

ROSWELL BURCHARD PERKINS

Known to the Institute — and elsewhere — as “Rod”

In the seventy years of its remarkably active life, the Institute has had only six Presidents. It is appropriate to list them here: George W. Wickersham, 1923-1936; George Wharton Pepper, 1936-1947; Harrison Tweed, 1947-1961; Norris Darrell, 1961-1976; R. Ammi Cutter, 1976-1980; and Roswell B. Perkins, 1980-1993. It may be added that there have also been only four Directors and six Treasurers.

The stature of the Presidents is obvious from the listing. They have provided the leadership which has kept the Institute's work on a high plane, serving as inspiration and guide to all of the others who have participated in the Institute's work. Rod Perkins now completes thirteen years as the Institute's President, thirteen years of remarkable innovation, development, and achievement. He has shown great energy, broad wisdom, and an approach to people at every level of the Institute's work which has brought out the best efforts of all involved. Among many examples of his contributions, and simply as illustrations, mention may be made of two of his major endeavors:

1. Under his leadership, the project on Corporate Governance was undertaken, though it was known that this might give rise to controversy. When controversy did arise, Rod handled it with great skill and wisdom, bringing the full force of his ability and personality to bear on the issues, while advancing modifications which ameliorated the problems without abandoning the major objective. Under his guidance, the project was brought to a successful conclusion.
2. Rod foresaw the need of a stronger financial base for the Institute. He proposed the raising of an Endowment Fund, in the amount of \$5,000,000, to give the Institute seed money and to provide a sure foundation for basic expenses, and to guarantee its capacity to maintain itself in a position of leadership in the analysis and development of American law.

As Emerson wrote, “an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.” Rod's energy, initiative, encouragement, and understanding have been widely spread. He has had much help, but his influence in the work of the Institute has been pervasive. It is fitting, at the close of his Presidency, to record our admiration and affection.

Ave sed non Vale

Erwin N. Griswold