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THE ASSOCIATION OF THE FEDERAL BAR  
OF  
THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL DINNER  
Commemorating  
THE WILLIAM J. BRENNAN, JR. AWARD

MAYFAIR FARMS  
West Orange, New Jersey  
June 15, 1995

Reported by STANLEY B. RIZMAN, C.S.R.

1 MS. SIEGAL: Good evening. On behalf of  
2 the Association of the Federal Bar of New Jersey, I  
3 welcome each of you to the 19th Annual William J.  
4 Brennan Award Dinner.

5 My name is Ronny Siegal. I am dinner  
6 chairperson.

7 At the outset, we're indebted to our  
8 federal court reporters, Stan Rizman and Howard  
9 Rappaport.

10 As you can well see, there are almost 500  
11 people here this evening. That is truly the largest  
12 gathering we have had for such an occasion. Clearly,  
13 it is indicative of the respect and admiration we have  
14 for this evening's honorees, the Honorable Harold  
15 Ackerman, the Honorable Dickinson Debevoise, and the  
16 Honorable Stanley Brotman.

17 (Applause.)

18 We take great pride in welcoming you,  
19 your family and your friends to tonight's occasion.

20 In addition, I would like to pay  
21 particular note to some other distinguished members  
22 that are here tonight.

23 First, Justice Morris Pashman.

24 (Applause.)

25 As you well know, Justice Pashman was

1 also a William J. Brennan award recipient.

2 In addition, we have our judges from the  
3 United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.  
4 We have Judge Morton Greenberg, Judge Robert Cowan,  
5 Judge Lee Sarokin. Senior Judge Leonard Garth. Also  
6 a William J. Brennan award recipient.

7 There are also so many of our District  
8 Court judges here tonight. Our magistrate judges, our  
9 bankruptcy judges. Judge William Ginden, Chief Judge  
10 of the bankruptcy court. These are the men and women  
11 before whom we practice and we're so proud that  
12 they're here with us.

13 I would also note that our United States  
14 Attorney, Faith Hochberg, is here as well.

15 And I would particularly like to welcome  
16 Mrs. Jean Gerry and her daughter, Ellen.

17 (Applause.)

18 So you know, they're sitting in the  
19 Camden section. That is what I've had to call it  
20 because everybody wanted to sit over there.

21 I'm going to ask our Chief Judge, the  
22 Honorable Anne Thompson, to pay a tribute to our  
23 former Chief Judge. The beloved John Gerry.

24 CHIEF JUDGE THOMPSON: Former Chief Judge  
25 John Francis Gerry died March 10th, 1995. Over the

1 long, difficult months of the last days of his life he  
2 continued to live with dedication, grace, wit and  
3 unequaled courage.

4 Those of us who were his colleagues have  
5 felt the void he left behind keenly and with great  
6 sadness. No gathering of federal court practitioners  
7 and judges can occur this year without a sense of the  
8 loss his death occasioned.

9 I will not recount the outstanding  
10 achievements of Judge Gerry. They've been described  
11 at other events this year and published in many  
12 newspapers and journals. He was a United States  
13 District Judge for 20 years. He loved his work. He  
14 did it with distinction.

15 When Judge Jerome Simandle eulogized him  
16 at his funeral, he glowingly referred to Judge Gerry  
17 as "an American original."

18 The last time I spoke to Judge Gerry on  
19 the telephone I told him of an upcoming judges'  
20 meeting. I said to him -- it was just a few weeks  
21 before the meeting. And I said to him, "Maybe you'll  
22 feel better by that time and maybe you'll be able to  
23 come to the meeting."

24 He paused silently for a few long  
25 minutes. Then he responded slowly, haltingly and with

1 great difficulty, "If I had my priorities, I'd be  
2 there," he said.

3 When I see all of you here, a full room  
4 of accomplished federal practitioners and his admiring  
5 colleagues, the judges of the United States District  
6 Court, I know Judge Gerry's spirit is here.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. SIEGAL: Thank you for those  
9 beautiful remarks.

10 And now it is my personal distinct  
11 pleasure to introduce our Federal Bar President, Fred  
12 Becker. He will now present the awards to the  
13 recipients.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. BECKER: Good evening.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished  
17 guests, our honorees, senior judges from our United  
18 States District Court, Harold Ackerman, Stanley  
19 Brotman and Dick Debevoise, and their wives and  
20 families.

