

Distinguished Service Award Presented to Prof. Carlisle Runge (1920–1983)

Chief Justice Nathan S. Heffernan

Last May, the name of Professor Carlisle P. Runge was added to the list of recipients of the Distinguished Service Award from the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association. Prof. Runge was the 39th person to be so honored since the award was instituted in 1967. We are indebted to Chief Justice Nathan S. Heffernan for making his remarks available for reprinting here. In this way, Carl's many friends, students and colleagues who could not attend the presentation can now share the honor given to Carl.

Carlisle Piehl Runge was born in 1920 and died at Brule, Wisconsin, on September 18, 1983. Between those years he lived a life of excellence and service.

My remarks today are, in a measure, personal. Carl and I were the closest of friends for 45 years. We met as freshmen at the University of Wisconsin in the fall of 1938 and were partners on the freshmen debate team.

Although Carl was only 18, he was already imbued with the fundamental philosophy which made him, over his career, the leading exponent of the Wisconsin Idea—that a person of intellect had a responsibility to society that transcended a duty to mere personal survival and personal gain, that there was a duty to the community, the state, and the nation, indeed the world.

Carl was raised on the public service philosophy of the Bob La Follette Progressives, who saw government as an instrument of the people and who saw the University as an institution which had an obligation to devote its best talents to government and the public welfare. Carl gave a new dimension to the Wisconsin Idea, for in the later stages of his career he recognized and exemplified the duty of a governmental leader to bring the research and the knowledge of government to the University.

The recitation of the chronology of Carl's life is a litany of public service. His undergraduate career—appropriately majoring in American Institutions—was interrupted by World War II. He served overseas and in the Army of the United States from 1942 to 1946, where he achieved the rank of Major and he was



awarded the Bronze Star. He also attended Oxford University for a year at the end of the war.

Upon his return to civilian life, he entered law school at the University of Wisconsin, where he graduated in 1948. Upon his admission to the bar that same year, he started his career of public service as Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin.

In 1951, he joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin Law School, and in less than seven years he attained the rank of a full professor. He was no ordinary professor, for during this period, in

addition to teaching the usual academic courses in the law school, he determined to utilize his military experience in an academic course called "National Security Studies." This was his first turn around of the Wisconsin Idea—instead of a professor bringing the intellectual qualities of a university to the government, Carl brought the intellectual qualities of a distinguished soldier to the University. He later became the National Director of the Carnegie Foundation's Security Task Force.

During this time he continued his military duty in the Wisconsin National

Guard and attained the rank of Colonel and Logistics Officer for the division.

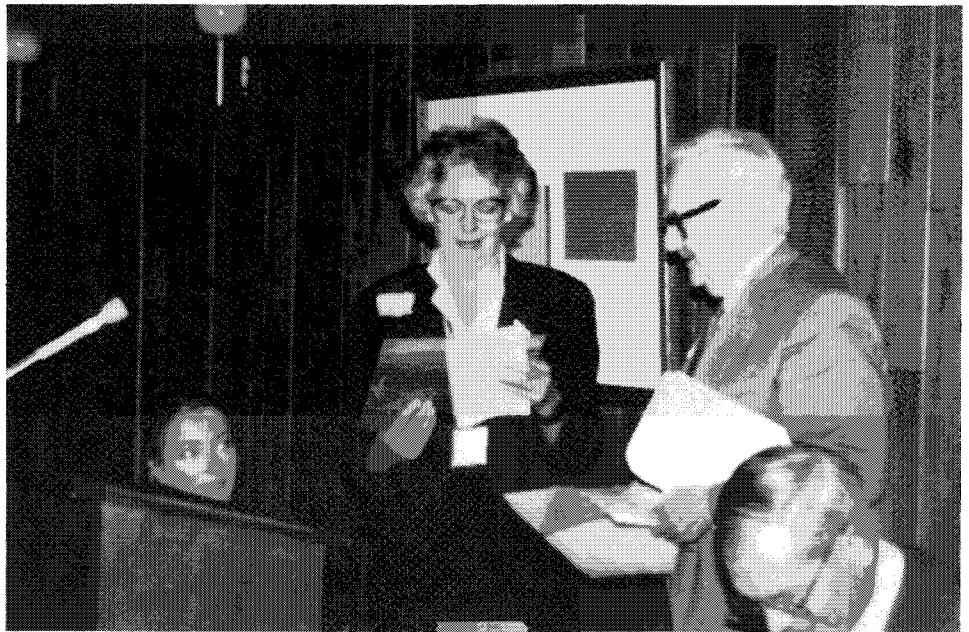
His talents and expertness were recognized by John Kennedy, for in 1961 the President appointed Carl as Assistant Secretary of Defense. I remember so well a visit with Carl in Washington in 1962, when the first shadows of the Vietnam War were creeping upon us. I remember Carl telling me that he had advised Robert McNamara, the then Secretary of Defense, that the minimum infantry requirement for a successful operation in Vietnam was over a million troops. The Secretary of Defense poo-pooed this estimate and proceeded on the assumption that 50,000 to 100,000 infantrymen could accomplish the military objectives. How different the history of the United States and the world might have been had Carl's wise counsel been heeded. The whole Vietnam fiasco might have been aborted.

