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IN PURSUIT OF THE PUBLIC GOOD: LAWYERS WHO CARE

*The Honorable Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

I am so pleased to be among the speakers in a series honoring Frank M. Coffin; for he is to me, as he is to legions of believers in the rule of law, the very model of what a good judge should be. His book titled *The Ways of a Judge: Reflections from the Federal Bench*, published in 1980, became a prime guide for newly appointed appellate judges.¹ It served as my orientation manual my first years on the bench; *The Ways of a Judge* helped me comprehend the office and inspired me to best efforts. It will similarly serve a dear friend and colleague with us today, the Honorable Robert A. Katzmann, devoted scholar and teacher, co-venturer with Judge Coffin and with me in court-related endeavors,² and just this fall, invested as Circuit Judge seated on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. (May I say, too, how spirit lifting it is simply to be in Maine today, to deliver this Coffin lecture within two months of the originally scheduled date, a date postponed due to my mid-September colon cancer surgery.)

Law and lawyers, you no doubt know, have fared rather badly in many a song and story. Writers from Shakespeare to Sandburg have sometimes revealed a lingering distrust of the lawyers' trade. Charles Dickens, in *Bleak House*, put it this way:

The one great principle of the English law is, to make business for itself. There is no other principle distinctly, certainly, and consistently maintained through all its narrow turnings. Viewed by this light it becomes a coherent scheme, and not the monstrous maze the laity are apt to think it. Let them but once clearly perceive that its grand principle is to make business for itself at their expense, and surely they will cease to grumble.³

But the legal profession has among its practitioners brave men and women who strive to change that perception, jurists devoted to, and at work for, the public good—people who are the best of lawyers and judges, the most dedicated, the least selfish. The Honorable Frank M. Coffin fits that description to a T. At each stage of his career, as practicing lawyer, legislator, executive branch officer (foreign aid administrator), and for thirty-four years federal judge, Frank has strived to assure that law and public service coincide.

Public service lawyering today spans a wide range. In these remarks on pro bono lawyering, I would like to survey the territory, to emphasize its diversity, and most of all, to convey to the students here the large satisfaction the lawyer gains when he or she is not simply a fee-charging artisan, but a contributor to the public good.

* Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the United States. Justice Ginsburg acknowledges with appreciation the grand assistance of her 1999 Term law clerks, Richard A. Primus and Deirdre D. von Dornum, in composing these remarks.

1. FRANK M. COFFIN, *THE WAYS OF A JUDGE: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FEDERAL BENCH* (1980).
2. See, e.g., Robert A. Katzmann & Stephanie M. Herseth, *An Experiment in Statutory Communication Between Courts and Congress: A Progress Report*, 85 GEO. L.J. 2189 (1997).
3. CHARLES DICKENS, *BLEAK HOUSE* 509 (Bantam Books 1983) (1853).

The main conception of pro bono legal activity originally was, and may remain, the provision of free legal assistance to poor people. On the civil side, that service generally involves counseling and representing indigent persons who have solid legal claims or defenses but lack the means to pursue them successfully. On the criminal side, the undertaking is to defend suspected or accused individuals who cannot afford paid counsel. Most daunting of those criminal matters currently are cases in which death may be the punishment.⁴

Roots of what came to be called "poverty law" and a major alert to the need for "legal aid" trace to one of Boston's leading law firms. In 1919, Reginald Heber Smith, a partner at Hale and Dorr, published *Justice and the Poor*, a groundbreaking study of how the economically disadvantaged fare in U.S. legal systems.⁵ Smith exposed vast differences in the quality of justice available to the rich and the poor. His exposé led to endeavors to narrow the gap, including the establishment of the first national legal aid organization (National Association of Legal Aid Organizations).⁶

While Reginald Heber Smith galvanized a national movement to provide lawyers for those who could not afford to pay counsel fees, he did not neglect the remunerative side of work in the law. Among his other distinctions, Smith is credited with inaugurating the practice of calculating lawyers' fees by "billable hours." Yet he fully perceived the need for devoting part of a lawyer's working time to the pursuit of justice for people who could not be billed.

