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Speech by Dean Dudley Warner Woodbridge during the Spring 1968 Semester

Dudley Warner Woodbridge
William & Mary Law School

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Speech

By

Dean Dudley Warner Woodbridge

Spring, 1968

College of William and Mary Law School
Williamsburg, Virginia

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DEAN WOODBRIDGE: Thank you for your kind introduction.

For a number of years, I attend a meeting of the American Law School in Chicago, and their definitions are not anywhere near the same as those that were just kindly given for me. In fact, they define the dean as the Big Rat and the assistant dean as the Little Rat, who hopes some day to be a Big Rat, and the dean emeritus is a Dead Rat that hasn't been buried yet. (Laughter.)

I'd like to say just a few words about my philosophies of law. The simplest definition I know of of law is, it's about the rules of the game of life. Well, that's a game we all play, and it has infinite ramifications. And the more we do in society, the more active we are, the more it's necessary to know the rules.

A baseball umpire, for instance, should be very well-versed in the rules of baseball. The players should certainly know quite a little about it, and the spectators should know at least something about it, or they couldn't enjoy the game. Now, no

game is better than its rules. If you change the rules of football to the rules of Tiddlywinks, you have Tiddlywinks. You don't have football.

And we're all anxious to make the game of life the best game possible, and therefore, we're constantly figuring out ways in which to improve matters. And we have sessions of the legislature and Congress and international organizations trying to make this a better world.

Now, there's a statement in Castro and Leach (phonetic) that I liked very much despite its great incompleteness. That statement is: If there's any rule that says that real property law must be dry, we aim to violate it as often as possible.

Now, my objection to that statement is, it should read as follows: If there's any rule that says that the study of law is dry, it should be violated as often as possible by the instructors. Now, I don't mean by that that the students ought to be amused all the time. There are a number of ways in which law may be made interesting--

If it's interesting, a student will learn a whole lot more than if it's dry. The first place, it should be instructive. If a student feels that

he's learning something, he gets into the spirit of the thing, and that helps him a great deal.

Then I think most people say we have five senses: Hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. Why overlook the fifth sense? We all have this, too, namely, a sense of humor. And the rule of "nonsense" from every once in a while, it doesn't seem to me has injured any professor's style.

Next, as Mr. Hale has already pointed out, if a thing is personal, it means a whole lot more to you. If I tell you about my trip to Europe, you'll probably be bored in just a few minutes. But if you were thinking about your trip and planning your trip and telling your friends about the trip, it would be intensely interesting to you.

It ought not take much imagination to put yourself in the shoes of all the people that are involved in law cases, and if you do and become personally involved, not actually, but you have enough imagination to realize, to make yourself personally involved, I think it will mean a whole lot more to you.

Then, a lawyer leads many lives than one. After all, life, some people say, is one damn thing

after another. It's really one problem after another, and we have to make solutions to these problems as we go along. And when you help other people with their problems also, you're making your life just that much fuller.

Now, by way of illustration, a case-- I don't know why it's never been put into a casebook on the subject. Let's take a comparatively simple situation and human interest story. A corporation owns a five- and ten-cent store, let's say, here in town. It has a manager. Well, put yourself in the shoes of the corporation and the manager. They're 100 percent business. They're in it for the profit that they can get.

Then, next, there are probably some girls hired in the store, some of them in their upper teens, and they're 50 percent for business because they want to please their manager and keep their job. Though girls will be girls, and every teenage girl or the upper teens, at least, there's a spark of romance, and that might not be too hard, even if you're a male, to put yourself in that position. (Laughter.)

The next person in this little episode I'm about to tell you about -- it's an actual case, but

please don't ask me for the citations because I've disposed of all my books and notes and so forth, so I don't have them at the present time. A young man ran into the store. He's was around 22. He was unmarried, and the girl smiled at him. Put yourself in his position. Why, naturally, you tend to josh or kid the girls a little. Well, the manager happened to see him doing this, and he said, Let the girls alone.

Well, now in the position of the man -- the position of the manager, maybe that's what you would have said. In the position of the man involved in the case, he thought that that was an unreasonable request, and he didn't like the tone in which it was given, and he didn't mean any harm. After all, he wasn't one of these criminals who you've just heard about. He said to the manager, I think you're too fresh.

Putting himself in the shoes of the manager, the manager says, I think you better get out of this store.

