

**SPEECH BY ATTORNEY EMANUEL MARGOLIS BEFORE THE  
CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT  
LAW DAY  
MAY 2, 2011**

Madam Chief Justice, Associate Justices, Former Associate Justices and all gathered here to celebrate Law Day, I can't begin to express the deep appreciation that I feel for the honor you have bestowed upon me with this extraordinary event. It will not be forgotten in the lives of Estelle and me, or in the lives of our five children and 10 grandchildren. We are grateful that two of our daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah, and our son, Josh, were able to be with us today.

When I received the *Champion of Liberty* award from the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, my friend Jack Zeldes, who is here today, gave me a spirited and remarkably comprehensive introduction (much of which was true!). It proved to be three times the length of my acceptance speech, which, I think put things in proper proportion.

As a young child studying in my father's Hebrew School, I was admonished: "Justice, Justice shall ye pursue."

A prime example of a fighter for the rule of law at this bench is, of course, Beth Gilson. She went to America's Gulag in Guantanamo to fight for justice. Beth took two of the cases of the Uighurs who were picked up by Afghanies and sold for ransom to the United States Armed Forces. An amazing act of courage and commitment. We are grateful to you, Beth, for your superb pro bono work in obtaining their release.

I am pleased to be able to accept this award on behalf of all the civil rights advocates all over the world. Even as we meet here today they are putting their lives on the line in the cause of freedom every day. Many of them are shot at, detained, imprisoned and tortured.

The so-called Middle East Spring has been inspired, in part, by our American system of democracy.

But let us never forget the incident involving Benjamin Franklin when he left the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in the sweltering summer of 1787. A little old lady approached him and asked, "Dr. Franklin, what kind of a government do we have—a Monarchy or a Republic?" Franklin said, "A Republic, Madam, if you can keep it."

As one of a number of human rights lawyers, I will continue to work on behalf of those demonstrating and fighting for freedom and democracy. As my ACLU colleagues here will readily attest: "Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom."

Thank you, I will never forget this day.

Emanuel Margolis  
2 May 2011