

# DROPPING NAMES; MAKING CLAIMS

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by

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(Corrected Version)

There comes a time in most cultures when one is expected to examine one's own life. If one is born to Judaism, and respects that Civilization, as I do, such a self-examination may adapt itself to the ancient myth of judgment in an ultimate heavenly court. In the original myth, the prosecuting attorney is Satan. Indeed, that may be the only place in traditional Judaism where Satan can be found. He is the Accuser.

But for a true disbeliever like myself, the real accusations are hurled by oneself. So I here find myself trying to find such lasting personal accomplishments as I might claim as being

worthy of being weighed in any such ultimate test.

I chose to return to this city after law school. It was a real choice. Judge Jerome Frank of the Second Circuit amused himself by teaching Jurisprudence on the side at Yale Law School. He presented me with a sheaf of letters as a graduation present. These were addressed to some of the eminences of the day who were his friends, and his letters suggested that they sit down with me and give me advice on politics and the law and my career. At first, I did not realize that such a letter from a judge, then sitting on what was possibly the most important Court of Appeals in the land, was the equivalent of a subpoena. But it soon became clear that such was the case.

Thomas Corcoran, “Tommy the Cork”, is no longer remembered as FDR’s “fixer”, but his advice to me was brilliant and memorable. His route for my future would have begun as a prosecutor serving outside of a major city. I confess I ignored his excellent advice.

Thurman Arnold, who had been FDR’s Attorney General, cleared a couple of hours or a bit more from his schedule. He began by saying that based on Frank’s letter I had a job at his firm. That firm was Arnold, Fortas and Porter of Washington, D.C. There was no need, Arnold said, to examine my academic record in any way. Judge Frank’s letter was enough. “Now let’s discuss whether or not you should accept that offer, and what you should do with yourself.” And he proceeded with the

most brilliant analysis of law and politics as a career which it has ever been my pleasure to come across.

That was not my only job offer. My father had arranged for an offer from Thomas Dewey to go with him and his buddy Herbert Brownell to join the Ballantyne law firm in New York City. That firm remained one of the leading lights of that city until shortly before its recent death as Dewey & LeBoeuf, dying in bankruptcy, amidst Federal indictments.

A brief word about my father may be useful at this point. He served for decades as Supreme Chancellor of the national Jewish law fraternity now known as the Tau Epsilon Rho Law Society. Today it is open to all. He was one of the original

Founders. Under his leadership it was the largest organization of Jewish lawyers in the world.

Many people I have known have described him as one of the most remarkable people they had ever known.

My mother, by the way, has received similar praise, and she is worthy of a separate book.

Similarly, the ghosts of Bayard Rustin, James Farmer, Morris Milgram and Joseph L. Rauh, Jr. will not be raised here tonight. There is too little time to give them more than very short shrift, and each deserves so very much more. And my father, of course, deserves much more than the brief mentions we will make here.

One of the rules which my father refused to break was that he would not use cash for any transaction which might provide the appearance of wrongdoing. He was willing to provide certain gifts at Holiday time. These usually took the form of ties which were marked by an identification tag embroidered with the name of the prospective donee. But he would not “thank” sheriff’s deputies or others for Special Service.

This led to a somewhat famous confrontation with Marshall Field III. At one point, my father had a case against the great man. As is often the case with people of great wealth who live in protected houses, the sheriff failed to make service. This happened repeatedly, but my father would not call upon the sheriff’s deputy and ensure his diligence by an appropriate sum

of money, as was then common practice in the State of Illinois.

One day the morning mail advised my father that Marshall Field III was scheduled to give an address to the Chicago Bar Association. My father wrote a registered letter to the Sheriff of Cook County advising him of this particular time and place at which Mr. Field could surely be found, and reminding the sheriff that service had not yet been had despite numerous claims that attempts had been made. And so, when Mr. Field concluded his address to the Chicago Bar Association, at its Headquarters, there was a long line of well-wishers who were eager to shake his hand. The last man in line slapped him with a Summons.

Mr. Field grew extremely angry at this inconvenience, and demanded an investigation of this conduct by the Chicago Bar Association. A Grievance Committee was duly convened. My father explained his practice of not tipping the sheriff's deputies. To its credit and embarrassment, the Grievance Committee dropped the matter.

I was delighted when a personal friend decided to seek the office of Sheriff. He was one to whom I might be able to explain problems in service and Special Service, and to discuss possible solutions with him. But all that came much later.

Growing up, my father never gave me direct orders to do

anything, as far as I can recall, until 1949, when I received a cable from the Carribean, (my parents were on a vacation cruise), ordering me to apply to Harvard. This was almost absurd because this was in February, and the official deadline for applications had already passed. It also seemed absurd because my grades were not top-notch. I was a student at Nicholas Senn High School, a Chicago public high school of mixed reputation.

My father had been a student at the University of Michigan and the University of Michigan Law School. What I had not known, and did not learn until long after this, was that he had not gone to Harvard because his father went from being relatively well-to-do to becoming impecunious at just the wrong

time. My grandfather had a railroad car loaded with hides, whose value had suddenly crashed. The Great Depression hit some rural areas years earlier than 1929, and this area in the Upper Peninsula was one of the hardest hit. My grandfather was driven into bankruptcy, and my father went to the University Of Michigan, his home state's school, and had never mentioned Harvard to me until that sudden request.

While on that cruise, my father had apparently been bragging about his oldest son, me. This was addressed to a friend, Maxwell Abell, who held two or three Harvard Degrees.

That same year, many colleges were braced to deal with what had been a continually growing onslaught of applications

for College. What none of us knew was that the flood of applications from veterans to attend college which had been touched off by the G.I. Bill of Rights had crested and crashed.

Later, at Harvard, we used to tell each other that we were the post-card class. We came close to believing that anyone who had sent in any application, even on a post-card, had been admitted.

