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Dedicatory Remarks and Prayer of the Howard W. Hunter Law Library (March 21, 1997)

Gordon B. Hinckley

I am delighted to be here on this great and significant occasion, my brothers and sisters and friends. I thank each of you for being here. This is a day of great appreciation and thanks and respect. I am grateful that Sister Inis Hunter is here with her family.

What a wonderful thing it is to be here on this significant occasion. What a glorious thing it is that we live in a nation that functions under the rule of law. When you see all the anarchy in the world, when you see all the trouble, when you see the civil wars and the strife and the difficulty among people, what a reassuring and wonderful thing it is to know that we live under law and that it becomes the safeguard of our liberties, of our security, of our peace. How thankful I feel to be a citizen of the United States of America living under a glorious Constitution, which brings with it tremendous privileges and opportunities and blessings. How thankful I am for the great provisions of the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights, which extend to each of us so many safeguards and blessings. How thankful we ought to be. You do not have to travel very far in this world to have a great increase in your love for this land of which each of us is a part.

I am thankful, and I express my thanks in behalf of the Board of Trustees, for this beautiful and serviceable building which will aid every scholar of the law who studies here. It is a remarkable and wonderful facility, and how grateful we are to have it, and how grateful we are to all who have made it possible. Our very deep thanks to each one of you: the Huntsmans, who out of their great love for their neighbor and friend,

President Hunter, have given so generously, and to the many others who have given generously, to Jack Wheatley and Alan Ashton, who are here, and to scores and scores of others including the starving student who may have given his mite to the construction of this great facility.

I just want to say a word about President J. Reuben Clark Jr., whose name is carried in this school. A generation is almost gone since he died. There are not very many people now who remember him well. I think I knew President Clark rather well. He was a true and good friend to me, I was almost a boy at that time. He was a man remarkable in so many respects: deliberate, careful, and thoughtful of what he said. He was a great student. His regular regimen was to go home each day after a day at the office and take a little nap. Then at 6:30 p.m. he would have a little supper. Then he would sit up and study and write until about midnight when he would go to bed and get up in time to be at the office at 8:00 a.m. We owe so much to this wonderful man who came out of a life of poverty, a farm boy really, who rose to the highest levels in his profession and in his service to this nation. How proper in every way that this great law school should carry his name. Thanks be to J. Reuben Clark Jr., who was loved by everybody who knew him, certainly respected by everybody who ever came up against him. I am grateful for his life. I am grateful for the fact that his name is memorialized in this school.

Now, just a word about Brother Hunter—Howard William Hunter. I sat next to him for 20 years in the Council of the Twelve. I was on his left hand as we went around the circle. That circle is a rather sacred thing in the Council of the Twelve and very carefully observed. What a great soul he was: a student, yes; a scholar, yes; a hard worker, yes. But above all, he was a man of great kindness and love and respect and care and thoughtfulness and consideration. It was not his brilliance in the law that came through as you knew him. It was his love for humanity which made the big difference in his life. He was a man who loved and respected people. He did a great deal of *pro bono* work as a lawyer, a vast amount of *pro bono* work to help those in need and in distress, the poor and the struggling among us who needed help. He observed the great dictum of the Master that we go about doing good.

I am so grateful for my acquaintance with him and for what he did for me, for the contribution which he made to my life of being careful of what you do, what you say, how you do it, nothing that was not deliberate and careful and proper. God bless his memory to our great good, each of us.

I just want to say a word about this marvelous facility. I do not know whether there is a better law library anywhere in the world than this. There are great libraries, of course, huge libraries of various kinds. Not long ago I was at the great Vatican Library in Rome, and it was a most inspirational experience to see those old illuminated texts, hundreds and hundreds of years old, that had been preserved for the blessing of mankind.

I once studied in the British Museum, the great national library of Britain, in great tall stacks of books, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of them.

I love libraries. I love books. There is something wonderful about a book. You can pick it up. You can heft it. You can read it. You can set it down. You can think of what you have read. It does something for you. You can share great minds and great actions and great undertakings in the pages of a book. I would not get far with this kind of law book over here I am afraid, but they are the stuff of which the study of law is basic and fundamental. What a marvelous thing that we have this tremendous facility—400,000 volumes here. That is a great library to which will be added many more through all the years to come.

