

WHAT PRICE INSULARITY

At a time when lawyers and social scientists have effectively begun to scale the barriers of professional ethnocentrism that insulated and isolated us from one another, a federal agency has invoked isolation of law faculties from other faculties' functions and activities in reaching a decision, justifiable on other grounds, that law faculties are special, separate units. The National Labor Relations Board ruled in September, 1971, that a university law faculty constituted a separate bargaining unit for collective bargaining with the university's administration.

The NLRB's written opinion in support of its ruling asserted that "members of the law school faculty have specialized training, work in a separate building under their own supervisor (the dean of the law school), and acting as a group, have a voice separate from that of the faculty of the remainder of the university in determining their working conditions." To these observations about functional and structural separatism, the federal agency then added a coup de grâce to interdisciplinary collegueship. For members of the law school faculty, "there is little or no interchange between them and other faculty members."

I have no quarrel with the utility of establishing multiple bargaining units on any particular campus; but I do object to a federal agency's reliance upon institutionalized academic apartheid in allocating its benefits. Enhancing intellectual and professional integration of law and social science faculties has been one of the objectives of the Law and Society Association. We have been striving with some success through the articles, symposia, and bibliographies in the *Review* and through co-sponsorship of the annual SSMILE (Social Science Methods in Legal Education) summer institutes, among other activities, to stimulate common interests and concerns of the disciplines in analysis of key issues and problems of public policy as well as in the quest for viable solutions.

One may hope that this instance of an agency's receptivity to professional isolation will in turn be remanded to a special

isolation ward, facilitating renewal of campus hospitality to integrative academic roles.

A more constructive model for law faculty functions in educational affairs is found in steps initiated by law professors that led to Governor Rockefeller's veto of an act passed by the New York Legislature last spring requiring minimum hours of "classroom contact" with students for all faculty. Law professors played a leading part in conjunction with other faculty colleagues in convincing the governor that the degree of a faculty member's commitment to his students is not embodied solely or predominantly in the hours spent directly on formal contact in the classroom.

The ability to educate officials about the sterility of equating classroom contact hours with dedication to or efficacy in teaching seems a nobler manifestation of legal advocacy than convincing a regulatory agency that lack of interchange with faculty colleagues should qualify for administrative reward.

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