

It is fortunate that these many activities will center beneath the covering of a building dedicated to Justice. When we stop to consider it we realize that every movement of ordered society depends upon the satisfactory and conscientious administration of law.

There can be no question but that there is a very real and vital connection between the progress of society, and the law. Not only does the law depend on social progress, but social progress depends, in a very real sense, upon the efficient administration of the law. It is, of course, obvious that all forward-looking attempts toward social welfare must be founded upon the principle that government guarantees the exact and unflinching fulfillment of public regulations and enforces obedience to such provisions by all citizens. The importance of a sound and fair administration of justice is obvious when we consider that it is founded in respect to and regard for the rights of every citizen and the full security and protection of their rights.

There must ever be a system of justice by which every man, high or low, seeking equality before the law, the due preservation of his rights, shall be secure in his right in the judicial tribunals of his state and the nation.

Not only is this a primary requisite of government but the people of every walk of life are entitled to have from their public officials and public agencies, protection against illegal operations of men or institutions who prey upon the public and thrive when the processes of justice are inefficient and dilatory.

Happily, among us there obtains a wholesome situation in this respect. Justice has ever held the upper hand. It has functioned in the public interest and by so doing has earned public confidences and public support. We should, however, not rest on our oars. The utmost vigilance is necessary, and continuous effort must be exerted to have public sentiment cultivated and nurtured to the end that the people who receive the kind of government they demand will always demand an administration of its affairs which is characterized by respect for and adherence to law.

This building stands for the principle that disputes, among men, should be adjusted in a civilized manner. Our objective is to solve problems by the ascertainment of truth and of fact. The judge, the lawyer, the citizen, make a positive contribution to the welfare of ordered society when they take part in the determination of a question in this manner.

Ours, happily, is a government of laws and not a government of men. It is a government wherein the Judiciary Department, so important in the functioning of all branches of the government spreads the broad and impregnable shield of its protection over life, liberty and personal property. It protects not only from the violence of the public enemy, but it protects also against the ill-advised action of majorities or groups who may be actuated by greed or influenced by fantastic theory.

I take this opportunity to compliment the judges of our State who have done and are doing so much for the welfare of society. The citizens of Maryland are justly proud of the high standing and acknowledged preeminence of the judiciary of our State. The judges and the people in general can be assured that the members of the other two coordinate branches of government— legislative and executive—will continue to show their respect for the judicial branch by refraining from any attempt to interfere with its functioning and by striving in every way to see that the judgments of the courts are respected and obeyed.