MEDDLING

This paper was presented before the

CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB

on

MAY 10, 2010

by

Hugh J. Schwartzberg

© 2010 by Hugh J. Schwartzberg, Chicago, Illinois, USA

all rights reserved

MEDDLING

As far back as I can remember, I've always been something of a Meddler.

Almost a quarter-century ago, I told this club how I came to run for office a half-a-century ago, against George Dunne, who was later to become Chairman of the Cook County Central Committee of the Democratic Party.

That losing campaign had plastered the Near North and Lincoln Park areas of this city with slogans crying out "Clean up the Police Force," "End Double-Shift Schools" and "Establish District Public Health Centers."

In losing, we won.

Prior to that campaign, not even the then-recent Summerdale Police Scandal, in which the police turned out to be the criminals, seemed to have provided any effective action against police corruption. In that rather different time, a substantial portion of the population carried a $5 or $10 bill next to their driver's license, for use when stopped by police for traffic violations. Citizens used to refer to the Outer Drive as the last outpost of collective bargaining. Faced with an invasion of the Democratic primary, which threatened the machine's own image of itself, Mayor Richard J. Daley called in Prof. O. W. Wilson to remake Chicago's police force. The Mayor, in his capacity as chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party, caused more than fifteen District Public Health Centers to be established. While the cause-and-effect may be less clear, double-shift schools soon disappeared. And as an indirect result of this venture, I soon found myself Chairman of the Community Advisory Boards for the Near North and Lincoln Park areas for President. Kennedy's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, and for President Johnson's War on Poverty and Model Cities operations. These events did not make the first Mayor Daley happy. The certificate of thanks which I received for my several years of effort refers to me only as "Temporary Chairman."

All of that was touched upon in my prior presentation, which was entitled "Throwing Money at the Problem." I do not intend to re-tell that tale tonight.

I want to tell something more about my meddling, because my tendency to meddle in matters of public policy had not ended at the point reached in my previous presentation. This time, we are going to look at meddling as a pattern of life. I do not intend to tell this story chronologically. Here goes.

In the early 1960s, my wife was on a rotating medical internship which included Cook County Hospital. Our County Hospital was then under the direction of Dr. Karl Meyer as Superintendent, and it had a wonderful reputation. Joanne came home to tell me

stories of Dr. Meyer using an operating room without air-conditioning, in which sometimes, during operations, he opened the windows and various flying insects came in to watch him operate. She told of STAT [which is to say, emergency] orders for medicines which waited unfilled for hours. She told of patients lined up in the corridors lying on gurneys, seemingly endlessly. The reality of that hospital simply did not match its public reputation.

I examined the budget for Cook County Hospital, and learned that like the rest of Cook County, the hospital relied on a line-item budget. With the assistance of the leadership of the staff of residents, I was given an opportunity to examine the hospital on my own, smuggled in and provided with my own green gown. I prepared testimony on behalf of the Independent Voters of Illinois, which was presented to the County Board by George Watson, who was at that time Dean of Roosevelt University.

I fully understood that County as an institution and Dr. Karl Meyer as an individual had built up a certain amount of power over the years. It was believed that some of this had been accumulated by providing fine medical treatment to prominent individuals.

I went to the Daily News, and they agreed to assign a reporter if I thought I could get him in to see what I claimed to have seen. We got the reporter his green gown, and a series of exposés resulted. And then the real work began.

Wherever and whenever the Chairman Of the Cook County Board gave a speech, I tried to make certain that at least one of the questions afterwards would center on the problems of Cook County Hospital. That took some doing, but I'm reasonably certain that we convinced him that no other political issue was viewed by the public as having greater weight. Meanwhile, I went to George Dunne, my erstwhile opponent in that race for State Senate, and sought an opportunity for a lengthy discussion of County Hospital. George finally agreed to allow me to accompany him on his walk home from his offices in the county building. On that leisurely walk, I had an opportunity to show why the hospital's nursing shortage existed. I pointed out that all the surrounding institutions offered better starting salaries, and better working conditions. To George's credit, we had an opportunity to discuss whether or not it was realistic to expect that we could get the private hospitals to take on their obligations to do the charitable work that was being conducted by County Hospital. Unfortunately, that was not a realistic answer.

It has been suggested to me that in the political maneuvering which followed, those who took on Dr. Meyer, including the then president of the County Board, Seymour Simon, lost their political positions because of it. Nevertheless, Seymour Simon, who happened to be an old family friend, ended up on the Illinois Supreme Court. George Dunne ended up as the titular head of the Democratic Party in this area.

That was not the last time that Cook County Hospital required and received activist political meddling. There are some public institutions which by their nature require activist meddling on a periodic basis. If we ever run out of meddlers, we will all find ourselves in even greater trouble. So the first rule of meddling is not to give up. It's never over.

The best meddling can go unnoticed, sometimes by design. If you want to understand meddling, you have to keep your eyes open, but you'll still miss most of it. Let me give you an example.

I was not happy with President Nixon's nomination of Judge Haynesworth to the United States Supreme Court. Joseph Rauh, Jr., a fine lawyer, a friend and something of a political ally ---we were both then members of the National Board of Americans for Democratic Action---was leading a battle against that nomination, but clearly needed more time in order to build momentum for Haynesworth's defeat. I did not consult him, and had not specifically been asked to do anything.

The President of the American Bar Association was in Chicago for the purpose of addressing that organization's Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities. I was a member of the Section, but at the time, had no other connection with it. My father took the ABA President to lunch the day before, and invited me to join the two of them. To my father's probable discomfiture, I talked to his guest about my understanding of the ABA Constitution. If a member in good standing called for an investigation of a judicial nomination, the President of the ABA was required to institute such an investigation. The ABA President, Bernard Siegel, confirmed my understanding. I advised him that if, during the question period following his address the next day, I was given an opportunity to inquire, I would repeat my question, and formally request such an investigation, based on the material which had come out on Haynesworth's judicial activities and related stock holdings.

Then I called some reporters I knew, and offered a deal. I would give them a time and place which would enable them to be present when an event would occur which would be worthy of a national story. But there was a condition. I would provide the information only on advance agreement that my name would be left out of the story, even though I admitted that I would be a minor participant. They were not required to report the event, but the deal was that if they did so, they would have to leave my name out. Now there can be some question as to whether or not a reporter should agree to such an arrangement. I'm not sure that it was inappropriate for me to ask. I always taught my journalism students that they could ask any question, but should not necessarily expect an answer. In this case, two or three reporters agreed to the arrangement, on a non-exclusive basis.

The next day, after President Siegel's formal address, I rose and made my request. The meeting's chairman seemed horrified, and tried to protect his speaker. There were boos, and some cheers, in response to my request. Siegel, to his credit, advised that as a

matter of courtesy he had received advance warning of the question, even though that was not required, and that he would take the matter under advisement. The publicity, and Siegel's subsequent actions, helped provide the additional push which defeated the Haynesworth nomination.

The newspaper stories appeared, without disclosing my identity except in the case of the Washington Star, a minor paper of the time, with which I had not made any deal.

My participation was, however, not overlooked by Professor Boris Bittker of the Yale Law School, who wrote a letter in support of young lawyers taking such positions, although he gave no indication that he remembered his former student. Bittker appeared to be under the impression that what I had done was the work of a committee, rather than the meddling of a single individual.

