

CORRESPONDENCE

LAW is all-pervading. It is the rich veracity of this statement that beckons the legal man today to a new consciousness as to his role in society. And his role is all-pervading too. It is law which maintains a social structure that is not built on the power in the barrel of a gun. In law, might is not right, but right is might. Like any other instrument which yields power, law is also open to abuse. It is the demanding duty of the lawyer or law student to sound his voice and resort to mounting effective pressure, as an individual or as part of a pressure group, to right wrong. His sense of Justice must drive him to see that abuse is substituted by proper, sound use of such a powerful weapon.

The Course of Laws at this university can say with confidence that it has given a valid and consistent contribution to the nation. It has produced true leaders of our country and it has given Malta a Justiciary that could be the pride of any nation. The law students have also had a representative body of long standing which started publishing its organ, 'The Law Journal' in October 1944.

In its first edition, this 'Law Journal', among other things, gave a short list of the activities that the Society had carried out. These included Lectures, Debates, Papers and Moots or debates on supposed cases in a mock court. These 'moots' had been 'chaired' by Prof. V. Caruana, B.Litt., LL.D., and Sir Philip Pullicino, Kt., B.Litt., LL.D. The Editorial also commented: 'It is a sign which augurs well for the future that the Society started off with a flood of activities - monthly lectures, reading of papers, debates, and moots'.

The inescapable question here is: has the good work been kept up? Or has the original enthusiasm dwindled away? Let us have a brief look at the immediate past. Over the past year, various issues - of legal relevance - have arisen both in the national and international fields. It is sad

to say that the Law Society has only taken a stand on one issue: the Constitutional Court. And what a weak stand it was! The suspension of such a vital judicial safeguard of the rights of the individual surely deserves more than just a statement in the local press. It deserves a long-term campaign to arouse public opinion and to press the authorities for the restoration of the people's rights. But what about Mozambique? or Chile? or South Africa? or Kreisky's capitulation to terrorism? or Sakarov and Solzhenitzyn? Did not these deserve a stand? Did not Chile set us thinking as to when a coup d'état is constitutional or unconstitutional? Is not the enforcement of 'apartheid' in South Africa a clear example of the abuse of law?

Let us not fall in the doldrums where the least breeze is miraculous. We must take a stand. The alternative is to retreat from the challenge of social involvement. And retreat means extinction. The Law Society must take a leading role. It must show the way to other student bodies by annihilating, once and for all, this perverse notion that politics are anathema. Undoubtedly, in taking any stand on legal issues, the Society would, willy-nilly, involve itself in politics. This would be a test in maturity. The Society must be regardless of the accusations of political bias that are apt to come with the taking of a stand on legal issues, and which accusations, being unjustified, are vivid proofs of mediocrity.

The voice of the law students must be heard or else it will die a tragic anonymous death. It must not only be heard but also listened to. It is only by showing our sense of responsibility by beneficially exploiting our unified potentiality that we can make the Law Society a respected voice of the law students. There is a dire need for an awakening from a sorry state of stagnant perennial inertia.

MICHAEL FRENDON