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PROFESSOR CORNELIUS J. PECK: A MAN OF MANY TALENTS

Ralph W. Johnson*

Outstanding teacher, authoritative writer, master winemaker, successful labor arbitrator, durable bicyclist, avid gardener, occasional portrait painter, and more. Meet University of Washington School of Law Professor Emeritus Cornelius J. Peck. Born in Calumet, Michigan, he attended public schools in Iron Mountain, Michigan, and found his way east to Harvard, where he received a B.S. degree in 1944 and an LL.B. in 1949. He was a Harvard National Scholar while he worked on his B.S. and law degrees. He held two jobs with the U.S. Department of Justice and one with the National Labor Relations Board before joining the University of Washington School of Law faculty as an assistant professor in 1954. He advanced rapidly to associate professor in 1956 and to full professor in 1958. In support of his candidacy for teaching at the University of Washington, Paul Freund, one of his Harvard professors, wrote, "Peck is a person of mature judgment, good presence, and devoted attachment to the intellectual challenge of the law. In his personal qualities no less than his intellectual equipment, he would, I am confident, earn the respect of students and teachers alike." Freund's prediction was exactly right. Professor Peck has earned that respect in spades.

Professor Peck's law teaching career centered on torts, labor law, and administrative law, although he taught numerous other subjects, such as negotiations, over the 39 years he served on the faculty. In 1963-64, Professor Peck was awarded a Ford Foundation International Law Fellowship for research in the Philippines and Malaysia. In 1973-74, he was a visiting professor at the University of Michigan Law School. He taught at Stanford Law School in 1979-80, and at the University of Iowa College of Law as Mason Ladd Distinguished Visiting Professor in 1982. He has published 37 law review articles in such esteemed publications as the *American Journal of Comparative Law*, *Harvard Law Review*, *Iowa Law Review*, *Michigan Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, *Washington Law Review*, and *Wisconsin Law Review*. Professor Peck has published a casebook, *Cases and Materials on Negotiation* (2d ed. 1980), and co-edited another book, *Labor Relations and the Law*

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(1965). He has also written numerous book reviews and articles for specialized publications. Since 1965, he has been a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators.

He was an organizer, with me and Professor Arval Morris, of the University of Washington's highly successful Asian Law Program, operated for many years by now-Emeritus Professor Dan Henderson. About \$500,000 was obtained in 1960-61 from the Ford Foundation to get the program started.

Cornelius Peck built a reputation for carrying an especially heavy teaching load. Where most professors teach 14 to 16 hours during a year, he averaged 18 hours. In addition, some of these classes were large, with more than 100 students. As a result, he consistently graded more than his fair share of exams, widely considered the most unpleasant chore of facultyhood. This is all the more remarkable in view of the quality scholarship he has produced and the committee and public service contributions he has made.

Professor Peck had a flair for creating unique fact patterns in his torts class, where he injected them with dry wit. In 1991, a student asked whether liability would attach to defendant under the foreseeability/proximate cause tests in a very unique situation. Professor Peck responded, "I do not answer exploding dog hypotheticals." When asked to explain, he told how a dog owner, in a jurisdiction with a leash law, left his fence in disrepair and his dog got loose. The dog then ate some nitroglycerine that a neighbor had negligently left on his back porch. The dog ran into the street near a bus stop. A passerby kicked the dog. It exploded injuring several people on a bus. Professor Peck declined to guess at who, if anyone, was liable!

In the early 1960s, Professor Peck was one of ten organizers of the Associated Vintners (now Columbia Winery), which produced world-class wine long before anyone else in the Pacific Northwest realized this was possible. Their achievement was especially noteworthy because they used only 5 1/2 acres of land near Sunnyside, Washington, for their vineyard. He is still a shareholder in what is now one of the state's largest wineries.

Professor Peck not only rode his bicycle to the law school every day, but is also an ardent squash player with a keen competitive sense. While he does not claim to be a world-class painter, his portraits of two colleagues hang in law school classrooms.

Gloria Breeskin Peck, Cornelius's wife, has a master's degree in Art History and taught this subject at Bellevue and Edmonds Community

Colleges and in the University of Washington Spectrum Series. She is an active supporter of the Seattle Art Museum, and former chair of the museum's Docent Program. She also serves on the board of the Northwest Chamber Orchestra. The Pecks have four children.

It has been one of my great pleasures to know and work with Professor Peck since I joined the University of Washington School of Law faculty in 1955. It is a distinct honor to recall and write about his outstanding teaching and writing record, and many other accomplishments.

