

## Introduction of Guido Calabresi

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## INTRODUCTION OF GUIDO CALABRESI

OSCAR S. GRAY\*

It would be presumptuous for me to claim similarities with Dean Calabresi—and, I think that the preeminent American law school dean of the second half of the twentieth century should be remembered as Dean Calabresi, whatever other dignities may come his way—presumptuous, as I say, to claim to have much in common with him—except, perhaps, our common birthday.

But we have at least shared certain experiences. We have both undergone the program of study that had become the classic torts course at the Yale Law School, an undertaking participants in which tend to consider to have been beneficial. And in the course of that we shared, at different times, a great teacher, Fleming James, Jr., whom it would be fitting for us to remember today.

Mr. James was a man who wrote and spoke plain English—and Latin—and who thought very clearly about tort law, its place in society and its role in the law school curriculum. He had little interest in the instruction of the young that, if you poke someone in the nose, you may have to pay for it. He thought that was a bit obvious for graduate-level academic work. Instead, guided perhaps by the perspective of having been a railroad lawyer—a perspective he shared in different ways with Abraham Lincoln and Louis Brandeis—he came to consider accidents to be the central problem of tort law and, more particularly, the question of how society manages the costs of accidents. We can readily imagine the satisfaction, then, with which he saw his prize student adopt these themes as the springboard for his own great career.

Mr. James would have been pleased, I think, to have known of our gathering here this weekend—partly, of course, for obvious reasons: gratification at the recognition being accorded Guido; perhaps additional pleasure that one or more of his other students managed to attend. And I am sure that he would have been tickled pink with the performance of his academic grandchildren (and great grandchild), Guido's magnificent students, who have contributed so splendidly to our proceedings.

But there is another reason, less obvious, for which he would have been pleased. He would have been particularly pleased, I think, precisely because this Symposium is being held here, in Maryland, in

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Baltimore. Because—while we always thought of him as an essential Connecticutter—notwithstanding his birth in Shanghai—on his mother's side his family were Godwins, of Reisterstown, a close suburb of Baltimore. He was very proud of that ancestry. He claimed—I was never sure how seriously—to be able to trace that line back to Harold Godwin, the fellow who lost the Battle of Hastings, William's immediate predecessor on the throne of England.

Well, Guido, a sense of heritage is not reserved for the Anglo-Saxons. And while the notion of Maryland lineage may seem remote to Calabresis and Finzi-Continis, perhaps our school can serve as a bridge for you. Because, as Karen Rothenberg told you yesterday, since that day last year when you extended your open-armed embrace to our graduating class, at our precommencement hooding ceremony, we have considered you a member of our family, and will continue to do so. I can assure you that this is one place where your name, and your works, will be remembered, not infrequently, and always with the greatest respect and affection.

It is of course, for the celebration of those works, and their better understanding, that we have gathered here this weekend, and the time has come for us to hear more about them from the source.

Accordingly, ladies and gentlemen, it is with the greatest pleasure that I present to you Dean Guido Calabresi, Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Member of the American Philosophical Society, Foreign Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Foreign Member of the *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Knight Commander (Honorary) of the Republic of Italy, a doctor of the Universities of Bologna, Chicago, Haifa, Maryland, Milan, Notre Dame, Padova, Pavia, Princeton, Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Torino, Toronto, Villanova, *inter alia*, United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit—*et cetera*, *et cetera* . . .