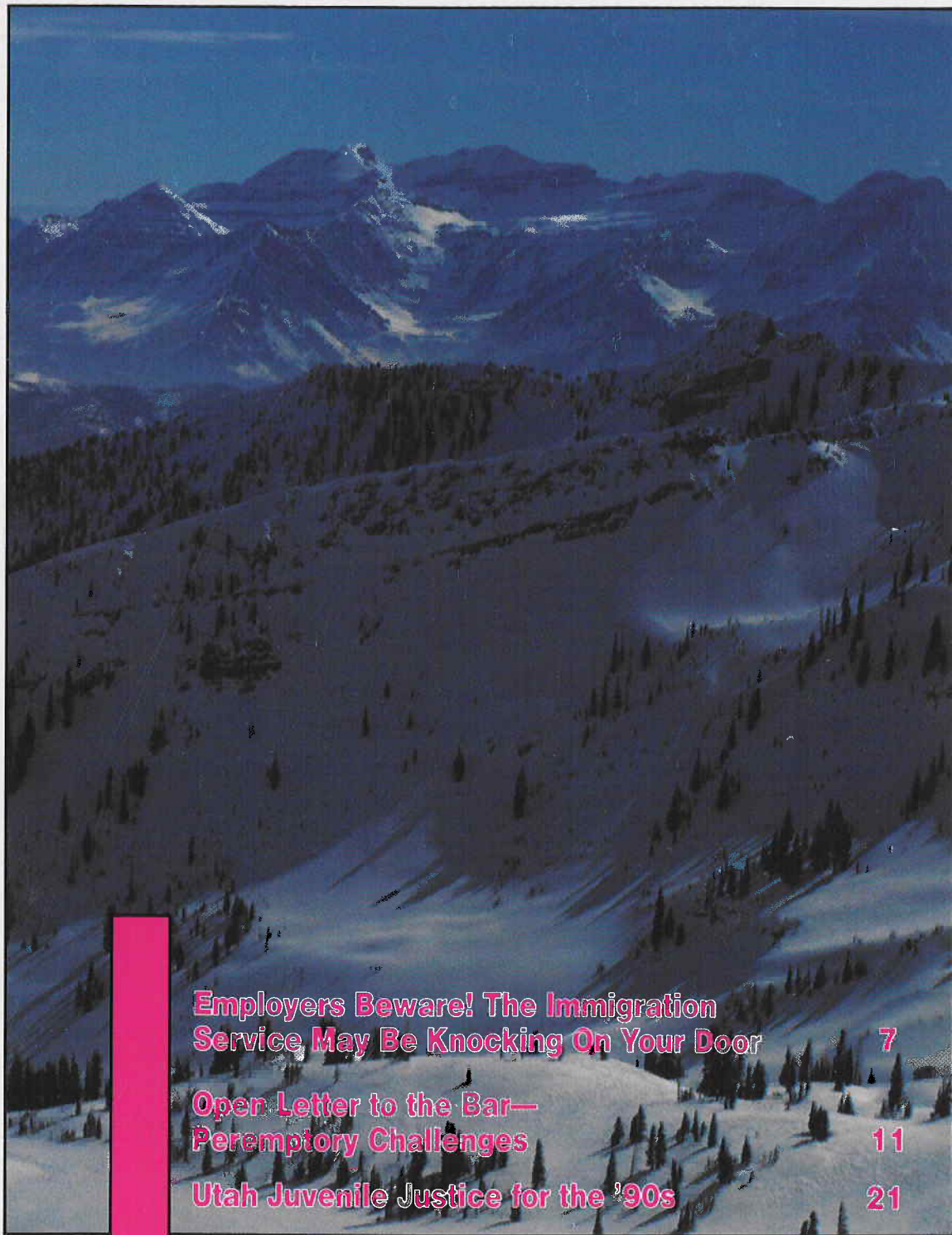


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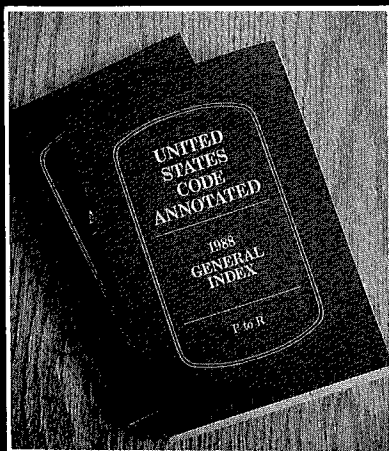
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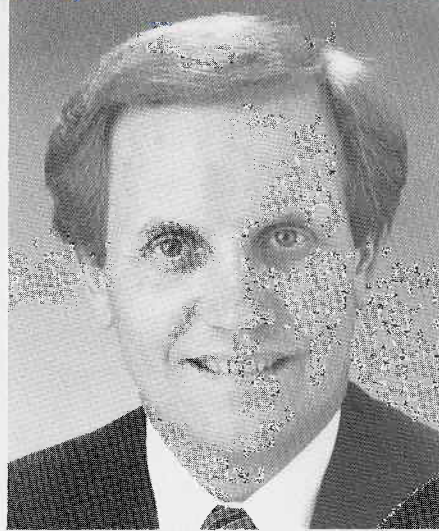
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## Courtesy—It Begins With a Handshake

*By Hans Q. Chamberlain*

I know you have been bombarded with many views concerning professionalism because this topic has been on the lips of many lawyers for some time. Rather than trying to discuss professionalism in its broadest sense, I would like to simply share a few of my thoughts concerning courtesy. Because lawyers are the main lubricant that makes society run smoothly and are so often in the public eye, it is my belief that courteous conduct by lawyers should always be the rule.

Because we see so much rudeness in today's world, many of us have reached the point of being courteous primarily because we want to be, and if there is an ulterior motive behind common courtesy, it is that when we make other people feel good, it makes us feel good, too.

Courtesy is often intertwined with manners. Fred Astair once said, "The hardest job kids face today is learning good manners without seeing any."

Too often in today's society, and even among lawyers, we hear someone proclaim, "I don't give a damn about what other people think of me." What that person is really saying is that he or she doesn't give a damn about other people, because it amounts to the same thing.

I have often tried to determine what the real difference is between practicing in a small community and the practice of law in

the metropolitan areas. Contrary to what some of you may think, things really don't move much slower (or, for that matter, much faster) in the rural area than they do in the city. The days are the same length in southern Utah as they are elsewhere, and we face the same time demands that lawyers everywhere face on a day-to-day basis. I have come to the conclusion that because rural lawyers meet and deal with the same lawyers over and over again and know everyone on a first-name basis, they usually go about their business with courtesy. Likewise, I have always been impressed with the courteous conduct of lawyers throughout the state and simply want to encourage that philosophy.

