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INTRODUCTION: THE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM IN LAW AND RELIGION

In late 1983, the Columbus School of Law of The Catholic University of America was awarded a three-year program development grant by the Henry Luce Foundation, Inc. for the purpose of developing an interdisciplinary program in law and religion. Since its inception, the purpose of the program has been to encourage the study of law and religion through creative use of the resources of The Catholic University of America to bring together scholars and legal practitioners having an interest in law and religion to collaborate on research, scholarship and education programs.

To that end, the Columbus School of Law seeks to serve as a catalyst in developing proposals for funded research and as a clearinghouse for information and ideas on which interdisciplinary research projects can be based. The goal of the program is to draw together the resources and expertise of several disciplines and to focus them on issues of practical or theoretical importance in the development of law or legal policy relating to religion, religious institutions, public morality and ethics.

Including the symposium which appears in the pages which follow, the project has sponsored presentations dealing with religion and politics (October, 1984), trends in separation of church and state (February, 1985), as well as co-sponsoring the publication of *Peace in a Nuclear Age: The Bishops' Pastoral Letter in Perspective* (C. Reid ed. 1986).

Future programs include: a faculty seminar on religion in public school curricula and materials; co-sponsorship of a conference on selective conscientious objection; "The First Amendment in Space: Freedom of Communication and the New Space Technologies" (co-

sponsored with the Institute for Communications Law Studies of the Columbus School of Law, the Radio-Television News Directors' Foundation and the Reporters' Committee for Freedom of the Press); a teaching conference on "Law and Religion in the Law School Curriculum"; and ongoing cooperation with several law schools in Europe and South America on studies in comparative church-state relations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The planning and design of "The Religious Foundations of Civil Rights Law" was a cooperative effort from the beginning, but it is appropriate that the significant contribution of Professor William J. Wagner of the Columbus School of Law be recognized. As the individual who took primary responsibility for the theoretical design and practical implementation of the symposium, his contributions and ideas are the basis on which the finished product rests. His patient insistence that the theoretical rather than the practical was the appropriate point of departure for the first major project of an interdisciplinary program in law and religion was invaluable to those of us whose focus is usually on the practical legal aspects of church-state relations.

Special note should also be made of the contribution of the Project Advisory Committee, Professors George Garvey, David Granfield, Benjamin Mintz, and William Saunders for their editorial and conceptual advice and input during each stage of the planning and implementation of the symposium, and of the invaluable assistance of Ms. Katie Noone, our administrative assistant, and Ms. Gayle Campbell and the secretarial staff of the Columbus School of Law, without whose patience and cooperation this symposium would not have been possible.

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