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Gorfinkel addresses Alumni Luncheon

By Robert Shubow

Golden Gate Law School's annual Alumni Luncheon, held in conjunction with the State Bar convention, was addressed this year by our first full-time dean, John A. Gorfinkel. The gathering, held in Fresno, attracted a number of our more "judicious" alumni, including Judges Norman Spellberg, and Bessie Dreibelbis, and Administrative Judges Leonard M. Levy, Doris Baker, Henry O'Connell, and Frederick A. Ferguson. The subject of Gorfinkel's speech was one that has been in the minds of many other lawyers: "the general practitioner as an endangered species."

More group legal services are in order, predicts Gorfinkel. "Large legal clinics, staffed with specialists and para-professionals, may be the trend of the future. The high costs of adequate legal service seem to make this inevitable."

Gorfinkel's thorough knowledge of the law, gained from over 34 years of teaching, and his awareness of the practical needs of the lawyer in the field, uniquely qualify him to speak on the direction of the evolving profession.

Gorfinkel presently serves as the consultant on legal education to the State Bar of California. His work takes him on extended trips around the state to visit the many new law schools and guide them toward accreditation.

When he's not occupied with that assignment, he assumes one of his many other roles. He helps to write the California Bar Exam, the Baby Bar, the Multi-State Bar Exam, and the Professional Responsibility Exam. Gorfinkel's philosophy of examinations is typically progressive. "I am opposed to any question," he states, "that is not realistic and contemporary."

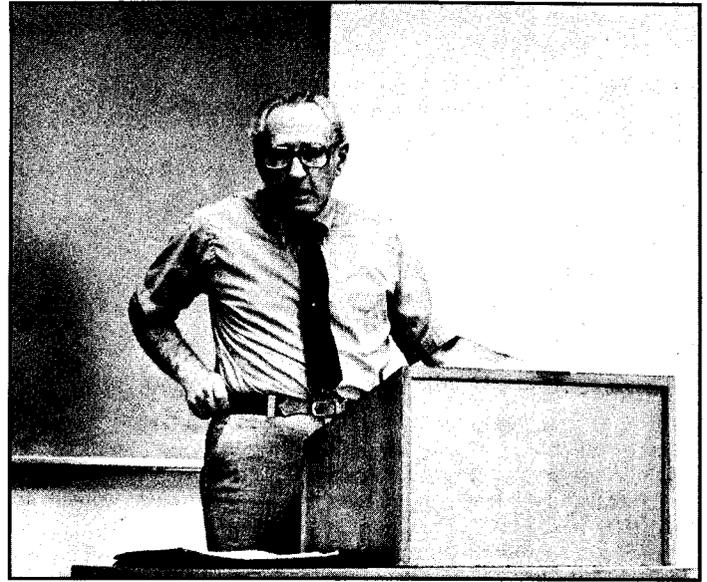
Wielding yet another gavel, Gorfinkel serves as chairman of the Standards Committee of the ABA, requiring even more extensive travelling. Gorfinkel estimates he is away from home 125-150 days a year. Through it all, he finds time to maintain a limited private law practice. And somehow he even manages to slip off to Europe with his wife for five or six weeks every year for a jaunt through the Alps.

Gorfinkel is as much a thinker as he is a traveller. Ideas which he originated years ago are now gaining acceptance, especially innovations in legal education. Five years ago, for example, he advanced an idea whose time may be approaching: that of the two-year law school. It would consist of intensive study of basic areas. The rest would be learned on the job, "as a lawyer learns it anyway." He also has proposed eliminating several courses from the curriculum and having the students literally teach themselves.

But these changes, Gorfinkel is quick to note, cannot be made by fiat. "They must arise as a result of imaginative and intelligent law programs designed by the deans and the faculties themselves."

What is the future of Golden Gate amidst all this change? "It is well situated to become a great urban legal center," thinks Gorfinkel. "The plan to develop an L.L.M. program in taxation is the first step. And we are fortunate in having one of the great deans in the nation in Judy McKelvey."

Gorfinkel began teaching in Golden Gate's evening program in '934. At that time he had been in private practice for five years following graduation from Boalt Hall, where he received a J.D. in 1929 and a J.S.D. in 1931. He continued in active practice until his appointment as associate dean, which position he held from 1952 to 1960. He was the first full-time dean of Golden Gate Law



John A. Gorfinkel, Dean Emeritus

School and served in that capacity from 1960 to 1969, when he left to assist the State Bar.

Gorfinkel is a second generation representative of the law school. His father, Jacob Gorfinkel, who practiced law in San Francisco until his death in 1933, was a member of the school's first class which started in 1901.

Alumni calendar

January 27, 1977 — East Bay Alumni Lunch at the Seawolf Restaurant. Dean Emeritus John A. Gorfinkel will be the featured speaker.

February 3, 1977 — San Francisco Alumni Lunch.

February 10, 1977 — North Peninsula Alumni Lunch.

March 4, 1977 — Sacramento Alumni Lunch.

March 17, 1977 — Marin County, Northern California Alumni Lunch.

Note: Specific information about the Alumni Lunch in your area will be mailed to you three to four weeks before the date listed above.

Bulletins

- Any Golden Gate Law School graduate who has a Bachelor of Laws degree may obtain a diploma showing a degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence by writing to: Patrick O'Brien, Dean of Students, Golden Gate University, 536 Mission St., San Francisco 94105. The cost is \$10.00. Please specify the year of graduation and your name, exactly as it appears on your diploma.
- Where are you now? The Forum is interested in announcing any changes in your professional career. Don't be modest. Send your updated notes plus any changes of address to: Editor, Alumni Forum, Golden Gate University Law School, 536 Mission Street, Rm. 210, San Francisco 94105.