When the Haynesworth nomination failed, and President Nixon named Carswell in his stead, there was a brief moment when I thought that I had made a terrible mistake. But then the Carswell nomination also failed, and Mr. Justice Blackmun took that seat on the Supreme Court. I felt great relief. It was a fine appointment. Oddly enough, in later judicial nominations for the court, some reporters tracked me down to see whether I had any information on the nominees. As it happened, I did. On an off-the-record basis, of course. But that's a different story, perhaps for a different time.

Success in meddling is never certain. There is probably no need to assure you that my meddling has not always been successful.

I once tried to solve the housing problems of the Philippines, a venture which clearly failed. From time to time I have salved my feelings with the memory of a warning given me by the senior Mrs. Aquino, mother of the assassinated Phillipine leader. In the middle of my quest, she asked me "Where do you expect to find honest men to assist you?" In a country in which it seemed that almost no public servant was provided with a legitimate living wage, the built-in problems may have been insurmountable.

That Philippines venture provided me with the opportunity to experience real danger averted. It provided the unforgettable memory of having our automobile stopped by brigands with rifles. My wife and I listened as our friend and guide stepped out of the car and dared to argue that we were American millionaires who had come to the country to attempt to solve its problems, so that we should not be harmed. I thought he had gone out of his mind. That his plea led to our release was only one of the amazing things which made up that unhappy venture.

Although I have received threats, meddling may be less dangerous than it looks. But not always. For the most part, there are no real adventures in the story of my meddling, with very few exceptions.

When the Hanafi Muslims seized the Washington headquarters of B'nai B'rith, and there held my friends and colleagues hostage, under constant threat of murder, unless certain prisoners were released, I was in Chicago. While international TV broadcast the Hanafi threats, our local Chicago police called me, wanting to know whether or not I wanted to cancel all local activities, or preferred to allow the police to place a protective force with riot guns outside our downtown office door. Days later, I decided that I had probably been a damn fool not to send my family out of town.

I was fully aware that the Hanafis were the remnants of a breakaway from the Black Muslim organization which had originally been founded by Elijah Muhammed. I remembered that this breakaway had been led by Malcolm X and, as I recalled it, the original Hanafi headquarters were in Chicago. I made the decision to carry on, but with protection, and without trying to provide a quick education for anyone on the intricacies of that portion of our local history.

That same night, with the take-over of our Washington B'nai B'rith headquarters still unresolved, I found myself driving to Skokie. That was in an era before cell phones. While still on the Edens Expressway, I suddenly realized that there was no reason to assume that the Skokie police had been listening to the national TV news, or that they had had any advance warning of the terror siege in Washington. Skokie, of course, was a different jurisdiction from Chicago. Homeland anti-terror communication was as yet undreamt of. I arrived at the storefront where the evening meeting was to be held, noting that the unguarded plate-glass store-front was a very easy target. I grabbed a telephone, and tried to explain the situation to the police operator, and to someone who seemed to be in charge. I was told they would take care of it immediately, but I wasn't certain that I had been understood.

I sat there while people milled in the back (all apparently unaware of the national news) and stared out from the front window for what seemed forever. Eventually, a single policeman appeared. To my horror, he was alone. The only armament he bore was the single pistol holstered at his waist. I thought of the kinds of weapons being brandished by the Hanafis in Washington. Again, I tried to explain the situation. Finally, he said to me: "Don't worry. I'm a member of Louis H. Harrison Lodge B'nai B'rith."

I have on occasion been immersed in real security protection, but that was because I was meeting with someone of importance, or because my own role might be misconstrued by others. I have never represented any country or group of countries or any organization of nations, or been part of any intelligence service or the like. My role was seldom anything other than that of purest meddler. Violence was never anything I had any particular reason to worry about, and so I didn't.

It's perfectly true that I stood on the roof of the Jewish center in Buenos Aires Argentina, and thought of the possibility of its being bombed. A few months after I stood

there, it was in fact obliterated. But that never seemed a threat to me, and it really wasn't.

I had gone to Buenos Aires because a local newspaper's stories were making life difficult for Jews and for the State of Israel. The local B'nai B'rith people thought that setting up a conference between the newspaper's representatives and me, as a high B'nai B'rith mucky-muck who had been a Professor of Journalism at Northwestern's Medill Graduate School of Journalism, might be a way of beginning to change things. So I flew down, and somewhat to my surprise, received assurances that the problem would be dealt with by the local publisher, and it was. I thought that I had accomplished something. That feeling disappeared when the actual bombing occurred. Which was, of course, some time after I had left.

For me, that bombing had no greater or lesser reality than the attack on the World Trade Center in New York. As it happens, I had had a meeting at the top floor of that building as well, shortly before its disappearance. In both places, I chanced to take out my video camera to record the ambience. That's nothing more than an odd coincidence.

It is important for meddlers to have a clear agenda in mind, but it is unlikely that it will remain unchanged over a lifetime.

Many of us who were involved in the early struggles for civil rights during our days started out with certain assumptions about the nature of civil rights, and about the problems which compounded civil rights issues. For example, we initially assumed that matters of social association lay outside our field of concern. If people wanted to discriminate in the major clubs of our principal cities, that was up to them, and–or so we then thought–nothing like that concerned us. We thought that we need not pay attention to matters of so-called social discrimination.. It was only slowly that some of us came to recognize that the great social and business clubs which symbolized the peak of our social structure sometimes created special problems for our society.

For me, the turning point came when a non-Jewish friend of mine described an experience at one of the top social clubs of Chicago (not the Union league Club). My friend had arranged to put up a Japanese client of his overnight at that club. The next day, his Japanese client tried to entertain him with some anti-Semitic jokes. When my friend made inquiries of his client, he learned that the Japanese client had heard these stories from some of the people he had met in that club the night before. The Japanese visitor had noticed that this was the kind of thing that prominent Americans did in a prominent institution. He had noted that this was the way respectable people entertained themselves. So he decided that since that was the kind of thing that you did in America, he would follow suit. My friend thought that he should bring this incident to my attention.

As American ideas about diversity began to change within our society, some of the sources of our bigotry became more clear. The Royal Order of the Moose began to look

different. Some civil rights organizations, including the ADL, began to look at social discrimination differently. In some cities, particular legislators began to question holding important meetings in particular private clubs because those clubs discriminated, and some began to refuse to attend important events.. In the final step that helped initiate change, some cities began to question the right of clubs which discriminated to maintain their liquor licenses. And what may have begun as a concern about racial and religious discrimination, rapidly became a concern about gender discrimination as well.

Although some of the great social clubs, in the city and elsewhere, were formed by Jews and Christians acting together as founders, as was the case of the Union League Club of Chicago, by the middle of the century, most bore the marks of racial and religious segregation, and remained limited to male members.

I tell you all this to try to explain that my activities with the Union League Club of Chicago were in no sense foreseen by me back when I started meddling with things. My aunt, for example, was astonished, and distressed, when I joined.

When I was a young man, The Union League Club had lost almost all memory of that very early period when Jews had been active in that Club, had forgotten the years when Julius Rosenwald was a symbol of Chicago philanthropy, or when Dankmar Adler steered Louis Sullivan's role in remaking Chicago architecture.

As a child, and later as a junior member, I belonged to the Covenant Club of Chicago, a city club which had been founded by B'nai B'rith, and which discriminated in matters of gender, and perhaps otherwise, until shortly before its end. In its closing years, the Covenant Club had held an exhibition of my own poetry and photography, in that club's lobby.

When word got around that the Covenant Club was considering closing, some members of the Union League Club urged me to join them. I told them that the Union League Club discriminated against women, and that as Chairman of the State's Advisory Committee on Civil Rights, I could not join such a club. And besides, I insisted, it was wrong. When, a couple of decades later, I found myself Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee of the Union League Club of Chicago and President of its Civic and Arts Foundation, I was as surprised as anyone.

