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VALUING LAWYERS
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(1) Introduction

1. It is a pleasure to have been asked to give this year's Sir Henry Brooke lecture. If anyone understood the value of lawyers, the focus of my lecture today, it was Sir Henry. He is still, of course, missed. As a barrister, chair of the Law Commission, Vice-President of the Court of Appeal's Civil Division, President of the Society for Computer and Law and Chairman of the Civil Mediation Council, there was no area of law in which he was not involved. And, of course, in playing a key role in the creation and development of BAILLI, he understood the fundamental importance of open justice.
2. Different people, inevitably, have different views concerning the value of lawyers. Shakespeare, famously gave expression to one type of view: the tyrant's view. In a fascinating study of how Shakespeare deals with tyranny across his plays, Stephen Greenblatt, notes how in Henry VI, Part 2, Shakespeare explores what Greenblatt describes as fraudulent populism. And how Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, stirs up a populist revolt, the aim of which is not to better the lives of the poor but is rather intended to place a '*golden circuit on [his] head.*' Part of that process is to stir up sentiment against lawyers. That he does, through manipulating John Cade, '*a headstrong Kentishman*' to lead a revolt. And it is during one of Cade's speeches that a voice from the listening crowd utters the infamous line '*The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.*' The tyrant's call throughout history. As Greenblatt puts it,

*'Shakespeare knew that the line would get laughs, as it has done for the last four centuries. It releases the current of aggression that swirls around the whole enterprise of the law – directed not merely at venal attorneys but at all the agents of the vast social apparatus that compels the honouring of contracts, the payment of debts, the fulfilment of obligations. We blithely imagine that the crowd wants such responsible qualities in its leaders, but the crowd suggests otherwise. What it wants instead is permission to ignore commitments, to violate promises, and to break the rules.'*¹

¹ S. Greenblatt, *Tyrant – Shakespeare on Power*, (Vintage, 2018) at 39.

What it wants, as Shakespeare is suggesting, is that without lawyers, without the means to give effect to the law and hold all to it, the crown will rest all that much easier on the tyrant's head. What it wants is a world without the rule of law.

3. Shakespeare has not been the only one to be critical of lawyers. Bentham in the 19th century was equally no fan. He dubbed the Master of the Rolls a swindler.² He referred to the relationship between judges and lawyers as a '*union of fraud and extortion*'.³ At the same time as he was writing, Lord Eldon, at the time Lord Chancellor, was also weighing in. He had been appointed to chair a Commission to investigate the problems then facing the Court of Chancery, of which he was in charge. They were problems with which we are also all too familiar today: complexity, cost, and delay in litigation. The Commission reported in 1826. Was the cause of the problems the Court itself or its rules of practice?
4. After weighty consideration, Eldon's Commission concluded that no fault could be laid at his door: it was not the fault of either the Court or its practices. No, the problem lay elsewhere. The fault lay with '*the carelessness of some parties, the obstinacy or knavery of others, or the inattention or ignorance of agents*'.⁴ Lurking under the comment is, of course, criticism of the lawyer: who else is responsible for the carelessness of parties, for not advising them away from obstinacy or knavery. And who is the inattention or ignorant agent if not the parties' lawyer?
5. More recently, an echo of Eldon's complaint that the problems associated with the delivery of justice lie at the hands of lawyers can be seen in work carried out by two American scholars. They suggest that in some, simple, cases there is '*little evidence that lawyers make much of a difference*.' Worse than that, there is evidence from one study relating to unemployment benefit appeals in the US that the only difference between cases where parties were represented by lawyers and those where they were not was that the former took longer – in fact, 40% longer. And increased time brings with it increased cost.⁵ Eldon would no doubt have nodded in agreement.

² J. Bentham, *Principles of Judicial Procedure*, in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, (Bowring edition, 1843) Vol. 2 at 13.

³ J. Bentham, *ibid.* at 76.

⁴ Report of the Chancery Commission (1826) at 9.

⁵ B. Barton & B. Bibas, *Rebooting Justice – More Technology, Fewer Lawyers and the Future of Law*, (Encounter, 2017) at 104-108.

6. I must, however, depart from these approaches. In this evening's lecture I want to consider how lawyers have value, and why we should therefore value them. And value them highly.