I just want to again express my profound gratitude for this great facility. Thanks to all who made it possible, and my congratulations, my warm and hearty compliments, to every student of this great law school who will become the beneficiary of what has been done here. You have been blessed; you and those who come after you have been immeasurably blessed by the creation of this marvelous and wonderful facility. The carrels in which you will study, we wish everybody on this campus had such a carrel. Thanks and my blessing I leave with you and my appreciation and my very deep respect on this sacred and significant occasion.

Now I invite each of you to bow your heads and close your eyes and join in a prayer of dedication.

Dedicatory Prayer

Our Beloved Father in Heaven, Our Father and Our God, with thankful hearts we bow before Thee. We are grateful for Thy wonderful blessings so bounteously bestowed. We thank Thee for this great institution of learning, for its distinguished faculty, for its great body of students.

We thank Thee for this J. Reuben Clark School of Law, for its stature among its peers, and for the confidence that it will continue to grow in stature.

We thank Thee for this new and spacious library. We thank Thee for the generosity of those who have made it possible, for their gifts freely given to provide the means to build it.

We thank Thee for the architect, the contractor, and all who have worked to bring it to completion.

We thank Thee for our friend and associate President Howard W. Hunter, whose name it bears. His life was guided by principles of equity and justice. He loved the law. It was his profession before he was called to a high and holy responsibility in Thy church and kingdom. Out of love and respect for him it carries his good name.

We are grateful that his widow is here, that members of his family are here. We thank Thee for the great tradition which they are carrying on.

Now, in behalf of the Board of Trustees, and in behalf of the officers and faculty of the university, as friends of President Hunter and as friends of the Law School, we are met here today to dedicate this useful and attractive addition to the Law School building.

Acting in the authority of the Holy Priesthood and in behalf of the Board of Trustees, I dedicate the Howard W. Hunter Law Library Addition for the purposes for which it has been designed and created.

With its hundreds of thousands of volumes and other materials and facilities, we pray that it will be a wonderful resource to both faculty and students. It is here to be used, and we pray that it may be a great treasure house of knowledge to the scholars who will partake of its offerings. We pray that its unique facilities may provide a place of quiet where the pursuit of knowledge may be experienced in a personal and individual way.

May these very facilities become an inspiration to all who will use them.

May those who have given generously to make this structure possible have satisfaction in the knowledge that it will fill a need, and that it will add immeasurably to the stature of this school.

May it contribute to the strength of scholarship and the attitude of those who are graduating from this institution. May they go forth into the world of work as defenders of the law and of the precious Constitution of this nation. May the plaque which adorns the hall of this library, and which contains words on the law and government from the Doctrine and Covenants, prove an inspiration to all who shall pause to read it.¹

May the graduates of this institution bring dignity and integrity to the profession of which they will become a part.

Bless this Brigham Young University and all of its schools and departments. Increase its stature among its sister institutions throughout the world. May it be blessed in its great mission to nurture faith in Thee, in Thy Beloved Son, and in Thy divine purposes, as it serves also as a teacher of secular truth.

Bless Thy church, which is the sponsoring institution of this great university that its work may roll forth to fill the earth. This law school is one bright facet of a tremendous program designed to bless Thy children everywhere who will accept and live by its teachings.

And now, at this hour of dedication, we rededicate ourselves to good citizenship in the nation and to the on-rolling of Thy great cause and kingdom.

Accept of our thanks, of our love, of our prayer and our labors, we humbly ask in the name of Thy Beloved Son, even the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

This dedicatory address and prayer was given at the Howard W. Hunter Law Library at Brigham Young University on March 21, 1997.

Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) received his BA in English from the University of Utah in 1932, was awarded 10 honorary degrees, and given a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civil award, in 2004. He served as a General Authority 1958–2008, member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles 1961–1981, counselor in the First Presidency 1981–1995, and 15th president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1995–2008.

Notes

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 134.