

## PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCIPLINE

By

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### TOMORROW NEVER COMES

Canon 6 of the Code of Professional Responsibility provides that “a lawyer should represent a client competently,” and DR 6-101(A)(3) specifically states that he shall not “neglect a legal matter entrusted to him.”

During the past summer, a panel of the Board heard complaints of dilatory tactics made against a single practitioner with some thirty years of experience. The attorney was asked why he persisted in failing to complete legal matters within a reasonable time. He responded that it was a question for which there was not clear-cut answer. If the matter could be disposed of immediately and without any problems, it would so be done. However, he said, if there were problems to be resolved, or if a piece of business more attractive intervened, the matter at hand would be done tomorrow. But, he continued, “Tomorrow just doesn’t come.”

This office continues to log in great numbers of complaints of failure to close estates within a reasonable time; of failure to commence suit, particularly personal injury actions; of failure to file the note of issue when suit is at issue; of delay in having judgment entered in default divorce cases, etc., etc.

Our Supreme Court has held a continued course of such neglect to be grounds for supervised probation, suspension, and even has suggested possible disbarment. I sincerely hope that “tomorrow does come” for every attorney, experienced or recently admitted, single practitioner or member of a firm. If not, the day certainly will come when he will be subjected to severe sanctions by the Court.