(2) The rule of law and economic growth

7. Let me start them by accentuating a positive or rather a more accurate picture of the benefit that lawyers provide.
8. The CityUK's latest report on UK legal services makes the case for the economic value of lawyers in emphatic terms. In 2023, the legal sector contributed £37 billion to the economy, while generating a trade surplus of £7.6 billion. It employed 368,000 people across the UK, two thirds of whom are employed in London. This income is generated not simply by UK law firms, but also the 200 global law firms with offices in the UK. Additionally, the total tax contribution flowing from professional services related to the legal sector was approximately £30.9 billion. And then there is the burgeoning legal tech sector in the UK, which is home to 350 companies, all of which are contributing to economic growth.⁶ And more than that, as CityUK puts it,

*'The UK's global reputation as a centre for justice and the rule of law is fundamental to the UK's status as one of the world's leading international financial centres. English common law is by far the most popular choice of governing law for cross-border contracts. The UK is also the world's leading centre for international dispute resolution in commercial disputes.'*⁷

And where dispute resolution is concerned, this encompasses not only the work of the Commercial Court, the Chancery Division, the TCC and the Patents Court, but also the work carried out by our world leading arbitration centres, arbitrators and mediators. Over 28,601 civil and commercial disputes in total were resolved via some form of alternative dispute resolution in the UK in 2023.⁸ It is sometimes easy to forget that the value derived from early, effective and particularly cost-effective settlement via ADR is one that has wide ramifications. As Lord Simon noted in *D v NSPCC*, as

⁶ CityUK, *UK Legal Services 2024*, which is available here: https://www.thecityuk.com/our-work/uk-legal-services-2024/?utm_campaign=Legal+Services+report+launch+email+2024&utm_source=force24&utm_medium=email&utm_content=textlink.

⁷ Ibid at 9.

⁸ Ibid at 46.

‘... society benefits if disputes can be settled out of court through negotiation between the parties.’⁹

Society benefits from early and effective settlement because companies and individuals who would otherwise expend their assets and their time on litigation can, following such a settlement, focus on developing their businesses, investing their time and creativity in those businesses, in their private and social lives and so on.

9. This leads me to a wider point. The value of lawyers does not just come from their role in litigation and the adjudication of disputes.
10. It stems, from what might be viewed as an invisible benefit, the very one that Shakespeare’s would-be tyrants wanted to set aside in favour of rule by dictat: the rule of law. It is well-known and generally accepted that societies that are committed to the rule of law are likely to be more economically successful than those that are not, or those that have weaker commitments to it than others.¹⁰
11. Let me be clear at this point. When I refer to the rule of law, I am very much not referring to rule by lawyers. A robust legal profession and an equally robust independent judiciary is a necessary component of the rule of law, and hence of intrinsic value to any successful society. But it is not a necessary and sufficient condition. It is one part of an overarching whole that goes to make up a healthy, open and publicly accountable democracy. Without, however, access to expert legal advice and, where necessary, representation, it simply is not possible to secure the rule of law effectively, again as Shakespeare’s would-be revolutionaries well knew.
12. We have seen this point and its importance emphasised by the Supreme Court. I refer to the opinion of Lord Reed in the *Unison* case.¹¹ In that case, the Supreme Court emphasised two aspects of the law that can go unnoticed and under-appreciated. The first is the role that the law plays in shaping the framework within which businesses plan, innovate and invest, how they and individuals organise their affairs, enter into contracts, buy and sell property, how individuals develop their private lives, educate their children, engage in social activities and so on. The law, created by Parliament and, where appropriate, the common law, is the framework within which we all lead our lives, and in this – as it has been called – law-thick world – it generally does so without the need for recourse to lawyers. It silently guides what we do each day.

⁹ *D v NSPCC* [1978] A.C. 171 at 232.

¹⁰ See, for instance, D. Acemoglu & J. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail*, (2012).

¹¹ *R (UNISON) v Lord Chancellor* [2017] UKSC 51, [2020] A.C. 86 at [66]ff.

13. But, and this is a significant but, that framework is developed with the essential input of lawyers. If it were not for lawyers advising clients on the law when disputes arise, arguing cases before the courts, devising innovative arguments to test the intellectual mettle of our judiciary, and appealing judgments where appropriate, as a society we would not see that framework develop through court judgments; we would not see it clarified and authoritatively interpreted. And where those interpretations and clarifications through court judgments are viewed by Parliament to be in need of revision or correction, we would not see democratic course corrections. Lawyers and their contribution to the legal framework, its development and implementation in this regard ought not therefore to be underestimated. Without lawyers we would have no effective legal framework.