In the same era, other lawyers, steadfast in promoting the public good, recognized that their best forum for enduring change was often the First Branch (the legislature), not the restrained, precedent-bound judiciary. Burnita Shelton Matthews, counsel to the National Woman's Party in the 1920s, and the first woman

4. State systems for affording representation to defendants charged with capital crimes vary from meager to adequate. See generally AN UPDATED ANALYSIS OF THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL AND THE RIGHT TO COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES IN STATE POST-CONVICTION DEATH PENALTY CASES (A.B.A. Postconviction Death Penalty Representation Project ed., 1996). The need for representation on collateral review has become more acute since the 1996 termination of federal funding once available to assist postconviction Defender Organizations. See Brad Snyder, *Disparate Impact on Death Row: M.L.B. and the Indigent's Right to Counsel at Capital State Postconviction Proceedings*, 107 YALE L.J. 2211, 2233-34 & n.179 (1998); Roscoe C. Howard, Jr., *The Defunding of the Post Conviction Defense Organizations as a Denial of the Right to Counsel*, 98 W. VA. L. REV. 863, 865-66 (1996).

Professor James S. Liebman of Columbia Law School, diligent counsel for defendants subject to the death penalty and co-author with Randy Hertz of the treatise *FEDERAL HABEAS CORPUS PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE* (3d ed. 1998), is currently conducting a comprehensive empirical study of several hundred capital case direct appeals and collateral review proceedings completed in the years 1973 to 1995. The study, funded in large part by the Open Society Institute, may provide a fuller, more accurate demonstration than we now have of how these cases are handled in United States legal systems. See COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL REPORT, Spring 1999, at 27.

5. REGINALD HEBER SMITH, *JUSTICE AND THE POOR* (1919).

6. For biographical information on Reginald Heber Smith, see Henry Weinstein, *Legal Aid for Poor Survives Cyclical Attempts to Kill It*, L.A. TIMES, Dec. 30, 1995, at A1; Erwin N. Griswold, *The Changing Legal Scene*, NAT'L L.J., Dec. 30, 1991, at 17. A similarly inspired contemporary organization is the National Association for Public Interest Law (NAPIL), a nationwide coalition of law student groups dedicated to enlisting and training students and recent law school graduates for the rendition of legal assistance to low-income and other underserved people and communities.

to be appointed to the federal trial bench (she was appointed to the District Court for the District of Columbia by President Truman in 1949) fits that description.⁷ Matthews, a gentle woman from Mississippi, aided National Woman's Party leader Alice Paul in urging passage of an equal rights amendment. Although that endeavor, launched in 1923, has not yet succeeded, Matthews made much headway on particular measures. She advanced passage of a 1927 law that allowed women to serve on juries in the District of Columbia. She framed a 1935 statute revising the District of Columbia law on descent and distribution to eliminate preferences for males, and drafted similar measures enacted by New York and Arkansas. She had a hand in writing laws for Maryland and New Jersey that gained for women teachers pay equal to that received by their male colleagues. Matthews also assisted in changing South Carolina's law so that married women could sue and be sued without their husbands' permission. And she helped to achieve 1931 and 1934 federal nationality law changes that extended full new citizenship stature to women.

The local (D.C.) bar knew Burnita Matthews less for her feminist activities than for her expertise in the field of eminent domain. When the federal government condemned the headquarters building of the National Woman's Party near the Capitol, Matthews's skilled representation led to the largest condemnation award the United States had yet paid. (The condemnation had, from my vantage point, a worthy purpose. The property on which the Woman's Party headquarters once stood is today occupied by the U.S. Supreme Court. The Woman's Party remains on the scene, housed on Constitution Avenue just a block from the Court, in the historic Sewall-Belmont House.)

Another innovator in the 1920s was Roger Baldwin, founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Baldwin was not himself a lawyer (he held a degree in anthropology), but he enlisted the aid of lawyers, first in defense of World War I draft resisters, then for a wide range of First Amendment causes.⁸ (Coincidentally, there was another Roger Baldwin who figured in pro bono representation in the United States. That Roger Baldwin was a lawyer. He represented the rebel slaves on the ship *Amistad* and helped to secure their freedom and return to Africa in 1841.) The ACLU took on individual legal cases—for example, in 1925, the Scopes Trial about the teaching of evolution in Tennessee public schools,⁹ and in 1978, the neo-Nazis' suit for permission to march in Skokie, Illinois¹⁰—not sim-

7. See J.Y. Smith, *Burnita S. Matthews Dies*, WASH. POST, Apr. 27, 1988; Kathanne W. Greene, *Torts Over Tempo: The Life and Career of Judge Burnita Shelton Matthews* (on file with author). See also Ruth Bader Ginsburg & Laura W. Brill, *Women in the Federal Judiciary: Three Way Pavers and the Exhilarating Change President Carter Wrought*, 64 *FORDHAM L. REV.* 281, 284-86 (1995).

