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Report of Special Committee on Powers and Substituted Assignments/Report of the Public Relations Committee

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for an act relating to the application of the statute of limitations in certain cases amending Minnesota Statutes 1945, Section 525.42; a bill for an act relating to determination of descent amending Minnesota Statutes 1945, Sections 525.31, 525.311, and 525.312; and a bill for an act relating to decree of omitted or incorrectly described property in certain cases.

Respectfully submitted,

J. A. MORRISON, Chairman	ROBERT B. HENTON
E. J. HINIKER	VINCENT HOLLAREN
H. P. CURREN	NELS M. ENGEN
LEO P. MURPHY	JOSEPH RYAN
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NORRIS O. PETERSON	DON ROBERTSON
E. J. McMILLAN	R. PAUL SHAROOD
J. K. UNDERHILL, Secretary	O. J. ANDERSON

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON POWERS AND SUBSTITUTED ASSIGNMENTS

TO THE MINNESOTA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION ·

Your Committee recommends:

Recommendation

That the question of substituted service under Section 559.02 of Minnesota Statutes, 1945, be continued before the Committee with an invitation to all members of the Bar to express to the Committee their views, comments and suggestions.

Report

The Committee at this time makes no recommendation for changes in Chapter 502 of Minnesota Statutes, 1945. This Chapter relates to powers of appointment. When this report is written, there is pending in the 1949 legislature a Bill for an Act relating to the release of powers of appointment. The Committee wishes to await action by the legislature on that Bill before making any specific recommendations as to additional legislation on the subject of powers.

Respectfully submitted,

HARRY A. BLACKMUN, Chairman
LOUIS S. HEADLEY
JAMES O. NYE
H. R. PFEIFFER
LORING M. STAPLES

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

TO THE MINNESOTA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION ·

Your Committee recommends:

Recommendations

1. That the public relations program be continued on a permanent basis.

2. That the necessary revision of the Constitution and By-laws of the Minnesota State Bar Association be made to permit the State Bar Association to increase the dues sufficiently to enable the allocation of \$1.00 per month per member for the continuation of a permanent Public Relations program.

Report

It is the consensus of the committee that the Public Relations program should be continued on a permanent and long-range basis and that the future cost of the program should be equitably distributed among all the members.

In analyzing the problem, the committee recognized that all lawyers desire to see the prestige of the legal profession increased. They all want to have the law, lawyers and courts held in high esteem by the general public. All want public understanding of the true role of the legal profession in the defense of our American liberties.

However, some, but not all, lawyers favor in addition to this a business promotion-type program. And those who fall into this category branch into other recognizable interest groups. Some want to bring more people into lawyers' offices for general consultation. Others put the emphasis upon inspiring confidence in the clients they now have. Still others would put the greatest weight on the stamping out of unauthorized practice. One group wishes, quite legitimately, to promote the interests of the real estate section of the association, while others are more interested in the tax section or title work or better relations with such non-bar groups as insurance adjusters, banks, real estate brokers, accountants, et cetera. Some even desire to place the greatest emphasis on an internal "house cleaning" program, although probably no two lawyers would agree on what such a clean-up should include.

It has been obviously impossible, with the time available to the public relations committee, to frame a program which would completely satisfy all of these desires. However, a simple but effective program has been launched which is calculated to serve as many of these legitimate aspirations as possible. It is an interlocking program, with most features designed to accomplish two or more objectives at the same time. It is, furthermore, an expandable program and flexible enough to cover a wide range of additional interests and needs in ensuing months.

The first decision reached by the public relations committee in planning this program was to employ professional counsel to assist with it. It was felt that someone with experience, proven command of the technical tools of communications and with the time to oversee the detailed carrying out of the program should be employed to assist the committee.

After investigating the records of a number of public relations consultants, the committee engaged Mr. Jordan, public relations director of Olmsted & Foley, well-known Minneapolis advertising and public relations firm. The committee and Mr. Jordan have worked in perfect harmony on the program now underway.

Simultaneously, the committee decided to appeal for voluntary contributions to put on an effective program. It was apparent that the funds available from the general association budget were hopelessly inadequate for the statewide task facing the committee. Accordingly, the committee set a goal of \$50,000 and launched its appeal. A fine response from the membership resulted in pledges amounting to \$41,382.00, or more than 80 per cent of the goal set. It was felt that the amount was sufficient to justify starting the work this year.

This is what the committee has done and planned to do since the close of the financial drive.

It has fixed four long range objectives for the public relations committee, as follows:

1. To do all possible to keep the public service motive before the membership;
2. To acquaint the public with the place and function of lawyers and the law in society;
3. To build respect for the law and the legal profession;
4. To put the legal profession aggressively into the fight to preserve our American system of individual liberty.

It has initiated a statewide short statement contest for youngsters (and their parents) of not more than high school age. The contest requires the young people to write on the theme, basic to our American liberty, of: "Why Freedom Depends Upon Government Under Law." (A further explanation of this contest will appear below.)