Earlier, my only hope for my own application to any major college had been a series of personal victories in inter-school competitions in oratory, debating, and essay-writing. One of those contests seems to fit in with tonight's principal story in an odd way.

In 1944, many national organizations in the United States had become frozen into far-right political positions. Among these was the American Legion. The farthest right among their political crew had established an Americanism Commission, for the purpose of falsely attacking people like Eleanor Roosevelt as being covert sympathizers with the Soviet Union, and of aiding that strange Congressional monstrosity, the House Committee on Unamerican Activities.

One of the local Americanism Commission's victims was a Civics Teacher at my High School, who had been subjected to a vicious form of Trial by Newspaper. I did not particularly share the general attitudes of Miss Noack, who obviously did

not share my hatred of Joe Stalin, but the attack on her was brutal, vicious, lying and contemptible, and a threat to all our liberties.

When the American Legion announced an oratory contest centering on U.S. Constitutional Issues, I grabbed at the opportunity. My chosen topic, of course, was Freedom of Expression and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The contest sessions were held in the public schools, and in the beginning, the contest judges were public school teachers. I successfully managed two or three contest levels, until I arrived at Steinmetz High School for the next level of competition.

While waiting for things to start, a burly gentleman

approached me, and introduced himself as Elliodor M. Libonati, the Chairman of the Legion's Americanism Commission.

"We've heard of you," Mr. Libonati said. "What have you heard?" I asked. "We heard that you are prejudiced towards your point of view," he said.

A short while later a change in judges was announced. They were no longer to be public school teachers. After the speeches, while the judges were deliberating, some of the Steinmetz students threatened to carry me out on their shoulders after the victory announcements, but I already knew better.

For the Hearst Oratorical Contest, which centered on Alexander Hamilton, I explained that Hamilton, despite the

lawyer's brief he provided in the Federalist Papers, actually thought that the proposed constitution was "a shilly-shally thing of milk and water which cannot last."

I do not know which particular speech provoked the blast, but I soon heard that the head of my High School's English Department, Miss Coryell, was teaching her class that I was a Communist and that "That speech was the filthiest speech ever given from a Senn Hall stage."

To my surprise and pleasure, a brand-new Principal at Senn, a member of the American Legion, signed off on my application to Harvard, as Harvard then required as part of any application.

I here confess that we have gotten somewhat off-course because I wanted to go back and tell you that tale of how I first came into contact with a member of the Libonati family. And I wanted to touch very briefly on my father.

My father's gifts to me were many, and they included paying full-freight for all costs of my degrees at Harvard and Yale, with very comfortable living costs thrown in, without any financial effort on my part, while also paying full-freight for one of his nephews.

Before I interrupted myself, we had been talking about my having to choose where I would practice law, a choice which faced me in the year 1956.

At the beginning of my law career, I elected not to practice with my father in part because I had seen cases in which father-son combinations did not seem to work well. Many years later, on the death of my father's long-time partner, Mark Barnett, I felt that I had an obligation to step in to his firm. I had already made my own reputation as a lawyer, and I think that final arrangement worked out well.

As I have explained above, at the beginning of my law career, Washington, D.C. and New York City were both possibilities. In Chicago, I had worked during a previous summer with Leo Arnstein at the firm which is today known as Arnstein & Lehr. At the time, they were not today's

world-class giant, but rather an important firm of about a dozen lawyers. They were then operating as Lederer, Livingston, Kahn & Adsit.

It was my dream to help transform my city. Home was where I went. I returned to Chicago with a letter to Sen. Paul Douglas, as well as others addressed to those whom Judge Frank knew well.

From the start, I had some specific goals in mind.

Foremost among these was the desire to help the cause of civil rights in general, and black-white racial problems in particular. I was fully conscious of the horrendous aspects of

race relations in my city, which deservedly scarred its reputation. As I saw it, starting to deal with that problem had to be one of the first steps.

I also wanted to clean up the police force.

And I wanted to wreck the machine. The ideology expressed by the Democratic Party's leading nominees for state and national office was fine. To me, the mechanism was hateful.

I had very little expectation or desire of holding public office myself. When Paul Douglas suggested that I become active in both the Democratic Party and the IVI, the Independent Voters of Illinois, I somehow or other made time for the latter and not for the former. Within relatively short

order, I found myself Chairman of the IVI's Executive Committee.

I also felt committed to strengthening and preserving certain institutions which I considered of great importance. These included the American Civil Liberties Union, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and Americans for Democratic Action. And *Poetry* magazine.

My intellectual political home for many years was the ADA, Americans for Democratic Action, and I served on that Board in the 1950s and 1960s, first as a selection by Students for Democratic Action and later as a representative of ADA's Illinois affiliate, the Independent Voters of Illinois.

The heart of that organization was Eleanor Roosevelt.

The great temptation in writing any form of memoir is to attempt to resurrect those among the dead who were larger than life while living. I first met Eleanor Roosevelt through the American Association for the United Nations. In college I had become National Chairman of the Collegiate Council for the United Nations. That placed me at a monthly dinner meeting in New York City which was attended by Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph J. Bunche, one of the Marburg family, Sumner Welles, Oscar A. deLima, Clark M. Eichelberger, and myself, and perhaps two or three others.

Ralph Bunche, the great scholar-diplomat and Nobel Laureate, is seared into my memory by the cigarette which

always dangled precariously from his nether lip. Sometimes, in fantasy, I theorize that he put part of a paperclip or some small wire into some of those cigarettes, to account for why the ash never fell.

I remember very little of Sumner Welles, although I will never forget MacGeorge Bundy's questioning me about him when I told him something of those dinner meetings.

