

Admissions Ceremony

29 April 2002

Chief Justice's observations

On behalf of the Judges, I congratulate you. Your admission today signifies great achievement, and signals your capacity to serve your community with distinction.

Public service underpins your new profession. In acting for clients, you will indirectly benefit the community through providing the expert legal services necessary for the civilized resolution of disputes, and for the orderly advancement of individual interests. More fundamentally, you become now part of the mechanism which assures the linchpin of civil society, the rule of law.

To the discharge of these responsibilities you will, I trust, bring integrity, intellect and judgment; and as well I hope, compassionate regard for those less fortunate. The involvement of lawyers in the provision of services pro bono or at reduced rates is warmly encouraged, and I ask you to regard it as a natural corollary of the privilege you now enjoy.

Most of you will enter into practice as lawyers, and in doing so, you will participate in the life of a noble profession, where collegial interaction is a markedly beneficial feature.

Our profession is regrettably not infrequently the butt of unmeasured criticism, most recently in the context of the insurance debate. Lawyers are inclined to be more vocal these days in answering such criticism, and you will have your own opportunity to contribute. I urge you to participate in professional life: more youthful contributions are invigorating, and inspire lateral thought.

And so you go forward, with our good wishes, which we extend also to your families and friends who no doubt have assisted you substantially to your present pinnacle. I hope you will continue to draw strength and inspiration from their wise counsel.

Finally, to those of you who may not enter into legal practice as such, you will of course remain lawyers, and that distinction will always signify both mental acuity and ethical commitment.

We again congratulate you, ladies and gentlemen, and warmly wish you well.