Power Struggle Influences Law Schools at the Expense of 'Liberal' Bloomington
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The recent controversy surrounding the two I.U. law schools seems to resemble the well-known Jeopardy game show. Everyone knows the given answer—merger—but no one seems to have any intelligent question besides—why?

Individuals interviewed, who are in some way affiliated with I.U. Law School-Bloomington, are unhappy and feel threatened by the talk of a possible merging plans at the law school on this campus and the I.U. Law School-Indianapolis. These people believe that the two schools merge, the division between them will grow and grow—much to the detriment of their school as a branch of the entire Indiana legal education system.

The debate has surfaced as a result of the IU-Sports Week editor that reported on a meeting of lawyers and judges in Bloomington concerning legal education since the establishment of the Indiana law school as a branch of I.U. in 1944. Indianapolis offered only a night school program for law students until 1968. In the legal world, the school has been guilty of absorbing all the law library of both schools, saving a strong drive by Indianapolis faculty and students to build its own law school, both in academics and reputation.

In order to do this, "Indiana law school administrators began to play the game of politics by appealing to all the Indiana Bar Association parties and winning favors with the Indiana Supreme Court," one member of the Board of Visitors said. (The Board of Visitors is an advisory group for I.U. Law School-Bloomington composed of lawyers and judges). "Dean Harvey, especially, has been guilty of this," he added.

Out of this sentiment grew a strong drive by Indianapolis faculty and students to build its own law school, both in academics and reputation. According to one source who wished to remain unidentified, firstly and power politics have existed between Indianapolis and Bloomington concerning legal education since the establishment of the Indiana law school as a branch of I.U. in 1944. Indianapolis offered only a night school program for law students until 1968. In the legal world, the school has been guilty of absorbing all the law library of both schools, saving a strong drive by Indianapolis faculty and students to build its own law school, both in academics and reputation.

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In the meantime, Bloomington's law school has been setting a different image for itself in the Indiana legal world, because of its own characteristics and the liberal attitude of its deans. I.U. Law School-Bloomington has been considered the "radical" law school, which has attracted conservative lawyers and judges in the past four years.

In 1971, to the dismay of many protesting students and Bloomington law school's Dean William Burnett Harvey (not to be confused with current dean of I.U. Law School-Indianapolis Dean William F. Harvey) was asked to reign his position. At the time, many persons speculated his "resignation" stemmed from his liberal approach to the war in Vietnam and his outspoken stands regarding the war in Vietnam to university and student campus protests.

If an angry fire was burning in Bloomington over the 1971 Harvey incident, the enactment of Rule 13 in 1974 added extra gas.

Outraged interviewees said the requirement does not provide "needed guidance" but is restrictive and unnecessary. Three persons said Rule 13 is another jab at Bloomington. Previously Bloomington required approximately 15 hours which least left most persons enough free time to pursue less traditional courses as environmental, women's welfare and sociological law.

According to one I.U. Law School-Bloomington graduate, many people believe the Indiana Supreme Court-enacted Rule 13, is designed to gear students away from these non-traditional, non-state oriented courses, and force everyone to become Indiana practitioners, she said.

And Harvey and Givan defend Rule 13 as an attempt to help students prepare for bar exams after 1973's relatively high percentage of flunk-outs from the Indiana bar exam (statistics were unavailable according to the State Board of Law Examiners.)

In comparison, Boshkoff has been outspoken and consistent in his support of Rule 13, and many of the persons interviewed speculate this may have "cost Bloomington politically."

Out of this background arises the talk of "merging" the two law schools.

More than three months ago Harvey wrote Boshkoff and explained his and the I.U. law school's reaction to it as "probably absorb all the the law library here (Indianapolis), and perhaps a substantial part of the law library in Bloomington too."

This statement, more than anything, has evoked a barrage of complaints from concerned people in Bloomington. According to the Courier-Journal, implicit in Harvey's remark is "the understanding that the Bloomington law school, stores of its library, would die." Neither the persons interviewed nor the Wilburn administration, who investigated the reorganization of the entire University administration, last year, wish to see the discontinuation of the two law schools. They especially don't want to see the Bloomington law school "die."

President Ryan will appoint a committee to examine the possibility of merging the two law schools shortly. The committee will decide when and how to mesh the schools into one institution. There is talk the I.U. law schools in Bloomington and Indianapolis will have one dean with one "cooperative" faculty and identical curricula, but currently no one is certain exactly what "merging" the schools would entail.

In the meantime, the undergraduate battle continues—undercover because most people who are opposed to merging are remaining silent about it. There seems to be an attitude among the individuals interviewed which is summed up by Boshkoff who said, "We simply have to wait and let the committee make the decision."

And as one member of the Board of Visitors said, "Let's just hope the committee is fair. This is not time for politics."

Denise Patitz
Opinion Page Assistant