

**SUPREME COURT LAW DAY CEREMONY  
REMARKS OF CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE T. ROGERS  
MAY 2, 2011 ~ 10:00 A.M.**

**Welcoming Remarks**

**THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE THIS MORNING AS WE  
CELEBRATE LAW DAY AND THIS YEAR'S VERY RELEVANT THEME  
OF "THE LEGACY OF JOHN ADAMS – FROM BOSTON TO  
GUANTANAMO." ON BEHALF OF THE SUPREME COURT AND THE  
ENTIRE JUDICIAL BRANCH, I WANT TO WELCOME YOU TO WHAT  
PROMISES TO BE A VERY ENJOYABLE AND ENLIGHTENING  
CEREMONY.**

**WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, IF WE CHERISH THE BASIC  
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT THAT *ALL* PEOPLE – REGARDLESS OF  
WHAT ACTION BROUGHT THEM TO COURT IN THE FIRST PLACE –  
DESERVE ZEALOUS LEGAL REPRESENTATION, THEN EVERY DAY  
OUR COURTHOUSES ARE IN SESSION SPOTLIGHTS THE  
PRINCIPLES WE HONOR TODAY.**

**SIMPLY PUT, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT ACCESS TO JUSTICE –**

**REGARDLESS OF YOUR RACE, AGE, SEX, ETHNICITY, WHERE YOU LIVE, HOW MUCH MONEY YOU MAKE, OR WHAT RELIGION YOU ARE.**

**AND I WOULD SUBMIT TO YOU THAT THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN PROVIDING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE HAVE NEVER BEEN GREATER. FROM THE HUGE INFLUX OF SELF-REPRESENTED PARTIES TO OUR GROWING LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POPULATION, OUR COURTS ARE TACKLING UNPRECEDENTED ISSUES THAT HAVE NO EASY ANSWERS EXCEPT ONE: WE MUST ACT, NOT REACT.**

**TO THAT END, THE JUDICIAL BRANCH NOW HAS AN ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION, WHICH WILL BE CHAIRED BY ONE OF OUR MOST EXPERIENCED JUDGES, THE HONORABLE RAYMOND NORKO. IF YOU DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW, JUDGE NORKO HAS DONE EXTENSIVE WORK REGARDING ACCESS AND IS WELL SUITED TO CARRY ON WITH THE HUGE TASK BEFORE US.**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS WILL FOCUS ON SEVERAL**

**DIFFERENT AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY WILL SEEK WAYS TO ENHANCE THE SERVICES AND RESOURCES OFFERED TO SELF-REPRESENTED PARTIES AND EXPAND UPON SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES ALREADY IN PLACE, SUCH AS THE VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PROGRAMS IN FAMILY COURT. THIS IS BEING DONE NOT ONLY TO HELP THE PRO SE LITIGANTS BUT ALSO THE JUDGES WHO ARE TRYING TO KEEP THEIR COURTROOMS OPERATING EFFICIENTLY AND FAIRLY.**

**I AM ESPECIALLY EXCITED ABOUT THE COMMISSION'S EFFORTS REGARDING PRO BONO SERVICE. JUDGE BILL BRIGHT CHAIRS THE PRO BONO COMMITTEE AND IS CURRENTLY PLANNING A "PRO BONO SUMMIT" FOR OCTOBER. THIS SUMMIT WILL IDENTIFY MULTIPLE PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES AND WILL PROVIDE ATTORNEYS WITH THE TOOLS AND SUPPORT NECESSARY, INCLUDING TRAINING AND INSURANCE, TO TAKE ON PRO BONO MATTERS. BASED ON THE INITIAL RESPONSE, WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THIS UNDERTAKING WILL GENERATE A SIGNIFICANT DEDICATION OF TIME AND RESOURCES BY ATTORNEYS TO ASSIST THOSE IN NEED.**

**FRANKLY, I CAN THINK OF FEW MATTERS MORE RELEVANT TO THIS YEAR'S LAW DAY THEME: THE HEART OF PRO BONO SERVICE IS, IN FACT, THE LEGACY OF JOHN ADAMS, FROM BOSTON TO GUANTANAMO.**

**THIS IS A PERFECT LEAD-IN TO THE HONOR I HAVE IN INTRODUCING TO YOU OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR TODAY'S CEREMONY.**

**ATTORNEY ELIZABETH GILSON OF NEW HAVEN WORKED TIRELESSLY IN A PRO BONO CAPACITY TO FREE TWO BROTHERS FROM CHINA WHO WERE DETAINED AT GUANTÁNAMO BAY FOR EIGHT YEARS. DID SHE DO THIS FOR FAME? NO. DID SHE DO IT FOR EGO? NO. RATHER, ATTORNEY GILSON – A SOLO PRACTITIONER -- TOOK ON THIS DIFFICULT AND TIME-CONSUMING CASE BECAUSE IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.**

**“WE DON'T HOLD PEOPLE WITHOUT HAVING EVIDENCE FOR PUTTING THEM AWAY,” SHE TOLD THE CONNECTICUT LAW**

**TRIBUNE LAST YEAR. “WE LOOK AT A PERSON ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, AND THAT’S WHAT GOVERNMENT FORGOT.”**