When the Union league Club committed itself to accepting women as members, I was told that my excuse was no longer available. To my pleasant surprise, the assurances I was then given, to the effect that the club would embrace diversity, in fact soon began to be fulfilled. The male toilet facilities on the first floor were ripped out, so that equal facilities would be readily available for men and for women. One of the first women members was named Chair of the Club's Membership Committee. Within a very short period of time, the Club had its first woman president.

I had thought that I would be bored by that Club, but came to find it fascinating and comfortable.

One of the first requests I received was to sit on a foundation committee making grants. It can be fun to give away other people's money, so I joined in. My biggest surprise was that I knew everybody else around the table, from various activities, while others recognized fewer faces. After a while, I was elected counsel for that Foundation, and began to rise through that entity's chairs.

Like most city clubs, this club was reaching out for new members, so I recruited the retired chief of the matrimonial division of the local courts to become a member, and he helped revive the Club's camera group. I brought in the Lutheran minister who had been president of the Raoul Wallenberg Committee of Chicago, and co-sponsored the Rabbi who served as Executive Director of the Chicago Board of Rabbis, and recruited the Chairman of the Chicago Landmarks Commission. I recruited a friend who was an executive in the health field to become a member and to serve as chairman of a special Subcommittee on Healthcare Problems. And I brought in some other members who could assist in helping support the good works of the club's foundations.

At the request of one of the club's presidents, I set up programs, in separate years, on Japan and on Israel, and arranged tours to each of those countries for members who wished to join them. It was also suggested that I arrange a model seder, which I led. Several past presidents attended. As Chair for Members Affairs, I helped my friend and insurance agent, who was already active, to establish a brass instrumental group, members entertaining members, which is still going strong.

Nevertheless, when some years after beginning these activities, I found myself Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee of the Union League Club of Chicago and President of its Civic and Arts Foundation, I was as surprised as anyone.

I tell you all this in part as background for my meddling in matters of capital punishment. But I want to be clear that my role in that matter was less than that of Bill Nissen, who is a member of our Chicago Literary Club, who shepherded that subcommittee through some difficult questions of criminal law reform.

Just as there are institutions which require meddling, there are also issues which require meddling, because in their very nature, they never quite die. Perhaps the most obvious of these issues is Capital Punishment. Some may be amused by the present generation of reactionary judicial activists who question the right of the United States Supreme Court to struggle with questions of capital punishment. Of course, in reality, capital punishment was one of the most important questions facing our young republic at the end of the 18th century, if only because most crimes were still felonies, punishable by death. And, as all of you know because I have already told you, James Wilson, the principal

author of our United States Constitution, explained to the leading figures of his day that the question of Capital Punishment was a question that was still open to be determined by the judiciary.

When I ran for office, I was not prepared for the death penalty question. I elected to take a public stance on my very first public outing. Dawn Clark Netsch, one of my precinct captains who in a later era was to be Democratic candidate for Illinois Governor, saved me some embarrassment by pointing out that the only practical effect of that position would be to provide a second for a motion which one of the legislators had been offering for years, without any support.

Actually, I now believe that the best policy is to leave capital punishment on the books for some matters, while treating any Supreme Court which allows its exercise more than a handful of times in a generation as being "a bloody Supreme Court." That is literally the Talmudic rule. As an aside, I here note that it is that traditional rule which the Gospels offer in the story of the woman taken in adultery. Jesus accepts that adultery is a capital offense, but prevents the exercise of stoning. That is to say, he prevented the exercise of capital punishment without changing the rule which required it. This was, by the way, the traditional ethical position of the pharisees, carried out in a brilliant manner. But I am getting away from my subject, so I apologize for the excursion.

When I became Chair of Public Affairs for the Union League Club I had a subcommittee on criminal law reform. I urged the members of that committee not to come in with a position against capital punishment, because I was certain that such a position would tear the club apart. I knew that it would not be possible to secure a majority against capital punishment in the Public Affairs Committee, and also in the Board of Directors of the Club, both of which were required in order to allow the Club to take any new policy position.

One of my successors in the Law and Journalism position at the Medill Graduate School of Journalism at Northwestern changed the playing field. He brought this state's attention to the DNA evidence which made a moratorium on capital punishment possible. So I went around to many of the prominent members of the ULC, one-on-one, presenting some arguments, and calling in some favors. I found enough members willing to say that if the sub-committee came out with a recommendation for a moratorium, they would allow the public affairs committee and the board (and therefore the club itself) to adopt that position. Let me be clear. A number of those who agreed to do this did so as a personal favor to me. Not because they had changed their minds, but because they were willing to allow a majority to act. And when the subcommittee did decide to support a moritorium, most of those in the policy-controlling bodies who had given me that assurance abided by their promises, and the new position was adopted.

The Governor of Illinois at the time was a man named George Ryan. He was a member of

the ULC.. He had been a member of its Public Affairs Committee. When I took on the obligation to chair that committee, I made it clear to staff that I wanted no awards or special treatment for the Governor during my term of office, because I considered him dsihonest. But I judged that the Club's support for a moratorium would be understood by the Governor as an indication that a respectable and somewhat conservative portion of society would tolerate, if not welcome, a moratorium.

The Club's public affairs director is required to maintain a position as a paid political lobbyist, duly licensed by the state. We sent that lobbyist to Springfield to lobby the Governor for a moratorium. Within the week, the Governor ordered the moratorium. As a result, he was showered with editorial praise, and nominated for a Nobel prize. Nevertheless, I was not surprised when, somewhat later in his career, he went to prison on an unrelated matter.

While serving as a Director for the Club, I also served as President of the Union League Civic & Arts Foundation. Sometimes meddling takes up a substantial amount of time..

As a student in this city, the downtown branch of the Chicago Public Library was of great importance to me, if only because the resources of my local public library had been exhausted at an early age. At College, the Woodbury Poetry Room of Lamont Library was also of importance to me. So when I became President of the Civic & Arts Foundation, I tried to get the Chicago Public Library system to establish a poetry reading room in the Harold Washington Library. I managed to secure agreement from the CPL for the establishment of such a room. This was to be in exchange for a small grant from the Civic & Arts Foundation, plus some assistance from Alice Ryerson Hayes, [best known for her work in the creation of the Ragdale Foundation, who in this instance provided money for some comfortable furniture], plus a personal gift from me of some of my videotapes of poetry readings, plus a substantial portion of my personal collection of first editions of poets, many of which were signed, plus an oil painting by e.e. cummings, as well as some archival material and my science fiction and detective/mystery book collections. It was all supposed to be anonymous. If any name was to be attached, it was to be that of Harriet Monroe. Shortly after the new room was opened, some kids trashed some of the furniture. The Library closed the special reading room and moved everything into Special Collections. You can still examine the unique portion of the material, on special request, at the top floor of the Library. Unfortunately the present result has very little to do with providing young adults in this city with an easily accessible reading room in which to explore their evolving taste in poetry. As far as I'm concerned, this whole venture provides additional proof that sometimes the best designed meddling can fail.

But the Foundation did find other good things to do. I managed to get the Foundation to set up a prize for classical music composition, but it has not continued, in part because there are some people who find it easier to celebrate the performance of

familiar material, than to appreciate creation of new music. During my most active time with the Foundation, during the period before the famous grant by Mrs. Lilly to *Poetry*, the Foundation helped keep that magazine alive. One of my favorite projects undertaken by our Foundation was to provide a system of grants, made available for special projects in their own classrooms. That wasn't one of my own ideas.