14. This leads to the second generally unnoticed value that stems from lawyers. Law does not always guide us silently, running in the background of our lives. As Lord Scott put it in the *Three Rivers* litigation when explaining the importance of legal professional privilege,

‘... in the complex world in which we live there are a multitude of reasons why individuals, whether humble or powerful, or corporations, whether large or small, may need to seek the advice or assistance of lawyers in connection with their affairs; they recognise that the seeking and giving of this advice so that the clients may achieve an orderly arrangement of their affairs is strongly in the public interest.’¹²

Obtaining effective legal advice is the means through which individuals and businesses can order their affairs consistently with the law’s demands, with the obligations and duties it imposes on them. Again, it supports the rule of law. It not only helps promote social development and economic growth, it also minimises the risk that disputes will arise. It has a key preventive role to play. Effective legal advice is one of the means through which the costs and disruptive of social conflict and legal disputes can be avoided. It is thus a means through which the adverse costs, both to individuals who would otherwise become involved in litigation and to Society as a whole, which may have to pick up the costs that flow from the development of disputes and litigation, can be avoided. Prevention is better than cure is a truism for a reason. Given the importance of giving effective advice to individuals and businesses, might we need to consider two things.

15. First, to enhance the value that lawyers contribute in this respect, is there a need to review the scope of legal education and training. The point here is whether we need to introduce elements that help future lawyers develop skills to identify where problems have arisen in the past so as to help them advise their clients on what

¹² *Three Rivers (No 4)* [2005] 1 A.C. 610 at [34].

steps can be taken to avoid problems arising in the future. And, given the potential for AI to play a role here in the identification of factors that led to and lead to disputes arising in specific circumstances, does this call for the greater incorporation of AI education into law degrees and vocational training. I return to education later.

16. Secondly, is there a need to promote access to legal advice and assistance so the benefits of active prevention can be realised more broadly across society. When considering reductions in legal aid since the introduction of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, the National Audit Office noted in 2024 the following, that the Ministry of Justice

‘... acknowledges the possibility that the removal of legal aid for early advice in some categories of law may have either increased its own costs by allowing issues to escalate and become more costly or passed costs onto other government bodies.’¹³

The nature of that possibility was fleshed out later that year in a report commissioned by *The Law Society*. Work carried out by *Frontier Economics* highlighted how unmet legal need, that is the absence of effective early legal advice, can result in significant adverse effects for individuals and, as a consequence for society as a whole.¹⁴ An absence of preventive legal advice can, they noted, lead to increased homelessness, which can in turn lead to otherwise avoidable increased pressure on the NHS and an increase in working days lost due to poor health. The similar absence of early advice can also lead to otherwise avoidable short and longer term adverse impacts on families, particularly where there is family breakdown.

17. These reports focus on legal aid. The point is, however, a broader one. They highlight the importance to society of the law’s preventative function: how it can prevent disputes developing and escalating. They highlight the benefits to individuals, businesses, the economy, to society generally of early advice from lawyers. They pose an equally broad question, one that calls for society to consider – and I hope for lawyers to consider – how can we best secure access to such early preventive

¹³ National Audit Office, *Government’s Management of Legal Aid*, (2024) at 20, which is available here: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/governments-management-of-legal-aid.pdf>.

¹⁴ The Law Society & Frontier Economics, *Implications of Research on the Sustainability of Civil Legal Aid*, at 6-7, which is available here: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/research/civil-legal-aid-the-public-service-that-can-benefit-us-all>.

advice. How can we do it economically, efficiently, and so it is best able to benefit society as a whole? CityUK's latest report tells us that the UK is a global leader in legal sector technology and innovation.¹⁵ That tells its own story about the strength of creativity within and related to the legal profession. Is there any reason why that creativity cannot be utilised to develop innovative and effective means to promote access to preventative legal advice, so that we are as strong in its delivery as we are in the delivery of dispute resolution in all its forms? I cannot believe that there is any reason why we cannot, and that the profession's significant value to society cannot then be enhanced further.