**HER WORK WAS SO EXEMPLARY THAT THE CONNECTICUT LAW TRIBUNE LAST YEAR AWARDED ATTORNEY GILSON ITS PRO BONO AWARD. A COLLEAGUE REMARKED AT THE TIME:**

**“I THINK BETH EXEMPLIFIES THE CITIZEN LAWYER. A LOT OF US GOT INVOLVED IN THIS WORK FROM LARGE FIRMS THAT ARE EASILY ABLE TO AFFORD IT. SHE REACHED INTO HER OWN BACK POCKET TO FUND THIS WORK, AND THAT’S AS GOOD AS IT GETS.”**

**PLEASE JOIN ME IN WELCOMING THIS REMARKABLE ATTORNEY TODAY, AS OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR THE 2011 LAW DAY CEREMONY.**

**Remarks regarding Attorney Emanuel Margolis**

**NOW, WE TURN TO THE PART OF THE PROGRAM WHERE WE SAY THANK YOU TO A REMARKABLE MAN.**

**MANNY -- OUR BELOVED MENTOR, COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND  
– TRULY IS ONE OF A KIND.**

**WE'D BE HERE FOR DAYS IF I SUMMARIZED ALL OF THE  
HIGHLIGHTS OF MANNY'S CAREER OR TRIED TO LIST ALL OF THE  
PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES HE'S AFFECTED. MANNY PROBABLY  
DOESN'T KNOW HIMSELF, AND IF HE DID, HE WOULDN'T TELL US.  
THAT'S HOW MODEST HE IS.**

**IT'S IRONIC THAT THE GIANTS AMONG US ARE HUMBLE. THEY  
DON'T BOAST OR BRAG; INSTEAD THEY SIMPLY MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY.**

**THEY ALSO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES THROUGH THEIR  
REMARKABLE TALENT, SPIRIT AND COMPASSION. WE'RE LUCKY  
THAT MANNY DECIDED TO DEVOTE HIS CAREER TO THE PRACTICE  
OF LAW, TO WHICH HE HAS DEVOTED HIS HEART AND SOUL.**

**OUR FOREFATHERS WOULD BE PROUD OF YOU, MANNY. YOU  
REPRESENT THE LEGAL PROFESSION'S BEST. YOU HAVE BEEN ON**

THE FRONT LINES EVERY DAY, FIGHTING FOR THE PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE THIS COUNTRY GREAT, AND YOU HAVE DONE IT WITH DIGNITY, CIVILITY AND COURAGE. IN FACT, I TOOK A LITTLE POLL AMONG LAWYERS WHO HAVE KNOWN MANNY FOR YEARS, ASKING FOR APPROPRIATE WORDS TO DESCRIBE HIM. THE ANSWERS I RECEIVED OVERWHELMINGLY INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING: FEARLESS, RELENTLESS AND A GENTLEMAN. CAN YOU IMAGINE A MORE COMPLIMENTARY DESCRIPTION OF AN ATTORNEY ADVOCATE?

MANNY HAS EXEMPLIFIED HIS COURAGE IN DIFFERENT WAYS. AS A YOUNG MAN IN THE U.S. ARMY, HE WON THE PURPLE HEART MEDAL WHEN HE WAS SHOT IN THE LEG BY ENEMY FIRE AFTER CROSSING THE RHINE RIVER. WAS HE AFRAID? PERHAPS SO. BUT, AS WE KNOW, WHAT DISTINGUISHES TRULY COURAGEOUS PEOPLE IS THE ABILITY TO OVERCOME FEAR, MOVE ON AND ACCOMPLISH THE TASK AT HAND. MANNY ENDED UP WITH A PERMANENT LIMP FROM HIS WOUND. BUT ANYBODY WHO'S EVER PLAYED A GAME OF TENNIS WITH MANNY – AND LOST – KNOWS THAT HE MOVED ON.

**I SHOULD QUALIFY THAT – MANNY DID INDEED MOVE ON. BUT HE ALSO DID SO WITH A FIERCE COMMITMENT TO FIGHTING FOR THE UNDERDOG, FOR FIGHTING OPPRESSION AND FOR HOLDING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE FOR ITS ACTIONS.**

**MANNY’S VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS. JUST THREE YEARS AGO, DURING NEW BRITAIN’S LAW DAY CEREMONY, HE SAID, “TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT IS ABSOLUTELY INDISPENSABLE TO THE RULE OF LAW AND TO OUR DEMOCRACY. IF THAT GOES, THE DEMOCRACY GOES WITH IT.”**

**FOR MANY YEARS, MANNY HAS BEEN THE VOICE OF THOSE WHO MAY HAVE REMAINED VOICELESS OTHERWISE.**

**AS A COURT-APPOINTED ATTORNEY, MANNY ONCE REPRESENTED A HOMELESS MAN FROM NEW HAVEN WHO WAS ACCUSED OF KILLING A YALE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE IN 1987. MANNY CHALLENGED THE POLICE SEARCH OF THE DEFENDANT’S DUFFEL BAG, WHICH WAS HIDDEN UNDER A BRIDGE WHERE THE**