Sometimes meddling is possible simply because one is in the right place at the right time, wearing the right hat. There is a very delicate line between meddling and appropriate activism. Sometimes what I have called meddling is simply a matter of carrying out the implied obligation that goes with office in any organization. I was President of B'nai B'rith District No. 6 at a time when that office implied policy leadership in communal affairs with respect to the midwestern states of the United States and a couple of provinces of Canada. The International Genocide Convention was submitted to the United States Senate for ratification. It seemed clear to me that ratification was at best doubtful. Nevertheless, there was a clear obligation to try to induce the Senate to act favorably. Sen. Burke Hickenlooper did not seem to be a likely supporter of that treaty. But in small towns across Iowa, individual citizens could be made to understand the importance of that treaty for the world as they saw it. If those citizens could be brought to the point where they would contact their United States Senators, unusual results could occur. It is unlikely that any of them had ever asked their Senator for anything at all before that. They were clearly acting without hope of personal benefit. There was no real detriment to the senator, either in monetary or political terms, if he went along with the Treaty. He ended up supplying what may be considered as the decisive vote. Perhaps that wasn't meddling at all. For some reason, I have never previously reported my activities in this connection to anyone.

Like most meddling, my meddling was usually in response to a combination of responsibility, personal or organizational, and happenstance. Take the time I was serving as Chairman of the Church-State Committee of the Illinois Division of the American Civil Liberties Union. A friend, Lyle Despain, called, deeply upset, requesting help on a church-state matter.

That committee chairmanship was not a very important job. Usually, in those years, my position in that organization was that of Chair of the Nominating Committee, a position which I held for several years.

For Despain, no item of belief was more central to his irreligious faith than his commitment to the importance of the Bill of Rights. He would become upset if anyone, whether Supreme Court Justice or ordinary citizen, failed to respect our fundamental liberties. Despain's children were in kindergarten, where their teachers taught them the words of the Lord's Prayer. He was livid, in part because it seemed to him that those teachers had failed to understand what Church-State separation meant. They were teaching their students the wrong lesson. So he complained. There were two separate results. When Despain's complaint became publicly known, he lost his job. That was one of the results.

The other was that the school decided to respond by dropping the Lord's Prayer. Maybe angry citizens would have helped create the first result even without the second.

The school board substituted the following verse for the Lord's Prayer:

"We thank you Lord for the flowers so sweet.
We thank you Lord for the food we eat.
We thank you Lord for everything."

Again, Despain objected. This time the school removed the word "Lord" wherever it appeared, but kept the rest. The school later argued that its new version was simply "a thankfulness exercise." Despain again objected, this time without result, except that he lost another job. During the course of these events, he managed to work his way down from real estate broker to pizza delivery driver. You may assume that, at various times, I tried to warn Despain that his supporters would desert him, and that the consequences to him would prove terrible. He ended up losing his marriage, among other losses. You may have known him as head of Chicago's College of Complexes.

Pursuant to Despain's request, I canvassed the members of the Church-State committee, and the ACLU board. There was great hesitancy in taking on Despain's case. I insisted that if we were to take on the case, we should be prepared to take on its appeal as well, because while I thought the case might be won in the Seventh Circuit, I was reasonably certain that the probability of winning at the trial-court level was small. Unfortunately, I did not get the commitment for appellate costs in writing in advance. When we lost in the trial court, the ACLU Board came very close to not authorizing an appeal, but it ultimately did so.

I recruited a friend to serve as trial counsel. I took on the task of trying to find some expert witnesses who might be able to help make it clear that, as a matter of fact, the court was dealing with a religious exercise, and also to provide some political cover for the court. I was upset to find that the Rabbis I approached were unwilling to touch the case. I found two Protestant experts, one an Episcopalian Professor of Theology at Seabury Western, and the other a Presbyterian, a Professor of Christian Education at McCormick Theological Seminary. The latter happened to be a friend and, at the time, my rear-door neighbor—Dr. John Burkhardt. In response to cross examination, Professor Burkhart performed brilliantly, explaining that, as a matter of history, the "thank you Lord" verse had been specifically written for use in childhood religious education. He also pointed out that the removal of the word "Lord" put the government in the position of writing its own religious material, its own version of prayer, which was precisely one of the most important things that the First Amendment was designed to guard us against.

All this was many years ago. This year, we face a United States Supreme Court majority which asserts that a cross, when used as a symbol for military graves, has no

religious significance. This is despite our nation's long tradition of allowing other symbols at grave-sites, when families prefer. Any generation which ceases to struggle to protect our liberties in difficult cases will ensure that we lose them, but I do not expect adequate protection from the judiciary in matters of church-state separation during the immediate future.

The obligations that go with being a lawyer sometimes present great difficulties for those of us who represent private clients. As John Adams and James Wilson both learned, life can become difficult for lawyers who meddle with unpopular causes. Practicing law provides other ethical difficulties as well.

In representing a client, I firmly believe that one is ethically obliged to make arguments that may lead to the creation of bad law. At one time, I helped the Supreme Court of Illinois reach the conclusion that rights to free speech with respect to a public mall are substantially different from those which apply to public streets. Winning the case did not convince me that my argument was good law. It was now law, but the law was not a good one.

Similarly, I once helped convince the Supreme Court of Georgia that earlier court opinions, are of greater legal strength than more recent ones. The idea is that an earlier judicial opinion would have to be followed in preference to a more recent one, unless the older authority was expressly overruled. I continued to consider this argument as nonsense, even after the Supreme Court of Georgia ruled in our client's favor.

I also believe that there is an obligation to represent unpopular clients in unpopular causes. At one point, I was forced to draw a very close distinction in this matter. I was approached by a representative of George Lincoln Rockwell, the leader of the American Nazi party at the time, asking me to represent Mr. Rockwell. I had no doubt that I was being sought out in part because of my titles in various Jewish organizations. My ethical position was further complicated by this representative's assertion that Rockwell had been unable to secure legal services from any lawyer of substantial legal ability. I informed this representative that Rockwell should make this claim, ;in writing, addressed to both the Chicago Bar Association and to the Illinois State Bar Association. Asking for their assistance in his quest for legal representation. I assured the gentleman that if both the CBA and the ISBA were unable to assist him in finding a lawyer of substantial capabilities, I would represent Mr. Rockwell. I am very grateful to say that that was the end of that.

When a group of American Nazis threatened to march on Skokie, I was clear in my own mind that there was no necessary obligation for the ACLU to represent them, at least in general terms. I felt that the ACLU had an obligation to make new law where appropriate, and to defend general principles in particular cases where the very existence of those principles was threatened. It was not obligated to represent, for example, every free speech case in the United States. So on the morning when the question of representing the Nazis in

Skokie was to come up before the Illinois Board, I arrived early, precisely in order to make it clear to all that I knew of no reason to represent them. I so indicated to David Goldberger, then general counsel, before the meeting started. He whipped out a copy of the temporary restraining order which a judge had already issued against the Nazi march, and insisted that I read it.

No special findings had been made. The order simply barred any march, in uniform or not, with permits or without them, with banners and signs or without them, whether or not silent, regardless of numbers, at any hour of the day or night, anywhere in the city limits. It was unlimited in duration. It struck me that the injunction itself was both a clear violation of our system of laws and a political act.