Putting himself in the shoes of the young man again, why, he doesn't want to create a big scene there, so he says, Okay. I'll go out the front door.

The manager says, Oh, no, you won't. You'll go out the back door. The manager seized him by the arm and led him out the back door.

And he brought an action against the corporation then for assault and battery and false imprisonment, and he claimed that he was humiliated greatly and that there ought to be punitive damages.

Well, put yourself in the shoes of the attorney for the defendant and the attorney for the plaintiff, what are the arguments pro and con? And put yourself in the position of the judge that has to give the instructions. If you can do all that, it seems to me you'll get a lot out of the case there, and you'll have an enjoyable time while you do it.

The actual decision in the case was, it was assault and battery and false imprisonment. A man -- before you can lay hands on a person and forcibly put him out, you should ask him to leave. And if a man says, All right. I'm going out the front door, and that was a reasonable way to go out, what are front doors for if they're not to go in and out of these stores. And he offered to go out that way and started out that way.

The manager didn't have any right to make

him go out another way then, and he was falsely imprisoned all the time that he was being led out. He didn't have to actually resist in order to be falsely imprisoned. In fact, maybe we should commend him that he didn't take a blow at the manager in the case, as some people might have done under those circumstances.

Now, one of the things that greatly surprises the beginners -- and I believe it disappoints them -- they wonder why you can't lay the law down cold to them. They don't like the uncertainties that we have. Here you go to law school to study law, why, you want to know what the answers are. You don't want to be told that some people think one way and some people think another.

I remember Judge Robert Armistead giving a talk to the Wythe Law Club before he was appointed to the bench -- and incidentally, Mr. Armistead must have graduated from high school at 15 and gotten his A.B. degree at 18, and he got his law degree at 20, and passed the bar examination, and he had to twiddle his thumbs until he was 21 because they wouldn't let him practice law on account of immaturity.

(Laughter.)

Anyway, he said when he went to law school, it seems that every case was a conflict of authority. He said he started getting a little disgusted, but he said when he got out in practice, he found out what lawyers lived on was conflict of authority. If everybody agrees on a thing, why have a big argument about it? And if one man says the law is this way, and another man says, no, it's this way, and each one has analogies or authorities to support it, it's a rare case in which two cases are exactly the same, at least if they involve a great deal, why, you can see then that that's where the lawyer's business to a considerable extent is.

And it's amazing as to how much conflict of authority and uncertainty there is in the law. I've been told that at Yale, they spend the first three months to convince the students there isn't any certainty at all in the law, and then they spend the last -- the rest of the three-year course in teaching the law as certainly as it is possible to teach it.

Now, the question I put to the students, to show the uncertainty of the thing, I say, suppose a client comes to your office, and he asks you a legal question, gives you a state of facts that involve a

legal question, and you check upon the matter, and you find there's no Virginia decision on it. There's a decision in State X that holds one way, and a decision in State Y that holds just the opposite. What's the law in Virginia on the subject?

Well, the student seemed to be a little puzzled as to what they should say when I asked the question like that. What I would like them to say, How in the hell would you expect me to know? It was decided by the Supreme Court of Appeals.

(Laughter.)

Then there's a conflict in statutes. It's a rule of statutory interpretation that repeals when implication are not favored. And what I would like to tell you now is off the record, but one of the bar examiners, in making up a bar examination question, wanted to ask a question on domestic relations. And he happened to open the Code, and it happened to come out where it had the Virginia Bastardy Act in it. And under the Virginia Bastardy Act, the father of a child, the parents being unmarried in the case, can't be held liable for the support of that child unless he makes a statement under oath to the effect that he believes he's the father of the child or so

confesses in open court.

Now, to me, that's one of the most foolish statutes there was. If we just change that and have it apply to negligence, no one shall be liable for negligence unless they.. (Laughter.)

Well, the question said, John and Mary decide to live together as husband and wife. They were both 21 years of age at the time they made the decision. They didn't bother about any license or anything, and in due course, a child was born to the marriage. And as soon as the child was big enough to take pictures, they had pictures taken of the child. The father carried the picture of the child around, and he showed it to anybody that would look at it, and he told everybody that would listen to him that he was certainly a marvelous child. He was a chip off the old block.

