

Law Quadrangle (formerly Law Quad Notes)

Volume 26 | Number 1

Article 4

Fall 1981

Events

University of Michigan Law School

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.law.umich.edu/lqnotes>

Recommended Citation

University of Michigan Law School, *Events*, 26 *Law Quadrangle (formerly Law Quad Notes)* - (1981).
Available at: <https://repository.law.umich.edu/lqnotes/vol26/iss1/4>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by University of Michigan Law School Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Law Quadrangle (formerly Law Quad Notes) by an authorized editor of University of Michigan Law School Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact mlaw.repository@umich.edu.

events

Renfrew: "Too Many Senseless Lawsuits"

"The amount of litigation in this country is absolutely staggering," **Charles B. Renfrew**, former deputy U.S. attorney general, told graduating U-M law students at the Law School's "Senior Day" ceremonies in the spring, 1981.

Speaking at Hill Auditorium on campus, Renfrew said many lawyers are advancing cases dealing with important human rights and constitutional guarantees.

But too many others, he said, are "abusing the legal process" with senseless lawsuits.

These "petty, vindictive, malicious" cases are too often pursued "for the benefit of lawyers themselves, much to the detriment of the public," said Renfrew.

Blaming these excesses for much of the public distrust of the legal profession, Renfrew called on lawyers themselves—particularly new law graduates—to help remedy the problem.

A 1956 U-M law graduate, Renfrew served as deputy U.S. attorney general during 1980-81 in the Carter administration. He recently returned to private practice as a partner in the San Francisco law firm of Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro.

Previously Renfrew had served for eight years as U.S. district judge for the northern district of California.

Renfrew told the graduates that emphasis on education of lawyers who "are members of a learned profession," rather than mere "technicians," could help restore trust in the legal world.

Rather than simply teaching techniques of lawyers, legal education should impart the "ideals and values" and help establish and maintain high "standards of performance," Renfrew stressed.

McCree: "Abiding Respect For The Supreme Court"

Wade H. McCree, Jr., the U.S. solicitor general for the past four years and newly appointed faculty member at U-M Law School, says he has left the solicitor general's post with "an abiding respect for the U.S. Supreme Court."

The keynote speaker at the Law School's second annual "Law Alumni Reunion and Law Forum" in the spring, McCree observed that the lack of unanimity in Supreme Court decisions is a reflection of changing

societal values and the "strong and divergent opinions on issues that should be debated vigorously."

He also said he was impressed by the high court's large caseload, in view of the fact that the average age of Supreme Court justices has been 70. "How many other courts can boast of no backlog of cases," said McCree.

Turning to other legal questions in an interview, McCree said he does not feel that the presidency of Ronald Reagan will necessarily mean a sudden conservative shift of the federal courts.

"It is interesting to observe that President Carter was the first full-term president not to have had a Supreme Court appointment. But he appointed more judges to lower federal courts than any other president in history, as a result of the omnibus legislation creating additional federal court positions.

"Many of these appointees are young people—such as two U-M law school alumni, Amalya Kearse and Harry Edwards (a former U-M law professor). And they are going to be serving on the courts for quite some time."

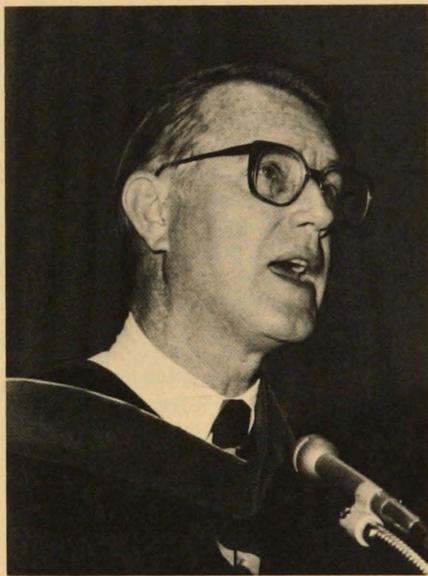
Based on his 23 years as a judge and four years as solicitor general, McCree said the quality of law school graduates who have served under him as law clerks or assistants is "better than ever."

This high quality of law graduates is due, in part, to the fact that "law school curricula are more responsive to the needs of the profession, the quality of instruction is better, and the quality of students coming to law school is better," observed McCree.

A graduate of Fisk University and Harvard Law School, McCree is no stranger to the U-M. He received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Michigan in 1971, and both his daughter and son-in-law are U-M law graduates. (Both now Detroit attorneys, Kathleen McCree Lewis is a 1973 graduate of the Law School and her husband David Baker Lewis is a 1970 graduate.)

Before being named solicitor general by President Carter in 1977, McCree was judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, the U.S. District Court for the eastern district of Michigan, and the Wayne County Circuit Court.

At U-M Law School, McCree expects his teaching will draw heavily on his experiences as judge and solicitor general. He is teaching a trial practice course during the fall term, 1981, and a Supreme Court seminar in the winter term. Another possibility is a class on "lawyers and clients."



Charles B. Renfrew



Wade H. McCree, Jr.