

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters should not be more than 300 words. The author in submitting such letter should specifically give the Editors the right to select excerpts of the letter and the Editors shall further not be responsible for any views set forth in this communication.

SICK PROFESSION

Dear Editor:

You are to be commended for the outstanding issue of the *Journal* of May 22, 1974. Particularly, I want to applaud our Bar President, Leroy Jeffers, for his comments on the President's Page.

We should always welcome as a friend one who makes justifiable criticism with a view toward improvement, but the true enemy of the legal profession is one who would make the unfounded attack as was made by the article in *U.S. News and World Report*, March 25th issue.

The unsupported charge by journalists that the legal profession is "sick" clearly raises the question of which profession is really sick. During my seventeen years of active practice, particularly during the past four years as U.S. Attorney, I have found the overwhelmingly majority of practicing attorneys to be competent, skilled, and professional.

ROBY HADDEN
Tyler

Dear Editor:

The May *Texas Bar Journal's* President's page carried Mr. Jeffers views on "A Sick Profession." I have difficulty following the reasoning of my learned colleague, although I am sure he wrote with all sincerity.

Mr. Jeffers assures us that all major criticism of our profession comes from "enemies" seeking to remake the profession to fit their image or; worse, "destroy the American legal profession." He recommends that "the hour for a militant counter-attack upon the enemies of the profession has come. It is time for *truth squads* of lawyers to carry to the people the question of "sick professions (stating that other professions are more suspect). Apparently, the enemies are not within the ranks of the present legal profession because, if they were, it might be difficult to pick the "truth squads."

Mr. Jeffers disassociates the legal profession from the Watergate aura, but unfortunately uses the same rationales and premises that the Watergate lawyers used! For example, Mr. Jeffers asserts that we are "sick of defamation at the hands of its (the legal Profession's) *inferiors*" and "it is sick and belly tired of catering to its detractors." When the leaders of our profession speak of the people (or the press in this case) as *inferiors* I wonder why our President was reluctant to expose his conversations with his lawyers. According to Mr. Jeffers' rationale, Nixon was

only speaking the views of the profession. In other words, it appears to me that the President of the State Bar as well as the President of the United States and his lawyers think truth is theirs to define, control and publicize.

JOHN B. NOBLE
Arlington, Va.

Dear Editor:

Texas lawyers can be proud of the leadership which Leroy Jeffers has given to those of our profession during his administration and not the least of his service has been his courageous stand on behalf of our profession while others who have been given positions of leadership by our profession, particularly in the American Bar Association, have done little but to criticize. Mr. Jeffers' President's Page editorial on "A Sick Profession" is a worthy answer to a most unfair and biased article in one of our weekly magazines which depicted our profession as "a sick profession."

Lawyers are accused by their critics of excessive charges but little is said of the free work that lawyers are called upon to do in representing indigents in the courts. This responsibility has been placed upon the Bar without adequate consideration for the cost to the lawyer of representing indigents, and particularly the cost of representing criminals who want, in addition to exculpation from their debt to society, free legal help and of the highest order. In none of the attacks on our profession, not one word has been spoken about the countless hours that we lawyers have to spend on behalf of criminals who either want to get out of prison or want to stay out after having committed a crime. Service to these criminals constitutes a substantial tax upon the members of our profession.

GEORGE E. RAY
Dallas

Dear Editor:

I can think of no way that President Jeffers could have spoken out better for the 374,889 of us who are proud to be members of the law profession.

I feel that we of the State Bar of Texas are indeed fortunate to have a president who has the courage to speak for us in print and "tell it like it is."

I hope that you will submit his article to the editorial pages of the leading newspapers in the State of Texas, as well as to *U.S. News and World Report* and similar national publications

who have been carrying on the type of attack which he describes against our profession.

I further hope that the officials of our State Bar of Texas will be inspired to carry on the "... truth squads of lawyers" described in his article.

TOM KIRTLEY
Houston

Dear Editor:

In his statement before the Tunney Sub-Committee on February 3, 1974, and in his comments entitled "A Sick Profession" appearing in the May *Bar Journal*, State Bar President Leroy Jeffers has done more harm than good to a worthy cause. Both statements presented nothing more than an overly emotional response which fell far short of the reasoned reply I had anticipated from the head of this State's Bar Association. I think the phraseology employed by Mr. Jeffers was particularly inappropriate. It adds nothing to our cause, to categorize anyone who questions the present role of the lawyer in our society as "the Bar's mortal foes" or "the enemies of the Bar who are ever eager to seize upon any cause to defame lawyers." In Mr. Jeffers' view, anyone who does not favor a minimum fee schedule is a part of a "mental malnutrition." They apparently are also "aberrant and misguided social planners." The tenor of Mr. Jeffers' response to the magazine article on the legal profession was even worse. Those who question the role of the profession

are "its inferiors." *U.S. News & World Report* is a "slick smear sheet" guilty of "ghoulish journalistic gloating" which "lingers lasciviously" over the role of lawyers in Watergate. Mr. Jeffers directs "truth squads of lawyers" to mount a "militant counter attack upon the enemies of the profession." Such phraseology does nothing more than to detract from the valid points raised by Mr. Jeffers.

I believe that the State Bar President owes a duty to the Bar members to reply to inaccurate or misleading articles such as that in *U.S. News & World Report*. At the same time, I believe that it is incumbent upon him to do so in the scholarly and reasoned manner typical of our profession rather than in an emotional appeal which will be well received by no one other than those who are already convinced that anyone who seeks to change our profession in any way is a mortal enemy or an inferior. I suggest that *Bar Journal* readers and Mr. Jeffers compare his response to the magazine article to that of Dane Everton and his firm. Mr. Everton's response is also in the May issue of the *Bar Journal* at Pages 425-426. I don't think there is really any question as to which is by far the most appropriate and effective.

RONALD M. GIPSON
Galveston

To read the article by Dane Everton responding to the *U.S. News & World Report* story, go to www.texasbar.com/daneeverton.

From the August 1974 Texas Bar Journal



Leon Jaworski of Houston was recently appointed special Watergate prosecutor. He is a former president of the State Bar of Texas and the American Bar Association.

Jaworski Answers 'A Call to Duty'

Special Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski, an active member of the State Bar of Texas, referred to his appointment as "a call to duty."

Reaction to Mr. Jaworski's appointment was epitomized by U.S. Rep. Jake Pickle. He said he thought the choice of Leon Jaworski was particularly significant because Mr. Jaworski is not only a skilled and proven legal expert and a man of considerable independence, but also because the Houston attorney "has a keen political sense."

He called Mr. Jaworski "an outstanding American and jurist who has the strong acceptance of the American legal community."

Mr. Jaworski, who has never held public office, is well known for his experiences in an earlier history-making prosecution role—chief of the war crimes trial section in Germany. He saw lessons for his own country in the German experience. In his book "After 15 Years" he outlined his thoughts on the rise of tyranny in Germany in the years before World War II. "No nation, no matter how powerful and great, whatever be its form of government can long withstand the stranglehold of moral deterioration in its people.

"Apathy and indifference to a course of wrong-doing of political leaders and acquiescence in their evil practices can prove to be as helpful as active assistance."

About his appointment as Watergate prosecutor, Mr. Jaworski has said that the American people are entitled to have some answers without waiting forever.

"I will take any position I think necessary in order for justice to be served in the situation."

From the December 1973 Texas Bar Journal