

LEWIS M. SIMES AS TEACHER

*Bertel M. Sparks**

To describe Professor Lewis Mallalieu Simes is to list the qualities of a great teacher. And just as it is impossible to identify all the characteristics of a great teacher, so it is impossible to articulate any complete description of Professor Simes.

A graduate student meeting Professor Simes for the first time saw in him a friend in whom he could confide, a scholar without peer, a teacher who was eager to join with the student in the pursuit of further enlightenment for both, and much more. The student came away from that first meeting knowing that he had been in the presence of a master but realizing that he had not been overawed by the master. Professor Simes was too modest for that. He was friendly, relaxed, and even eager to assist the student in expanding the student's own area of understanding. In doing so, he always left the impression that he was studying along with the student and was actually learning from him. The atmosphere of a two-way street was preserved.

The student was usually surprised to learn how well he had become known to the professor even before the two had met. Professor Simes had studied the application for admission thoroughly. He had become acquainted with the student's professional goals and was prepared to contribute toward their realization. As a result of that preparation, Professor Simes' students wasted little time in what some others might have called the perennial search for a dissertation topic. The primary requirements were that the topic be the student's choice and that it have the potential for shedding new light on an unsettled legal problem of current interest to the practicing bar. Professor Simes' prior familiarity with the student's background and interests enabled him to evaluate quickly sug-

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gestions from the student or to be ready with suggestions of his own if they were requested.

The actual research project was launched at an early date. From that point on the student was left free and unhindered, but he soon learned that the Professor's enthusiasm for finding a suitable solution to the problem being pursued was as keen as his own. No student of Professor Simes ever experienced any difficulty concerning professor availability. Each student was even offered a weekly appointment schedule *at the convenience of the student* for private consultation. At the same time it was made clear that this schedule was intended as a convenience and not a burden. The student was expected to cancel any regularly scheduled appointment that was not needed and to call at unscheduled times if any special problems were encountered.

Such a course of study under Professor Simes was a continuous feast of wisdom, learning, good humor, and gentility. No student who has had the experience is likely to forget it or to take it lightly.

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