

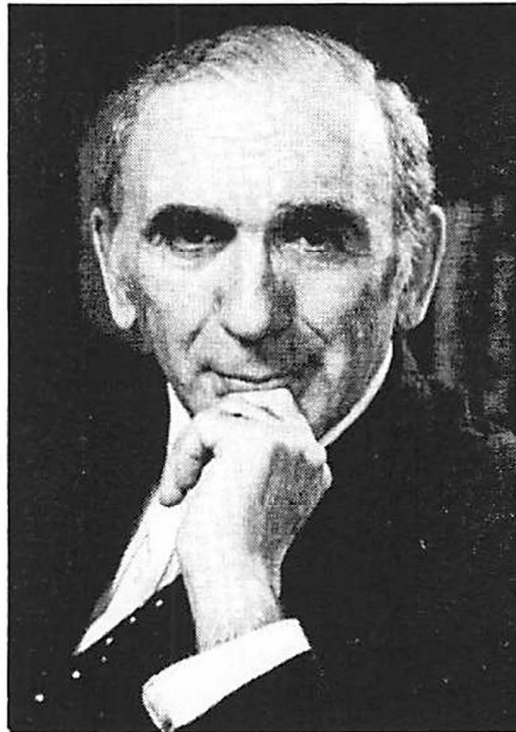
Maxwell Cohen

1910 - 1998

Maxwell Cohen, law professor and judge of the ad hoc

International Court of Justice, was born in Winnipeg and was called to the Bar in Manitoba in 1939, before serving in the Canadian Army during World War II with the rank of major. He joined the law faculty at McGill in 1946, became a full professor (1952-78) and Dean of Law, and the Professor Emeritus of Law thereafter.

Beyond McGill his law activities included being director of the Institute of Air and Space Law (1962-5); Judge in the ad hoc International Court of Justice from 1982; co-chair 1974-9 of the International



Joint Commission (on boundary waters); chairman of the Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland (1969-72), and chairman of an Advisory Committee on the Law of the Sea (1971-4). He was a member of the Canadian delegation to the United Nations in 1959-60.

He received many degrees related to the law, including LL.B at NorthWestern, LL.M at Harvard Law School and LL.Ds

from UNB, Ottawa, Manitoba and York.

He earned national recognition in the late Sixties as chairman of the Royal Commission against Hate Propaganda, and he was called the father of the Anti-Hate Section of the Criminal Code.

His major contribution to the Group of 78 was as chair, organizer and fundraiser for an international conference on “Nuclear Weapons and the Law”, in which a memorable face-off occurred between fellow G78 member and Nobel laureate John Polanyi and Edward Teller, the father of the Hydrogen bomb. Judge Cohen managed to persuade the most prestigious and powerful Canadian-based law organizations - the Canadian Bar Association, the Canadian Council on International Law, the International Commission of Jurists – to support the conference.

He married Isle Alexandra Sternberg, and they had one daughter Joanne, an Ottawa poet and children’s writer under the name JC. Sulzenko.

His awards included Gold Medals from the Quebec Society on Criminology and the Canadian Council on International Law, as well as awards from Columbia University, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Council of Christians and Jews, and the Manitoba Bar Association. The editors of *Essays in honour of Maxwell Cohen* wrote: “This work celebrates a man who, as teacher, scholar, judge and administrator, has made a vital contribution to the law, to learning, to Canada and the world.” His colleagues remember his golden tongue and sharp wit; he once described former deans as “hasdeans”.