(3) A robust profession and judicial futures

18. I want to turn now to the value that the legal professions provide to the judiciary: to judicial futures. Sir Brian Leveson once remarked that the criminal justice system was an ecosystem. And, that as an ecosystem *'its vitality [was] a product of the effective interaction between its constituent parts and of their individual vitality.'* He went on to note how a *'structural weakness in their interaction, a fundamental weakness in any one or more parts, [would] undermine the system as a whole.'*¹⁶ The reality is that the whole of our justice system is an ecosystem. Civil, family and criminal justice, along with justice in the tribunals, and the developing online justice system, all form part of a single, wider whole. Both the judiciary and the legal profession form essential constituent parts of that whole. That connection can be seen through the fact that two of the regulatory objectives governing the operation of the legal profession are to support the constitutional principle of the rule of law, of which judicial independence is an inherent part, and that regulation should encourage *'an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession.'*¹⁷

19. Just as the judiciary is and must be independent of Government and Parliament if it is to ensure it can carry out its constitutional function, so the legal profession must also be robust in its independence of Government, Parliament, and the Judiciary if it is to carry out its, may I suggest, constitutional function. That it must be robust in this regard is important for several reasons, not least that it underpins how lawyers provide their clients with legal advice and assistance effectively so that all in Society are equal before the law. I want to highlight one specific reason, however. That is the link that independence provides between the profession and the judiciary.

¹⁵ CityUK, *ibid* at 30.

¹⁶ Sir Brian Leveson, *Criminal Cases Review Commission Annual Lecture 2018*, at [47], which is available here: <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/speech-leveson-ccrc-lecture-april-2018.pdf>.

¹⁷ Legal Services Act 2007, s.1(1)(b) and (f).

20. It remains the case that the vast majority of the judiciary are drawn from the legal profession. There are, of course, examples where judges have been appointed from legal academia. Lady Hale and Lord Burrows are the two most obvious examples. The route from academia to the judiciary remains, however, under-developed. Given then that today's lawyers are tomorrow's judges, it is essential that they continue to develop their careers committed to and exhibiting all the historical hallmarks of independence of thought, strength of character and, where called for, moral courage to advise and act for individuals and businesses who may be unpopular, just as they would for any other client. And more than that, that they continue to exercise their independent judgment in advising and acting for their clients. If tomorrow's judges are to continue to demonstrate the robust independence of mind in the service of justice that has historical been the case and remains so today, it is essential that today's lawyers continue to develop that independence of mind in their practices. And, it should be said, that academic lawyers too demonstrate through their research and the robust critiques of our judgments the same essential characteristics.
21. Maintaining the future vitality of the judiciary through maintaining the current vitality of the legal profession is not simply a question of ensuring that lawyers continue to learn and exercise robust independence. It is also a question of skills. Historically, when judges had less of a hands-on role in case management, were less involved in the management and administration of courts, and had less to do with technology because there was simply less technology, expertise in the law, independence of mind, good character, and robust judgment were the essential requirements for judicial appointment. A robust future judiciary calls for more than that.
22. Today's judiciary needs to demonstrate effective management skills. It needs to be able to engage in and lead the effective administration of the courts. In some jurisdictions, such as the Netherlands, this calls for specific training in administration for those members of the judiciary with specific administrative roles. As our courts continue to digitise and particularly given the increasing importance artificial intelligence will have in the management and administration of justice, as well as its potential role in assisting judges to carry out their role, it is essential that all judges are as familiar with it as they are with the administrative, case management, and adjudicative functions.

23. Given this, it is all the more important that the legal profession continues to develop, as it always has done, its development of these skills as much as it has embraced technology. In that latter respect, I very much doubt it is the case, as some suggest, that where technology is concerned, the legal profession has adopted a conservative approach. That it has not is evident from the lead that very many of our leading law firms have taken in the adoption of technology and particularly recently AI. My point then is that if we are to maintain the vitality of tomorrow's judiciary, we must maintain the vitality of the legal profession so that tomorrow's judges are fully equipped to carry out the many aspects of their role when appointed.
24. If, as a society, we do not ensure we have a robust legal profession that is able to do this, we harm another crucial aspect of the ecosystem of justice: the judiciary. This is particularly important where we consider the need to ensure that the judiciary is well-equipped and experienced to deal with criminal and family cases, as much as it is to deal civil and commercial cases, as much as it is able to deal with public law cases as it is chancery matters. And that it is properly equipped now to consider and give effect to its new powers concerning the use of mediation, ENE and other forms of ADR. We must take care then to ensure that we are able to maintain the health of all areas of legal practice: each has its intrinsic value as part of the whole. If we allow one area to atrophy, the whole will be diminished as a consequence. Where one or more areas of legal practice are under pressure, what steps can the profession as a whole take to support them and to support individual lawyers to develop valuable and rewarding careers within them? Careers that benefit society through enabling the public to access high quality legal advice, and in the future benefit it by ensuring the judiciary remains strong, vibrant and independently minded.
25. More than that, and reverting to the topic of education, do we also need to consider how we ensure that our lawyers have the necessary training and skills. This may mean revisiting the nature of legal education. Given that 21st century legal practice is and will continue to become a practice that requires an understanding of technology and, particularly, AI, do we need to ensure that all law students are required to undertake appropriate courses as part of their law degrees, their vocational training and their continuing professional development. Where insights can be gained from other subject areas might we want to consider how they can be incorporated into legal education. It is, for instance, standard practice now for universities to provide four year law degrees with one of these years spent studying law in a university in another country. The benefits are obvious. Might we want to adapt that model so that one of the four years is dedicated to studying computer science, AI, psychology,