With a very heavy heart, I told David that I would make his motion. At the ACLU Board, questions of any sort were seldom treated with unanimity, and this was no exception. One member, later a judge, made it clear that he would try to prevent the ACLU from representing the Nazis at any time under any circumstance. He was a survivor, and I fully understood his position. My motion passed. It would produce a drop in ACLU membership and in the contributions received, and it made life very difficult for the organization and for David.

That evening the same situation came up before the Executive Committee of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, where I was also a Director. Early in the discussion, a well-known United States District Court Judge made an extensive argument as to why he thought that the Nazis could be defeated in their attempt to overcome the temporary injunction. I responded that I thought that the judge's peers would not agree with him, and that even if they did, the Seventh Circuit would reject his point of view. However, I also argued that there was no obligation on the part of the Anti-Defamation League to support the Nazi position. It was not the ACLU. It was, to a considerable extent, the defensive legal arm of the organized Jewish community. The Jewish community often needs defense, and failure to make the attempt would neither be understood nor excused. There was no reason why the Anti-Defamation League should not make things as difficult as possible for the Nazis, and to attempt to defeat them in any legitimate manner. So I made a formal motion to that effect, and it carried.

As you can see, this meddler believed that there are obligations on the part of anyone who accepts a leadership role in an organization which preclude ignoring the primary and lawful intents of the members, where they are consistent with the organization's rules and purposes. To do otherwise would be to deny the root purpose of the organization itself. I did not expect others to understand my conclusion.

There were two other people who served on both the ACLU and ADL boards. One was Prof. Victor Rosenblum of Northwestern Law School. The other was Prof. Stanley Kaplan of the University of Chicago Law School. A few days later a newspaper reporter

came to my office to find out how the three people who were on both boards had voted. I explained to the reporter that I was unwilling to give that information. On an off-the-record basis, I explained that while the other two might or might not have personal clients, I certainly did, and I was not prepared to explain my position on such matters to my private clients. My two friends are now long dead, so I have no hesitancy in telling you that, without prior or subsequent consultation, we all three voted the same way in both cases.

The rest of the Skokie story has been the subject of movies and TV, fiction and documentaries, together with considerable research and analysis. None of it involved any additional meddling on my part, and therefore will not be dealt with here.

Meddlers sometimes are surprised by those who seek out their meddling.

When some Black Panthers sought assurance that they could safely attend a Democratic National Convention in Chicago, they came to me. I don't know how they heard of me. Based on assurances given to me by the criminal division of the United States Attorney's office, they came to that convention.

When a Chicago Teachers Union official was scheduled to go to jail for alleged injunction violation, and feared for his physical safety while in jail, he was referred to me by parties unknown. I talked to the Sheriff to get special assurances for his safety. Why and how that union official chose to contact me, I have never learned.

When Lenny Bruce feared for his physical safety at the local police station in surrendering on the warrant which arose out of his Gate of Horn bust, he came to me to make the arrangements, and I did so. I have never learned how or why I was chosen.

When Yugoslavia broke up, the German government was rather quick to recognize one of the new nations, while the United States was not. I'm not in the practice of doing such things, but I wrote a note to the local German Consul, with whom I had had some friendly dealings, and suggested that if Germany was prepared to defend these new states when one of them crossed the border against the other, then his country was right and my country was wrong. But unless the nations of the world were prepared to counter such aggression and respond with counter-force, then my country was right, and his country was wrong.

I wrote that in the expectation that he would send my message back through diplomatic channels to his own country, but had little hope that it would have any effect.

Later, when one of the State Department figures from the former Yugoslavian desk at the Department, resigned in protest over our handling of the opening of the Serbian/Bosnian wars, I was surprised to get a telephone call from that former official. He was soon to find himself a high school teacher. Resignation is often not the way to go. I have never understood how or why he turned to me.

In that connection, I did end up doing some things, but others did much more. The Ambassador to the United States from Bosnia, who was Jewish, appeared before the B'nai B'rith International Board to make his plea for assistance, and that provided some support for my own feelings in the matter. When it became clear that Serbia was involved in ethnic cleansing of portions of Bosnia, all my hackles rose. During the course of the campaign to make certain that the United States would at the least provide weaponry to the Bosnians, I set up a meeting in my office for some of those who were prepared to support the Bosnian position. I think some of the Imams who attended were wondering what they were doing in the offices of a Jewish attorney. The Bosnian Consul insisted that I take on the role of Chairman of the group to be established, which became the Illinois Committee to Save Bosnia. It was initially run out of my office.

I do not wish to exaggerate my role in the Bosnian matter; I consider it to have been a minor one. A friend of mine who led the Muslim Voters League insisted that I accompany him to the Independent Voters of Illinois to plead for the Bosnian position. I told him that I had had no connection with the IVI for many years, but he still insisted. And I did manage to get the IVI to take a position favorable to the Bosnians, despite some initial reluctance on their part to take a stand.

I went around to various friends at the Union League Club to raise monies to bring in Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick to address the Club, and in so doing to raise money for an organization which she was supporting, which had the same aims as ours. I spoke to a rally we arranged at the Chicago Cultural Center. And there were other activities.

At one point, I found myself explaining to a friend that I had some hesitancy in teaching the Bosnian community how to influence American foreign policy, but there were no understanding of what I was worried about. Of all the horrors that were being reinvented in the Balkans, ethnic cleansing triggered my greatest response. Ultimately, the United States did, I believe, come around to doing some of the right things, but it was late, and being late was costly.

Long afterwards, I was invited to the opening of a new Muslim center on Chicago's South side. I went along, if only out of curiosity. The meeting was presided over by Wallace Mohammed, the son of the Elijah Muhammed who had founded the Black Muslims. The father's version of Black Islam included what was clearly hatred of Jews, a built-in form of religious anti-Semitism. Wallace Muhammed did not buy into that portion of his father's religion. There were forces within Islam that made Wallace Muhammed suffer for that, but that is a different story.

Shortly after I arrived at this meeting, Wallace interrupted it, saying that he had to do so in order to pay honor to me, a man who had done so much for a Muslim country, even though that man (myself), was a Jew. That was, of course, a bitter form of thanks. On the one hand, Wallace himself symbolized the possibility of religious tolerance growing with

successive generations. On the other hand, to call Bosnia a Muslim nation also symbolized the end of the dream of Sarajevo, the dream of a place where Christians and Muslims and Jews could all thrive together, as part of one common civilization.

I did not set out to make a sideline career of meddling. It only came to look that way.

My brother went into the foreign service, after a period as a college-level academic teaching in the English Department. He was also teaching fencing, and participated in various theater arts. For some who knew us both when we were young, his later move to the USIA, and on to the State Department, seemed to be an instance in which two brothers had exchanged roles. There was some sense to that switch. He is more politic than I, and has a great gift for languages. When he revised the State Department examination, I was proud, and I was astonished when he picked up languages like Swahili, Basque and Quechua. He served in diplomatic positions on three different continents and later served as part of those visiting teams that grade the work of our embassies around the world. That is to say, he became, as he might have put it, the Prince of Two Lies. The embassy people would announce: "How pleased we are to see you." And he would respond: "We are only here to help." In that guise, he visited the capitols of China, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, fulfilling his childhood dreams of seeing the world.

When I became a Senior International Vice president for B'nai B'rith International, the International President of B'nai B'rith was kind enough to put me in charge of policy, subject of course to the resolutions and actions of the organization, but in some matters I was given a relatively free hand. One of our local leaders came to me explaining that he had been relatively close to the Jordanians when he had been in US public service. Since some of the Jordanian diplomats were going to be in Chicago, he thought it might be useful to set up an informal meeting. When the Jordanians acquiesced, I reached out to form a small but substantial group from the American Jewish community. It was my understanding that we were setting up a photo opportunity.