8. See SAMUEL WALKER, *IN DEFENSE OF AMERICAN LIBERTIES: A HISTORY OF THE ACLU* (1990).

9. The Tennessee statute prohibiting the teaching of evolution in state-supported schools, pursuant to which John Scopes, defended by the ACLU and Clarence Darrow, was convicted in a Dayton, Tennessee, trial court in 1925, was upheld as constitutional by the Tennessee Supreme Court, but Scopes's conviction was reversed on technical grounds. See *Scopes v. State*, 289 S.W. 363 (1927). For a recent work on the Scopes trial, see EDWARD J. LARSON, *SUMMER FOR THE GODS: THE SCOPES TRIAL AND AMERICA'S CONTINUING DEBATE OVER SCIENCE AND RELIGION* (1997).

10. See *Collin v. Smith*, 578 F.2d 1197 (7th Cir. 1978). See also ARYEH NEIER, *DEFENDING MY ENEMY: AMERICAN NAZIS, THE SKOKIE CASE, AND THE RISKS OF FREEDOM* (1979). For a view critical of the ACLU's position in this case, see DONALD A. DOWNS, *NAZIS IN SKOKIE* (1985).

ply to secure free speech in particular instances but as frontrunners in advancing for all people freedom of thought, expression, and association, as well as the equal protection of the laws.

Revered among test case litigators, Charles Hamilton Houston trained and inspired scores of lawyers to assist the NAACP in its long struggle against segregation.¹¹ Houston, the first African-American editor of the *Harvard Law Review* and the mentor of Thurgood Marshall, faced the intransigence of Jim Crow legislators and therefore turned to the courts to trigger change. Houston crafted the NAACP's strategy in the 1930s and 1940s, step-by-step to dislodge *Plessy v. Ferguson*¹² and end apartheid in America.

The NAACP and the ACLU set a pattern for myriad other public interest legal organizations—for example, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the National Organization for Women Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Women's Law Center, and the National Partnership for Women and Families (formerly, the Women's Legal Defense Fund). And law teachers assisted those organizations or worked cooperatively with them. In my days at Columbia Law School, from 1972 to 1980, for example, I conducted a clinical program in which students assisted in the sex equality cases I litigated under ACLU auspices. And I recall vividly from those years the efforts of Harriet Rabb, co-founder and director of the Columbia Law School Employment Rights Project. Harriet mounted arduous and ultimately victorious challenges to sex discrimination then rampant in business and commerce. She propelled overdue change in hiring and promotion practices, notably in leading New York law firms, the *New York Times*, and AT&T.

Among the many way pavers in the academy, teachers who inspired students and involved them in pro bono work, I would be remiss if I did not at least mention Jack Greenberg, Thurgood Marshall's successor as head of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. More recently, Jack launched Columbia Law School's (summer) Human Rights Internship program, which places about seventy students annually in human and civil rights organizations here and abroad.¹³

11. See Roger A. Fairfax, Jr., *Wielding the Double-Edged Sword: Charles Hamilton Houston and Judicial Activism in the Age of Legal Realism*, 14 HARV. BLACKLETTER J. 17, 20 (1998).

12. 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

13. The City University of New York School of Law (CUNY) occupies a special place in academic pro bono endeavors. CUNY, now headed by Kristin Booth Glen, has as its prime mission the education of law students for ongoing public interest service. Among CUNY's initiatives, the school is developing a Community Legal Resource Network to support law practices in small, underserved communities.

Some 20 law schools have made student pro bono service a requirement for graduation. For example, in 1996, in response to a student initiative, Columbia Law School adopted a requirement that each student do at least 40 hours of pro bono service, with pro bono defined broadly and non-ideologically to include work for not-for-profits, small businesses, legal service providers, and all three branches of government. Tulane, which requires students to do 20 hours of work related specifically to the provision of legal services to the poor, was the first law school to adopt such a requirement. The University of Pennsylvania mandates a greater number of hours than most of the programs—70 during the course of a student's second and third years—but allows students a broad choice of pro bono projects. A few schools, such as Stetson University College of Law, have extended this requirement to their faculty members. See Memorandum from Donna Alleyne, Pro Bono Coordinator, Columbia Law School Center for Public Interest Law, to Chambers of Justice Ginsburg (Aug. 17, 1999) (on file with author); *Law School Public Service Graduation Requirements*, NAPIL BRIEFS (Nat'l Ass'n for Pub. Interest L., Washington, D.C.), Winter 1996.