These courtesies begin with a simple handshake. It seems to me that shaking hands is becoming a thing of the past unless the other attorney happens to be a close personal friend. Admittedly, I have some failing in this regard, but generally try to excuse my behavior by blaming the other person for not offering his or her hand first. I also have to frequently remind myself to ignore the outdated principle that one does not shake hands with a woman unless she offers her hand first. Shaking hands adds a degree of warmth and courtesy to any professional transaction. Even boxers shake hands before they challenge each other in the ring. Lawyers should do likewise so in

every professional transaction, including the vigorous stages of litigation.

We all like to think we have a hometown advantage when the case at issue is tried in our locale. From the standpoint of the rural practitioner, we should avoid the tendency to be rather cliquish when out-of-town lawyers make an appearance on our turf. Because rural lawyers seem to know everybody on a first-name basis, it is much easier for us to be cliquish than if the tables are turned and we have to make an appearance in the Wasatch Front where everyone doesn't know each other.

Lawyers are image conscious. We have been taught to be conscious of how we act or portray ourselves at almost every CLE event we have ever attended. It is my suggestion that we become conscious of our image concerning courtesy, and recognize that courtesy should not be misconstrued as a sign of adversarial weakness or, for some reason, affect the image we have strived to create.

As you know, the Rules of Professional Conduct obligates us to represent a client zealously within the bounds of the law. This does not mean that we have to engage in rude behavior or use tough rhetoric. Courtesy simply boils down to an outwardly appearance of having a genuine regard for the feelings and general welfare of those we meet professionally and otherwise.