When I told my brother that a small meeting had been arranged between some of the B'nai B'rith people on the one hand and the Ambassador from Jordan and its Foreign Minister on the other, he warned that it looked as if nothing was going to happen in that arena on a bi-lateral basis for a long time to come. I thought that the meeting would be no more than a public indication that both the international Jewish community and Jordan were now willing to be seen together, publicly.

I had not planned to chair that little get-together, but the person who was supposed to do so became involved in an auto accident early that same morning, unbeknownst to us. We waited a long time, and when we could wait no longer, our little discussion begin. It was soon clear that the man who was at that time the heir-apparent to the Kingdom really wanted to talk. We, on our side, reported these conversations back to the State Department and to the Government of Israel. Everyone understood, and I so explained, that we were in

no position, ourselves, to represent anyone. As it happened, within a very short period of time, a peace treaty ensued between Israel and Jordan. It has lasted from that day to this, so I assume that we did not harm the process.

For some years, the most visible sign of my meddling, was my role with the Fund for an Open Society, which was commonly known as OPEN, and which had its headquarters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This was the principal national civil rights organization dealing with Freedom of Residence. Morris Milgram was President of that organization and James Farmer was its National Chairman Neither liked to chair meetings, and both of them knew that I did.

Some of you may remember Morris Milgram as the man who lost the last of the major civil rights cases, the one that dealt with his failed attempt to establish an integrated housing development in Deerfield Illinois. The village had responded by condemning the property, and turning it into a new park, named after Abraham Lincoln.

Although you probably do not remember James Farmer, despite the fact that he was presented with our national Medal of Freedom shortly before his death, you should. He was the man who employed James Chaney and Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwermer, the three principal martyrs of our civil rights revolution. He was also the man who had been originally scheduled to give the principal address at the March on Washington. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a last-minute substitute. But Farmer was thrown into a Louisiana jail, so King made the address which went down in history. Farmer was also a great orator.

OPEN's role initially was to show that racially integrated housing projects could actually work. OPEN sometimes helped provide monies to induce such projects Over a long period, as monies began to be available from other funding sources, OPEN was more likely to provide advice. When the organization helped provide the final funds for an integrated housing project in South Bend, Indiana, I took particular joy in the fact that this project was located in Indiana, which in a different era had been quite hospitable to the Ku Klux Klan. When it became clear that other funding sources had become generally available, I pressed for us to sell our mortgages, and to shift more of our activity into advocacy and advice.. This was eventually accomplished. More than a million dollars was netted from prior activities. Meanwhile, I went on to meddle in other things.

Before leaving OPEN, I was given the opportunity to participate in what I sometimes think of as the last civil rights sit-in of our time. An unusual one. OPEN's leadership had received an invitation to participate as invited guests of a Civil Rights Meeting or Caucus, to be held at the Democratic National Convention. The invitation was initially addressed specifically to James Farmer as National Chairman, but Jim insisted that the invitation be expanded to include me as well. He would not hear otherwise, and I was advised that we received a corrected invitation, covering both of us.

When the two of us arrived at the convention, Farmer was approached by what seemed to be an endless number of people who wanted to thank him for things he had accomplished. This was often gratitude for specific things which Farmer had made happen within the federal bureaucracy, which had directly affected some of these delegates as individuals. There were also reporters, and others, who simply wanted to shake his hand. I was pleased that in an era which was still poisoned by the false dreams of black power, an era which had seemingly forgotten the very meaning of civil rights, there were all these individuals who recognized that James Farmer was one of the ultimate heros of our time.

The so-called caucus was held as a luncheon. I found myself seated between Farmer and Congressman Charles Rangel. As I looked around, I soon realized that I was the only white face among those seated at our table, or at any of the tables. Shortly afterwards there were two official-looking young people who came by to politely suggest that I remove myself to the side of the room. They offered assistance to make certain that I did so. James Farmer would have none of that. Farmer had founded CORE, the Committee on Racial Equality, as a civil rights organization. When it had been taken over by those who rejected civil rights in the name of black power, he had returned to attend a national convention of CORE, in a well-publicized attempt to make the general public understand that CORE was no longer his kind of organization.

It took a moment or two for me to understand that the reason he had insisted on my presence, and the reason he would not let me leave the table, was because these people were trying to take away the name of civil rights and use it as a descriptive for what was here an all-black caucus. He would have none of it.

I sat through that meeting but, ultimately, that was a battle that Jim lost; that we all lost. The great civil rights coalition was broken by those who preferred personal power and publicity rather than maintaining the group of allies who had made possible our most important progress in civil rights. That caucus meeting had been set up by Congressman James Wright of Texas. He lost, also.

Sometimes meddling gets very complicated. Trying to explain how the Reagan Administration came to appoint me as a brand-new Member and Chairman of the Illinois State Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission would probably take longer than this address.

My primary goal was to make certain that we did not waste our entire term arguing over the limits of affirmative action, which was apparently what a portion of the administration expected us to do, and perhaps hoped that we would.

I was later told that one of those responsible for my appointment called a friend of mine from the White House. When my friend heard that I had received the appointment,

she was so astonished that she blurted out: "Don't tell me that you appointed *him*." He responded: "Oh no. Don't tell me that we made *another* mistake." She assured him that he should not worry, but I think that he later did.

The federal administrator for this committee had earlier served as Executive Vice President of St. Augustine College. During the period of his service, a client of mine, who was a Canon of the Episcopal Church, had volunteered me as counsel for the Board of that College, on a dollar-a-year basis, when that College faced a particularly difficult situation. That Canon was one of the Directors, and he convinced the Bishop for this Diocese that I might be able to help straighten things out. And I did.

So the ISAC committee administrator was not a stranger to me. The administrator had made some preliminary recommendations for membership in the ISAC committee. They had not been accepted. When, to his complete surprise, he found that I had gained the appointment as Chairman, instead of his personal pick, I believe we were both very pleased.

One night, we sat down, at my suggestion, to prepare a potential agenda of approximately twenty items for potential consideration by the Advisory Committee. We then split these up, and drew up short summaries of the possible projects. That way, at the very first meeting of the Advisory Committee, we could find out which items secured substantial agreement from both Democratic and Republican members of the committee, and agreed upon an agenda that excited everyone, as part of a program that might make a difference.

One of the first items we agreed on was to hold hearings on hate-crimes legislation. I had previously collected that suggestion from the staff of the mid-west office of the Anti-Defamation League B'nai B'rith. They thought that that might be the most useful thing which ISAC might be able to accomplish.. From this vantage point, it may be difficult to remember that neither New York nor Illinois had yet passed any hate-crimes legislation. In Illinois, when the Republicans came close to passing such legislation, the Democrats apparently killed the proposal. The reverse seemed to the case when the Democrats appeared to come close. And some legislators had some very serious doubts about this kind of legislation.

As a site for these hearings, we secured use of the ceremonial courtroom of the United States District Court, a venue which always seemed to help us secure useful publicity, even though it had no real meaning, other than that it looked impressive. We heard testimony from substantial experts, representing both parties. When I was told that the legislation had received some support from some Republicans, but was about to suffer its death at the hands of the Democrats, I visited my friend the Democratic Sheriff of Cook County, Richard Elrod, who had assisted me when I was President of the B'nai B'rith Council of Greater Chicago. Elrod agreed that his lobbyists would support the legislation. So the proposal became law, even before we published the report of our hearings.

