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In Memoriam. Professor Kenneth K. Luce

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I met Kenneth Luce once or twice at most, and then only for the few hurried words of greeting that are exchanged at alumni gatherings. Yet I feel I have come to know him well — sadly for me, chiefly through his friends and after his death. With the passing of any prominent alumnus of the Michigan Law School, we are likely to receive letters from friends and associates urging some suitable memorial. For Professor Luce there was more than the usual expressions of esteem and respect for professional ac-

complishments. Affection for the man himself shone through the words about him. He was loved for his humaneness, his selflessness, and his fervor in supporting the causes and institutions in which he believed.

Kenneth Luce was deeply loyal to his Alma Mater, the University of Michigan, to which he came by way of Montana and Nevada, and from which he received both his A.B. in 1934 and his J.D. in 1937. His Ann Arbor years were crowned with a Phi Beta Kappa key, a Law Class Presidency, membership in the Order of the Coif, and an editorial post on the Michigan Law Review. In later years he was a perennial chairman of the Law School's fund-raising efforts among its alumni in Wisconsin.

Loyalty to one institution seems to enlarge rather than diminish the capacity for loyalty to others. Professor Luce was also intensely devoted to the United States Navy, in which he served during World War II, and to Marquette, which played so central a role in his life during his working years. He was of course a full-time member of the Marquette University Law School faculty from 1945 to 1950, and again from 1973 until his death on May 30, 1977. During his period of active practice from 1950 to 1973, he retained his association with Marquette as a part-time member of the law faculty.

Professor Luce had a special fondness for his highly popular course in Restitution, but Corporation Law and Commercial Law were the areas of his most significant work and greatest influence. "Luce on Corporations," as Marquette's Dean Robert Boden has put it, was "a living and breathing, sometimes swearing and table pounding, walking and talking encyclopedia of corporate law and practice who was responsible, over 32 years, for the basic instruction in this subject of more than 25% of all the lawyers now practicing in the State of Wisconsin." Professor Luce was a principal draftsman of the revised Wisconsin Business Corporation Law of 1951, and a member of the committee which adapted the Uniform Commercial Code and recommended it for adoption in Wisconsin in 1965.

As would be expected of such a person, Professor Luce was widely involved in public service and civic activities. The organized bar was a particular focus of his concern. He served several terms as a member of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Wisconsin, and was Chairman of the State Bar's Committee on Research Planning from 1970 until 1974. He was also a school board member for a number of public and Catholic institutions.

Wherever he was, Kenneth Luce made his presence felt. He was genuinely fond of people, but he was no respecter of persons. He had strong views on many issues, and he could be forceful and pungent in espousing them. In an often bland era, he was a throw-back to a time when gentleness could still have bite. His going, like the fall of Markham's "lordly cedar," will leave "a lonesome place against the sky."

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