O'Brian. With this issue the *Buffalo Law Review* marks its twentieth anniversary. In 1950, the late Charles W. Webster encouraged and guided a group of eager students in their preparation of our first issue. In retrospect, our existence seems lengthy; when contrasted with the ongoing career of John Lord O'Brian, however, it is ephemeral. Mr. O'Brian, a graduate of our school, has been actively meeting the call of professional responsibility in a most competent manner for over seventy years. He has selflessly devoted his life to his country and profession. In recognition of this devotion, we dedicate our Twentieth Anniversary Issue to John Lord O'Brian.

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On the twentieth anniversary of our *Review* we pause to reflect upon the value of our endeavor. Serious and candid consideration motivates us to enunciate a feeling that is shared by many law review participants and readers alike. There are today over a hundred law reviews in print. One wonders whether this number may not be excessive, in that frequent staple of many law reviews is redundant articles dealing with subjects insignificant to begin with. The reason for this malady appears to lie in the "publish or perish" philosophy of too many law school faculties and in the tangible benefits for student writers that result from publication.

If law reviews are to be worthwhile, certain criteria for publication seem relevant. No work should be published unless it: (1) deals with a subject not adequately treated elsewhere; (2) offers a new approach to a problem; or (3) offers new criticism of a situation or position. Because there is a dearth of work meeting these criteria, strict adherence to them could well sound the death knell of many law reviews as we presently know them. Whether this consequence would be desirable is a judgment which should be predicated on balancing the value of law reviews (to the writer as well as the readers), against the situation that would exist without many of them.

In this balancing process a question arises: Do the overall benefits accruing from law reviews justify the present talent drain made by them from other meaningful endeavors such as *pro bono* work, political involvement, or even studying? We submit this question to our readers for their consideration.



Buffalo Evening News Photo

JOHN LORD O'BRIAN