A few years later, he found out that his wife -- of course, this is a common-law marriage, and such marriage is void in Virginia. He fell out with his wife and didn't want to support the child. The wife was the child's mother, and that was his way at getting back at his wife. So is he liable?

Well, if you just look at that statute

normally, you'd say, no, he's not liable. Showing a picture to someone and bragging about what a fine boy your boy is in the case isn't a statement under oath, nor a confession in court, that you're the father of the child.

There's another statute in Virginia, however, says, The issue of marriage that's deemed null in law shall nevertheless be legitimate. And now a common law marriage is null in law, and the issue of such a marriage, by this statute are legitimate, and, of course, the man is under a common-law duty to support his legitimate children.

Officer of the bar examined Ms. Brigget (phonetic). This particular bar examiner happened to have had his law somewhere else out of the state, and he saw this statute, but he didn't have the other one in mind. And a lot of people who took the bar exam, I guess they had the one about the ~~issue~~ of marriages being null in law shall nevertheless be legitimate had that in mind and then had the Bastardy Act in mind.

Now what the bar examiners did in the case was to give full credit whether you had the one answer or the other answer. But what is the law on the

subject? One statute says one thing, and the other statute says another, and there's no Supreme Court of Appeals decision on it.

Then when President Eisenhower was campaigning during his first term, I believe one of the franks in the Republican platform was that income tax laws were too complex. You read them over and read the regulations over, and they were conflicting, and you couldn't make heads or tail out of the lot of them. It was time we overhauled the laws and made them clear so everybody can understand their obligations to the federal government.

And a good friend T. Coleman Andrews, then became Commissioner of Revenue, and he undertook them to rewrite the income tax law so every Tom, Dick, and Harry could understand them. Well, you know what the result was? It just made the matter all the worse then, didn't help one bit.

Probably the two most fundamental documents upon -- if I may call them that -- are the Bible and the United States Constitution, and did you ever see people disagree more about what they mean? We even had a war about what the Constitution of the United States meant, a Civil War, and just I need only to

point to all the denominations to show you how much difference of opinion there is about what the Bible means.

Now, I think I've done enough to show you the considerable chaos in the law. That reminds me of the story that the engineer and the surgeon and the lawyer had an argument among themselves as to which was the oldest profession. And the surgeon says, why, surgery is the oldest profession. Says, why, God took a rib out of Adam and made Eve, says that was the greatest operation ever performed, and that is not even by the most recent one in South Africa, the heart transplant.

The engineer says, Yes, but before that, God made heaven and earth out of chaos. Just think of that. Out of chaos. He said, That's the greatest engineering feat that's ever been performed.

And then the lawyer spoke up and said, Yes, but who made the chaos? (Laughter.)

One time, unfortunately, we had the -- we had to require a student to drop his law school work because of academic deficiencies, and he filed a red hot petition for reconsideration. And in that petition, he said, The examination questions are

utterly unfair. They're worded in such a way that you can answer it either one way or another way. Then the instructor, D. Swen (phonetic) always marked it wrong on the grounds he ought to have answered the other way. He says, How in the world can you expect a person then to pass a law course when the instructor, D. Swen, then can give him any grade he wants to?

Of course, the fallacy in that argument is, if a person doesn't even see the issues involved and doesn't discuss the issues as he should, whether it's on one side or the other, you can't give him any credit.

I was rather flattered when a law student that I had about 30 years ago paid me a visit recently, and he said, I'll never forget the time when you wrote on my final examination paper, eight of the ten questions you answered, you answered wrong, but your reasoning was so good that you deserve an A, and he had an A. After all, what we're primarily interested in is not memory work but his analysis. If he can see what the points are in the case, suppose you forgot which way the law was on those, the chances are if it's that close, there's some conflict of

authority on it, and if you can make an analysis, you can look up the law. But if I can't make an analysis, you wouldn't even know how to start looking up the law.

Now, it's amazing sometimes how one branch of the law can be called in support of another branch of the law. That's -- Vernon Getty, Senior, told me this story. He said, A young woman was seduced and then jilted, and about seven months-- she became pregnant as a result of the seduction. And seven months later, a serviceman came back from Europe and fell in love with her.

And the woman made a whole confession of everything, that he proposed marriage and married her when she was about eight months along, and in due course, the child was born. Unfortunately, about two months after the child's birth, the child met with a serious accident, and the hospital bills ran up some two or three thousand dollars.