21 I think the first thing I should do here  
22 this evening is thank Ronny Siegal for making all the  
23 arrangements for this wonderful dinner that we will  
24 all enjoy this evening and have so far enjoyed. She  
25 has really spent an enormous amount of time working on

1 it. Has paid attention to every detail and I think  
2 the evening reflects that attention. I'd like to  
3 thank her on behalf of all of us.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. BECKER: It is really an  
6 extraordinary privilege and an honor for me to  
7 introduce to you this evening's honorees, the  
8 recipients of the William J. Brennan, Jr., Award at  
9 this 19th Annual Brennan Award Dinner.

10 The William J. Brennan, Jr. Award is  
11 given annually by the Association of the Federal Bar  
12 of the State of New Jersey to recognize excellence in  
13 our profession. It is awarded to persons who in their  
14 professional and personal lives reflect the qualities  
15 of justice in Judge Brennan. Qualities which our own  
16 Bill Brennan has beautifully and accurately described  
17 as "humanity, principled intelligence, devotion to the  
18 law and love of our nation."

19 I say that it is an extraordinary  
20 privilege for me to introduce this evening's honorees,  
21 Judge Ackerman, Judge Brotman and Judge Debevoise,  
22 because each of these honorees reflects a long history  
23 of excellence at the Bar and on the bench and each  
24 reflects those qualities of humanity, principled  
25 intelligence, devotion to the law and love of our

1 nation.

2           There is a Latin saying which translated  
3 means that legal justice is the act of the good and  
4 the fair. The conduct of Judges Ackerman, Brotman and  
5 Debevoise reflects a clear understanding of that  
6 concept of legal justice. And each of our honorees  
7 also makes clear from their conduct on the bench every  
8 day an understanding of Tennyson, who taught all of us  
9 that the greater the man, the greater the courtesy.  
10 Because together with all of their attributes, each of  
11 our honorees this evening treats all who come before  
12 them with dignity and with courtesy and we all greatly  
13 appreciate that.

14           It has been and remains a stroke of good  
15 fortune to those who practice in our United States  
16 District Court and to those of our clients whose cases  
17 are heard in that court to have the opportunity to  
18 appear before and have cases decided by judges of the  
19 quality and of the integrity of our honorees this  
20 evening.

21           I would now like to introduce each  
22 honoree separately, although necessarily briefly. In  
23 doing so, let you all in on a secret which I would  
24 appreciate your not sharing with Judge Ackermanbrot  
25 (laughter) Judge Brotman and Judge Debevoise.

1                   The secret is that the Association's  
2                   Executive Committee, after a protracted and often  
3                   heated debate, could not reach a unanimous  
4                   determination as to the order in which the honorees  
5                   should be introduced. One school of thought insisted  
6                   that the determining factor should be good looks.  
7                   Another insisted that height should be dispositive.  
8                   And you can imagine how I felt about that.

9                   (Laughter.)

10                  MR. BECKER: And there were other  
11                  suggestions as well.

12                  We finally did resolve the matter but  
13                  determined not to disclose our methodology in order to  
14                  provide any clues regarding that methodology.

15                  With that background, I would like to  
16                  first introduce the Honorable Harold A. Ackerman -- I  
17                  was instructed not to provide any clues -- Senior  
18                  Judge of the United States District Court for the  
19                  District of New Jersey. Judge Ackerman has served as  
20                  a member of the judiciary for so long that the mind of  
21                  man cannot recall to the contrary.

22                  (Laughter.)

23                  Judge Ackerman was appointed to our state  
24                  court bench in 1955 and served throughout the New  
25                  Jersey state court system hearing both civil and



1 criminal matters with his last five years on the state  
2 court bench being in general equity; indeed, in a  
3 little courtroom in Elizabeth which was very hard to  
4 find.

5 And I sometimes think that Judge Ackerman  
6 decided to leave the state court bench as a result of  
7 the very lengthy Chancery Division trial before him in  
8 which I participated.

9 In any event, Judge Ackerman was named to  
10 the federal bench and assumed his duties as a judge of  
11 our United States District Court in 1980. He has  
12 served on our United States District Court with  
13 distinction for the past 15 years and continues to  
14 serve on that court as well as lecturing extensively  
15 on toxic torts, settlement techniques, RICO, products  
16 liability, reinsurance, alternative dispute resolution  
17 as it applies to the field of reinsurance.

