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BALSA 10th ANNUAL NATIONAL
CONVENTION

BALSA's 10th Annual National Convention was held at the Pick Congress Hotel in Chicago, Illinois on March 15-19, 1978. Present at the affair were Dr. Vernon Jordon, Keynote Speaker, Lennox Hines, President-NCBL, Charles Knox, founder of the NCBL Community College of Law in Chicago (The school hosting the conference), A.J. Cooper, founder of BALSA and the NCBL, and Mayor of Prichard, Alabama, plus many other distinguished guests and speakers. Muhammad Ali also made an appearance.

Dr. Jordon pointed out the more than evident ills of the Black American way of life, including unemployment at higher rates than broadcasted on national medias, and the persistent presence of racism in American law schools. He acknowledged the fact that Bakke is a systematic attack on the development of Black minds, fed by unholy discussions about whether Blacks are in fact educable. Dr. Jordon accepted the fact that these conditions make it hard for Black students to stay in class for lectures, makes it hard for them to concentrate, and crushes the spirit. "Nonetheless", he says, "if you were not in class to learn how to raise a timely 4th amendment objection or file charges in a Title VII suit, you are no good to us. The biggest favor you can do for yourself, and your primary responsibility to Black people is to leave that institution with something in your head." In addition, Dr. Jordon warns, "YOU CAN'T COME HOME -- until the job is done"!

THE BOTTOM LINE

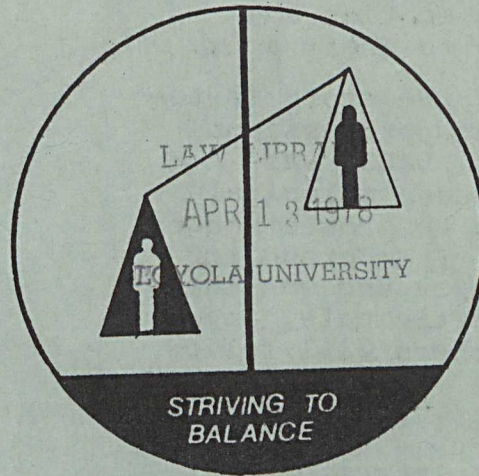
'STUDY HARD, AND LET YOUR DREAMS
BE YOUR ONLY BOUNDARY"

Vernon Jordon

THE BALSA

Black American Law Students
Association

ADVOCATE



Loyola Law School Spring, 1978

Special Report
National Convention

CONVENTION LIFE

You never know just how together or untogether you are until you're put into the tank with the big fish. The message here is that any gathering of people with the same goals and problems as yourself can be nothing but a great motivational force. Atop this is the knowledge that you are successful at your jobs and will indeed become the new leaders of the movement. Anyone not sharing in these experiences is truly missing a lot -- sort of like missing the senior prom in high school. It can surely be said to be a high point in the lives of those attending.

Days are scheduled in full and run freely into the wee hours of the morning. Participation on special ad hoc committees and socializing with the organization's forerunners adds a rich perspective and

history one could never gain in reading five years of BALSAs Advocates. Earnest, and sometimes, desperate activity create an aura of electricity which drives emotion and productivity to their apex.

The moral of the story is togetherness and professional interchange. BALSAs was founded on these principals and promises to grow stronger under them. I am proud to have fought for and won the chance to participate, and hope that others will follow suit.

NATIONAL ELECTIONS

The Far-West Delegation was surprised-to say the least-at the energy displayed by eastern candidates for national office. Their campaigns were quite professionally done. The surprising factor here is the women. The new national president, Theresa Cropper, and all but one of her executive board are women. They have promised to do a far better job than the men have done. The Far-West wishes them luck and feels confident that the New Board will treat the West in the manner it deserves -- after all, it was our block vote which swung the pendulum.

ST. PATTIE'S DAY

St. Patrick's Day was vigorously celebrated by Chicago's preddominately Irish population. So much that their festivities interferred with the conventions progress in a "barbaric" sort of way, calling for tighter security for female BALSAs members, (the brothers didn't mind that very much) and for many

* Edgar L. Borne, III, Editor *

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of the St. Patrick's Day celebrants to be evicted from the Hotel premises. This becomes a little ironic once we realize that the celebration is all about the Irish finally pushing the Blackamoors out of Ireland many years ago. So don't tell me anything more about snakes!

THE FAR-WEST BABY

For the past several years the Far-West Region has complained of "special problems and general neglect by the national organization. I believe that the time has come to "grow up" on this issue. As a part of the larger organization, it is incumbent on Far-West Chapters to become involved in the national rather than asking the National to become involved in the Far-West. This past convention has put us into perspective. Thanks to the magnaminious efforts of the "workaholic" Mr. (Engineer) Bill Taylor, Far-West Regional Director 1977-78, the West is the most organized and a potentially more powerful region nationwide.

The concern has been with bringing the national leadership of BALSAs to the West Coast. We have been moffed at recently since we are in the "Land of Bakke" and all seems impossible. The West must therefore grow more active and seek creative new ways to gain the support of their schools. Western schools suffer from a lack of support from their administrations. In the East, devices for spurring leadership in their schools consist of work-study positions for persons who get elected to national offices, and other form of administrative and clerical aids. The school has to be interested in giving its students the opportunity to become leaders and must be ready to make financial committments toward that goal. We should strive here at Loyola and throughout the West to get such programs started. God and all of us know we deserve it and that it is long overdue.