A major public interest initiative was sparked by President John F. Kennedy in 1963 when he convened a meeting of bar leaders at the White House. Kennedy invited the leading lawyers' aid in assuring that civil rights guarantees would be effectively enforced. In response to the President's call for assistance in confronting our nation's civil rights problems, several of the attorneys he brought together founded the nonpartisan, nonprofit Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.¹⁴ With offices in several large cities, the Lawyers' Committee undertakes legal work on behalf of disadvantaged minorities and poor people. Its national office in D.C. endeavors to promote legal reform on issues that touch and concern the urban poor, including employment opportunities, voting rights, and fair access to housing.

The Lawyers' Committee has a small permanent staff, but it relies dominantly on volunteers to accomplish its aims. The Chicago office, for example, by 1998, had enrolled forty-eight law firms as members of the local chapter; and in that year, those firms donated more than 15,000 hours of professional assistance both in litigation and in work aimed at improving the public schools, increasing the stock of affordable housing, and fostering business opportunities in disadvantaged communities.

The organizations and individuals I have so far described espouse generally "liberal" or "progressive" views of the law. And to many people—especially people sympathetic to the causes those organizations support—the idea of pro bono lawyering itself has a distinctly liberal tint. But the pro bono universe is not confined to the representation of poor persons, equal rights advocacy on behalf of racial minorities or women, free speech promotion, or separation of church and state enforcement.

A devoted district attorney, who resists the lure of private practice, and instead pursues prosecutions vigorously but fairly, is also a pro bono lawyer, using his or her skills not just for personal gain but for the good of the public. The Boston law firm to which legal aid promoter Reginald Heber Smith belonged, for example, today has a program enabling associates to do six-month rotations in the Somerville, Massachusetts, local prosecutor's office.¹⁵ Hale and Dorr pays the associate's salary, and the town gets a lawyer cost free.

In some areas, separation of church and state comes to mind, cause-oriented lawyers may appear on both sides of a case. Lawyers may serve the public good, as well, in diverse out-of-court settings. Vilma Martinez, for example, from 1973 to 1982 president of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, now a partner at the Los Angeles law firm of Munger, Tolles, & Olson, sits on corporate boards keeping her colleagues alert to the benefits equal opportunity policies can yield.

A highly respected Supreme Court Justice, Lewis F. Powell, Jr., before his appointment to the Court, helped to promote pro bono initiatives of a then untraditional kind. He urged volunteer advocacy by and in defense of business interests. In 1971, Powell, then a lawyer in private practice, counseled the busi-

14. See Carl McGowan, *Private Lawyers and Public Responsibilities*, 80 MICH. L. REV. 183, 186-87 (1981).

15. See WHAT'S NEW IN LAW FIRM PRO BONO (Law Firm Pro Bono Project at Georgetown University Law Center), Mar./Apr. 1999, at 3.

ness community to safeguard free enterprise through legal action much as the ACLU watches over free speech.¹⁶

Powell's idea took hold as an array of public interest legal foundations were established to represent "conservative" or business groups, for example, the Washington Legal Foundation, the Pacific Legal Foundation, the Mountain States Legal Foundation. Commercial free speech has been among the particular concerns of the Washington Legal Foundation. And if an ACLU lawyer thinks first of the privilege against self-incrimination when one mentions the Fifth Amendment, so the Pacific Legal Foundation lawyer may think first of that Amendment's declaration that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.

New defenders of religious exercise have also come on the scene in relatively recent times. Among them are the Rutherford Institute, named for a seventeenth-century Scottish minister whose books were burned because he wrote against the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, named for a famous opponent of excessive state power over religion: Thomas à Becket, the martyred Archbishop of Canterbury.