18 Judge Ackerman is a member of the  
19 American Bar Association, a Fellow of the American Bar  
20 Foundation and has been three times honored by Rutgers  
21 University School of Law, two times, including most  
22 recently in 1994, with its Distinguished Alumni Award  
23 and in 1991 with its first Honorary Order of the Coif.

24 Harold Ackerman is a great judge and a  
25 great person. Judge Ackerman, I am honored to present

1 to you on behalf of the Association of the Federal Bar  
2 of the State of New Jersey, the William J Brennan, Jr.  
3 Award and I would appreciate it if you would please  
4 come up and accept the award.

5 (Applause.)

6 JUDGE ACKERMAN: Thank you, Fred.

7 Chief Judge Thompson, my esteemed  
8 colleagues, my family, including my dear wife,  
9 Barbara, all of my friends.

10 I promised Barbara and Judge Garth I'd be  
11 brief. As I was driving up here tonight I said, "You  
12 know" -- I started to think fancifully that perhaps  
13 this might be similar to an Academy Award evening. We  
14 were going to be honored for Jurassic Park 2 and I  
15 could get on and get off in two minutes thanking  
16 everybody under the sun.

17 And I'm so glad that you paid such a  
18 fitting tribute to your predecessor and I'm so  
19 delighted, Jean, that you and Ellen have honored us  
20 with your presence this evening.

21 The speech will be short.

22 Lee, I have a confession to make. After  
23 you took your oath as Judge of the Court of Appeals  
24 for the Third Circuit, I had the distinguished  
25 portrait of Justice Brennan removed to our ceremonial

1 court, which I'm privileged to occupy. That portrait  
2 was presented by this Association in April of 1983.  
3 And every morning, when I come into the court, I look  
4 at that portrait. It is inspirational.

5 I've had the privilege of knowing Justice  
6 Brennan for many, many years. Recently two  
7 unauthorized biographies have been published. One by  
8 a gentleman named Hunter Clark. It's not a very good  
9 book.

10 One of the points Mr. Clark makes is that  
11 whatever your views regarding Justice Brennan's 36  
12 years of distinguished and monumental service to the  
13 court has been, there is no question that he has stood  
14 for fairness.

15 And every morning, when I look at that  
16 portrait, I try so hard to live up to that. Try to be  
17 fair. Try to be right. If you're not right, you're  
18 going to get reversed. But after all, what else would  
19 the Court of Appeals judges have to do?

20 In accepting this award tonight with  
21 great appreciation, my mind went back to April of 1988  
22 in the Parsippany Hotel, Parsippany Hilton Hotel, our  
23 former Chief Judge John Gibbons was honored. Justice  
24 Brennan was in attendance that evening. He wasn't  
25 feeling too well. Toward the end of the evening I

1       went up to him, briefly, to pay my respects.

2               He said, "Harold. Sit down."

3               Of course, I sat down.

4               And he then proceeded to whisper in my  
5 ear certain thoughts he had which I shall not repeat.  
6 And I must confess to you I was overwhelmed by what he  
7 said and I got very teary.

8               And then he said to me, "I wonder,  
9 Harold, if you would do me a favor."

10              I said, "Justice, anything."

11              He said, "Would you pose for a picture  
12 with me?"

13              And I picked up my ponderous body and I  
14 posed for that picture which is right in back of my  
15 desk each day. It, too, sends an inspirational  
16 message to me.

17              And so this award has many meanings for  
18 me. I appreciate your remarks, Fred. And I shall try  
19 to keep on going.

20              I would like to again thank all of my law  
21 clerks -- where are they? They're all over there. I  
22 love them all. They're like family to me.

23              As a matter of fact, one of my first law  
24 clerks, Shepard Guryan -- I'll tell you how bad it's  
25 gotten. Thirty years ago -- almost 30 years ago he

1 was my law clerk. His son will be clerking for me  
2 next year.

3 (Laughter)

4 So when Fred said what he said about  
5 memory, it really goes back a long time. And I  
6 wouldn't have it any other way. I love going to work  
7 in the morning and I hope I have the opportunity to  
8 continue to do so in the future.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. BECKER: Thank you, Judge Ackerman.

12 Our next honoree this evening is the  
13 Honorable Stanley S. Brotman, Senior Judge of the  
14 United States District Court for the District of New  
15 Jersey.

