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DEDICATION TO PETER GERHART

Peter Gerhart became Dean of the Case Western Reserve University School of Law in the summer of 1986. In recognition of his arrival, the *Law Review* dedicated the first issue of Volume 37 to the new dean. Along with a welcome, the *Review* wished him a long and productive career. It described him as an able administrator and an esteemed scholar. It went on to express confidence in Peter, a confidence inspired by his enthusiasm and by his sensitivity to student concerns. Peter's deanship, from beginning to end, has been defined by these two qualities—enthusiasm and sensitivity to student concerns.

Before coming here, Peter graduated from Northwestern University and Columbia Law School, was an associate in a New York law firm, and was a law professor at Ohio State University. While at Ohio State, he taught Antitrust, Regulated Industries, Unfair Trade, and Administrative Law. He also served three years as Associate Dean and for a short while as Acting Dean. With this extensive experience in hand, Peter was prepared to assume our deanship in what the *Review* dedication described as "exciting times."

It is never easy, let alone in exciting times, for a law dean to serve his many masters: his students, faculty, staff, university administration, and alumni. Peter served them all with characteristic grace, humor, and good will. Since 1986, there has been a goodly share of problems, tensions, and difficult issues—what are often called, with tongue in cheek—"challenges." In this regard, Case Western Reserve has been no different from most other law schools. Peter's challenges included rising and falling admission applications, student and faculty affirmative action issues, declining job markets, pressing space demands, and the always constant pressure for money. It is not faint praise to say that Peter faced

them all squarely. In his struggles, he “won some” and for the most part, kept the others “at bay.”

The signs of accomplishment during Peter’s stewardship are there to be seen. Most visible are the law school’s new wing that added needed classrooms, student offices, and lounge area; and attractively remodeled the legal clinic, library, and faculty offices. Less obvious, but nonetheless real, are the greatly expanded and successful activities of the Law-Medicine and International Law centers, a curriculum broadened and deepened to respond to the needs and interests of the students, and a revamped and increasingly effective career planning and placement program. It is this last that most accurately reflects Peter’s responsiveness to his students. Deans do not produce such accomplishments and transformations by themselves. Peter knew this, finding ways to fully acknowledge the contributions of his students, staff, and faculty.

Peter encouraged his faculty and students constantly, reminding them how exciting the law school adventure should and could be. In every gathering and on every occasion, he would affirm that our students were the best and brightest, that our faculty were the finest teachers and scholars, and that our alumni were the most loyal to be found. His lavish praise of everyone in the law school community was clearly aimed at encouraging and rewarding commitment to our educational enterprise. It also reflected Peter’s genuine respect for the members of this community and his deep pride in our law school. His public stance was always the same—gracious and optimistic.

The dean’s principal task is to pull together and support the efforts of others. Equally important, he must maintain a broad, future-oriented perspective. In 1993, Peter, with strong support from an alumnus and a faculty colleague, provided the inspiration and gathered the talent and resources for a major conference held in Cleveland on the “Future of the Legal Profession.” This highly successful event did much to focus attention on the school and to enhance its growing reputation. The significance of this event and its importance to the school has been undervalued, perhaps lost in our absorption with the immediate and everyday aspects of our professional lives.

More than on conferences, the school’s future depends on people, the people who teach, write and shape its academic program. In the past ten years, some established scholars and several highly promising younger professors have joined our faculty. They have already made substantial contributions to the life of the law

school and to the legal literature as well. Those of us on the faculty count ourselves very fortunate and proud that they have joined us. Peter is entitled to share our pride for his part in bringing them here. The school's future appears to be in good hands.

Those of us who have worked with Peter know him to be self-effacing and to possess personal courage and inner strength, qualities needed by a dean. I believe we will look back on Peter's ten year tenure and see it as a time when a good law school became a better one, a law school more ready and determined to fulfill its mission. When our new dean takes charge, he should find our students, faculty, staff, and alumni ready to work with him with the spirit and good will Peter always sought to inspire.

For his colleagues and friends, I wish him peace, time for reflection, time with his family, and a long and productive career as a teacher and scholar here among us at the law school.

E.A. MEARNS, JR.