I had been walking in Harvard Square one day when Bundy stopped the limousine he was riding in, and insisted that I join him. I protested that I was only going a couple of blocks, but he did insist. After all, he was Harvard's newly-minted Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. I obeyed. He told

me he had been pleased by a program that the Harvard International Relations Club had set up, which had honored the White Rose group. I explained that those who did this were my successors in office. He insisted on finding out what I was now doing. I talked of the dinners with Mrs. Roosevelt and he wanted to know whether or not Sumner Welles had made a pass at me. My good opinion of Bundy has always been somewhat lessened by that question. I already knew the story of how Donovan had used Welles' homosexuality to sideline Welles.

Much later, shortly before graduation, I broke an appointment with Bundy when I decided that he probably wanted to sound me out on graduate school or on a possible career with the CIA. I was not interested in being dissuaded

from attending Yale Law School by any alternate temptations.

But please allow me to return to Eleanor Roosevelt for a moment.

Mrs. Roosevelt always seemed to find time to attend any meetings she was scheduled to attend in any formal capacity. I firmly believe that it was for that reason that anyone of much value to the universe always seemed to find time to meet their obligations to attend the meetings that Eleanor was scheduled to attend. Reinhold Niebuhr never seemed to miss such meetings. Isaiah L. Kenen, Benjamin V. Cohn, and one or the other of the Reuther boys became familiar faces. Conversely, I here note that although Ronald Reagan appears at one point as a matter of record to have been listed as a director of Americans for

Democratic Action, I hereby testify that I never saw him actually attend.

I first knew Eleanor Roosevelt when she was working on issues of international human rights, including the Declaration. But she seemed most centered on the task of convincing the United States never again to become the isolationist entity that threatened the world by retreating from it, as it had done prior to World War II. At that time, I found the possibility of another such retreat inconceivable. Nevertheless, every once in a while, this country does flirt with isolationism. Whenever that happens I am reminded of Eleanor Roosevelt's essential wisdom.

Eleanor had the habit of leaning back and appearing to have drifted off into sleep at many of these meetings. If anyone attempted to take up anything contrary to her positions, she would suddenly stiffen, the closed eyes would open widely, and she seemed totally alert and ready to crush any opposition to her ideas.

We didn't particularly get along. When I suggested at one point that there were some areas in which we could possibly do business with John Foster Dulles, I think she was disappointed in me. But I never pushed myself and we never talked much. She was well worth listening to.

When I was in college, Professor Sam Beer was the most important figure in Massachusetts ADA. Although I was a student in one of his classes, and he was Chairman of the Government portion of the Department of History, Government and Economics in which I majored, I don't believe we ever had any contact at all, or at least any meaningful contact, during that period.

I was curious enough as to Beer's own beliefs to acquire a copy of his own attempt at forging a political theory, embodied first in his doctoral thesis, and later in his then newly-published book: "City of God". I was not taken by his religiosity. Meanwhile, I was working on my own political theory, ambitiously titled: "Absolute Relativism", in which each of us

chooses our own absolutes. I included some of that in a paper for that same beginning course in Government taught by Beer. I found myself called in by my Section Man, the Graduate Student assigned to my sub-unit of that large lecture class. My Section Man told me that he was allowed to give only one top grade for his own section. Another student, he said, had turned in a flawless summary and recap of all the required material. Faced with this, and my own struggles with my own theories, how could he give me that one top grade?

Please bear in mind that at that point neither Sam Beer nor myself had as yet recognized the importance of James Wilson. It is years later that each of us, acting independently, came to begin to understand the importance of Wilson as the first great

modern theorist of democracy, and as designer of a means of effectuating that theory, in Wilson's role as architect of the United States Constitution.

I was finally reintroduced to Sam Beer shortly before his death at the insistence of my old Undergraduate tutor, Stanley Rothman. In the interim, Rothman, as a sociologist, had become one of the nation's leading academics. Rothman and I remained close friends until his death.

In the last year or two of Sam Beer's life I also had the sense of being very close to him. And I felt that that sense was reciprocated. After decades of politics we had managed to come out at the same end, having shared the same tunnels. His widow wrote me that shortly before his death in 2009 he was

busily making notes on his copy of a speech which I had given to you, to this organization, the Chicago Literary Club.

For a while, John Roche was head of ADA. Some will remember Roche as having been Dean of the Fletcher school of Law and Diplomacy. Many will remember Roche as a fine essayist. He sometimes stayed at our house when visiting Chicago. I remember John's hesitancy to go to work as an Assistant to Pres. Lyndon Johnson. Originally, John Roche was certain that he could not assist any man like Johnson, who set as a pre-requisite that he, Lyndon Baines Johnson, be allowed to first nail the applicant's cojones to the wall.

Much later, I remember John explaining that Lyndon

understood that one of the problems of the war in Vietnam was

Johnson's own unwillingness to create a propaganda machine in the United States suitable to winning that war. In Johnson's words, as Roche reported them to me: "I don't want to turn us into a nation of haters." This was just one of the times that I've felt that the world was the exact opposite of what most of the pundits and newspaper editorialists thought that it was.

All this is intended as background for the first set of claims which I might make for trying to do some good.

While I was still in College, Clark Eichelberger came up to

Cambridge to see me, and to plot a campaign to defeat the Bricker Amendment. I was pleased and flattered even after I found that Eichelberger had asked around to find the right student leader for that aspect of the job. I was told that he was told that he already had the right person.

Eichelberger and I also went to Washington to testify, although time problems on the day of testimony dictated at the last moment that my testimony would be submitted only in writing. From my standpoint as aged critic, that was probably the best decision, even though I had prepared myself with much diligence. In any event, we were successful in our campaign, and the Bricker Amendment went down in defeat. It was a good thing, but my part cannot have weighed much in the

outcome.

Three years out of law school, I filed in the Democratic primary for the office of State Representative in what today is roughly the same area as Near North plus Lincoln Park. One of my opponents was George Dunne, who would much later become Boss-of-the-Works for the entire Democratic Party of Cook County.