16 By now, you may have figured out the  
17 methodology and the order of the appearance. Judge  
18 Brotman received his B.A. degree from Yale but  
19 overcame that adversity by going on to Harvard Law  
20 School, where he distinguished himself by winning the  
21 Ames Moot Court Competition, which is really quite a  
22 Signal honor.

23 This proved to be only the precursor of  
24 many very significant achievements by Judge Brotman  
25 both at the bar and after being appointed to the

1 federal bench in 1975.

2 Before his admission to the New Jersey  
3 Bar in 1950, Judge Brotman served in Burma with the  
4 Office of Strategic Services during World War II as a  
5 Far Eastern Specialist fluent in Burmese, apparently  
6 preparing himself for his appointment to the District  
7 Court.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. BECKER: He was recalled to active  
10 duty as a reserve officer during the Korean campaign.

11 Stan Brotman had really an extraordinary  
12 career of service to the Bar, which includes service  
13 as President of the Cumberland County Bar Association,  
14 service as President of the New Jersey State Bar  
15 Association, service for four years as a member of the  
16 New Jersey Board of Bar Examiners.

17 In recognition of Stan's many services to  
18 improve the system of justice, he was awarded in 1990  
19 the New Jersey State Bar Foundation Medal of Honor  
20 Award.

21 Judge Brotman has also served in many  
22 other capacities, including membership in the American  
23 Bar Association House of Delegates for five years and  
24 as the State Delegate and member of the Nominating  
25 Committee for 11 years and as Past Chairman of the

1 American Bar Association's National Conference of  
2 Federal Trial Judges and of the Steering Committee of  
3 the Nominating Committee.

4 He presently serves as Vice President and  
5 Membership Chairman of the Federal Judges Association  
6 and a member of the American Bar Association Standing  
7 Committee on Federal Judicial Improvements.

8 Somehow in 1975 Judge Brotman found time  
9 to join the federal judicial family and he has served  
10 since that time and continues to serve with  
11 distinction as a judge of our United States District  
12 Court.

13 In addition to his duties in the District  
14 of New Jersey, Judge Brotman for the past 15 years has  
15 been temporarily assigned from time to time to sit in  
16 the District Court of the Virgin Islands. And from  
17 December of 1989 until August of '92 he was designated  
18 by the Third Circuit as the Acting Chief Judge of that  
19 court.

20 Judge Brotman's achievements have been  
21 recognized. In addition to the 1990 medal of honor  
22 award which I have referred to, he has also been  
23 recognized by the Virgin Islands Bar Association which  
24 awarded him the Person of the Year Award in 1991 and  
25 most recently by the American Judicature Society,

1 which in 1994 awarded to Judge Brotman the Herbert  
2 Harley Award in recognition of his service in  
3 promoting the effective administration of justice.

4 Judge Brotman, a great judge and a  
5 tireless worker in promoting the effective  
6 administration of justice, I am very pleased to  
7 present to you on behalf of the Association of the  
8 Federal Bar of New Jersey the William J. Brennan, Jr.,  
9 Award.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. BECKER: Judge Brotman, will you step  
12 up, please?

13 (Applause.)

14 JUDGE BROTMAN: Unlike Harold, I have a  
15 script. And since Harold only spoke for five minutes,  
16 I am taking over the two minutes that he left in the  
17 event that my speech exceeds some seven minutes.

18 President Becker, officers, trustees,  
19 members of the Association of the Federal Bar of the  
20 State of New Jersey, guests and friends.

21 I commend all of you who came here this  
22 evening knowing beforehand that you would hear  
23 speeches in triplicate. You've heard of Manny, Moe  
24 and Jack and Larry, Moe and Curly. And now there is  
25 another trio for the ages. Harold, Dick and Stan.



1                   For years I've known and revered Justice  
2 Brennan and I have considered this award given in his  
3 name to be one of the highest honors bestowed within  
4 the New Jersey legal profession. I cherish it and am  
5 most thankful.

6                   To share this award with Harold and Dick,  
7 my respective colleagues and close friends, enhances  
8 the occasion.

9                   I don't believe that I can be very  
10 edifying in the seven minutes I've been allotted plus  
11 the two I'm borrowing from Harold, and probably I  
12 wouldn't be edifying in 70 minutes, either, but I can  
13 assure you that when I was toiling away earlier in my  
14 career, I never dreamed that it could get this good.  
15 Looking back, it seems to me that I loved every minute  
16 of it. Well, almost every minute.

