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Professor Reed Dickerson

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
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Professor Reed Dickerson

GEORGE C. KEELY*

“Who’s that playing the trumpet? He’s terrific.” The occasion for this question was an annual dinner-dance of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL) when some of the commissioners got up during the intermission to entertain their fellow commissioners and their guests. The trumpet player was F. Reed Dickerson—a man of unusual talents, great intellect and many abilities. Who would have thought that an eminent professor, noted writer and draftsman, and leading legislative expert could play the trumpet so well. But, of course, Reed Dickerson can do, and has done, many things well.

In debates on proposed new uniform laws at annual meetings of the NCCUSL, new commissioners will often turn to older members and ask after a distinguished member stands and speaks—“Who’s that? He’s good.” Reed Dickerson is one of the members of the Conference whose incisive questions and comments often elicit such an inquiry.

The Conference is composed of commissioners from the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and of associate members who are directors of their states’ legislative drafting office. There are more than two hundred and forty commissioners and forty-six associate members—all lawyers. Reed Dickerson is outstanding in this group.

The Conference has written and promulgated many uniform laws, such as the Uniform Commercial Code, Uniform Partnership Act, Uniform Gifts to Minors Act, Uniform Reciprocal Enforce-

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ment of Support, and the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act. Proposed uniform laws are drafted by committees of eight to ten commissioners and are then carefully considered by the entire Conference at two annual meetings. At the annual meetings, the Conference, acting as a Committee of the Whole, reads aloud, criticizes and debates proposed laws line-by-line, section-by-section. It is commissioners with the background, the intellectual capacity and the lucid reasoning of Reed Dickerson that make intelligent, coherent drafting and debate possible.

Reed Dickerson has been a commissioner for over twenty-two years and has participated actively, effectively and with distinction in the Committee of the Whole, on Conference committees and on special drafting committees. He has rendered outstanding service on the Legislative Committee, one of the most important committees of the Conference, the Study Committee on the Proposed Plain Language Act, the Committee on Law School Research, the Drafting Committee on the Uniform Consumer Sales Practice Act, the Drafting Committee on the Model Public Defender Act and the Drafting Committee on the Metric System Procedure Act. In recognition of his eminent service to the Conference, Commissioner Dickerson has been designated a life member.

The Conference is pleased to join in the dedication of this issue of the *Indiana Law Journal* to this outstanding lawyer, teacher, draftsman, writer, commissioner on uniform laws and trumpet player.