I chose to concentrate on three issues, and flooded the area with bills and small stickers repeating these words: Clean up the Police Force; Set up District Public Health Centers, and End Double-Shift Schools. I expected to be defeated; I thought I was building a base. I would probably have been defeated

even without the open and obvious buying of votes which ensued in certain areas. I did not fully expect the mucking around with voting results.

In one precinct, after closing, but during the vote-count, the precinct captain and his assistants loudly objected to the counting process, in my presence. “Hey, we usually just weigh these things,” I was told. The official record for that same precinct shows more votes for my opponents than there were applications for Democratic ballots.

Afterwards, I refused the blandishments of the party to join up and forget that sort of stuff, along with promises of future reward, but I insisted on activating the Sheriff’s office (the

Sheriff at that time was a Republican) for voter protections in the forthcoming November election, and leaned on the FBI and the newspapers. That fall, one of the newspapers ran a lengthy crusade against vote fraud in advance of that November election.

I myself spent that election day in a radio-telephone car at the hub of a system of poll watchers which I had helped arrange for much of the city. I found myself observing what appeared to be the cleanest election in modern Chicago history.

This embarrassed the editor of the leading newspaper who had run that crusade against vote fraud. That same editor now proceeded to concoct a series of phony news stories in a

desperate attempt to save face. The world was provided with a bunch of fraudulent stories purporting to show that Mayor Daley had pulled out all stops, legal and otherwise, to support the election of John F. Kennedy.

This was a fraud in all respects. The machine had in fact pulled out all stops to control its own primary in April, but did not do so in November.

Kennedy was elected without the need of such help, and Nixon knew better than to challenge an election where most if not all of the fraud had taken place downstate on the Republican side of the fence.

There were many, including leading reporters, who knew the truth. I set up a major public program to expose this. The program included reporter Max Sonderby, and other newsfolk. We couldn't get any newspaper play. The newspapers protected each other. The Big Lie went around and around the world and settled into concrete.

Locally and nationally, it didn't hurt Richard J. Daley's reputation very much that he appeared to have done so much to help the new, young, handsome and charismatic President, who was in fact popular among Daley's constituents.

If in the 1960s you had asked me about that April primary

election, I would've told you that that was how I cleaned up the police force.

In the 1950s, the Chicago police force was so corrupt that most Chicagoans placed a \$5 or \$10 bill next to their driver's license, so that if they were stopped by the police they could hand over their wallets to prevent being ticketed. It was widely expressed in Chicago at that time that the outer drive was the "last outpost of collective bargaining".

The newspapers ran an exposé in 1959, culminating in January of 1960, when it was learned that crime in the Summerdale Police District of Chicago was being run by eight police officers of the District operating out of its headquarters,

hauling some of their own ill-gotten gain around in their own police squad cars. For a short while, nothing happened.

When I began to run for public office in the Democratic Primary on the issue that the police force had to be cleaned up, I became the recipient of anonymous threats to my life. One stone, falling from a high-rise, almost grazed me. I kept it as a souvenir for a long time. But I cannot really tell you whether or not it was a warning message, or an accident that didn't quite happen. I took the position, loudly, that all public servants in every political position shared the obligation to help clean up the police force.

It is clear that Mayor Richard J Daley, "The Boss", did not

like that at all, but this time he reacted. He called in a Professor of Criminology, Professor O. W. Wilson, who was appointed to chair a Search Commission which found Wilson himself for installation as Chicago's new Commissioner of Police . A real attempt at clean-up began. The full panoply of reform included taking the office of the Commissioner of Police out of City Hall. This proved to be more than a symbolic act. I had no doubt that the meaningful scope of these reforms was the direct result of my political campaign.

In the wake of my campaign, Mayor Daley also saw to the establishment of district public health centers, and for some decades these remained in good effect.

The third issue which I had publicized was that of double-shift schools.

The underlying problem is (and will continue to be) one of basic urban geography. Different generations present different patterns of schoolchild-age residence throughout the city.

Neighborhoods age and change. Neighborhoods do not all continue to provide schoolchildren. There are no steady rates of supply or demand. Meanwhile, attempts at reallocation of student populations run athwart school and neighborhood loyalties, and may break open new threats to life and limb when particular sub-groups of children are required to cross forbidden boundaries.

From the standpoint of a Superintendent of Education, almost any answer looks good if the system can reduce the enormous cost of tearing down old schools or building new ones. Meanwhile the parents who are affected by those changes grow angry. Foolish newspapers, ambitious politicians, and others start supporting the stupid non-solution of an elected school board.

In the 1960s, in Chicago, the then Superintendent of Education, Mr. Benjamin Willis, offered two different types of solution, both of which hampered working mothers and increased the probability of after-school crime. One of his answers was to provide double-shift schools, and the second was

to provide what became known as “Willis Wagons.” Willis Wagons were temporary structures built on the grounds of existing schools in order to be able to increase the student capacity of those schools when the student populations ballooned.

These were both very bad ideas, but they improved the bottom line in education budgets. Mr. Willis had great faith in his own ideas.

In the years following my campaign, the City worked itself free from Mr. Willis’ answers, but it was not immediate, and it took more than one public campaign.

Some years ago, I described to this club my successful attempt to free Cook County Hospital from control by Dr. Karl Meyer, and the reforms which followed that struggle. I will not repeat that tale here, although I do not yield any claim with respect to its importance. Problems like cleaning up the police force, or dealing with entities like Cook County Hospital will always need aid, and must be dealt with again and again.

Similarly, I will here present no claim with respect to the rescue of Soviet Jewry, which I have also discussed with you at some length. That activity involved a lot of people, and I'm not certain that anything I dealt with in that connection would not have been accomplished by someone else in my absence.