**DEFENDANT LIVED. AND HE PERSUADED THE CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT THAT HIS DUFFEL BAG, TO QUOTE JUSTICE BORDEN, “REPRESENTED, IN EFFECT, THE DEFENDANT’S LAST SHRED OF PRIVACY FROM THE PRYING EYES OF OUTSIDERS, INCLUDING THE POLICE.”**

**IN ANOTHER CASE, THIS ONE BEFORE THE U.S. SUPREME COURT, MANNY ARGUED ON BEHALF OF A 20-YEAR OLD STUDENT WHO HAD SURRENDERED HIS DRAFT REGISTRATION CARD TO A MINISTER AT A PUBLIC GATHERING FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF PROTESTING U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM. THE YOUNG MAN WAS DECLARED DELINQUENT FOR FAILING TO HAVE HIS DRAFT CARD AND FAST-TRACKED AS AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY SERVICE.**

**MANNY TOOK ON THE CASE AND WAS ABLE TO PERSUADE THE HIGHEST COURT THAT THE STUDENT WAS QUALIFIED FOR A STUDENT DEFERMENT DESPITE HIS POLITICAL PROTEST.**

**AND EVEN WHEN A CAUSE IS ABHORRENT, MANNY HAS**

RESPONDED TO THE CALL WHEN CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES ARE AT STAKE. ACCEPTING AN ASSIGNMENT FROM THE CONNECTICUT CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, MANNY REPRESENTED THE KU KLUX KLAN WHEN THE CITY OF WATERBURY RESISTED GRANTING THE GROUP A PERMIT TO MARCH AND HOLD A RALLY.

AS ED KWESKIN, ONE OF MANNY'S PARTNERS AT WOFSEY, ROSEN, KWESKIN & KURIANSKY, RECALLED RECENTLY:

***“DESPITE THE CONSTERNATION IT CAUSED MANY IN MY LAW FIRM DUE TO THE ABHORRENT NATURE OF WHAT THE KKK ESPOUSED, MY LAW FIRM SUPPORTED MANNY'S REPRESENTATION OF THAT ORGANIZATION. A FERVENT BELIEVER IN THE FIRST AMENDMENT, MANNY APPROACHED THE ASSIGNMENT WITH ZEAL AND, OF COURSE, PREVAILED. AFTERWARD, THE IMPERIAL WIZARD WROTE A PERSONAL LETTER TO MANNY EXPRESSING THE WIZARD'S ADMIRATION FOR MANNY'S FIDELITY TO A PRINCIPLE WHICH REQUIRED THAT MANNY PROTECT THE RIGHTS EVEN OF A GROUP THAT MANNY DESPISED PHILOSOPHICALLY.”***

NEEDLESS TO SAY, MANNY'S A TOUGH ADVOCATE IN COURT ... SO MUCH SO THAT HE EARNED A PARTICULAR NICKNAME DURING HIS STINT AS LEGAL COUNSEL TO AN INSURANCE COMPANY. UNWILLING TO GIVE UP ANYTHING MORE THAN “ICE IN JANUARY” ON BEHALF OF HIS CLIENT, MANNY WAS NICKNAMED

**“NAILS” BY THE INSURANCE COMPANY.**

**BUT IF HE WAS “NAILS” IN SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, HE HAS BEEN ANYTHING BUT ON BEHALF OF THE DISENFRANCHISED WHO HAVE REACHED OUT TO HIM FOR HELP. IF I MAY QUOTE ED KWESKIN AGAIN:**

***“MANNY REPRESENTED PEOPLE OF ALL SHAPES, SIZES, COLOR, WHETHER RICH OR POOR, POPULAR OR BARELY SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE. WHILE HE WAS A PARTNER AT WOFSEY, ROSEN, MANNY REPRESENTED A VERY POOR MAN WHO RARELY, IF EVER, BATHED, HAD A SERIOUS HEARING PROBLEM AND WHO WOULD COME TO THE OFFICE UNANNOUNCED SHOUTING THAT HE WANTED TO SEE HIS LAWYER ‘MR. MAGURTIS.’ MANNY ALWAYS ANSWERED HIS CALL.”***

**MANNY, YOU HAVE SET THE BAR HIGH FOR ALL OF US. WITHOUT FAIL, YOU HAVE ANSWERED SOCIETY’S CALL TO FIGHT FOR THE PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE THIS COUNTRY GREAT. YOU HAVE STOOD TALL WHEN OTHERS RAN AND YOU HAVE ARGUED ON BEHALF OF THE DESPISED AND THE DISENFRANCHISED WHERE CHERISHED PRINCIPLES WERE AT STAKE. YOU ARE A PATRIOT IN THE TRUEST SENSE OF THE WORD, AND I CAN THINK OF NO GREATER HONOR THAN TO NOW PRESENT YOU WITH THIS**

**LAW DAY 2011 AWARD.**

**ATTORNEY MARGOLIS, PLEASE COME FORWARD TO ACCEPT  
YOUR AWARD AND A SMALL TOKEN OF OUR APPRECIATION.**