The Bicentennial John A. Sibley Lecture
The University of Georgia School of Law

by His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Zelman Cowen
Former Governor-General of Australia

"The Media, the Law and Beyond"

The responsibility of media networks in providing a reliable public
information resource has become an increasingly controversial issue in
contemporary global polities. The limitations placed on press coverage in the
interest of national security and diplomatic policies are an intrinsic concern
of the free world. As present Chairman of the Press Council of Great Britain,
fortified in his duties with a doctorate degree in Civil Law at Onford,
Sir Zelman Cowen is most acutely waver of the legal implications the press
must face in the preservation of free speech within the bounds of
corresponding responsibilities. He will discuss the function of the British
Press Council and the responsibility and freedom of the press in his lecture,
which is the sixty-second in the John A. Sibley Lecture Series.

As former Governor-General of Australia, Sir Zelman is a seasoned veteran
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As former Governor-General of Australia, Sir Zelman is a seasoned veteran of prominent positions in the international arena. At the time of his appointment as Governor-General in 1977, he also served as Academic Governor of the Board of Governors for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and as Law Reform Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Australia. He became Chancellor and Principal Knight of the Order of Australia when he was sworn in as Governor-General, and was promoted to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George in 1977. In the same year, Britain honored him with an appointment as Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and in 1980, during a visit to Australia, Her Majesty the Queen named him Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order.

Sir Zelman possesses renowned prominence as a legal scholar and educator. He was elected Rhodes Scholar for Victoria in 1940 after studying at Scotch College in Melbourne and the University of Melbourne, but he entered the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve and dedicated himself to war service until 1945. After the war he earned the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law at Oxford University and was selected Vinerian Law Scholar. In 1947 he served both as a University Lecturer in Law at Oxford and as a consultant in constitutional 'matters to the British Military Government in Germany. At the early age of 31, he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Law and Professor of Public Law at the University of Melbourne. He served in these positions for fifteen years before serving as Vice-Chancellor of the University of New England in New South Wales and then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland. He currently is the chief collegiate chapter dignitary in his service as Provost of Oriel College at Oxford.

His Excellency nurtures a love for theatre, music, and art, and he promotes the cultural institutions of his native country as evidenced by his chairmanship of the Australian Opera National Council. He is the author of numerous books and articles on legal and constitutional matters, and has served as visiting professor at universities in the United States and India.

In 1945 he married the former Anna Wittner in Melbourne. Sir Zelman and Lady Cowen have three sons, one a practicing lawyer in Israel, and one daughter.

The Bicentennial Sibley Lecture
March 27, 1985
3:30 p.m. Law Auditorium