And you will not here be bored with the long story of how what we now know as Home Health came into being, but here's the short one. That is really one of my wife's stories, and one of her great accomplishments. She supplied the medical leadership, and I provided the legal framework. Of course, it would not have been possible had my father not gambled \$300,000 on what my wife and I thought we could accomplish, even though there would be no monetary reward for my father if we succeeded, and even though that venture provided less of a possible reward to my wife and to myself than almost any other use of that money, or any other use of our time, would have provided. We did succeed. My father got his money back, and that is how the first successful home health agency outside of one in Louisiana was created. That is how the Home Health

revolution was begun. Satisfaction is a great reward.

There were other instances when we co-operated to make change. When I became Chair of the Illinois Advisory Commission to the US Civil Rights Commission, Joanne was scheduled to chair the International Convention of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf. We arranged to hold hearings on the Civil Rights of the Deaf and Hearing--Impaired. We helped create understanding of the need for oral interpreters, etc. At least one magazine dubbed it as the new hot issue, and it helped lay the groundwork for the Americans with Disabilities Act.

It took me several years to arrange similar hearings on behalf of the Civil Rights of the Blind. Those hearings showed

that the Blind needed greater help in advocacy from some of the sighted. I was able to parlay my then position as head of Public Affairs at the Union League Club of Chicago into setting up a local sub-committee to advocate for problems of the blind, which in turn did useful work.

Now we come to the toughest problem. How do we deal with those items where we cannot know whether or not an action of mine controlled the result. Here's an example.

George Dunne once came to me to ask my opinion of a proposal that a gulch be created to the east of Cabrini-Green as a means of deterring Cabrini-Green residents from walking east, where some might perform criminal acts. That gulch would be

built underneath the CTA elevated tracks which run North and South at that point, along a line East of those housing projects.

My instantaneous response was that this gulch was a horrendous idea which I for one could not possibly accept, and I trusted that George could not either. Was there any real possibility that this would have been attempted had I not objected so vociferously? I cannot know, and therefore I will not include this in the file for my defense.

Let me give you a variant on the same problem. On two separate occasions, classmates of mine from outside the city became employees of the Chicago's Department of City Planning.

In discussions with one such classmate, I learned that consideration was being given to clearing substantial areas of the city to produce the equivalent of large suburban shopping malls. I insisted that this overlooked the fact that the real strength of our largest cities lay in the creation of specialty shops which could not be replicated in the cookie-cutter fashion of national brands on which the suburban malls relied. It was precisely because some urban land and some urban structures become less valuable over time that they can support adventurous youngsters eager to create new types of shopping, new restaurants, new theaters, galleries, and the kinds of things which make urban civilization important.

Similarly, another classmate told me about plans to do

away with the diagonal shopping streets which are central to some neighborhoods in the city. I understood that these diagonals seem to make life difficult for urban transportation, but I argued that that was not really the case. I argued that there was good reason for such shopping diagonals to remain the mainstays of healthy neighborhoods, and that it would be a great mistake to destroy the diagonals.

I am reasonably convinced that I changed the beliefs of my former classmates. I do not know whether that is why proposals of this kind have failed. It is because of that uncertainty that I am unwilling to make any pressing claims that this reflected my doings.

I also have a completely different kind of a problem in anticipating any Judgment Day for me. There are some circumstances where I am certain that great things were accomplished, but where I do not fully remember exactly what those accomplishments were. Let me explain.

The year 1972 marked one of the most mixed-up elections the state has ever known. The regular Democratic organization nominated Paul Simon for governor of this state. Simon had already demonstrated that he supported the finest ideals of any of the independent Democrats in this state, and had received all of the awards of the IVI and various good government entities. Simon chose Neil Hartigan as his running mate for the office of Lieutenant Governor. An independent Democrat, Daniel

Walker, chose to make his bid for the office of governor at this time. He had helped create at least one organization for the cause of independent Democrats. He had been active in fighting attempts to destroy a racial integration project in one of Chicago's suburbs. His public reputation was fine, but I didn't think it came close to the reality of Paul Simon. A substantial number of my friends managed to lose my political respect by choosing Walker over Simon. Walker chose as his running mate for the office of Lieutenant Governor, the Mayor of Carbondale, Neil Eckert.

I was very pleased when Neil Hartigan sought my help in that campaign. I was even more pleased when Hartigan spent an entire evening, running into the early dawn hours, working out a

very specific platform for his fight against Eckert. Neil Hartigan won for Lieutenant Governor, but Paul Simon lost, although he later served, very ably, as United States Senator. Sadly, much later, Walker went to prison on matters unrelated to his Governorship.

For many of the Democrats in the Illinois legislature in the year that Hartigan became Lieutenant Governor, it was easier to listen to the requests of Neil Hartigan than to those of Daniel Walker. Neil asked me to draft the proposed platform for that year's state Democratic convention. Shortly after that first election for Lieutenant Governor, Neil asked me what I wanted, and I made it very clear that what I wanted was the passage of those items which we had agreed upon in that very long night.

I was somewhat surprised a year or two later, when Neil called me in and went over that same list of items as a check-list to demonstrate that every one of them had been accomplished. The problem is that I can't seem to find a copy of that list, and while Hartigan has assured me he is looking for it, he was unable to locate it before this presentation tonight.

He says he does remember, for example, that we set up the first State Department of Aging. He then sold that concept to various states around the country. I remember that we established some kind of ombudsman activities for the office of Lieutenant Governor. But there was so much more.

I do remember what it felt like to have known a politician who kept his promises with such exactitude. But I think I can claim some credit for a small part in those results, and I do so here.

In 1983, Hartigan was elected Attorney General of the State of Illinois, and I was pleased to again provide him some assistance during his campaign.

I'm not certain that I was responsible for accomplishing any results during my time of trying to deal with the Balkan Wars and the problems which we will all remember by the rubric of "ethnic cleansing". I felt that it was important to aid advocacy efforts with respect to the Bosnians.

