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Rowe retires after 11 years

The Executive Director of the Society, Ted Rowe, has retired. His retirement in April this year brings to an end a long and interesting career in the law.

Ted came to the Territory from Sydney in 1979 with his wife, then Stipendiary Magistrate, Sally Thomas and their two sons, Chris and Nick.

Shortly thereafter Ted was snaffled by the local profession to act as the first Executive Officer of the fledgling Law Society.

Ted started part-time work for the Society in late 1979.

His soon developed into a full-time part-time job, and he found himself as the Society's representative on a number of committees, including the Law Reform Committee and the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board.

He saw the Society through a period of great development and change including the issue by the Society of practising certificates, a significant increase in the number of Territory practitioners, the development of the Independent Bar,

changes within our courts (Supreme Court, Federal Court, Local Court, Summary Court and Family Court), significant increases in demands made upon the Society by Government and the increasing prominence of the Law Council, of which the Society is a constituent body. With his depth of experience as a practitioner Ted was a father figure to many practitioners in the relatively small Territory profession and he was always a willing listener and helper for practitioners with problems or for those who simply sought guidance on practice matters. Ted retains an interest in the law through Sally, our Chief Magistrate.

In his retirement we hope he continues to pursue some of the activities we know are dear to him, including his love for the Indonesian country, its people and language, and his general love of the Territory lifestyle.

History will certainly show Ted Rowe to have been a significant figure in the development of the Law Society and the legal profession in the Territory. The Society thanks him for his contribution.

Concern over political bans

The President of the Law Council of Australia, Alex Chernov QC, said he sees the government's ban on political advertising on radio and television as breaching some important elements of freedom of expression and free elections. "It is difficult to see any justification for such a sweeping interference in the right to freedom of expression," he said.

Mr Chernov said the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Australia is party, provides in article 19 that "everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, including freedom to impart information and ideas of all kinds through any medium."

"The ban will limit that right," Mr Chernov said.

He said the International Commission of Jurists in defining the *Rule of Law and Human Rights* said that "freedom of expression through the press and other media...is an essential element of free elections and is also necessary to ensure the development of an informed and responsible electorate."

Again, he said, that element will be limited.

The Law Council, meeting in Alice Springs earlier this month, noted that radio and television are vital channels of communication for people in remote areas as well as for people throughout the country whose main or only sources of political information are the electronic media. The Council also noted that a significant number of Australians in both city and country areas cannot read English and that banning political advertising on radio and television would deny those people an important source of information.

The Law Council said it would be a retrograde step to close any means of communication.

"It is particularly undesirable that two of the most widely accepted and used media in a modern and free society should be subject to the ban," Mr Chernov said.

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