Carl was no militarist. He was the best example of the citizen soldier who recognized, as did President Lincoln, that the conduct of a war and conduct to avoid a war was too important to leave to the generals.

He returned to the University, where he acted as Special Assistant to the President. As President Ed Young, under whom Carl served, said, "He was the best troubleshooter the University ever had." His intellectual and administrative talents materially contributed to the improvement of numerous University departments. After his return from Washington, he remained a member of the law faculty, although he was on leave while actively participating in other departments of government.

He was the first Director of the Coordination Committee on Higher Education. In that post, he has had a salubrious effect on all education in Wisconsin. He was Director of the Council on Economic Growth, formed of representatives of the Big 10 universities. He was consultant to the Argonne Universities Association, a group that sought to bring sanity to the development of nuclear energy. He became the Chairman of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, and in 1973 he became the Director for the United Nations of Adriatic Environmental Study in Yugoslavia.

He founded the Department of Public Policy and Administration at the University, now known as the Robert M. La Follette Institute of Public Affairs, and was its first director.



Chief Justice Heffernan presents award to Sally Runge.

During his career, Carl was active in politics; and to his everlasting credit, he was the Chairman of the Wisconsin Committee on the Record of Joseph McCarthy. This group led by Carl made the first definitive study of the unsubstantiated nature of Senator McCarthy's charges. This study did much to redeem the soul of the State of Wisconsin as a leader in governmental morality.

Although Carl was, from 1962 on, most active in University affairs not in the law school, he remained concerned about, and active in, the affairs of the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association.

Due to failing health, Carl retired from the University faculty in 1981 to live in Northern Wisconsin on the banks of the Brule River. In a sense, he changed not his career of public service but only its locale. During his few years of permanent residence in the North, he was active in the affairs of Northland College and the Sigurd Olsen Foundation. He was the lobbyist for the Brule and was the leading advocate of the bill that banned tubing on the Brule River.

The Runge's built a beautiful home on the Brule River—a home of Carl's and Sally's own design—constructed in part of the huge pine timbers from the Ashland Ore Docks. Carl's study overlooking the river reflects his public career: His four-star flag as Assistant Secretary of Defense; pictures of his friends in gov-

ernment—at least two presidents, who would have done better had they followed Carl's advice; a picture of his good friend, Scoop Jackson, who predeceased him by only a few weeks; his books and all the memorabilia of a great career. But they were not merely mementos of past events. They were evidence of a continuing commitment to the improvement of society. Carl served his country well. He was honored in 1981 by a convocation of the University entitled "The Wisconsin Idea—A Tribute to Carlisle P. Runge" sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Center for the Study of Public Policy and Administration, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, and the Institute for Environmental Studies. The Governor declared a "Carlisle Runge Day." The tribute was richly deserved.

So, too, is this award richly deserved. The criteria for this Alumni Award are that the honored person has made an outstanding contribution to the profession as a practitioner, teacher, judge, or in the government, or has been a full-time faculty member of the University of Wisconsin Law School. Carl's career more than satisfied the stipulated criteria. I know of no one who in recent years has made a greater contribution to the "Wisconsin Idea." I am honored to have been his friend for almost 50 years and honored to present this award to Sally Runge.