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Address of the President

George J. Millett

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WYOMING STATE BAR

Laramie, Wyoming

September 26-27, 1963

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

GEORGE J. MILLETT

To the Members of the Wyoming State Bar:

Some of my distinguished predecessors have modestly indicated that the address of the President is one of the less important portions of the program of the annual meeting of the Wyoming State Bar. That may be true this year. Generally, however, I consider it to be of importance, not only because Rule 10 of the rules governing the Bar requires that you hear the address of the President, but also because it is about the only available time to summarize the activities of the Bar so that you, as members, can know of the work being carried on by your officers, commissioners and committees. So I welcome this opportunity to report to you on the activities of your Bar during the past year.

I have had extremely fine cooperation from the officers, commissioners, committees, and members of the Bar and I express my sincere appreciation to all of you. Frankly, I expected that it might require considerable persuasion to get members to serve on committees. I am pleased to report that I was completely mistaken. The willingness of the members to serve and their enthusiastic efforts in so doing have been tremendously gratifying to me.

Recognizing the work of the Public Relations Committee to be one of our most important activities, the Commissioners authorized the expenditure of a substantial sum of money by the Public Relations Committee, of which James A. Tilker is chairman. During this meeting you will receive a report from this committee and I am sure you will appreciate the fine efforts of Jim and his committee. I believe the importance of the work of this committee cannot be overemphasized, and I recommend that the Bar continue to authorize a substantial expenditure for the public relations program.

Upon the recommendation of my predecessor, George P. Sawyer, and with the approval of the Commissioners, I appointed a Bar Economics Committee, of which George F. Guy is chairman. As you know, this committee has been active, and you will receive a report from the chairman of the accomplishments to date. I recommend that we have a permanent Bar Economics Committee.

The Uniform Jury Instruction Committee has made progress during the year and you will receive a report from the chairman, Ross D. Capenhaver at this meeting.

At the annual meeting of the Bar in 1960, the membership directed

that a committee be appointed to study the problem of judicial selection. Such a committee was appointed by John P. Ilsley, who was then President, and the committee made a report to the legislative meeting of the Bar in January, 1961, which was approved. A bill was introduced in the legislature, was referred to the House Judiciary Committee, but was not reported out of committee. Since then the Bar had done nothing further. Although I am not convinced personally that a change of method of judicial selection is greatly needed in Wyoming, I believe it is a matter which should be studied and submitted to the members for consideration. Therefore, I appointed a new committee, of which W. Hume Everett is chairman, to commence study and to report to you at this meeting. At that time, I trust you will determine whether or not the Bar desires a change. If so, the committee can continue its study and present a recommended plan at our next annual meeting.

Another new committee which was appointed, and from which you will receive a report, is the Committee on Lawyers' Title Guaranty Funds, of which Gordon W. Davis is chairman. We are all aware of the importance of this study, and I recommend that the work of this committee be continued.

The membership of the Minor Judicial System Committee was increased to 23, one member from each county, upon the recommendation of its chairman, Robert Stanley Lowe. This committee achieved its first objective at the last legislature and Stan and his committee should be commended for their efforts. They still have a tremendous task ahead and will need and should have the cooperation and assistance of the entire Bar.

One of our most important committees is the Legislation and Law Reform Committee. Its chairman, David N. Hitchcock, will report to you on its activities the past year and I do not wish to infringe upon his report. I do, however, wish to urge all members to cooperate with this committee in the future and especially to attend the legislative meetings of the Bar. In the past I have been concerned about the small attendance at those meetings because important decisions are made by a small minority of the Bar. In 1960, Charles M. Crowell, then President of the Wyoming State Bar, recommended that at the conclusion of each session of the legislature the Bar mimeograph and mail to every lawyer a summary of new legislation. This was an excellent suggestion which has apparently been overlooked by his successors, including me. I now join with Charlie in recommending this, and I propose that it be a function of the Legislation and Law Reform Committee or of a special committee. The Bars of some states distribute a legislative news bulletin periodically to their members during the legislative sessions. This would be an excellent service to the Wyoming lawyers if our budget will permit.

At the time of our legislative meeting in Cheyenne in January, 1963, the Wyoming State Bar held a banquet in honor of the Honorable Fred

H. Blume, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Wyoming. This was a memorable occasion for members of the Bar who had the privilege of paying tribute to Judge Blume, and of hearing his splendid address. I hope those who have not done so will read the very fine "Tribute to Chief Justice Blume," by our present Chief Justice Glenn Parker, which is in Volume 17, Winter of 1963 edition, Wyoming Law Journal.

We are grateful to the University of Wyoming Law School for the excellent Institute held at Laramie last spring. The institutes which have been conducted in past years by the Law School have been outstanding and I hope more of our members will find it possible to attend future institutes.

As your President, I had the privilege of representing the Wyoming State Bar at the annual meeting of the Colorado Bar Association in Colorado Springs in October, and of the Nebraska Bar Association in Omaha in November. I also attended the annual meeting of the American Bar Association in San Francisco in August, 1962, and the meeting of the National Conference of Bar Presidents in New Orleans last February. Upon the recommendation of George P. Sawyer last year, in which I concurred, the Bar Commissioners sent our secretary to the meeting of the National Conference of Bar Secretaries, also held in New Orleans in February. I recommend this be done each year. As you must be aware, the activities of your Bar are expanding rapidly and it will be necessary to call upon the secretary for more and more assistance in maintaining the continuity of our program and activities.

A number of other committees have been active during the year. You will receive reports from them at this meeting, and I will not prolong this report further by going into the details of their activities, but I appreciate very much the work done by the chairmen and members of these committees.

On behalf of the Wyoming State Bar, I wish to thank the members of the Albany County Bar and their wives for their splendid efforts in making the arrangements for this meeting in Laramie. I trust all of you will enjoy yourselves.

Friday afternoon I will hand the gavel to Jerry W. Housel as your new President. I have known and admired Jerry for more than thirty years. He is a man of ability and integrity and a fine lawyer. I have greatly appreciated his assistance to me during the past year. I know he is prepared to take over and that he will be an excellent President. I am sure he can count upon you for the same full cooperation you have given me.

I am grateful to you for the honor and privilege of serving as your President. For whatever has been accomplished I give full credit to the officers, commissioners and members of the various committees from whom I have had such excellent support. To each of them, and to all of you, I say thank you.