

## FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

# Legal Center First in U.S.

by NANETTE GEE

The meeting of Herbert Hoover, Herbert Brownell Jr., Henry F. Holland and other distinguished lawyers here this week for the Inter-American Bar Conference is reminiscent of another meeting five years ago when an imposing procession of legal talent assembled to help the Southwestern Legal foundation dedicate a new idea in law improvement.

Sweltering in heavy caps and gowns, rows of eminent lawyers and judges marched into McFarlin auditorium on the SMU campus to hear dedication services for three buildings 100 yards away.

The buildings made up the first legal center ever built in this country. Endowed by businessmen and attorneys from five southwestern states, the center was to be a clinic where laws could be studied and legal research made in the same manner as medical research is conducted in medical centers.

The dedication was coupled with Lawyers week at SMU and a regional meeting there of the American Bar Association. The three events drew to Dallas some of the biggest names in American jurisprudence.

Justices Tom Clark and Robert H. Jackson of the United States Supreme Court; Dr. Umphrey Lee, then president of SMU; Judge Harold R. Medina, who presided over the famous 1949 trial of eleven top Communists in New York; Gordon Dean, chairman of the Atomic Energy commission and assistant to Justice Robert H. Jackson during the Nuremberg trial; Henry R. Luce, founder, editor and publisher of "Time", "Fortune" and "Life"; John W. Davis, former ambassador to Great Britain and 1924 Democratic presidential nominee; Carol M. Shanks, president of Prudential Life Insurance com-

Dallas for the last 30 years."

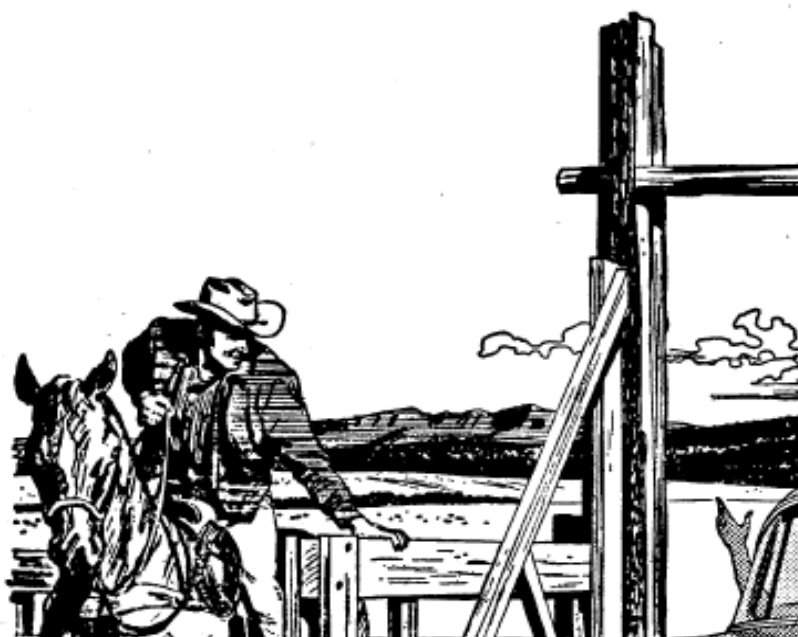
Arthur T. Vanderbilt, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey and former president of the ABA, was main speaker at the services. He predicted that the legal center would be the rendezvous of "some of the ablest, most public spirited lawyers and laymen in the country engaged in work, the importance of which will be unmatched by any other comparative endeavor ever undertaken in this country in the field of law."

Vanderbilt, who originated

the idea of legal centers (Dean Robert G. Storey had the dream of SMU's legal center), said there was a need for simplification and condensation of laws—"so that one well-reasoned principle can supplant a score or a hundred technical rules."

Today, SMU's Legal Center is host to the second meeting in the United States of the 18 year old Inter-American Bar Association (It previously met in Detroit, Mich.) which chose Latin America as the location for the rest of its past bi-annual conferences.

*If you hear  
it's only*



Prudential Life Insurance company, the second largest corporation in the world and Major General R. C. Harmon, judge advocate general of the Air Force were included in the list of dignitaries who wore the formal robes of the university.

The state of Texas was represented by Dan Moody, former governor; Price Daniel, Attorney General of Texas; John Ben Shepperd, Texas Secretary of State, and Chief Justice John E. Hickman of the Texas Supreme Court.

**The three buildings of the center were formally given by James Noyles of Houston and Karl Hoblitzelle and John W. Carpenter of Dallas. They were accepted by Bishop A. Frank Smith, chairman of SMU's board of trustees.**

The classroom building formerly was named Kirby hall and was part of SMU's theological training center. But incorporated into the legal center, it was renamed Florence hall in honor of Dallas banker, treasurer of the Southwestern Legal foundation, Fred Florence. The other two buildings in the center (Lawyers Inn, a dormitory for law students and the big administration building) were formally dedicated as the Legal center.

Hoblitzelle, who made the first contribution to the foundation's building fund, said on the 1951 dedication day that the classroom building was dedicated to Florence "because he has actively supported every worth-while educational, charitable and otherwise constructive movement in