I cannot conceive that any Jew who had lived through the Age of the Holocaust could feel much differently. Oddly enough, I knew that the Bosnian Ambassador to the United States was a Jew. I also knew that Sarajevo had been the kind of metropolitan city in which Jews had thrived. But when I called together representatives of the Bosnian community and others to my office for the purpose of organizing what was to become the Illinois Committee to Save Bosnia, I had some doubts whether or not the invited imams would even attend. I thought that the proper chair or president for such an organization should be a Muslim, and I was surprised when the Bosnian Consul here in Chicago insisted that I serve as President of the new organization, which I did. During the course of what followed,

I came across Stephen Mueller, of Serbian descent, who took over the hard task of serving as Executive Director.

Among other things, we held a rally at the Chicago Cultural Center.

Throughout those events, the laboring oar in Washington for the results I wanted to see was being moved by Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. For many reasons, Jeane deserved the Medal of Freedom which she was ultimately awarded.

As Chairman of Public Affairs for the Union League Club I went around that club to find donors willing to provide money to support Kirkpatrick's efforts in this cause, and to bring her to that Club to present our arguments. This was successful.

On the ground, the outcome for Bosnia and Bosnians was not an easy one, but at least some of the guilty were found guilty of war crimes, including ethnic cleansing, by an International Criminal Court.

I received a sort of unlikely recompense for that activity. It came from Wallace Mohammed, the son of Elijah Muhammad of the Black Muslims. If Elijah Muhammad ever had a good word to say about any Jews I never heard it. His version of the Nation of Islam, the Black Muslims, spewed hatred on Jews and others.

Before this incident, I had provided some help to Sharif

Nasr and his Muslim Voters League. He himself had accompanied me on a visit to the Board of the Independent Voters of Illinois to present the case for Bosnia. I had not visited that organization for several years prior to that, but was able to convince them to support our position.

Now Nasr asked me to visit a new Muslim center being opened on the South side of Chicago, and I agreed to do so. On arrival, I joined a large table around which a group of people were gathered for a meeting which had already started. The meeting was being chaired by Wallace Mohammed. I think Nasr whispered in his ear who I was, and Mohammed interrupted his own meeting to say that he must stop everything to honor me, and to introduce me as someone who was not Muslim, but who

had done so much for a Muslim country.

I would of course have preferred a set of results in which the country was not so fully identifiable as representing one particular religion, but there are times when one is willing to take what one can get. Being praised by the son of Elijah Muhammad in that way seemed to me a step forward. I was all too aware of the worst in the history of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam.

Following the death of Elijah Mohammed, there was a struggle for control of his organization. Some of Malcolm X's followers set up a group which became known as the Hanafi Muslims. In 1977, part of that group seized three buildings in

Washington, D.C., including the International Headquarters of B'nai B'rith. They were armed with machetes and rifles, and they seized a hundred hostages, threatening the lives of some of my close friends.

When that occurred, I was President of the B'nai B'rith Council of Greater Chicago. I had to choose whether or not I should flee the city. The story soon seemed to take control of world's TV.

The Chicago Police Department offered protection for our local headquarters, and I was asked to choose whether or not I should shut those down for the time being. I elected not to do so, and Chicago police with assault weapons were stationed outside our headquarters.

That evening, I went to a B'nai B'rith event in Skokie. It was not till I approached that event on Edens Highway that I realized that it was possible that no one at my destination had been warned of the day's new problems, even though the seizure of the Washington headquarters was the subject of continuing broadcast on national and international TV. I arrived and stared briefly at the plate-glass which marked the facility's entrance. I hastily called the Skokie police. I finally got through to someone who claimed to understand the situation and assured me that that help was on its way. When it arrived, it was a single policeman with a single pistol.

I tried to explain to this man my concern that it was not really possible to warn away participants, some of whom had

already arrived. I tried to explain that other law enforcement entities assumed that greater firepower was required than that which he possessed. The policeman responded: “Don’t worry. I’m a member of Louis H. Harrison Lodge B’nai B’rith.”

To this day I still find that very funny. I have sometimes traveled with Mossad officers at front and rear, but I will never forget the sense of fear which had finally broken through as I traveled that road to Skokie.

Bosnia and the Hanafis provided me with no claims for doing much good. They were educational.

I have some right to claim partial credit for reform in the field of Capital Punishment. Judge Frank had been deeply

concerned with the problem of capital punishment, as reflected in his book “Not Guilty.”

That was a time when a Visiting Professor at the Yale Law School, Dr. Gregory Zilboorg, was arguing that the very existence of Capital Punishment caused some people to kill as a means of seeking their own death. We have all seen recent examples of a similar process, that of suicide by cop.

When I first ran for public office, one of the first questions thrown at me requested my attitude toward Capital Punishment, and I was unprepared. In response to that initial question I stammered that I would probably support a moratorium. Dawn Clark Netsch, who happened to be present at that meeting,

sought to defuse any negative feedback by pointing out that all this meant was that the legislator who had been suggesting such a moratorium would now have one possible seconder for his motion.

When I became Chair of the Public Affairs Committee of the Union League Club, I named a subcommittee for consideration of reform in criminal procedures. I warned the Chair not to deal with Capital Punishment, because I was certain it would split the Club, create great animosity, and probably prevent support for all other reforms. The Club did take stands on political issues, provided that both the Public Affairs Committee and the Board of Directors approved them. And it maintained a lobbyist in Springfield.

Then the newspapers began to tell the story of how DNA was beginning to be used to remove convicted criminals from death row.

I began to seek specific assurance from particular members of the Club that they would allow Club support for a Moratorium if that was the way that the Subcommittee and the Public Affairs Committee itself chose to move. In several cases, I was asking for and receiving personal favors.

Governor Ryan had been a member of this Club and a member of its Public Affairs Committee.