It has prepared a quiz game, based on interesting legal facts, which was sent to all contestants who had indicated by entering the contest, that they and their families were receptive to new ideas about the law.

It has designed an association membership certificate, to be sent to every paid-up member of the association, with the purposes of stimulating pride in the profession and of increasing the respect of clients for members.

It has produced a series of four public service pamphlets, which have, within our ethical limitations, a business promotion objective. These pamphlets have been or are to be called to public attention in three ways. First, the quiz game carries a page announcement about the pamphlet series. Second, each association member has received copies for personal distribution. Finally, the committee has offered to send any of these pamphlets to any individual designated by a member.

The pamphlet series completed to date covers: wills, title examinations, joint-tenancy and the attorney-client relationship. The series has been designed to appear with the same format but in distinguishing colors. Two of the pamphlets, produced early in the committee's term, are to be revised and reprinted when the present supply is exhausted.

Feeling that the press and the bar should be natural allies in the defense of liberty, it has undertaken a constructive program for improving relations with the press. Mr. Jordan has written a handbook for all bar association committee chairmen. This handbook was unanimously well received when shown to outstanding representatives of the metropolitan and rural press and radio. We have a standing request for 500 copies to be distributed among newspapers of the state if and when the booklet is printed. (At present, it is in mimeograph form.)

Tentative plans are underway for a roundtable meeting of attorneys and newsmen to discuss, informally, their common problems and to iron out misunderstandings which may exist in the minds of each group regarding the limitations and requirements of the other.

It must be added that newspapers of the state have been extremely generous in publicizing not only the contest but various bar association activities.

The committee has also endeavored to include radio in its planning. While funds were not available to publicize the statewide contest by radio, some token time was purchased and used to heighten the effectiveness of the newspaper messages.

We have also invited Mr. Alan McIntosh, the distinguished publisher of the Luverne Star-Herald and president of the Minnesota Editorial Association, to be a featured speaker at the bar association's annual convention this year in order to bring lawyers the viewpoint of the press on common problems.

The committee, largely through Mr. Jordan's efforts, has also sought

to give proper publicity to a wide range of bar activities and interests. Most of the news released has been widely used.

The committee has also dealt with a miscellaneous number of problems and situations, almost too numerous and scattered to be reported on in detail.

For an example, the committee noted that Prof. Karen Larsen of St. Olaf College had published "The History of Norway," a book in which she championed the idea that freedom is based upon law. At the suggestion of the public relations committee, the Hennepin County Bar Association invited Miss Larsen to be a featured speaker at a regular luncheon meeting. Arrangements were made to have President Thomas present her with a suitable token of the esteem in which she is held by Minnesota lawyers for her contribution to public opinion on the subject of law.

In addition to these activities, the committee has offered its cooperation to any and all other committees of the state bar association, some of which have taken advantage of the assistance which the public relations committee can provide. This assistance may take the forms of help with publicity, counsel on probable public attitudes and reactions or of efforts to correlate specific projects so that they will produce the most gratifying results for the whole legal profession.

The committee also wishes to report in some further detail on the state-wide short statement contest. It was decided to put on such a contest as an effort to reach several objectives simultaneously. It was desired to undertake a public service project which would, at the same time, dramatize the bar association's position in the defense of our system of freedom under representative law. The committee felt that an essay-type contest among older school children would best accomplish this objective. To interest students other than the few who are conscious of literary ability, it was decided to make it a short statement contest rather than the more traditional essay contest. Finally, the committee saw in such a contest an opportunity to bring a wide circle of persons into greater familiarity with the law and lawyers. The quiz game mentioned above was designed to provide this link.

The contest theme, "Why Freedom Depends Upon Government Under Law," was carefully selected after long deliberation. It was felt that one of the dangerous drifts in public thinking today is toward the concept that "efficiency" results when executive regulations are substituted for legal principles. The contest theme was selected in an effort to direct student thinking against that fallacy.

The prize, a free trip to Washington for a boy and a girl, was chosen as being the most dignified and appropriate, as well as appealing to young people, that could be offered. The committee believes that the privilege given the students of consulting with both parents and teachers on their statements will broaden the interest in the contest beyond that which ordinarily accrues.

This program is far from complete. Indeed, there has barely been time to initiate some of the projects which are both urgent and susceptible of immediate action.

There has not, for instance, been time to undertake such important actions as the improvement of relations with other professional and business groups.

The pamphlet series should be expanded topically and means devised for extending distribution of the printed materials.

The work of various bar association committees which parallels parts of the over-all public relations program needs to be correlated for the greater effectiveness of all concerned. Typical examples of this are the programs of the committee on government in grade and high schools and the committee on American citizenship and the bill of rights.

While the committee and Mr. Jordan have cooperated with various other committees, there still remain committees which could use the services of the public relations committee and which have not yet availed themselves of this help.