finance and so on. Some universities are already doing so. Might it be an approach that should be generalised across legal education so that all new entrants to the profession are fully equipped in these areas for developing their practices in the 21st century? And from there, for those who want to do so, to enter the judiciary in the course of their careers.

(4) Ethics, standards and effective regulation

26. This leads me to my final point: ethics, standards and effective regulation. Lord Bingham, when Master of the Rolls, famously held in *Bolton v The Law Society* that solicitors had to be capable of being trusted to the ends of the earth.¹⁸ This was a statement made in the context of solicitors' regulation. There is a need to '... *maintain [the] reputation and sustain public confidence in the integrity of the profession. . .*'. And the reason for this, as he put it,:

*'If a member of the public sells his house, very often his largest asset, and entrusts the proceeds to his solicitor, pending re-investment in another house, he is ordinarily entitled to expect that the solicitor will be a person whose trustworthiness is not, and never has been, seriously in question. Otherwise, the whole profession, and the public as a whole, is injured. A profession's most valuable asset is its collective reputation and the confidence which that inspires.'*¹⁹

The same applies, and sometimes more so, where an individual places responsibility for their liberty, their immigration status, their business dealings, their claim for damages for personal injury, their family circumstances, in the hands of their lawyer.

27. It is fair to say that Lord Bingham's words have resonated loudly in recent years. Professor Moorhead in his recent Hamlyn lectures has pointed to concerns about the legal profession's involvement in the Post Office scandal. We can all think of high profile collapses, and subsequent regulatory investigations into law firms.²⁰ And more broadly, as the Legal Services Board has recently summarised it, evidence shows that lawyers are sometimes failing to act in an appropriately ethical way in other circumstances, which range from

¹⁸ *Bolton v The Law Society* [1994] WLR 512 at [15].

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ See, for instance, J. Hyde, SRA ready to move on SSB prosecutions, (Law Gazette, 28 February 2025), which is available here: <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/sra-ready-to-move-on-ssb-prosecutions/5122501.article>.

‘ . . . unintentional behaviour through to more severe, intentional and even criminal conduct, [which includes] misleading courts and compromised independence, as well . . . the misuse of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) and the use of Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPPs).’²¹

28. For a critic, such as Bentham, the various examples would support his view that the legal profession’s worth to society was somewhat less than it might consider it to be. For Lord Bingham, they would have underscored the importance of that most valuable asset: the profession’s reputation and client and public confidence in it. For others, like Professors Moorhead and Higgins, it suggests that reforms may need to be made to legal professional privilege so that it cannot, as they suggest, be misused, particularly, by in-house legal teams.²² For the Legal Services Board, the various concerns they highlight suggest a need for regulatory reform focused on ensuring that the primary legal services regulators provide the right framework to give effect to professional ethics across the profession, as well as the right level and type of support to ensure that the framework is effective.²³

29. Undoubtedly there will be detailed discussion of the reforms that are needed to minimise the risk of future unethical conduct, so that the profession’s reputation is not called into question as it has been in recent years. And just as importantly, that the profession is able to properly deliver the value to its clients and Society in the form of proper and effective legal advice and assistance, even where that advice and assistance involves telling the client hard truths. One question that may need to be considered though is whether and to what extent the various recent and troubling examples have been as much a consequence of the approach we take to regulation. This was certainly the view taken by Professor Stephen Mayson in his independent review of legal services regulation. As he concluded,

‘The current regulatory structure provides an incomplete and limited framework for legal services regulation that is not able in the near-term and beyond to meet the demands and expectations placed on it.’²⁴

²¹ Legal Services Board, Upholding Professional Ethical Duties, (March 2025, Consultation Paper), which is available here: <https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/PERL-Consultation-Documents-February-2025.pdf>.

