

...and fear will henceforth have a freer hand in influencing a partestamentary plans," said Cynsamuel, a Tulane law professor who is polishing the law.

The new law is a revision of a statute that lies at the heart of Louisiana's Napoleonic Code, the system of law in use here since 1825. The code has been under revision for decades to modernize it.

The original statute stipulated that parents must leave a portion of their estate to their progeny, one-fourth if there is one child and one-half if there are two or more children. Its proponents argue that this "forced heirship" law, along with the state's community property law, made Louisiana the only state in the country where wealth was handed down from generation to the next.

Under community property law, the estate is unchanged, family riches bequeathed equally to husband and wife so that each spouse is free to distribute only half of the combined assets to his or her heirs.

Proponents Claim Flexibility

In defense of the changes, proponents say the new law will give Louisiana more flexibility in how they choose to dispose of their estates. In the revision, the Legislature limited the forced heirship law to apply only to children under the age of 23 and to disabled adult children.

Academics and other legal experts believe the change has virtually destroyed the forced heirship concept but feel the revision may not have an attack on its constitutionality because it has introduced an age exception.

In the meantime, under directive of the Legislature, members of the Louisiana State Law Institute, which includes lawyers, judges and academics, are polishing the legislation's language. Many people who opposed the change continue to debate and some have indicated they will lobby for its repeal.

For years disgruntled parents have tried to abolish the law, but none as effectively and canny as Mr. Perez, who used the intricacies of Louisiana law at the knee of his father, a legal strategist who helped lead the fight against civil rights in the 1940's, 50's and 1960's.

The bill's sponsor, State Senator Henry Nelson, whose northern Louisiana borders East Texas and includes Shreveport, had tried for a decade to repeal the law. But this year he

'Forced heirship,' an issue that will not die.

gained a strong ally in Mr. Perez and changed strategy. Rather than seeking outright abolition, Mr. Nelson proposed changing the law to exclude adult children.

Chalin Perez hired a prominent Louisiana lobbyist, E. L. (Bubba) Henry, former Speaker of the State House, who shepherded the bill to its

final passage.

"Chalin is very bright and capable and when he wanted to get something done, he knew how to go after it," said State Representative Jim Donelon, a suburban lawyer who opposed the bill. Lobbyists "like Bubba Henry," Mr. Donelon said, are usually employed "by major corporations, by well-heeled types and not by mom-and-pop types."

Mr. Donelon said others favoring the bill included "three dozen testators, each involved in some down-and-dirty family fight." Advocates also included The Shreveport Times, but the bill was barely noticed by

many other newspapers until it was enacted.

Mr. Donelon said he fought the bill because "we have a system that worked well for hundreds of years." He added, "I am a card-carrying republican who respects private property, but I'm also aware of the rigidity of forced heirship in Louisiana litigation down as opposed to other 49 states, which do not have a forced heirship law."

Professor Samuel of Tulane and other law professors who fought the change, testifying before legislative committees, say much of the opposition outside the United States has been similar forced heirship laws.

"This is an old legal institution that serves a new social purpose, getting kids don't get divorced from their inheritance when parents get divorced from each other," she said. "Sometimes the old has the wisdom of the ages."

New Role Seen for Old Law

By the early 1900's, Louisiana forced heirship law had become little old-fashioned," said Mark Glendon, a professor at Harvard Law School, but now "with about 50 percent of all marriages ending in divorce, it has become modern because of the changed circumstances."

Professor Glendon said that a spouse remarries in other states and children of the first marriage do not see property that was accumulated during that marriage. "Louisiana enabled an older person to say to the second spouse, 'I require me to leave a portion of my estate to my children.'"

At a recent forum on the new law, Frederick Swaim, a professor at Loyola University's Law School, said, "We're going to have this law litigated for centuries."

Another believer in the old law is Janice Barry, who left her job as a lawyer in the State Attorney General's Office to raise a family, but as an unpaid lobbyist against the law. Mrs. Barry says she is preparing to lobby again for its repeal.

She recalled a brisk exchange with a legislator, who told her, "This money, I made it and I can do what I want with it."

"I told him," Mrs. Barry said, "They're your children and I made them too and they have no claim."

For the Record

Texas Lawyer's Creed

Last month the Texas Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals adopted the "Texas Lawyer's Creed — A Mandate for Professionalism," citing abusive tactics that "ranged from lack of civility to outright hostility and obstructionism." The following excerpt is from the creed.

Our Legal System

I am passionately proud of my profession. Therefore, "My word is my bond."

I am responsible to assure that all persons have access to competent representation regardless of wealth or position in life.

I commit myself to an adequate and effective pro bono program.

Lawyer to Client

... I will endeavor to achieve my client's lawful objectives in legal transactions and in litigation as quickly and economically as possible. ...

I will advise my client that civility and courtesy are expected and are not a sign of weakness. ...

I will treat adverse parties and witnesses with fairness and due consideration. A client has no right to demand that I abuse anyone or indulge in any offensive conduct.

I will advise my client that we

will not pursue conduct which is intended primarily to harass or drain the financial resources of the opposing party. ...

I will advise my client regarding the availability of mediation, arbitration and other alternative methods of resolving and settling disputes.

Lawyer to Lawyer

I will be courteous, civil and prompt in oral and written communications.

I will not quarrel over matters of form or style, but I will concentrate on matters of substance. ...

I can disagree without being disagreeable. I recognize that effective representation does not require antagonistic or obnoxious behavior. I will neither encourage nor knowingly permit my client or anyone under my control to do anything which would be unethical or improper if done by me. ...

Lawyer and Judge

I will always recognize that the position of judge is the symbol of both the judicial system and administration of justice. I will refrain from conduct that degrades this symbol.

I will conduct myself in court in a professional manner and demonstrate my respect for the court and the law. ...

I will be punctual.

Britain's World Wars

...inch line. And there are also five, unexpectedly beautiful paintings that layer together figures from silent cartoons, creating lush penitence reminiscent of Sigmar Polke. Also random, unlikely casts of characters.

Fortunately, Mr. Prince's excursions of American humor often focus on infidelity — almost all the scenes used by the artist depict a woman discovering her husband in a

joke (spelled phonetically) as examples. The discussion ends with an observation that fleshes out the joke with unexpected poignancy: "The girl who asks the questions has the same accent but she sounds bored with life."

A rapid drop in energy occurs across the street at the Barbara Gladstone Gallery, where Mr. Prince is exhibiting his first forays into three

Japanese Resort to Get A \$51.3 Million Picasso

By RITA REIF

A Japanese real-estate developer paid \$51.3 million yesterday for Pablo Picasso's "Pierrette's Wedding" and said he planned to hang it at an auto racing resort he is building on the

...ture, in addition to the art museum. The 2.94-mile auto racing circuit, which has been certified by the International Federation of Automobile Sports.

The sale was attended in Paris by about 800 people and in Tokyo by about 500, the auctioneers said.