In another and unrelated connection, I was able to take up some of ISAC's concerns with a sympathetic Republican ear at the US Attorney's office, in the person of a man who had begun his career handling civil rights complaints. The results of meddling are not always achieved openly.

Another of my original agenda suggestions, with which the committee agreed, was that we conduct hearings on the Rights of the Hearing Impaired. I had a very personal interest in this problem, because my daughter had been born profoundly deaf. My wife, who gave up six years of the practice of medicine to help solve my daughter's educational problems, had become Chair of the International Congress on Problems of the Deaf for the Alexander Graham Bell Society.

Earlier, the two of us had helped set up a self-help group for parents of the deaf, which we called "*Listen*," That group later became the basis for the Illinois Chapter of A. G. Bell, and Joanne later became head of the International Parents Section of A. G. Bell.

I also wore an additional hat at the time. Judge Abner J. Mikva had appointed me Regional Chair for the Rights and Responsibilities Section of the American Bar Association.

After some consultation with the three staffs involved {the ABA, the USCRC and AGBell} we arranged that locals and visitors from all over the world were given an opportunity to listen to the world's experts testify on what the Rights of the Hearing Impaired might be.

Based on preliminary advices which I was given, we placed some emphasis on the need for interpreters, including oral interpreters. Many of the deaf do not know any sign language. Some who are hearing-impaired rely on facial and lip-reading cues in order to understand speech. In some cases, oral interpreters, [those who repeat someone else's words within line-of-sight of one who is hearing-impaired] are more useful than sign-language interpreters. Good lighting may also be crucial for good communication. Technology was becoming more important.

Within a very few weeks, the *New Republic* was reporting that the Rights of the Deaf had Become the new hot issue. For some reason, until shortly before Pres. George H. W. Bush was prepared to sign the American Disabilities Act, we had difficulty getting our report accepted, printed and distributed.

Today, in our new world, my daughter is doing advanced study through the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of Illinois at Champaign. This is in addition to her full-time employment. The University sends out a computer signal that gives my daughter the Professor's face , with captions that provide his words, and the text of student discussions. On the side, she offers her book advices to

thousands, all over the world. I don't know whether any of this bears any relation to my meddling, but it is a nice change.

Shortly after our hearings on Rights of the Hearing-Impaired, nearly all the members of the ISAC Committee expressed interest in holding similar hearings with respect to the problems of the blind. Nevertheless, it took me a good many years of service on that committee to actually make that happen. In the interim, there was always some current problem that looked more sexy to some people.

When we did get around to the Civil Rights of the Blind, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, for the first time, published one of its reports in braille. During the course of that experience, I learned that the blind community was singularly ineffective in publicizing its own problems. As a nation, we once understood that the blind can reasonably benefit from affirmative action. Most of you will remember that, for generations, the stands for newspaper dealers and candy merchants in public buildings were traditionally reserved for blind operators. The policy behind that policy represents one of those lessons which we have unfortunately forgotten, and is the kind of thing we would do well to revisit.

Some years later, when I became Chairman of Public Affairs for the Union League Club of Chicago, I established a subcommittee to deal with the problems of advocacy for the blind. For many years now, that Club's Public Affairs Subcommittee on the Blind (under the continuing leadership of_____) has done good work.

I served two terms as Chair of the ISAC committee, which in actual practice stretched out to approximately eight years. When tendered a third appointment, I pointed out that there was a regulation against such a third term, but I continued as a very active member and occasionally served as substitute Chair.

At one point, the staff for ISAC was moved to Kansas City. I had the odd feeling that someone thought that I had corrupted that staff toward my point of view, and that someone felt a need to replace everybody. But even the new federal appointees eventually came around to understand that the problems of civil rights are real problems, and that they can sometimes be dealt with effectively. I was reappointed to the Committee by every United States Presidential Administration, whether Democrat or Republican, from Ronald Reagan through George W. Bush. I lost my position just a couple of years ago, when a form of term limits was instituted. .

Meanwhile, ISAC. continues to work on the last project which I helped initiate, which centered on hearings held with respect to Differences in Medical Services for Different Minorities. Its work was assisted by the head of the American Medical Association's Department on Aging and _____. That position, of course, is held by Dr. Joanne Schwartzberg.

For some years, I had difficulty convincing a majority of ISAC to take a look at allocation of police personnel in different parts of the city. That's one of those problems that is almost always current. Police personnel are understandably increased in the areas that know how to complain. As Jane Addams understood, it is the squeaky axle that gets the grease. The first thing I learned in real-life politics was that areas of deep poverty fear the police, but fear not having enough police protection even more. Bringing in O. W. Wilson had provided the city with a police superintendent who understood that police personnel had to be reassigned periodically , and that geographic dispersion and force levels of personnel had to be changed every few years.

Now, years after O W Wilson, the city was in a position where murder calls in the ghetto were going without response for long periods, while minor altercations in the city's wealthier areas were getting prompt response. ISAC had sufficient power to get the police force to publicly disclose some of that reality. It had its effect. The Mayor called in the head of our staff to make sure that a new system of police re-allocation of resources had actually began to meet the problem.

Shortly afterwards, I learned that the ACLU had been struggling with trying to get a handle on that problem for some years, without result.

As Thorstein Veblen realized, public institutions are always out-of-sync with public needs, and thus always require readjustment. There will always be room for meddlers.

Sometimes, meddlers are called upon to re-institute old remedies. Periodically, a democratic majority will institute draconian punishments in the belief that they will rid us of ancient evils. Making the counter-corrections is never easy. Democracy is never easy; it remains only the best alternative.

Last week's newspaper talked of dealing with youth crimes by diversion of young miscreants to local institutions, rather than sending young criminals to jails that serve as schools for crime. That's part of the same pattern we used in the JYDC experiments half-a-century ago; the same activities I told this club about just a quarter-century ago. New meddlers are always needed, even for old solutions.

Meddlers that have been around for a while sometimes find that their accumulated good deeds, or the belief that they have accomplished something, leads to requests to lend their names for other good causes. Power is what someone else believes you have, but sometimes that is taken to ridiculous lengths. Often the lists of sponsors for the best of causes consists of people who have never met together, and are never asked to do anything beyond lending their names. Sometimes they get together once. As a result of all this, on more than one occasion, I have found myself at a small dinner that includes others whom I count among the mighty. For example, a small group was gathered to help induce the United States to pay its UN dues when we had fallen far behind. That was the only time I

have met George Soros, and I do not expect to meet that financier again..

Born meddlers, however, do tend to meet each other, and that's part of the fun of it. My favorite among the 20th century civil rights leaders was Bayard Rustin, with whom I worked on Indochinese Refugees, Israel, Cambodia Famine Relief, Thailand's Treatment of Refugees, Civil Rights, and Project South Africa. At one point I was Rustin's landlord in Buffalo for an apprenticeship training program, but neither of us noticed. He set up even more organizations than I did, and was equally prepared to walk away from them.

In long walks, he told me something of his life, including his grandmother's reaction when a young Jewish schoolmate convinced Bayard to campaign for a wet, Catholic, Democrat:: Al Smith for President of the United States. I am proud of having put together two birthday parties (Rustin's 70th and his 75th), during his lifetime. Of course. they were used to raise money for good causes. Now that he is long dead, people are beginning to realize that Martin Luther, King, Jr. got his ideas of non-violent resistance from Bayard, who risked his life to reinforce that message at the height of the Montgomery Boycott. There will never be space enough to tell the story of my favorite meddler, but the biographies have begun to appear..