²² A. Higgins & R. Moorhead, *Reforms to Privilege Laws*, (Post Office Project, 2025), which is available here: <https://postofficeproject.net/wp-content/uploads/WP9-Legal-Professional-Privilege.pdf?ga=2.236422985.992803771.1741340165-1970005668.1740481613>

²³ Legal Services Board, *ibid* at 6-7.

²⁴ S. Mayson, *Reforming Legal Services*, (2020) at 13, which is available here: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ethics-law/sites/ethics-law/files/irlsr_final_report_final_0.pdf.

And in March of last year, Sir Bob Neill, then Chairman of the Justice Select Committee, while noting in a letter to the then Lord Chancellor, that the legal profession was a '*a vital and internationally significant industry which makes a major contribution to the economy*', was clear that while there was no real appetite to review the current regulatory regime, it was, as he put, '*undeniable that the case for re-examination of the legislative framework underpinning regulation is growing stronger and stronger*'.²⁵ Whether there is such a review is clearly a matter for Government.

30. In thinking about whether to review, and if so what might be the scope of such a review, several points might beneficially be explored. First, what does the long view tell us. Is there evidence that professional and ethical standards have declined overall in the last twenty years, or at least since the introduction of the post-Legal Services Act 2007 regulatory structure? Secondly, if there is such evidence, is the regulatory structure the or a significant cause of that decline. It is argued outside the legal environment that poor behaviour is a symptom of poor environments.²⁶ Is that the case here? Thirdly, if the regulatory structure is not the or a significant cause, what then are the causes and how can the challenge they create be met effectively? That too may lead to a conclusion that regulatory reform is needed. It may also lead to the conclusion that changes need to be made to legal education, so that professional ethics is not simply a part of the vocational courses but becomes an integral part of law degrees.

31. I do not suggest any answers to these questions. They are, however, questions that might usefully be grasped. The profession cannot allow itself to be misunderstood, as might well become the case if recent examples of poor professional and ethical standards continue to increase, to take the view of ethics best left to Alfred Doolittle. As those familiar with Pygmalion (or My Fair Lady) will remember, the father of Eliza Doolittle when asked if he had no morals, retorted, '*Can't afford them, Governor*'.²⁷ To ensure that the profession continues to be highly valued, to minimise the risk of unethical conduct that calls into question its value then, it is of fundamental importance that the right regulatory structures are in place and the right approach to the teaching and maintenance of professional ethics is in place. That is the challenge. It is one that I have no doubt can be met.

²⁵ Sir Bob Neill MP, Letter to Alex Chalk MP LC (21 March 2024), which is available here: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/44017/documents/218057/default/>.

²⁶ See, for instance, P. Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect*, (2007).

²⁷ G. Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*, Act 2.

(5) Conclusion

32. The rule of law and economic growth, effective legal advice, the prevention and resolution of disputes, the provision of the judiciary of the future – one that reflects the breadth of Society – underpinned by sound legal education, professional ethics and effective regulation. Taken together they articulate the significant value that lawyers provide to society. As a charge sheet goes, that seems to me to be a rather impressive one; one that more than answers the cynics and the critics.

33. I want to leave the last word to Sir Henry. Twenty years ago giving a lecture on access to justice and judicial review he commented on the need for serious consideration to be given to the cost of justice, and who is to pay for it. If I can adapt his words, all of us who care for justice and the rule of law must, I think, start talking seriously about the value of lawyers to the delivery of justice and a just society. There is a powerful story to tell. It is one that lies at the heart of any vibrant, open society.²⁸

34. Thank you²⁹.

²⁸ Sir Henry Brooke, *Current Trends in Judicial Review*, (2006) 11:1 Jud Rev 1 at [8], '*All of us who care for justice and the rule of law must, I think, start asking very serious questions about the cost of justice, and who is to pay for it.*'

²⁹ And my thanks to Dr John Sorabji for his assistance in the preparation of this lecture.