And he went to a lawyer and asked if he had to support another man's child, whether he was liable for the hospital bill or not. And the lawyer said, Well, I haven't had a case like this in all my practice. He said, You come back next Wednesday, and

in the meantime, I'll look up the law.

So the party came back next Wednesday, and the lawyer said to the man, I had an awful time finding the law on the subject, but he says I finally found the answer in my textbook on negotiable instruments. (Laughter.)

The man says, Negotiable instruments, what does that have to do with the case?

Well, he says, here it is in black and white. It says in my textbook here, When the maker defaults and dishonors his obligation, and the endorser has notice of the dishonor, the endorser is liable. (Applause.)

Now, there's been a great deal of conflict among the law teachers as to how legal ethics should be taught. Some people say we'll have a formal course in it. Other people say, a formal course is just telling people to do good, and that's not the way you do it, says you ought to teach legal ethics right along with your courses as the problems arise, consider the side points that involve the ethics of the case. And, of course, still another way is to do both.

I just might tell you a few then of the side

points involving legal ethics that have come to my attention. There was a child molestation case, and the only witness against the accused was a bright nine-year-old boy named John, and he was put on the stand, and John testified. And when he was through, the attorney for the accused cross-examined him, and he said, John, did you talk about this case with your father?

And John said, Yes, sir.

And the lawyer said, Well, didn't your father tell you what to say?

And John says, Yes, sir.

And the attorney then turned to the court and said, I move that John's testimony be stricken and the jury be directed to bring in a verdict for the defendant because it's apparent why John's own testimony in the particular case, by his own admission, that what he said was what his father told him to say.

And his father couldn't testify because he didn't know anything about the case directly, and he ought not be allowed to testify indirectly then through his son when there's no way to cross-examine the father as even a witness.

And the judge said, You may have a point there, but says, First, let me ask John a question. The judge turned to the boy and said, John, just what did your father tell you to say?

And the boy said, My father told me to tell the truth, and then the lawyers couldn't get me mixed up.

The motion to dismiss the case was overruled.

Then I would never advise a person to take advantage of a merely technical defense where he hasn't been imposed upon or where the purpose of the technical defense wouldn't be served. Now, of course, if a man has the defense of infancy, and the infant has been imposed upon, then that's a different proposition.

The University of Illinois Dean of Men actually had this experience. A young man came in to him, and he said, I got a long-distance telephone call last night -- the boy was from a rather distant state -- that my mother is sick and not expected to live, and I don't have a penny. Have you got any suggestions on how I can get home?

Well, the loan sum happened to be exhausted,

so the Dean of Men said, I'll advance you the money, and you can pay me back later on. So he advanced the money and didn't hear anything from the boy for about three years. So he wrote the boy, and he got an answer back, and it says, Sir, I was a minor when I contracted that obligation, and hence, I'm not liable.

If a lawyer told -- gave him any such advice as that, I think it was very erroneous advice, as I'm starting the person off on the wrong foot. Now, it would be perfectly proper for a lawyer to say, You have the defense of infancy if you want to take advantage of it, but if you want to take advantage of it, you'd better get another attorney and tell the reasons why if he were in his shoes, he would not take advantage of any such thing.

Then there's one of the duties of an attorney to con the client as much as possible. A man didn't keep a dental appointment, and the dentist had the list of appointments, and he didn't have anyone during that half-hour. And he saw the man on the street the next day, and he said, Why didn't you keep your appointment with me yesterday?

And the man said, Oh, I changed my mind. I

decided not to come.

The dentist says, I'm going to bill you for it. He says, That will be \$5.

And the man says, I'll be damned if I'll pay it.

And the dentist said, Oh, yes, you'll pay it --

The dentist went to a lawyer, and the lawyer advised him to forget about it, just chuck it up to experience.

He says, To begin with, no lawyer will take the case for less than \$10. That was under a different time. Now, I suppose they'd charge at least 20 now, so we -- the man says, Well, it's not the \$5. It's the principle of the thing. I want him to pay. I want to show him what's what.

Oh, the lawyer says. Oh, well, give me a retainer of \$10, and I will see if I can collect it. A few days later, a check arrived in the mail for \$5 reached the client's office -- yeah, that's right, the client's office. When the client saw the man on the street, he said, Haw, haw, I thought you weren't going to pay, and the man on the street said, I don't know what you are talking about. He said, I haven't

paid anything.