17                   There is a morality play unfolding in a  
18 California courtroom and on TV screens nationwide that  
19 has plunked us into a kind of despair for our justice  
20 system. For a few minutes let me disperse the clouds  
21 of doom and interrupt the anguished introspection.  
22 I'd like to share a random selection of a few Golden  
23 Oldie memories that will never show up on the Lexus  
24 search.

25                   If I can be accused of having a message

1        tonight, it is that what I recall most fondly now are  
2        the human relationships, the collegiality, the humor,  
3        the adventure and fun I've had on the bench.

4                Thanks to Clifford Case and President  
5        Gerald Ford, on April 23rd, 1975, I had the good  
6        fortune to take my seat on the bench behind our  
7        debonair senior judge, the inimitable Mitchell H.  
8        Cohen, and irrepressible and irreplaceable John F.  
9        Gerry, who had been sworn in three months before.

10               Lurking in the background and causing  
11        mischief from time to time was Third Circuit Judge  
12        James Hunter, III. He constantly threatened to call  
13        up the Marines to subdue his clerks, whom he called  
14        his Muppets. Jim often spoke in code. For instance,  
15        he always admonished his Muppets to preserve  
16        confidentiality by saying, "KYMS," meaning "keep your  
17        mouth shut."

18               The first key issue to be resolved by  
19        Mitch, Jack and Jim was what to label me. When Jack  
20        came on, the other two decided to call him "The  
21        Rookie." Three months later, what should they call  
22        Brotman? The unanimous response was "The Kid." The  
23        next order of business was to adjourn to lunch at  
24        Fifth and Pine, a little Italian restaurant where we  
25        were joined from time to time by Clark Fisher, who

1       couldn't resist the hot peppers.

2               Although I had been a trial lawyer for 25  
3       years, it took a bit of courage at first to sit on the  
4       other side of the bench. My former court reporter,  
5       Steve Daner, who, fortunately, has lived to this day  
6       and is seated over there -- he's the little guy you  
7       can hardly see. Just the bald head above the table.

8               (Laughter.)

9               JUDGE BROTMAN: He had served in the  
10       state courts and considered himself then, as now, an  
11       expert in the law. He advised me to listen  
12       attentively, ask intelligent questions and just before  
13       ruling to glance in his direction.

14              (Laughter.)

15              JUDGE BROTMAN: If his thumb was up,  
16       grant the motion. If down, deny the motion.

17              Surprisingly, my reversal rate was very  
18       low.

19              Now, if there was anything Steve didn't  
20       know, I could always turn to Jack's court reporter,  
21       Ted Formaroli -- and he's the big guy next to Steve  
22       sitting there and keeps Steve in order.

23              As some of you may recall, one day in  
24       1978 I issued a bench warrant for a defendant leaving  
25       himself to be the Prophet Jeremiah reincarnated. His

1 cult followers immediately began picketing the  
2 courthouse and my home in Vineland with signs  
3 proclaiming "Brotman is a heathen judge serving a  
4 heathen nation" and also signs stating "The United  
5 States, Russia and the Pope are bringing about a  
6 nuclear disaster."

7 The Marshal's Service provided extra  
8 security for my commuting for almost two years until  
9 the defendant was located and there was a final  
10 resolution.

11 Let me tell you about the U.S. Marshals  
12 in New Jersey and in the Virgin Islands. They have  
13 been there for me many times. And I cannot overstate  
14 their loyalty, good humor and commitment to their  
15 duty, all of which has earned my deepest respect.

16 Even the worrisome picketing had its  
17 lighter side. Arriving at work one morning, I learned  
18 that someone had gained access to my chambers, had  
19 drawn on the courtroom blackboard various cartoon  
20 figures and some vaguely threatening language. The  
21 FBI, the Marshal and the U.S. Attorney had already  
22 been notified. I called Clark Fisher, who was the  
23 Chief Judge at the time, and told him what had taken  
24 place.

25 Fingerprints were being taken and Pat

1 Ronga, Jack Gerry's courtroom deputy, went up to  
2 Jack's chambers to let him know what was happening.

3 Shortly thereafter, my telephone rang.  
4 It was Jack.

5 "Stan," he said, "I did it."