Eventually, the Subcommittee decided that it did want to present a proposal for a moratorium on Capital Punishment, and by that point I had lined up enough votes on the Public Affairs Committee and in the Board of Directors to support that proposition.

We proceeded to send the request for a moratorium to our lobbyist and to Governor Ryan. Within two or three days he acted favorably on our request. After all, he knew what it meant for our Committee and for our Board to stand behind such a proposal. He could see and understand that a relatively conservative institution had suffered a sea-change in attitudes toward Capital Punishment, and he must have felt that it was now safe to move to declare a a moratorium.

As you know, that kicked off support for moratoriums in other states, and eventually led to legislation in our own state. So I make a claim here for some small part of that credit.

Which at long last brings us to my three favorite weights which I am willing to toss into my final balance. These three are Hate Crimes Legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Rescue of the Indochinese Refugees.

When I secured that designation as Chair of the Illinois State Advisory Commission to the United States Civil Rights Commission, one of the first things I did was to go to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and ask what they thought I might accomplish. They told me that they had a draft

proposal for Hate Crimes Legislation which might provide a good target. They told me that this had been tried before, but when the Republicans were willing to support it, the Democrats shot it down, and vice versa.

I convinced the members of our Advisory Committee to support a Hearing on the subject of Hate Crimes Legislation. I had remembered that we conceivably had the right to use the great Ceremonial Courtroom of the Seventh Circuit. We made that arrangement. We invited the leading experts in law enforcement from both parties, and sought testimony from supporters of such legislation, and from their opponents. Not surprisingly, it was easier to find supporters.

Some considerable time later, I was advised that the proposed Hate Crimes legislation was about to be defeated in the Illinois legislature. This was partly because one of the leading Democratic senators had doubts as to its constitutionality. I went to my friend the Sheriff of Cook County, Richard J Elrod, to discuss my problem. It turned out that the Sheriff had his own lobbyists, and he told me that he would have them try to aid passage. They did so, and the State of Illinois became the first state in the United States to pass such legislation.

It took almost 10 years before New York State followed suit. Today, 45 or more of our states have passed similar legislation, which is complemented by Federal legislation.

That pattern has continued elsewhere in the world. For example, Japanese television last week talked of hate crime legislation as being on the docket of the highest Japanese court. Passage became easier in various states, as courts began to accept the constitutionality of laws which allowed an increase in punishment of crimes which are marked by various forms of hatred.

It is not a major weight for my scale, buy I was also grateful to Sheriff Richard Elrod when he set up a special office within the Sheriff's office for Special Service, where lawyers with a need for Special Service could secure same without having to grease any Deputy's palms. I don't believe I ever pointed this out to my father.

Most of us think that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was one of the great landmarks in Civil Rights history. In 1963, the passage of such an act seemed uncertain. Inside the Congress, in Congressional committee, there was great controversy but the committee was prepared to send the proposed legislation to the floor of the Congress. I was told that the Kennedy administration was terrified that if that legislation went to the floor in the form that the Committee had agreed upon, the resulting debate on that legislation would prevent the Kennedys from achieving any legislation, including that bill itself. I was told that they had been desperate to get some Representative on the applicable Congressional committee to change his or her vote. The Southerners on that Committee, and the Republicans, were

adamant, but they were already counted on their side. Changing the results could only be achieved if one of the Northern Democrats agreed to change his or her position on these votes.

There was one and only one real possibility to change the outcome.

In those days the Mafia controlled at least one vote in the United States Congress, and that was Congressman Roland Victor Libonati from Chicago's South side, out of the old Little Italy neighborhood. He had been Al Capone's lawyer . I was told that, in desperation, President John F. Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy had agreed to provide a favor to "Paul the Waiter" Ricca, a major Mafia figure who was then

in Federal prison, in exchange for Congressman Libonati's change of vote. I was told, by telephone, that this was about to happen, and that it was my obligation to find a way of stopping it.

I had never met Congressman Libonati. At the time, I did not realize that his reputation as Al Capone's lawyer had been open and notorious. Frankly, I am embarrassed to say that until just this week I had not even known that Roland Libonati had been Al Capone's attorney of record.

I did know that Congressman Libonati had a brother, Elliodor M. Libonati, that same Chairman of the Americanism Commission of the American Legion, whom I had met when I

was fourteen or fifteen years old, and who had told me that I was “prejudiced towards” my “point of view.”

I went to the managing editor of a newspaper with whom I had worked on various stories. I told him my terrible tale, and he did a remarkable thing. If I would give him my source, and if he was able to track down this story and substantiate it, he would run it. I gave him my contact in Washington and to my surprise, within a day or two, I was greeted by a newspaper headline blowing this story wide open. Unfortunately, I have no substantiation for what I here tell you other than that newspaper story itself.

I am sure that neither the Mafia nor Congressman Libonati

himself were very happy with that story. I have some doubt that Paul Ricca was so unhappy as to attempt to punish the Kennedys in blood for their failure to follow through with that bargain. The Mafia had been provided with some public embarrassment.

Those who talk of possible causation for possible assassination by the mafia have thus far offered little more than speculation.

What did happen is that the Bill went to the House floor as originally marked up. President Kennedy was assassinated. That Bill became the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which was passed as a monument to our late great President.

In my heart, I believe that nothing I have ever done in public life or for the public good could possibly ever equal that strange event, and I am prepared to offer that is one of the three

achievements in my life which really counted.

In some ways, the third and final story is for me the strangest of all.

Leo Cherne, President of the International Rescue Committee, was coming to town to discuss refugee problems. Cherne was one of my heroes. He had successfully debated Joseph McCarthy at a turning point in that monster's career, and the transcript of that debate had been set out in full in Life magazine, to great effect. He had been active in, and a great supporter of, AZA. That was the youth organization of B'nai B'rith, and I once served as President of B'nai B'rith's World Center in Jerusalem. Cherne's role as head of the International

Rescue Committee had been utterly worthy of praise.

