



A GLOBAL FORCE FOR THE RULE OF LAW

The Center for American and International Law celebrates its 75th anniversary.

WRITTEN BY KARLA LÁRRAGA

The Center for American and International Law, or CAIL, is located on an unassuming street in the heart of Plano. Few may be aware that the building, emblazoned with the scales of justice and anchored by an impressive Jeffersonian dome, houses a nonprofit organization that has spent 75 years working to advance the quality of justice and promote the rule of law in the United States and around the world.

Over its 75-year history, CAIL has worked with legal and law enforcement professionals around the world with the vision of establishing fair and just legal systems at home and abroad. CAIL's history has been inspiring and its reach has been vast.

A Rich Tradition: Revisiting CAIL's History

Robert G. Storey was a prominent Texas lawyer who joined the military during World War II. Near the war's end, while the Soviet Union remained an American ally, the U.S. Army sent Storey to observe prosecutions of alleged fascist collaborators after the Soviet Army began occupying Eastern Europe. In that role, he watched what proved to be Stalinist show trials. Soon after, following Germany's defeat, Storey served as executive trial counsel to Justice Robert H. Jackson in the Allied prosecution of the highest-ranking Nazis during the first Nuremberg Tribunal trial.

Having become an expert on the nature of the Nazi regime and witnessing the brazen display of injustice in the guise of law by Soviet forces, Storey felt compelled to establish an organization that would champion the rule of law over arbitrary power. Storey envisioned the establishment of "a 'clearinghouse' for legal problems, a forum where lawyers, judges, interested laymen, public officials, professors, and students may coordinate their efforts for the improvement of

the law and the administration of justice."¹

In 1947, having returned to Dallas from Europe, Storey established the Southwestern Legal Foundation, now known as CAIL. Storey, who served as State Bar of Texas president in 1948-1949, was a proponent of the "legal center movement" and hoped that the Southwestern Legal Foundation would be the first of many such centers throughout the country and around the world.

To date, CAIL's scope has expanded to include five institutes that have established internationally recognized forums and programs addressing criminal justice, law enforcement administration, energy law, international and comparative law, transnational arbitration, law and technology, and other topics.

Additionally, CAIL has benefited from the leadership and experience of many great lawyers—often leaders of the Texas Bar—including terms as chair of its board by Leon Jaworski, Judge Patrick Higginbotham, David Beck, and Harriet Miers, among others. As a nonpartisan organization, CAIL refrains from stances on policy and political choices but strives to inspire and connect champions of the rule of law across

borders and disciplinary lines: prosecutors and public defenders, academics and practitioners, advocates and arbitrators, and police officers and criminal defense lawyers in the U.S. and around the world.

Advancing the Rule of Law: Measuring CAIL's Impact

Today, the impact of CAIL goes beyond the tens of thousands of lawyers and law enforcement officers from all 50 states and approximately 130 countries that have participated in its programs. The broader communities whose lives are impacted by the knowledge participants put into practice are another intangible way to gauge CAIL's impact.

For more than half a century, attorneys from developing countries have attended programs in Texas—for the past 20 years, at CAIL's education center in Plano—to connect with one another and learn how upholding the rule of law can improve both their countries' economic development and their protection of fundamental rights. Alumni of these programs have risen to high ranks in judiciaries and government ministries, in international legal organizations and non-governmental organizations, and in their legal professions at home. The impact on participating lawyers has been transformative and provided a foundation that creates leaders within the international community.

Additionally, CAIL serves as a venue for training law enforcement professionals in ethics, diversity, leadership, and communication. The focus on advancing the rule of law includes criminal justice education, such as programs on actual innocence that illuminate systemic problems in the justice system with audiences that include judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and law enforcement officials. Other educational programs address the complexities of death penalty cases and ensure that

ABOVE: The Center for American and International Law educational center in Plano. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

prosecutors and defense counsel are well prepared for their respective roles in criminal litigation with the very highest of stakes.