6 (Laughter.)

7 And he went on to explain that on his way  
8 through my courtroom to pick me up for lunch the  
9 previous day he had an uncontrollable impulse to  
10 utilize his artistic skills, planning to guide me past  
11 the blackboard on the way to lunch and have some fun.  
12 However, something happened on the way. He forgot  
13 what he had planned and we left my chambers by a  
14 different door. Jack, I said, "You can call the FBI,  
15 you call the U.S. Attorney, you call the Marshal and  
16 you call the Chief Judge."

17 Months later, as Jack and I were walking  
18 down the front steps of the courthouse, I noticed that  
19 the pickets were all new; a fresh platoon, so to  
20 speak. I turned to Jack and said to him in a loud  
21 voice, "Judge Brotman, they're still picketing you."

22 (Laughter.)

23 JUDGE BROTMAN: You know, if you wait  
24 long enough, there is always a way.

25 The good memories are not limited to my

1 original colleagues in Camden. They include our  
2 expanded roster of outstanding judges and  
3 magistrate-judges in the southern vicinage, all of  
4 them are brilliant jurists -- you noticed I said  
5 "brilliant," gentlemen -- and all-around good guys,  
6 willing to lend a hand. They exhibit tender, loving  
7 care to their doddering old mascot, the senior judge.  
8 I salute the two Joes, Rodriguez and Irenas. Jerry  
9 Simandle, Joel Rosen and Bob Kugler.

10 Time restraints prevent me from  
11 reminiscing about my colleagues to the north. Maybe  
12 we can do that tomorrow night if you want to.

13 Now, before I go further, I think I would  
14 like to introduce to you my wife --

15 MS. ALISON BROTMAN: No.

16 JUDGE BROTMAN: -- Suzanne.

17 My daughter just said "No," but she's  
18 overruled. I'd just like to say -- Susanne, stand up  
19 so everybody can see you.

20 (Applause.)

21 I tell you why I asked her to stand up.  
22 I want you to see what a former secretary looks like.  
23 She was my first legal secretary.

24 And sitting next to her is my daughter.  
25 Alison, why don't you stand up and let everybody see

1       you, Alison?

2                       (Applause.)

3               MS. ALLISON BROTMAN:   You've never had a  
4       secretary as good, actually.

5               JUDGE BROTMAN:   Alison practices law with  
6       Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems up here in Bedminster,  
7       New Jersey.

8               Now, judges are a little like the sugar  
9       figures on top of the wedding cake.   They're in a  
10      prominent position with a lot of good stuff supporting  
11      them.   The support team in this case is my secretary,  
12      Sharon Krause, presiding at the center of the  
13      whirlwind -- and I tell you, it is whirlwind -- and  
14      my indispensable courtroom deputy, Barbara Fisher.  
15      Over the past 20 years, 40 law clerks, and one of them  
16      is here tonight.   Alan Wovsaniker, one of my earlier  
17      law clerks, is here.   Great to see him.

18              Over the past 20 years 40 law clerks have  
19      tolled tirelessly to draft opinions and orders.   They  
20      also performed a most crucial function in chambers.  
21      They order and bring back my lunch.   Law clerks, like  
22      the man who came to dinner, enter a judge's life and  
23      never leave.   They are truly family forever.

24              In 1980 I was asked to help out in the  
25      Virgin Islands for the first time, and that developed

1 into a career within a career. There is no time here  
2 to describe the early days of very tight security when  
3 U.S. Marshals accompanied me everywhere and referred  
4 to me over their walkie talkies and "Big Mac One." I  
5 thought they were playing cops and robbers. Nor is  
6 there a time to describe the old Danish courthouse in  
7 Christianted with the charming courtyard which was  
8 visited daily by a rooster.

9 By the mid-1980s there was a judicial  
10 vacancy on St. Thomas and a very sick judge on St.  
11 Croix, and I was temporarily designated to lend a hand  
12 again. The backlog of pending civil cases was over  
13 2,000 and I helped to recruit additional judges from  
14 across the country, including our Chief Judge Anne  
15 Thompson and Al Wolin of our District Court. In time  
16 Bill Ginden helped out in Bankruptcy for a while and  
17 Jerry Simandle, who at that time was a magistrate  
18 judge, also spent a week helping the local magistrates  
19 with discovery and pretrial procedures.

