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## Address of the President

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# W Y O M I N G   S T A T E   B A R

## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

GEORGE P. SAWYER

To the Members of the Wyoming State Bar:

Rule 10 of the rules governing the Wyoming State Bar states: "Such annual meeting shall be held for the election of officers and to hear the address of the President, and in general, for the discussion of matters of interest to the State Bar and affecting the administration of justice." You might like to hear only that my address is Torrington, Wyoming, and no more, but I am sure that such an interpretation of Rule 10 should not and would not be considered a proper fulfillment of the duties imposed upon your President.

It is thus my duty and my privilege to report to you on the Bar activities during my administration. I have had excellent cooperation from the officers, commissioners and committee members, and at this time I want to extend my sincere appreciation to them.

The Wyoming State Bar is, I am sure, grateful to the West Publishing Company for their complimentary printing of our minimum fee schedule during the past year. Every few years we appoint a committee to revise our minimum fee schedule, but this is not adequate. I would recommend the establishing of a permanent Economics of the Bar Committee. Lewis F. Powell, former Chairman of the Economics of the Bar Committee of the A.B.A. will speak to us Saturday morning on this subject, and I hope it will be possible for all of you to hear his address.

Mention should certainly be made of the excellent assistance we of the Wyoming State Bar receive from the University of Wyoming Law School, and too often take for granted. During the past year our Continuing Legal Education Program was entirely dependent upon our Law School, their publication of the Wyoming Law Journal with its outstanding articles, and their conducting of the fine Institute at Casper. At the beginning of the year it was the hope of the Committee on Continuing Legal Education that they would be able to work out a program in conjunction with the Nebraska and Colorado State Bar Associations, but after discussing the possibilities of such a program with similar committees in the respective States it was decided that such a program was not feasible. It is important to the Bar and to our client, the general public, that we have a strong continuing legal education program, and when an institute is arranged for our benefit that we attend and take advantage of the opportunity.

During the past fall and winter the Public Relations Committee, headed by James Tilker, presented "The Law and You" Television Program in Cheyenne through KFBC-TV. This program was well received,

and was similar to the one presented in Casper two years ago. I want to express my appreciation to this Committee and to the judges and lawyers in Southeastern Wyoming who participated in the program for a job well done.

In accordance with the recommendation of our Junior Past President, John P. Ilesley, and the action of the Commissioners, I appointed a Client Security Fund Committee, and they will report to you during the Convention. Each year more State Bars are inaugurating client security funds. This program not only fulfills an obligation to the public, but is a major step toward better public relations.

The past year has seen broad developments on the unauthorized practice front. A number of state courts, including the Supreme Court of Arizona, have handed down decisions on unauthorized practice matters. Our Unauthorized Practice of the Law Committee, with Byron Hirst as its Chairman, has again worked diligently and is making definite progress. The primary function of this Committee is to protect the public against the dangers of unauthorized practice. Undoubtedly, the most effective force against unauthorized practice of the law is an able, well trained, intelligent Bar, performing services promptly and efficiently and at reasonable fees.

At our last Annual Meeting the advisability of revising the Minor Court Judicial System was discussed. I appointed a Committee for this purpose under the Chairmanship of Stan Lowe, and they have worked diligently. At the Regional Meeting held in Salt Lake City this spring I discovered the Bar Associations in nearly all the other Rocky Mountain States have similar committees at work and studies being made. Although our need in Wyoming may not be as urgent and as critical as in adjoining states, there is a need for legislation to modernize our Minor Courts, and I would recommend that this Committee be continued.

The Wyoming Legislature will convene in January, and any proposed legislation should be submitted as soon as possible to the Legislative Committee. It is my understanding that there will need to be some minor changes in the Uniform Commercial Code and in the Model Corporation Act which will be discussed later in the session. When the Wyoming State Bar proposes to sponsor legislation, it is the duty of each and every member of the Bar to know and understand the proposed legislation. If we favor or oppose proposed legislation we should make our reasons known to the Bar before the Bar decides to sponsor or not to sponsor the legislation. There is no better way to demoralize the standing of the Wyoming State Bar before the Legislature and to weaken the entire legislative program than to have it appear that a bill proposed by the Bar at its Annual or Legislative Session and presented to the Legislature by the Legislative Committee is not representative of the wishes of the lawyers generally.

My wife and I were guests of the Colorado Bar Association at their Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs last October, of the Nebraska Bar Association at their Annual Meeting in Omaha in November, and of the Utah State Bar at their Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in May, held in conjunction with the Regional Meeting of the American Bar Association. It was a real honor and privilege to represent the Wyoming State Bar at these meetings. The Presidents of these Bar Associations have been invited to attend our Convention this year. I also attended the Meeting of the National Conference of Bar Presidents held during the Mid-Winter Meeting of American Bar Association in Chicago in February, and the Meeting of the Interstate Bar Council held in February in Denver, Colorado. These meetings were most interesting, for the problems of the Bars in the various States were discussed and frequently their problems were similar to ours. The Wyoming State Bar participates in both of these activities and should continue to do so. The National Conference of Bar Secretaries also meets each February during the Mid-Winter Meeting of the American Bar Association, and because our Secretary normally continues in office from year to year I would recommend that the Wyoming State Bar consider the advisability of sending our Secretary to these meetings.

In the States of Utah and Colorado, as well as in other states, the Bar Associations, in an effort to permit their lawyers to continue in the practice of real estate law, have endorsed Lawyers' Title Insurance Companies. These are private corporations endorsed by the State Bar of the State, and in states where they have been in existence for several years they have made it possible for the lawyers to regain a substantial portion of the real estate law practice previously lost to the lay title insurance companies. I recommend that the Wyoming State Bar appoint a Lawyers' Title Insurance Committee to study the feasibility of organizing a Lawyers' Title Insurance Company in Wyoming.

We of the Bar, as well as the people of Wyoming, have had the good fortune and the privilege of having a member of the Wyoming Supreme Court for more than forty-two (42) years Chief Justice Fred H. Blume. He is recognized not only in Wyoming but throughout the United States as an outstanding jurist. Judge Blume has always taken a sincere interest in the welfare and activities of the Wyoming State Bar, and he would be here today if his health permitted. As you know, Judge Blume will be retiring at the end of this year, and I know we will want to adopt a resolution at this Convention expressing to him our sincere appreciation for his many years of service to the great State of Wyoming. I would also suggest and recommend that the Wyoming State Bar honor Judge Blume at a dinner in Cheyenne either this fall or at the time of our Legislative Meeting in January.

Since the Worland Bar extended their cordial invitation to us a year ago to hold our Convention here their numbers have decreased fifty

per cent. This has placed a great deal of work and responsibility on the present members of the Worland Bar. I sincerely appreciate their work and the fine cooperation they have given me in making the arrangements for this Meeting.

It has been a privilege to serve as your President for the past year, and I shall always be grateful to you for this honor. Saturday afternoon I will turn the gavel of the presidency over to George J. Millett. Like my predecessor, John Ilsley, George is a fine lawyer, a man of ability and integrity, and I know he will be an excellent President. I ask that you give him the same full cooperation that you gave to me.

In closing I would remind you that we are meeting again this year in an atmosphere of world-wide tension. I like to think that the lawyers of the world, and especially the free world, will provide the courage, the wisdom, and the leadership necessary to meet the challenge which lies ahead. The primary reason for the existence of the integrated Bar in Wyoming is to enable its members to better serve the people of our great State and our Country by continually striving for excellence within the profession and thereby improving the administration of justice under the American principle of "Liberty Under Law."