The impact of CAIL's programs is directly felt when:

- public confidence in policing is restored in communities with law enforcement agencies that have provided their officers with tools for effective leadership and ethical decision-making;
- wrongful convictions are prevented by defense lawyers and prosecutors who are more aware of the sometimes esoteric or subtle pitfalls that can derail the pursuit of actual justice;
- advocates are current on the law, practiced in their advocacy skills, and thus better equipped to provide quality and efficient representation;
- foreign attorneys return to their home countries with a new legal mindset, setting off a ripple effect that influences their immediate legal community and impacts the people they serve; and
- lawyers share their expertise and forge solid professional connections through participation in CAIL's institutes and programs.

In short, CAIL facilitates valuable training and network-building opportunities to raise the professional standards for the legal and law enforcement professionals charged with upholding the justice system and protecting the rights of others.

Honoring the Past by Enriching the Future: CAIL's 75th Anniversary

As CAIL celebrates 75 years of providing education to improve the quality of justice and promote the rule of law both domestically and internationally, it must look to the future.

Leading up to its jubilee anniversary, CAIL has seen a transition of leadership and adopted a new strategic plan that focuses on building an even more dynamic, diverse, and cohesive organization positioned for its centennial and beyond. In 2021, Thomas "T.L." Cabbage III began managing CAIL's programs as president. Later that year, the board of trustees elected Randall M. Ebner as its chair as CAIL enters the next era of its history.

CAIL's 75th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign has been launched as a cornerstone of the 75th anniversary celebration. Donations to the campaign will support CAIL's institutes, special programs, research, publications, and events to advance and improve the quality of the justice system for decades to come. The upkeep and modernization of our education center, which is 20 years old, will also be supported by donations. This is essential as CAIL continues its mission to improve the quality of justice over the coming decades.

Throughout 2022, multiple events were organized to share CAIL's mission and promote the rule of law. The yearlong anniversary celebration was kicked off with a live virtual event featuring unique perspectives on the rule of law from U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit Judge Patrick Higginbotham and criminal defense attorney Michael Tigar, whose storied career as a trial lawyer and human rights activist includes a pivotal role in establishing CAIL's educational programs for death penalty litigation.

Soon after Russia invaded Ukraine early in 2022, CAIL

invited Professor Jonathan Bush from Columbia University Law School to discuss the legal issues raised by wars of aggression and legal mechanisms that have been used historically to hold people accountable for instigating them. Later in the year, CAIL partnered with Project Aletheia from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to convene top academic, law enforcement, and legal experts to address principles and best practices arising from recent multidisciplinary research on interrogations of witnesses, sources, and suspects.

The celebrations were topped off in October with a 75th Anniversary Gala held in downtown Dallas. The gala drew attention to CAIL's rich history and recent impacts and featured the presentation of CAIL's prestigious Great Leaders Award to former U.S. Sen. and NATO Ambassador Kay Bailey Hutchison in front of approximately 350 business, civic, and legal leaders.

Closing Thoughts

In the *Texas Bar Journal* in 1961, Storey shared that an "important element of a law state is the necessity for a responsible, capable, honest, and independent legal profession. Such a legal profession is the medium through which the law reaches people, and the highest honor and integrity must mark the calling which deals with the rights, privileges, and liberties of the people ... We of the legal profession of the Americas have a direct, urgent, and responsible role to further the rule of law."²

In recent years, we have witnessed the rule of law being tested in many arenas, including evident crimes against international norms occurring in the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As many concerned observers have pointed out, the issues that motivated CAIL's creation in 1947 remain as urgent as they have ever been during its history. CAIL carries on its founder's belief that professional education and the cultivation of communities with shared values are needed to ensure that those charged with protecting the rule of law continue to serve with exceptional skills, ethical integrity, and a commitment to justice.

CAIL's 75th anniversary gives us the opportunity to reflect on what our collective responsibility is to ensure a just society for future generations to come. **TBJ**

NOTES

1. *Southwestern Legal Center: Plans Announced To Establish It at Dallas Source*, American Bar Association Journal, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 121-123 (February 1948), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25716302>.
2. Robert G. Storey, *Developments in International Law Rule of Law Conferences*, Texas Bar Journal, Vol. 24, No. 4, pg. 296 (April 1961).



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