

*Tribute to Professor R. Q. Quentin-Baxter*  
*by the Chairman of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly*  
*of the United Nations*

Distinguished Colleagues:

It is with a great deal of sorrow that I must announce the untimely death yesterday of Professor Robert Q. Quentin-Baxter of New Zealand. As a member of the New Zealand Delegation to at least ten sessions of the General Assembly beginning in 1952, Professor Quentin-Baxter was one of the most active and respected members of the Sixth Committee. Besides being of course a renowned expert in the field of international law, he also served as his country's representative on the [United Nations] Commission on Human Rights and perhaps is best known to us as a member of the International Law Commission since 1972. As the Commission's special rapporteur on the topic "International liability for injurious consequences arising out of acts not prohibited by international law", Professor Quentin-Baxter made a remarkable contribution in conceptualizing this contemporary and complex topic.

His untimely death represents a loss not only to his country, to the Sixth Committee and to the International Law Commission, but to all of us who were privileged to know this warm and personable man. He always displayed not only great intellectual skills, but also great kindness, honesty, humour and willingness to cooperate. On behalf of the Sixth Committee I should like to express our deepest condolences to his wife Alison and to the Government of New Zealand. I would now ask you all to rise for a moment of silence in tribute to the memory of Professor Quentin-Baxter.

Mr Goerner

*Tribute to Professor R. Q. Quentin-Baxter*  
*by Mr Filimone Jitoko, Representative of Fiji to the Sixth Committee of the*  
*General Assembly of the United Nations*

My delegation has also learnt rather belatedly and with deep regret of the passing away of Professor Robert Quentin-Baxter of New Zealand, a prominent member of this Committee in the years past and an eminent member of the International Law Commission. I had the very good fortune to come under his tutelage in my years in law school at Victoria University of Wellington. His warmth and radiance and deep and thorough knowledge of international law and international relations left an indelible mark on all of us who were fortunate to know him. In extending my personal as well as my delegation's condolences to the Government of New Zealand and to his family, let me also make mention

of the immeasurable assistance small island countries and territories of the South Pacific had received from Professor Quentin-Baxter. Credits for the constitutional development of some of the countries and territories presently in transition are due to his and Mrs Quentin-Baxter's expert advice and guidance. He is, I am sure, a big loss to his country, to the region of the South Pacific, to the international legal fraternity and to the International Law Commission on which he served so very well.

*Tribute to Professor R. Q. Quentin-Baxter*  
*by the Chairman of the International Law Commission on the Introduction of the*  
*Commission's Report to the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly*  
*of the United Nations*

Before proceeding to introduce the report of the Commission on the work of its 1984 session, I must refer to a recent event which has saddened all of us, the death of Professor Robert Q. Quentin-Baxter of New Zealand, who had been a member of the Commission since 1972. I would like to pay tribute to Professor Quentin-Baxter — a great international lawyer, a skilled diplomat, a faithful, committed and active member of the International Law Commission, a creative and diligent Special Rapporteur, and a warm personal friend. Professor Quentin-Baxter represented his country at many diplomatic conferences and is well known to this Committee. He was deeply committed to the United Nations and was a man of idealism and vision who taught law and shaped its future. As a Professor of Law at Victoria University of Wellington, he never lost sight of the operational aspects of law-making. As a scholar and diplomat, he understood the complexities of contemporary international relations and the difficulties of prescribing legal norms which would be acceptable to all. He brought to the task a deep personal tolerance which enabled him to seriously and honestly try to take into account and balance the interests of all. He was never discouraged, thanks to his respect for and commitment to the common interest of mankind, in attempting to prescribe law. For him the challenge and hardships in the process were worthwhile.

Professor Quentin-Baxter believed that the science of law should join other fields of knowledge which are continuously working to shape the future, and that lawyers should not shy away from this daunting task. The principle value of law, he thought, was to regulate the present and to shape the future in a way which best serves the common interest of the human community. His sound judgment, good common sense and modesty often concealed the tremendous efforts he had put into his work marked by his profound thoughts and contributions. As a human being and a friend, Quentin-Baxter was compassionate, sympathetic and generous. Words are a poor consolation for the loss of Quentin, but I would like to request the distinguished representative of New Zealand to transmit these few words of tribute and sorrow to his devoted wife, Alison, a true friend of the Commission and a distinguished lawyer in her own right. Without Quentin's wise counsel, support and gentleness, the International Law Commission is the poorer. . . . I should not close my short statement on this topic [international liability for injurious consequences arising out of acts not

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prohibited by international law] without once more remembering its able Special Rapporteur, Professor Quentin-Baxter. With his creativity and perseverance, he was able to conceptualize the complicated topic assigned to him. . . . There is no question that due to his profound and creative mind, as well as his commitment and hard work, this complex topic has now revealed its theoretical basis: a schematic outline provides an indication as to how it could develop. Professor Quentin-Baxter could have completed with success this important and complicated topic. The Commission is now deprived of the services of a man with a vision and great intellectual abilities.

Alexander Yankov



PROFESSOR ROBERT QUENTIN QUENTIN-BAXTER

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1922 - 1984