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Tribute to Howard A. Glickstein

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A TRIBUTE TO HOWARD A. GLICKSTEIN

The Notre Dame Lawyer is proud to pay tribute to Howard Glickstein in our fourth annual Civil and Human Rights Issue. Few men deserve this honor more, for his life is an example of deep, personal commitment to ensuring justice for all people. But more importantly and more fortunately for those whom his efforts benefit, his commitment is professional as well as personal. An advocate for the poor and the ignored, he brings to his task the skills of a fine lawyer: thorough research, precise analysis, and clarity in articulating the results of those efforts. Nor does he allow his standards to diminish merely because his work is imbued with obvious human importance. If anything, he feels that civil rights demands the finest efforts of an attorney: demands he easily meets. This dedicated application of legal skills, while accomplishing much for the disadvantaged of our country, is also a convincing argument that civil rights is more than rhetoric and emotion; it is a legal concept steeped in the finest sense of justice. Indeed, this ability to derive personal and professional fulfillment from his work has persuaded more than one young attorney to likewise find meaning in public interest practice.

That the securing of civil rights to all people is largely a task for those trained in the law is a belief he has followed throughout his career. After undergraduate studies at Dartmouth and legal education at Yale, he practiced with a prestigious New York City firm, specializing in labor law. As the 1950's saw a burgeoning awareness of racial oppression, he realized that his concern over such problems stemmed not only from his heart but from his intellect as well. Accordingly, in 1960 he left the comfort and rewards of a New York practice to become a vital part of the then skeletal Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. While there he helped draft the momentous Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

His impact on civil rights was enhanced in 1965 by his appointment as General Counsel for the United States Civil Rights Commission. By 1969 he was Staff Director of the Commission, a position he held with distinction until 1971. After freelance work as a consultant and writer in civil rights, Howard Glickstein was appointed Director of the Notre Dame Center for Civil Rights in 1973. An elaboration of his performance in these various national leadership capacities is hardly required here. That his influence and responsibility grew in a period when the area of civil rights experienced vast increases in scope and complexity obviously speaks of his abilities. It is sufficient to note that many of the legal breakthroughs securing the rights of millions of Americans occurred while Howard Glickstein filled these important positions.

While at Notre Dame he has not only continued to demonstrate the skills of an administrator, but also exhibited those of a teacher and scholar. As a teacher he brings his characteristic fastidiousness to the classroom. Students soon learn that the obvious enjoyment he derives from his work is not to be confused with the rigorous steps he takes to reach that enjoyment. He instills in his students an abhorrence of superficiality and an aversion to sophistry. He is not satisfied that a
student feels his position is correct; he insists that those planning to practice law
be able to explain and justify their positions clearly and convincingly. He
routinely demands critical analysis in his class, a requirement that is finally taken
as a compliment rather than a burden. Yet the best indication of his teaching
ability lies in the consistency of respect his students hold for him. While he
traditionally treats his classes to wine and cheese at semester’s end, and to his
usual dry humor, his students appreciate even more the skill and dedication he
brings to his teaching.\footnote{Unfortunately for those of us at Notre Dame, Howard Glickstein is leaving the Notre Dame Center for Civil Rights. As of January 1976, he will be a faculty member of the Howard University School of Law.}

As a legal scholar, it is especially appropriate that the \textit{Notre Dame Lawyer}
pay tribute to Howard Glickstein. As a former member of the editorial board of
the \textit{Yale Law Journal}, he realizes that law reviews must dedicate themselves to
worthwhile legal scholarship, as well as to intensive training for future lawyers.
His interest in the role of law reviews in the legal community is consistent with his
belief that civil rights must aspire to the highest levels of a lawyer’s intellect. And
as with his other efforts in civil rights, law reviews have borne witness to the
and planning. Nor is his scholarship limited to legal reasoning. He possesses
an awesome understanding of this nation’s history, particularly its experience
with slavery and discrimination. His work has also caused him to develop a
more than casual knowledge of sociology, psychology, and political science.
Indeed, he heartily subscribes to the notion that law cannot be practiced as a
self-contained set of rules, but that a public advocate is most effective when he
understands and believes in the cause he is arguing.

Finally, as a man, Howard Glickstein epitomizes compassion and tolerance.
He may be saddened by the problems of the poor, yet he can share friendship
with one who disagrees with him about solutions for these problems. He looks
beyond issues and positions to personal qualities. His own qualities of honesty,
sincerity, generosity, and discipline are those he seeks and can elicit from others.
Perhaps the \textit{Notre Dame Lawyer} can pay no greater tribute to the man than to
acknowledge his human warmth. To pay tribute to his skills as a lawyer, teacher,
administrator, and scholar is finally only a way of expressing the greatness of the
man. Throughout his career he has given tirelessly of himself in every way, on
every level. Yet no career can be more fulfilling, and fortunate are those few who
earn its rewards.