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## MONRAD PAULSEN

*Peter W. Low \**

THE dedication of this issue of the *Virginia Law Review* to Monrad Paulsen affords an occasion to recount some of the aspects of his Deanship that may not be widely known or sufficiently appreciated. Those of us who saw Monrad from the inside of the Dean's office during the seven and a half years of his service<sup>1</sup> had a unique perspective on the many admirable qualities he brought to the office and to the institution. We are also in a position to relate some of his accomplishments to the manner in which he set out to perform his task as Dean. Monrad has had, I would submit, a profound effect on the present status of the School and the directions that it will assume in the future. In this short tribute I shall undertake to explain why I believe this to be true.

It is necessary first to say something about the man. Dean Kadish and Dean Sovern have accurately captured the unique features of his presence and his personality. He has a cherubic quality to match his enormous size and is capable of great warmth and empathy. He takes people and their problems seriously. He is also a person of unusual intellectual breadth and experience and of uncompromising standards. What was uniquely important about the way he conducted himself as Dean, however, was the balanced application of judgment and insight that he brought to the problems of the office. He had an understanding of the role of law schools in general and of Virginia in particular that we came to admire as we worked with him. He also had a sense for what he could and could not do as a person and as a Dean that he combined with firm and accurate opinions about what needed to be done. These are intangible qualities that are difficult to describe and to illustrate. But it was clear that he had them in generous measure.

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<sup>1</sup> For those who may not know, Lane Kneedler was in charge of many aspects of Law School administration during most of Monrad's tenure as Dean. Graham Lilly served first as Assistant Dean in charge of student affairs and later as Director of the Law School Foundation. Al Turnbull was in charge of both the admissions and placement offices. As for me, I was Associate Dean without portfolio, in charge of nothing but often in the way.

There are two other aspects of the man and the way he worked that should be emphasized. The first is his indefatigable energy, enthusiasm, and commitment. The second is his view of people and the congenial manner in which he worked with them. Monrad lived and breathed the Law School while he was Dean. He had literally no concept of the bounds of a working day, nor the times when one should or should not be thinking or working on Law School affairs. He combined these qualities with a generous and compassionate view of people. Dean Sovern correctly points out that Monrad always treated his juniors as partners, not subordinates. This was true in Law School affairs as well. People worked with Monrad, not for him. Advice was sought, listened to, and frequently taken. It was an unbroken rule that he stood behind those who worked with him, even when they acted precipitously and in his view erroneously. He did so, moreover, with determination and enthusiasm, always without rancor or regret that it was their mistake and not his.

But enough about the man. I should now turn to some of the reasons why I think that his contributions were important. The key, again, is people. The judgment to which I have already referred was always at its best in the hiring of faculty and in making other uniquely decanal decisions concerning people. Monrad was a vital factor in the appointments process.<sup>2</sup> Largely as a result of his efforts, the Law School has been able to attract a core of young and talented faculty whose value to the institution is already manifested in their accomplishments. It is important to understand, however, that the selection of good people was the essential component in Monrad's concept of how to build for the future. In most matters, Monrad was neither a planner nor an organizer. He did not regard it as important to his role to concern himself deeply with matters of curricular reform, grading systems, calendars, degree programs, and the like—all of which can become pressing issues in an educational institution. His view was not

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<sup>2</sup> One of the first actions Monrad took as Dean was to secure the multi-faceted talents of Sir Leon Radzinowicz, who is also a contributor to this celebration. Radzinowicz, *Some Preliminary Reflections on the Evaluation of Criminal Justice*, 63 VA. L. REV. 189 (1977). While Dean Paulsen is the proper subject of these remarks, I am sure he will forgive me if I note in passing the retirement of Sir Leon from active teaching at the Law School. There are many who would join me, most particularly the students, in noting with regret that the vibrant personality of this great man will no longer be available to enlighten future generations at Virginia.

that these matters are unimportant, but that in the hands of the right people they will largely take care of themselves. He thus saw people of quality as the answer both to the present and the future and regarded it as his job to attract and retain them.

This leads me to a separate point. Monrad was fortunate, as he will readily admit, that Hardy Dillard was his predecessor. Hardy laid the groundwork on many of the practical affairs of law school life which are so important to the maintenance and growth of an institution. He was instrumental in the development of a supportive system of private funding, of realistic and competitive faculty salaries, and of a sound relationship with the University Administration. Monrad knew what to do with this foundation. This is not to say that he was the most efficient administrator, for in many ways he was not. But he had a knack for choosing the relevant. Among the hundreds of sometimes mundane matters that daily crossed his desk, he would labor for hours and often days on two or three which he thought would later turn out to be important. He also knew when these matters could be quietly resolved and when they required a full dress battle. He was an effective spokesman for the Law School both privately and publicly, exhibiting a tenacity that he coupled with a remarkable ability to communicate and to persuade. The result was that the base Hardy had provided flourished and expanded under Monrad's leadership. The more important result to Monrad was that good people came and they stayed.

Monrad saw the Law School as a part of a University, as a place where scholarship and teaching were the important components of a larger mission that included, but was not limited by, the careful training of those who must acquire the basic skills to make them effective practitioners at the Bar. The idea is not new either to the profession or to this School. It had been shared by Hardy and, before him, by Dean Ribble. But the remarkable thing is the manner in which Monrad was able to motivate the people he thought so important to believe and act on the same idea. It is fair to say that the vitality of the Law School as a center of scholarship has changed dramatically because Monrad has been its Dean. He believes to his core in the idea of a community of scholars and teachers. He believes also that good scholarship need not be sacrificed in order to obtain good teaching, nor good teaching to obtain good scholarship. Most importantly, however, he knows

how to inspire and to guide others, by example as well as by leadership, to induce them to share these beliefs and to give them a sense of the excitement that attends the world of ideas. This is why faculty at other Law Schools, like Dean Kadish, speak of Virginia as a law school "even greater than the one he came to." If the stature of Virginia as an important national Law School has grown during the past few years, as I believe it has, these attributes of Monrad as Dean are an important reason.

It is perhaps fitting that I conclude these remarks by relating an incident that occurred at the Law School a number of years ago. Sir Arthur Goodhart had just completed a visit to the School and on the occasion of his departure we presented him with a small token of our appreciation for his contributions. He then told a story that bears repeating here. A young English schoolchild asked his mother to give him two shillings to take to school the next day. When she pressed the child for the reason, the explanation was offered that one of his teachers was leaving the school and the children had been organized to present the teacher with a little "momentum." This issue of the *Virginia Law Review* is in a sense our "momentum" to Monrad. It is only appropriate to observe, however, that it is momentum in the real sense that he has given us.