I wanted my son to hear the great man, and we went downtown together to do so. As part of his presentation, Cherne explained with what was obviously great sorrow that he did not believe that the country could be induced to admit additional refugees from the remaining Indochinese refugee camps which were strewn around the South China Sea in addition to those thousands who had already been accepted. An estimated 700,000 remained.

This was totally unacceptable to my very young son, and he proceeded to recite to Cherne part of Emma Lazarus' poem as inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty. While drowning in his own tears, my son asked how that could possibly be

reconciled with Cherne's conclusion. I am sure this had little effect on Cherne, who was already fully committed to the refugee cause without my son's tears, but I felt that it almost destroyed something in me.

I went home and during that sleepless night I decided that I would try to do something that one of my heroes believed could not be done. I decided to try to set up an organization to induce this country, and perhaps other countries as well, to absorb some of the remaining 700,000 refugees who were caught in those terrible camps.

From my point of view everybody on every angle of the American political spectrum had a good reason to want to help

those refugees. They had fled the new Vietnam in small boats, risking death, rape and plunder from the pirates who were attacking such vessels or death from the seas themselves.

I knew that some of those on the right who had supported the war felt special guilt because they understood the price being paid by the Hmong, the mountain people, the people without a written language, who had elected to become our allies, and were now being singled out for “re-educaton”.

I knew that there were some people on the left who had never really believed that so many in Vietnam would give proof of their cry for freedom by the flight which had placed them in those camps.

Others felt guilty because of translators and assistants left behind when we pulled out. Others were troubled because we had pulled out.

I believed that there would be some, like my son, who had great difficulty in accepting that the neediest of all, who sought only freedom and survival, would be denied our gates.

And I decided that it might be possible to put together enough opinion leadership from across all the various possibilities to activate American humanitarian action.

I had learned in college how easy it was to set up an

Advisory Committee which was asked to do no more than lend their names for the stationery. I believed that if one began with the right group, one could expand it almost indefinitely. We called our new creation ETFIR, the Emergency Task Force for Indochinese Refugees.

I was reasonably convinced that I could get Milton Sacks, who had occupied the Indochinese desk of the State Department during World War II, and was an old friend. I was reasonably certain I could get the leadership of the AFL-CIO, and Tom Kahn of that organization. I thought it important to try to get Roger Baldwin, the Founder of the ACLU. He was a very hard nut to crack, but he eventually agreed. Immediately after finally

agreeing, he wanted to know what he should do, but I delayed answering him indefinitely. Somehow or other I got to Martin Anderson, the Director of Domestic Policy for President Reagan, and he agreed. Indeed, there were only two initial refusals which I was unable to reverse. One of these was Jerzy Kozinski, who did not want to be disturbed from writing the novel on which he was then working. I don't really think that rethinking his refusal precipitated his suicide. The other was Milton Friedman, who said that he would support unlimited immigration, but would not specifically agree to this proposal for immigration from a specific group.

One by one I slowly built up an a wonderful Advisory Committee to ensure our respectability.

Meanwhile, I had secured an agreement to assist from Joseph Sullivan, a schoolmate from Harvard, who agreed to serve as Co-chairman. He was President of Estech , a major national Corporation which had begun under the name of Swift and Company. Together with his wife Jeanne, Joe was also a philanthropist.

We also recruited Anthony Mourek as an officer. He was a friend, philanthropist and realtor, who agreed to take on part of the burden of finding funds.

I don't remember how we dragged in Neal Ball, who had headed the American Hospital Supply Foundation. He completed our officer crew.

The most important guarantor of the validity of our proposals came to be Lane Kirkland, the President of the International AFL-CIO.

Historically, the greatest barrier to expanding immigration into the United States had been American labor. The image of those refugees, rotting in those camps, was simply one which Lane Kirkland could not accept. He issued a public statement in support of our proposal to absorb those immigrants. Reporters pounced upon him, and insisted that he answer their question as to how many should be taken in. He explained that he didn't think there should be a formal limit on absorbing all those refugees. He had gone up and down this country, he said, and it

was a big country with a lot of empty space, and it could absorb a lot of people. We took that statement and reproduced it, and the next day it appeared on the desk of every member of Congress.

Eventually, it all came down to supporting specific legislation. I don't know when Joe Sullivan ensured our ultimate victory, but he told me how he did it. He called in Estech's lobbyists, and told them what he was doing. He explained that no one was required to help him and that no one would get any reward for doing so, or be punished in any way if they did not. But if they felt the same way as he did about those people trapped in those camps, he hoped they would try to help secure passage of our plans. Nearly all of them supported our cause.

People like to do good.

Before we were through, we had even managed to embarrass some nations into taking refugees who usually never did so. The Australians took in non-white refugees in substantial numbers, to the surprise of many. The Japanese took in refugees, which was also a surprise. Later, on a visit to Japan I tried to find out what had moved the Japanese, and I found some confirmation for my theory that they did not want to be embarrassed when everyone else seemed to be willing to help.

As our project wound down, the Sulllivans and Neal Ball decided that they wanted to continue assisting in the general cause of refugee problems. They set up a new organization, the

American Refugee Committee. I declined to participate, feeling that I had too much on my plate already, at that time.

I have come to realize that there was almost no public newspaper record of my role in any of the three items which I have here included as my primary contributions to the public good.

I remain a disbeliever, but if I ever face trial by mythic court, I intend to claim these last three items, Hate Crimes Legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Rescue of the Indochinese Refugees, and dump them onto my side of the great balancing scale. I may have to cry out to the angelic orders to help me find proof, if Omniscience doesn't help. But I feel

confident that I will Beat the Devil, because I have even convinced myself that some of my activities have actually done some good.