Nor do I have space to tell you about ICAN, Illinois Citizens for Action Now, my attempt to influence elections outside of Greater Chicago, as well as in it. Paul Johnson, a fellow James Wilson fan, writing and calling from Arizona, recently reminisced about our ICAN road trips to Ottawa and Rockford. My son insists that I think of Paul as the retired great historian, and not just as that younger man of half-a-century ago.

There is no space here for the many organizations that made up the struggle for Soviet Jewry, or the failed effort to find and to free Raoul Wallenberg from the Soviet Gulag.

Enough of what I cannot tell you. Let me close with my all-time favorite meddling, the instance that convinced me that sometimes any of us can accomplish almost anything. My single most successful meddling effort was the most unlikely success of all. Events had touched on my central beliefs, and it had begun to look as if nothing would happen unless I somehow made it happen.

For me, the First Freedom is the Freedom to Flee. I had taught and sold that rubric in the campaign for Soviet Jewry. Its corollary is that those seeking to flee must be granted the possibility of Asylum. Freedom to Flee is worthless without a Destination.

And I firmly believe that Immigration is a good thing for the United States. As Eric Hofer---the great shoreman/philosopher---recognized, those who choose to pick themselves up and build a new life usually turn out to be a different kind of people. To stop immigration, as the Congress did after World War I, was to turn our cities into sink-holes.

It was no longer possible for each American generation of immigrant to raise itself on the backs of those who had come before. I confess that I never quite understood any great differences between the Korean War and the Vietnam War except in the relative likelihood of our success. I did not, and do not, believe that one can put down a guerilla insurgency in any manner that would be acceptable to a free state without use of a force that is at least ten times larger than that of the insurgents, and in the absence of a safe haven for the guerillas. And I don't think that the United States can do so without the kind of propaganda that Lyndon Johnson rejected, when he said that he was not prepared to turn us into a nation of haters.

That said, once Indonesia had launched its internal crack-down on its own communists, I thought the domino theory was dead. But all these comments are unnecessary because apparently no one else alive today, other than myself, is prepared to confess to having supported any portion of the Vietnam War. By its close, I thought that the best argument for the war was that its aftermath would prove even worse.

Nothing about the Vietnam War (except maybe Richard Nixon's embrace of one of the perpetrators of the My Lai Massacre) was so shameful as the manner of our leaving it.

And then came the refugees. From 1975-1978, our country provided some degree of sanctuary for part of the first wave of Indochinese Refugees. But the flood only increased. Eventually, more than 700,000 human beings remained piled up in refugee camps along the South China Sea. Even that number represented the survivors from that flight, those who had not been murdered by Thai pirates, although it included the victims of rape and brigandage who had seen their limited escapee's souvenirs lost to piracy and the high seas. Death had kept some away from what now seemed a final destination.

My hero in refugee matters was Leo Cherne, a great human being. Heart and soul of the International Rescue Committee. The man who helped build AZA. The man who defeated Senator Joe McCarthy in public debate, the transcript having been made available to all of us by *Life* magazine. And now as Leo explained, publicly, that there was just no way to save these Indochinese Refugees, I couldn't take it.

We built the Emergency Task Force for Indochinese Refugees, ETFIR, from scratch. I say we because Joseph Sullivan, Anthony Mourek, Neal Ball, and others, were all necessary partners. I supplied the use of my offices and staff as an initial base, but the others soon found ways of supplying the harder cash. Joe, who had been a schoolmate, was at that time President of Estech, the Swift & Co. affiliate. Neal Ball was President of the American Hospital Supply Company Foundation, and Anthony Mourek was active in managing family real estate holdings. I say "we" because the four of us were pretty much in it from the start.

I named Joe as Co-President along with myself. A staff was hired. I took on some

tasks for myself, the principal one being to build a list of advisory board members, those informal guarantors of our worthiness. And I wanted more than just the usual suspects. My theory of the whole thing was that the political right could see itself as continuing to fight a war which had been lost by helping to rescue allies left behind, while the left could assuage any feelings of guilt for the tragedies which peace had produced, while performing a humanitarian act. The anti-immigration movement had not really begun to organize itself. That happened later. The idea that we were a nation of immigrants was still a centrist idea.

Recruiting Martin Anderson, the President's chief of domestic policy, helped in official quarters, and proved surprisingly easy. I wanted Roger Baldwin, the founder of the ACLU whose name was on its foundation, to help our credibility among much of the left. I had not known Baldwin, and was surprised that I had to work him over. When his refusals died, and he asked what he was to do next, I assured him I would get back to him, but in effect grabbed his name and ran.

If you start out with the right names, it becomes easier as you go on. I can think of only two who turned me down. Jerzy Kosinski, author of "The Painted Bird" wouldn't let anything interfere with the novel he was working on, and I couldn't convince him that this would not do so. He ended up committing suicide, but I don't think it was related. The other refusal came from Milton Friedman. Friedman took the position that he would support unlimited immigration into the United States, but not for any one group. I wouldn't touch Friedman's policy position with an eleven-foot pole, so I backed away very quickly.

Our battle-cry was: "Empty the Refugee Camps Now." There was a song, but I've forgotten the words.

The most important name for our purposes was Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO. Organized labor at various points in the historical past had fought immigration, although that has not been its position in recent times.

When Kirkland's support became public, reporters descended on him to demand just how much immigration he would support. And they kept pressing him. Finally, he said that he had been up and down the country, that it was a big country, that it could absorb a lot, and that he didn't see the need for any limits. We put the transcript of that interview on the desk of every member of Congress.

As I understand it, Joe Sullivan called in Estech's lobbyists, explained his position, and welcomed help. He made it clear that the lobbyists would receive nothing for doing so, and that it would not help or hurt their jobs. Apparently, they were delighted to assist.

Looking back from this vantage point, the success of our effort is still not quite believable. As the United States moved, some other nations agreed to help. A nation that

had rejected the very idea of alien immigration, Japan, somehow came to feel shamed, and took in immigrants from the camps. So did Australia, which had long balked at substantial Asian immigration. I don't really claim any of that.

When I run into Ed Silverman in the neighborhood, the official who directed re-settlement efforts in Illinois, I think of the thousands of individuals who bore the brunt of our venture, the real work that began for many after the refugees got to our shores. As a matter of policy, they were scattered across the continent.

Joe and Neal went on to set up and bnild the American Refugee Committee, ARC, which continues to do important work on refugee problems, but I got caught up in other causes.

Some years later, I was introducing Kirkland at the AFL-CIO headquarters. I think it was during a program honoring James Farmer. I said something about how unlikely it was to introduce the head of labor in Labor's own house. I spoke of how some people always expected organized labor to fall on the right side of social justice issues, to support Social Security even though the unionized were more likely to have pensions, and to support National Health Insurance, even though the unionized were more likely to have health insurance already. And I praised Kirkland for having provided support for the Indochinese Refugees. Afterwards, I stopped him to say that I meant every word of my praise for him. He put on a very poker face, and then struck me on the arm, saying: "And they made good citizens too, didn't they."

Along with all the valedictorians that the vietnamese refugees have given us, there were often terrible problems, some of them originating in all of the languages they brought with them. The Hmong, the mountain people who had been our allies in Vietnam, had not even had a written language.. I treasure an elaborate embroidery which a Hmong woman made, which tells the story of their rescue and resettlement. When I found it in an art fair down the street from my house, the woman who sold it to me did not know why I was crying.

Meddling has its own rewards.