The label "conservative" is too pat to describe the views and activities of some of these groups and their counsel. An advocate in point: Jay Sekulow is a self-described "liberal" who opposes capital punishment and favors gun control; he also runs the American Center for Law and Justice, or ACLJ, a religious freedom organization founded by the Christian evangelist Pat Robertson. Sekulow has defended Operation Rescue's abortion clinic blockades, but he also takes the side of diverse other religious groups, including Hare Krishnas and Scientologists. Among his successes, in 1987, representing Jews for Jesus before the Supreme Court, Sekulow won a unanimous decision allowing the group to distribute religious literature on a pedestrian walkway in the Los Angeles airport.¹⁷

Competition can be a healthy thing in the pro bono sphere as elsewhere. Our system of justice works best when opposing positions are well represented and fully aired. I therefore greet the expansion of responsible public-interest lawyering on the conservative side as something good for the system, and hardly a development to be deplored.

It sometimes takes the vision and will of one individual to propel legal advocacy in support of a cause. Among such individuals, I hereby identify three notable examples. Charles Hamilton Houston, Thurgood Marshall's dean and teacher, attended law school following his 1917 to 1919 military service in a segregated unit of the American Expeditionary Forces. While in service, he experienced and witnessed virulent racial discrimination and harassment, including the unjust court martial of an innocent black officer. "I made up my mind," he later wrote, "that I would never get caught again without knowing something about my rights; that if luck was with me, and I got through this war, I would study law and use my time fighting for men who could not strike back."¹⁸ Houston did just that in the years he served as Special Counsel to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

16. See Lewis F. Powell, Jr., *The Powell Memorandum: Attack on American Free Enterprise System* 7 (Aug. 23, 1971).

17. *Board of Airport Comm'rs v. Jews for Jesus, Inc.*, 482 U.S. 569 (1987).

18. Fairfax, *supra* note 11, at 20 (quoting Charles Hamilton Houston, *Saving the World for Democracy*, PITTS. COURIER, Aug. 24, 1940).

Turning to pathmarkers in more recent times, Marian Wright Edelman is exemplary. Edelman entered law school in 1960, anticipating that she would help fill the large need for civil rights lawyers. In her own words: "[I]f you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it, one step at a time."¹⁹ In 1973, Edelman founded the Children's Defense Fund (CDF). The Fund studies and documents conditions affecting children and proposes legislation to make things better. Aided by the large store of information gathered by the CDF, Edelman educates lawmakers and successfully lobbies for measures addressing the needs of the one in five children in the United States who lives below the poverty level. Edelman's gravest concern is public apathy. Quoting Albert Einstein, she has said that the world is "in greater peril from those who tolerate evil than from those who commit it. Democracy," she reiterated, "is not a spectator sport."²⁰

I would also include on this list an extraordinary, if controversial, enemy of public apathy: Ralph Nader.²¹ Distressed by the number and severity of automobile accidents he witnessed while hitchhiking around the country as a college student, and horrified in particular by an accident in which a young child's neck was cut open from ear-to-ear by a faulty glove compartment door that flew open at impact, Nader delved into highway mortality statistics and wrote his third-year law school paper on unsafe vehicle design.

Excerpts from Nader's study appeared the next term in the *Harvard Law Record*. Nader attributed "[t]he tragedy of the highway bloodbath" in part to "the callousness and apathy of the public's reaction."²² A few years later, Nader determined to change that reaction by making highway safety his mission. With no one paying his salary, working without an office staff, and living in a Washington, D.C. boardinghouse, Nader launched consumer rights as a national issue with his exhaustively documented study of the Detroit automobile industry and its safety practices. Nader thereafter extended his activities in many directions: He exposed dangerous flaws in packaged meat, synthetic fabrics, and natural gas pipelines; he helped to spark the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; and he strived to forge a "Fifth Estate" to represent the public against what he saw as an unholy alliance of corporations and government.

In 1971, Nader founded Public Citizen, an organization devoted to the pursuit of public interest matters. Public Citizen litigators have taken on cases in large numbers involving the Freedom of Information Act, election laws, the First Amendment, and various health and safety issues. Like other cause-oriented organizations, Public Citizen does not train its efforts on courts alone. It endeavors to educate people, and to promote legislative change.

In response to a 1972 speech Nader gave at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, a group of students met and founded OPIRG, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group. PIRGs now operate in several Canadian provinces and states of the United

19. Nancy Traver, *They Cannot Fend for Themselves*, TIME, Mar. 23, 1987, at 27.

20. Dawn Bradley Berry, *THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN AMERICAN LAW* 281 (1996).

21. See CURRENT BIOGRAPHY 402, 403 (1986); Marcia Stepanek, *Can Ralph Nader Save America Again?*, NEWSDAY MAGAZINE, Mar. 9, 1986, at 9.

