

## ADMISSIONS CEREMONY 29 JANUARY 2001

Speaking for all Queensland Judges, I warmly welcome you to the legal profession.

Congratulations on your substantial achievement. There is really no need for us this morning to top up your excitement levels! And without resort to hyperbole, we may properly acknowledge two things: your own great achievement, first; and also, the very real contribution of families, supporters, and friends especially, my experience would say, mothers.

Ladies and gentlemen, you join a profession which is both utilitarian, and grand.

The utility rests in our jointly discharging a serious public responsibility providing significant legal services in a very complicated world which people only of your considerable expertise can meet.

The grandeur rests partly in the inheritance of centuries of wondrous tradition: reflected in no small degree today through our fine robes, regalia which some cynics choose to question, but which, like the memorabilia outside, in truth enriches public appreciation of this vital responsibility: and public respect for the way we lawyers discharge it.

If you actually practise as lawyers, you will become part of the indispensable mechanism necessary to ensure the rule of law. Even where, in recent instances, that element of good government has failed Fiji, the Solomons, Malaysia, Pakistan the fearless integrity of lawyers has generally been acclaimed. I hope your own dedication to that central goal will, when aroused, be uncompromising.

Will you also please seek, as best you may, to address our most challenging practical issue: the financial inaccessibility of justice according to law? First, commit yourselves, if you will, to pro bono work. And, as well, express your own views in the public debate join those who remind Executive Government, as but one example, of its neglect in relation to the provision of adequate legal aid, especially to the marginalised, the friendless and the weak.

You may not end up in actual legal practice. But I am sure you will in that case nevertheless continue to appreciate two aspects, in particular, of your training to this point: its traditional moral underpinning, and its intellectual rigour.

I revert for a moment in this centennial year to the question of tradition. Let us not be shy about acknowledging tradition as a springboard for progressive

development. The past informs the present. Value tradition, as of course you value your modern learning. Never undervalue the roots of any present value you perceive you may have. Especially acknowledge that the wisdom of our families enriches our own.

We Judges make right decisions with the assistance of level headed lawyers. We, depend, ladies and gentlemen, on both your learning, and your balanced commonsense. I know you will not let us down: your great challenge is to help us, and thereby, the people who need recourse to the courts of law.

You go forward with our warm good wishes, and our sincere encouragement!