He got in touch with the attorney, and the attorney said, Well, the easiest way to collect that bill was to take it out of the retainers' fee.

(Laughter.)

Then there's the story about the immigrant who had come over to this country, and he wasn't acquainted with American customs. He was the plaintiff in a suit. He said to his attorney, he said, Don't you think we ought to send the judge a box of cigars?

The attorney said, No. Don't do that. He said, He'll think you're trying to bribe him. He'll think you don't have a good case, and he'd be sure to decide against you if you send him a box of cigars. A few days later, the attorney happened to see the client, and the client says, Well, we going to win the case.

And the attorney says, Well, what makes you so sure?

Well, he said, I sent him a box of cigars.

The attorney said, Well, I told you not to do that. I said, we're sure to lose it.

Well, he says, I put in the defendant's

card. (Laughter.)

Now, it's necessary to explore every angle of a case when you have a case. One of the law professors we had here, who also practiced extensively, said it was the practice of his firm when they had an important case was to call a conference, and everybody would think of every possible point that could possibly be involved in the case. You heard there are two sides to every argument, but lots of time, there's more than two sides. There may be a lot of sides.

Well, he said, it may end up then that we'll jot down 30 things that we want to look into. Then we do work extensively for a day or two, and we meet, and we decide that, say, 20 of those things can be eliminated, don't have to worry about them anymore, we've checked into them.

Well, maybe, say, we've got ten left, and they do some intensive work on the ten, and after doing some intensive work on the ten points, they may discard six or seven of them depending on the circumstances, they end up then having three or four points involved that they think are certain to be the turning points in the case.

Now, one summer while I was teaching at the University of Virginia, I met a man who was working for his doctorate in mathematics, and he told me about a case in which a man had deliberately killed another man. He didn't like the race that he belonged to. The reason that he killed him was he was pretty sure he could get by with killing him. There was no question about that he knew the difference between right and wrong, and he wasn't governed by any irresistible impulse. He was over 21 years of age.

If there's -- the judge instructed the jury to acquit the man, and I said, Well, you may know something about mathematics, but I say you don't know the first thing about the criminal law of murder. I said, There's a homicide with malice aforethought and no defense, no provocation of any kind. There's no judge in the world would tell the jury to acquit.

Then he brought up a point that one of the commenters made tonight, he says, Isn't it better that one guilty man escapes than an innocent man be punished?

And I said, Sure, but what does that have to do with the case?

He said, Well, the defendant was a Siamese

twin. (Laughter.)

Now, in the old days, the justice of the peace used to have jurisdiction over small cases, and sometimes this role of authority went to their heads, and justices of the peace for the most part weren't claiming the law, they were just supposed to give a common-sense determination of the thing. If it was only a little bit involved, that was the end of the matter. If it was very much involved, an appeal was allowed.

There was a justice of the peace down at Yorktown trying a case, and he indicated he was going to give judgment for the plaintiff. Whereupon, the defendant said, But, Your Honor, he said, that would be right in the teeth of a ruling decided by the Supreme Court of Appeals in Richmond that held just the other way.

The justice of the peace said, Where did you say that court is?

He said, You know, the Court of Appeals in Richmond.

And he said, What jurisdiction does the court in Richmond have over Yorktown? (Laughter.)

The late Dean Prince told that there was a

justice of the peace who was riding on a train and got on the C&O train -- this is back in the days when they had C&O passenger trains. He got on a train at Huntington, West Virginia, and the justice of the peace -- he was a justice of the peace from the City of Williamsburg.

The justice of the peace looked around, and he didn't see any license tacked up anywhere around the train. So he went to the man, and he said, I'm the justice of the peace in Williamsburg, Virginia. Where's your license?

And the railway employee was someone who lived on the train, said, You say Williamsburg, Virginia? He says, This is West Virginia. He says, You don't have any jurisdiction here, do you?

Well, the justice of the peace couldn't hardly answer that. When they got to Clifton Forge, why, the railway employee started another round of selling things. The justice of the peace went to him and said, Where's your license? You have to have a license to sell.

And the man said, Where did you say you're a justice of the peace from?

He says, Williamsburg, Virginia.

He said, This is Virginia, but it isn't Williamsburg, is it? You don't have any jurisdiction here.