22. Ralph Nader, *The American Automobile, Designed for Death?*, 20 HARV. LAW REC., Dec. 11, 1958, at 1.

States, channeling the energies of university students into advocacy for a better environment and other matters related to the general welfare.

Nader's success was emphasized by Lewis Powell when he urged the business community, in 1971, to adopt liberal tactics.²³ Powell recognized the source of Nader's effectiveness. Nader's force, Powell understood, stemmed from his passionate belief in the law as a means to advance the public interest.

While cause- or issue-oriented pro bono lawyering may garner more headlines,²⁴ I should not end this talk without emphasizing the constant need for lawyers willing to perform the routine services that can greatly improve poor people's lot, services that generally do not implicate contentious, politically tinged issues.²⁵ Lawyers affiliated with Maine's Pine Tree Legal Assistance, for example, fill that need. They provide representation in everyday civil cases: typically, automobile accidents, divorces, and mortgage foreclosures. Pine Tree has also fostered improvement in prison conditions and in mental health care.

On a larger scale, the Law Firm Pro Bono Project, housed at Georgetown University Law Center, endeavors to make pro bono work a standard part of what great law firms do. Firms affiliated with the Project may lead from strength, for example, by contributing the time and talent of their real estate and corporate departments to the development of affordable dwellings or the chartering of community-based lending institutions.²⁶

It is generally not ideology that keeps people from offering their services to poor clients. It is more likely to be apathy, selfishness, or anxiety that one is already overextended. Those are forces not easily overcome. "Recent estimates suggest that most attorneys do not perform significant pro bono work and that only between 10 and 20 percent of those who do are assisting low-income clients. The average [of all pro bono labor] for the profession as a whole is less than a half an hour per week."²⁷ Nothing to cheer about in that record. It is incumbent on anyone who regards lawyering not simply as a trade but as a true profession to assure that legal aid will be there, when needed. In the words of the Talmudic sage Rabbi

23. See Powell, *supra* note 16.

24. Among issue-oriented groups, Common Cause bears note. Founded by former Secretary of HEW John Gardner in 1970, Common Cause has been a leading lobbyist and sometimes litigator for campaign finance reform and for transparency in government operations.

Among newer cause-oriented organizations, the Appleseed Foundation, organized in 1993 by members of the Harvard Law School class of 1958, funds Centers (currently 13 in 12 states) for the pursuit of systemic change. The Foundation's fields of concentration include poverty, the environment, and consumer protection. It aims to attract young lawyers to advance its public interest undertakings.

25. Congress established the Legal Services Corporation in 1974 to fund local civil legal aid programs nationwide. The Corporation has suffered repeated cutbacks in funding and in the scope of services it may render. It has survived due, in considerable measure, to the vigilant efforts of the American Bar Association to prevent its demise.

26. Among its pro bono efforts, The Association of the Bar of the City of New York has launched a Public Service Network to match attorneys interested in public service with suitable nonprofit organizations. See *City Bar Public Service Network: Getting the Right Match*, 44TH STREET NOTES (The Ass'n of the Bar of the City of New York), Sept. 1999, at 16. Recently, the City Bar sponsored a panel discussion on public service opportunities abroad and the organizations sponsoring such opportunities. See *id.* at 9.

27. Deborah L. Rhode, *Cultures of Commitment: Pro Bono for Lawyers and Law Students*, RESEARCH LAW (Am. Bar Found., Chicago, Ill.), Spring 1999, at 1.

Tarfon: "The day is short, and the task is much; the workers are lazy, but the reward is great."²⁸

A dozen years ago, in his article *The Law School and the Profession*, Judge Coffin urged law schools to take active roles in preparing their students for career decisions, rather than simply "look[ing] on helplessly as the phalanxes of big firm recruiters descend."²⁹ Judge Coffin hoped law schools would introduce law students to the range of possibilities open to them and encourage them to think broadly about their professional pursuits. I know he would agree with me in this judgment: Lawyers will fare best, in their own estimation and in the esteem of others, if they do their part to help move society to the place they would like it to be for the health and well-being of all who dwell in this land.

28. The Mishnah, *Avot* 2:18.

29. Frank M. Coffin, *The Law School and the Profession: A Need for Bridges*, 11 *NOVA L. REV.* 1053, 1062 (1987).

