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## FLORIDA BAR INDUCTION ADDRESS\*

CHRISTOPHER L. GRIFFIN\*\*

Because I do not presume to know any more about the practice of law than you do, I will not attempt to talk about that. What I would like to talk about is what I perceive to be a great service that we here today can render to the organized bar, namely, the education of other, more experienced attorneys on the present state of bar admission procedures and the bar examination.

The need for such education can be seen in the current professional regulation reform movement, a movement that is currently gaining strength throughout the state of Florida. Lawmakers and the public accuse professional self-regulation of inherent protectionism and are increasingly questioning the ability of the professions to regulate themselves in a manner consistent with the public interest. Case books, legal periodicals, newspapers, and news magazines are replete with records and accounts of litigation, administrative action, and executive decisions regarding professional self-regulation. The Florida Legislature, in just the past few months, has taken strong steps to remove the regulation and control of several professions from the hands of members of those professions.

There is little reason to think that lawyers are immune from this movement. In fact, certain legislators have already proposed constitutional amendments which would take the admission and discipline of attorneys out of the jurisdiction of the supreme court. And, on the national level, the Federal Trade Commission is presently investigating whether bar association regulatory activities are unfair, deceptive, and anticompetitive.

If we hope to stem this tide and retain our privilege of self-regulation, then we, as attorneys, must make right our own house. That is where we come in. Admission tests and procedures are a

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\* Formal Induction Ceremony, May 31, 1979, Lakeland, Florida.

\*\* B.S. 1976, Florida State University; J.D. 1978, Florida State University College of Law. Associate of the law firm of Carlton, Fields, Ward, Emmanuel, Smith and Cutler, Tampa, Florida. Mr. Griffin graduated with Highest Honors, a distinction earned by only twelve graduates since the College of Law's inception in 1966. He was selected by the Florida Supreme Court to address those inductees being sworn in at the Lakeland induction ceremony.

vital part of the regulation of the bar. As such, they are just as subject to attack as disciplinary and other procedures. And we, among all the groups of the Florida Bar, are best suited for educating others about the current status of those tests and procedures. We have all recently completed the bar examination, made each and every disclosure required of us, and most of us have only recently completed law school. We are, therefore, in an excellent position to evaluate the bar examination in light of law school education, and, in a very short time, in light of the actual practice of law. If changes are needed, our significant insights and comments can help insure that those changes are made quickly and efficiently.

The need for change in these areas is, of course, a highly debatable issue. The American Bar Association section of legal education and admissions to the bar has planned a discussion program at this year's ABA convention to explore the validity and reliability of bar examinations. The use of multiple-choice questions, the extensive disclosures required of bar applicants, and the subject area coverage of the bar exam are just a few of the issues that are now being discussed by law students, practitioners, and professors. It is our duty to contribute to these discussions.

I urge you, therefore, not to forget your recent experience, not to cast aside your intimate impressions and memories of the bar examination. I urge you to keep them in mind, explore them to the utmost, and decide whether you think that the bar examination and other admission procedures are fair, valid, and serve the interests of the public and the profession. And I also urge you to initiate discussion with other attorneys so that they too can know of these procedures and examinations and decide for themselves whether change is needed. As members of a self-regulating profession, it is our duty to search out problems in these areas and move quickly to correct them, for if we don't, someone else will do it for us.