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Statement of Policy

Natural Law Forum Editors

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STATEMENT OF POLICY

THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS of the twentieth century have made everyone familiar with the differences among men and nations concerning ethical and legal judgments. Totalitarian excesses, moreover, have made it increasingly difficult to acquiesce in the positivist conclusion that the ideology of one person or nation is as valid as that of any other. This is the great jurisprudential issue of our day. Can natural law resolve it? Does natural law have anything really sound and relevant to say concerning the problems of moral and legal relativism now confronting us? We hope to make this journal just what its title indicates—a *forum* for the discussion of these and related questions.

The editors believe that all aspects of natural law, from its claimed foundations in human nature to its last implications for concrete practice, need to be critically examined and rethought in our time. We hope, therefore, to publish disciplined studies of the theoretical foundations of natural law and of alternative formulations of natural law in the past, as well as discussions concerning the scientific justification and the practicability of natural law today.

We realize that natural law jurisprudence is always confronted by two opposite dangers. On the one hand, the principles set forth may be so abstract as to lack meaningful content, offering no adequate basis for determinate applications of any kind. On the other hand, they may be identified with judgments of positive law defensible only for special groups living under special conditions. We hope to steer a course between these hazards.

The *Forum* will not be identified with any particular school or doctrine of natural law; nor will it rule out contributions which are basically opposed to the whole conception. We are interested in promoting a serious and scholarly investigation of natural law in all its aspects, not in defending any established point of view. We will welcome any article in the area of philosophy, of social or behavioral science, or of jurisprudence, which leads to a more adequate understanding and evaluation of natural law, whatever its point of view may be; and we hope to publish relevant contributions from a maximum variety of sources. In this way it is our purpose to avoid the bias of any particular institutional orientation or political outlook, and thus

to encourage the widest search for universal standards relevant to the solution of contemporary problems.

In addition to scholarly articles and notes, we hope to publish reviews of important contemporary books and abstracts of all other relevant literature appearing both here and abroad, to the end that the *Forum* may serve as a world-wide clearing house of information and ideas. Book reviews will not be restricted to one or two pages of undeveloped summary and comment. In the case of important books, we shall encourage the reviewer to engage in sustained criticism and original reflection, unhampered by the usual space limitations.

The *Forum* begins as an annual; later it will be a semi-annual; and in due time, we hope, a quarterly.

THE EDITORS