



Clifford E. Haines

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## More Change Still Needed

**M**y mother's good china came to mind the other day. You know, the china that only came out on special occasions because it was delicate and special. What brought it to mind was the phrase "bull in a china shop." That phrase was used recently by one of my good PBA friends to describe me. It will come as no surprise to those who know me that this isn't the first time I have heard that. In some respects I can't argue with the analogy because I know I am at times headstrong, single-minded and determined. Likewise, I can charge ahead seemingly oblivious to the consequences. But I have some difficulty with the china shop part of the analogy.

The practice of law — and the activities of the PBA — can hardly be compared to something so delicate. Perhaps a better word is fragile, not because it lacks the right composition, but because it is so highly sensitive.

The PBA is steeped in tradition but growing in diversity. And that diversity doesn't have a lot of time for much of that tradition. The young lawyers and minority members approach our organization differently than the older generation, and as we go forward we need to keep in mind that there have been dramatic social and cultural changes in the years since we adopted a statement of purpose, wrote our bylaws and created our House of Delegates. Just as the winds of change are upon the political culture in Harrisburg, the winds of change are upon us lawyers, and we need to be agile and ready to adapt.

I leave my post as PBA president with a sense of satisfaction in what we have accomplished this past year and with regret that we didn't get further. As the mantle of PBA president passes to the inestimable Gretchen Mundorff and the presidential officers who follow, there is unfinished business that needs to be addressed.

The association needs a greater commitment to its diversity policy. We still have not succeeded in advancing members of minorities to significant positions of leadership outside the committee structure.

The association needs to address the unwillingness of law firms to support the organization by paying the dues of their associates. It is not likely that the trend in that direction will change, and it is critical that we not look just at cost-saving measures but find significant non-dues revenue sources.

Our approach to CLE needs to be analyzed and the relationship between the PBA and the Pennsylvania Bar Institute revisited. Two physical campuses is probably neither cost-efficient nor good business.

We need to consider an alternative to our current dependence on outside sources for liability insurance. We are too much at the mercy of others when we need not be.

We need to strengthen our approach to mediating disputes between the bench and bar and within the profession itself.

And I hope we will develop meaningful recommendations to assist the constitutional review process that has grown far beyond our association in the short time since our special House meeting last October.

Recently I looked at my mother's old china, which has passed on to me. It looked, frankly, a little tired and worn. I doubt that my kids will have any interest in it. Their generation doesn't do sit-down dinners with linen, silverware and china. Maybe it should go out to pasture where the bull can grind it back into the ground.

Clifford E. Haines  
PBA President