

## President's Message

I am glad that so many of you were able to attend the Annual AAPL Meeting in Boston, Thursday, October 23, through Sunday, October 26, 1975. Ted Sidley, as Program Chairman, developed an outstanding program, and sincere appreciation and thanks are extended to him for his contributions. The topic, "Prisons, Psychiatrists, and Rehabilitation," is timely, especially in light of the sharply accelerated trend against active rehabilitative treatment of the institutionalized offender.

Recent years have witnessed mounting interest among psychiatrists in the relationship of psychiatry to law, as psychiatrists, both in the public and private sector, have experienced the impact of legal opinions upon their practice; and I also believe that in these years multiplying numbers of psychiatrists have become involved in the practice of forensic psychiatry.

These developments call for AAPL's continued leadership in promoting relationships between psychiatry and law, influencing the law for the ends of mental health, and improving our professional skills in the application of our field to the ends of civil and criminal justice.

All of this, I believe, requires increasing expertise in the field of psychiatry and law. And this leads me to the theme I have been pursuing for many years, that additional post-graduate education and advanced training are necessary to develop the expertise in psychiatry and law that society expects from the specialist.

One of AAPL's major goals is this upgrading of the interface of psychiatry and law; but today very few groups and academic centers are providing such specialized programs, and, unfortunately, still too few AAPL members, in my opinion, are pressing for the development of programs that can improve our professional contributions to this field.

I have been asked to describe our program at the University of Southern California Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Science. While it is not ideal and certainly does not meet everyone's needs, we feel that the program is a good one. It is founded on the premise that psychiatry and law—or forensic psychiatry, if you will—is a psychiatric subspecialty that requires the input of basic, but specialized, education and training to attain expertise. Such input cannot be provided during the formal period of general psychiatric residency. This program was therefore developed to provide fundamental underpinnings of education and training for the necessary development of specialized knowledge and skills in this field, and the program should be looked upon as an introductory core curriculum upon which those interested in teaching, research, and practice in psychiatry and law can build.

It is a one-year, full-time fellowship program for four to six psychiatrists who have completed psychiatric residency training. Through the Institute, fellowships are also available to a post-doctoral psychologist, a social worker, and an attorney. We also offer special topical programs in psychiatry and law directed to judges, practicing attorneys and other legal and mental health professionals, in which Fellows participate; but psychiatric Fellows have their own full-time core program.

In essence that program is an interface one. It provides specialized education in law for psychiatrists, stressing the relationship of legal theory and of substantive and procedural law to psychiatry specifically and to mental health issues generally, and directing itself to the application of psychiatry to legal issues for legal ends. It attempts to combine such specialized education and supervised training with a very limited preceptorship approach.

The program content is divided roughly into fourths: one-fourth, formal classwork in courses in Psychiatry, Behavioral Science and Law; one-fourth, clinical case work with patients involved with civil, administrative, and criminal issues including their psychiatric-legal examinations, reports, and court testimony, if needed; one-fourth, a field placement and informal seminars; and one-fourth individual and group supervision.

Formal class work consists of 24 course units in six four-unit university semester courses. These courses are (1) Criminal Law and the Behavioral Sciences; (2) Behavioral Science and the Administration of Justice; (3) Behavioral Science and Civil Law, including Mental Health Law; (4) Behavioral Science and Family and Juvenile Law; (5) Psychology and the Law; and (6) Physical, Social, and Cultural Factors in Social Conduct.

In addition, the program includes a weekly psychiatric-legal presentation in a Case Conference and a Reading Seminar in Psychiatry and Law, plus a special Seminar in Psychiatric-Legal Defenses in Criminal Law. Psychiatric-legal interviews, evaluations, written reports, and courtroom participation are supervised individually or in groups. Faculty includes judges and lawyers as well as psychiatrists and other behavioral scientists.

As you can see, this is a complete full-time program. A previous two-year program has been condensed into this one intensive year. The question that is repeatedly raised is whether such an academic approach, or for that matter, any other special education in forensic psychiatry, is really necessary for the development of the expertise in this area that society expects and wants. Or perhaps the question is, more properly, whether *psychiatry as a profession* really believes that such additional specialized education and training should be necessary to prepare the psychiatrist for his work in this field: and if so, how such post-residency programs can be developed and made available, and what such programs should include.

AAPL members, as psychiatrists most interested in these questions, should be most active in the efforts to answer them, especially the basic question about how valuable, if at all, such additional academic training is, in contrast to the specialized experience which has been the sole basis for almost all of our expertise to date. AAPL is our forum for expressing ourselves on these questions; and AAPL has a major stake in the developing future of psychiatry and law.