So he waited until he got to Williamsburg, and sure enough, the employee made a round selling sandwiches and popcorn and so on. And he says, I've got you now. I'm a justice of the peace in Williamsburg, Virginia, and this is Williamsburg, Virginia. Whereupon, the employee grabbed him by the beard and said, I'll have you know, I'm engaged in interstate commerce, and I don't have to have a license. (Laughter.)

Now, particularly -- in my teaching, I particularly liked to use the problem method of instruction. Remember around about 1880 or 1890, Professor Langdell of Harvard started the Casebook Method of instruction. Well, now, I had some serious objections to the Casebook Method only, and when your client comes to you, he doesn't ask you what a certain case means. He asks you -- he gives you the facts, and it's up to you then to tell what the law is.

So I like to teach them by giving a series of problems, and I had foolish visions one time thinking I maybe would be a second Langdell, that

people would adopt the problem system with the little law school at William and Mary at that time, some of our classes were quite small, didn't have the same influence as Dean Langdell, so as far as I know, very few people have adopted this problem method of instruction.

With the problem method of instruction, you can give references to cases in the casebook and save wear and tear on the library. You can also give references to Law Reviews, Law Review articles, statutes, and the like.

You can't plow too deep because you don't have time, but you can cover quite a lot of materials if you don't go too deep. After all, most of the world's wealth is in the topsoil. At the same time, of course, you should know how to plow deep if you have to, and that's why we have the courses in briefing and trial and appellate classes.

Another favorite device I liked to use was the pop quiz. (Laughter.) I would from time to time without any warning give a quiz, and very frequently, I started this right on the second day-- I don't believe I ever gave a pop quiz on the first day. (Laughter.)

Now, with a pop quiz, I can call on everybody. I've been in law school classes of, say, 100 or more, and if you were called on once, you knew to a moral certainty you wouldn't be called on again for at least another month, and that doesn't keep you on your toes like you should.

And the second day, I can tell how well or how poorly I'm getting the material across, and it gives me some basis for mid-semester grades. Now, I don't want to criticize any of my colleagues, but it seems, especially a beginning student would like to have some idea how he's doing, and it must be a little disconcerting to find that he has four or five G's in the middle of the semester.

However, I always make this provision, no matter how poorly you've done on the pop quizzes, if you write me an A final examination, you'll get an A. So I always held out hope for the students, and from time to time, I had students make enormous changes for the better before the final examination. I said, I'm concerned whether you know it at the end of the course, not whether you know it as we go along. If you can put it all together at the end and know it then, why, and write an A paper, I see no reason

why you shouldn't have an A.

And one thing I've been very thankful for is that unlike preachers, I don't have the same congregation every year. Even the Methodists, I believe they change once every three or four years. Law teachers have a different class every year, and you can get by with more repetition than you otherwise could.

Now, in one contract examination, I gave the students this problem. I said, A man had a dog by the name of Rover. He thought a great deal of the dog, and the dog disappeared, and the man put a -- offered a liberal reward in the newspaper, no questions asked.

It turned out that the plaintiff in the case had taken the dog and was keeping it in the hope that the owner would offer a reward. After the owner put the reward in, but before -- after it was too late to kill the ad, he found out what the true facts were. So when the man returned the dog, he took the dog and refused to pay the reward. And the party said, Well, you said no questions asked. He says, I'm not asking you questions. I'm just not going to pay you.

Well, the party brought an action, and I

asked what judgment should it be. Well, an answer that has amused me the most was somewhat as follows. Judgment for the defendant. Where I was taught on the knee of my mother, no man should profit by his wrong to another. It would be foolish to make the defendant pay a reward for the return of Rover and then to get even, bring an action of coercion.

(Laughter.)

I'll just give one more because I see my time is drawing to a close. In the course of contracts, we have a great deal to do with traditions. It is a little word, but it certainly has a great deal of meaning. Now, it's a principle of the law of contracts that it's an implied condition if a person through no fault of his own becomes incapable, physically incapable or mentally incapable of carrying out a personal service contract, why, he's excused from performing.

There's the case of an unmarried movie actress who had signed up for a picture. This was an actual California case. She became pregnant and was unable to perform in the picture, and the movie people sued her because they were put at great trouble and expense.

And the defense in the particular case said she was excused by an act of God, that pregnancy was an Act of God, but the court held that it was an act of man rather than an act of God.

(Laughter and applause.)

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