20 Many of you already have heard in  
21 excruciating detail about my experience on St. Croix  
22 during Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and how Steve Daner  
23 rescued an injured woman and was a certified hero  
24 during the storm.

25 Three days passed before we were located



1 and evacuated while 200 former prisoners roamed the  
2 island. Two days later I returned to devastated St.  
3 Croix in a plane full of well-armed U.S. Marshals. I  
4 felt like the Cavalry coming over the hill with  
5 banners flying. The Court family kept their wrecked  
6 and damaged homes and pitched in to reopen the courts.  
7 There were times when we wrote warrants in longhand by  
8 flashlight.

9           Within three months my good friend, Chief  
10 Judge Dave O'Brien of St. Croix was dead of Hodgkins  
11 Disease at 57 years of age and I was designated Acting  
12 Chief Judge. Nothing has been more gratifying than  
13 working with the local magistrate judges, the visiting  
14 bench, the Bar and the Court staff to reduce the case  
15 load eventually to under 600 cases.

16           I'll always remember a local court  
17 reporter in the Virgin Islands showing up for a high  
18 profile case wearing a full set of tails with a bright  
19 red bow tie - an image that sums up the spirit of the  
20 place and the people. Finally, I had the pleasure of  
21 overseeing the construction of a handsome and  
22 efficient new courthouse on St. Croix, and of assuring  
23 that the Virgin Islands was "an early implementation"  
24 district under the Civil Justice Reform Act. Today  
25 the Virgin Islands have their own local district

1 judges on each island.

2 The point of all this is that whatever  
3 accomplishments we may be able to rack up in our  
4 careers, there are other people who make it possible,  
5 and it is our relationships with those people that  
6 make our deeds more meaningful. In the words of the  
7 late Judge Harry Adler, of my home county of  
8 Cumberland, whom many of you, I think, remember, and I  
9 quote, "Be kind and sweet to each other."

10 Thank you and bless you all.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. BECKER: Thank you, Judge Brotman.

13 Our final honoree this evening is the  
14 Honorable Dickinson R. Debevoise, Senior Judge of the  
15 United States District Court for the District of New  
16 Jersey.

17 Judge Debevoise was appointed to our  
18 United States District Court in 1979. He is a  
19 graduate of Williams College and Columbia Law School.

20 Judge Debevoise served in the United  
21 States Army in the European Theatre and received the  
22 Bronze Star Medal and served again from 1951 to 1952  
23 in Korea.

24 We should have known that after Judge  
25 Debevoise's second tour of duty that he was beginning

1 to attain the qualifications suitable for the federal  
2 bench because he was released from service the second  
3 time as a lieutenant, having earlier been released as  
4 a sergeant.

5 Before serving on the federal bench,  
6 Judge Debevoise was an active practitioner in New  
7 Jersey and served on many significant committees and  
8 commissions, several of which he chaired, to which he  
9 was appointed by both the Governor and the Chief  
10 Justice of New Jersey.

11 In addition, Judge Debevoise has served  
12 as a Trustee and as Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
13 of Ramapo College of New Jersey, as a member and as  
14 Chairman of the Lawyers Advisory Committee of the  
15 Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and he  
16 presently serves as a member of the Committee on  
17 Financial Disclosure of the Judicial Conference.

18 Judge Debevoise has also served as an  
19 Adjunct Professor of Constitutional Law at Seton Hall  
20 Law School and, in addition to other publications, has  
21 recently published an article in the Rutgers Law  
22 Review entitled, "American History and the Study of  
23 Constitutional Law."

24 Judge Debevoise is a member of the  
25 American Bar Association, the New Jersey State Bar

1 Association, the Essex County Bar Association, the  
2 Federal Bar Association, the Association of the  
3 Federal Bar, the American Law Institute and the  
4 American Judicature Society. And he is also a Fellow  
5 of the American Bar Foundation and presently serves as  
6 President of the Columbia Law School Association.

7 We all know that it is always a great  
8 pleasure to appear before Judge Debevoise. He's  
9 always very well prepared. He always treats people  
10 before him with great courtesy and civility.

11 Judge Debevoise, a great judge, a scholar  
12 and a gentleman, I am really very privileged to  
13 present to you on behalf of the Association of the  
14 Federal Bar of New Jersey the William J. Brennan, Jr.  
15 Award. I would appreciate your coming up to receive  
16 the award.

17 (Applause )

18 JUDGE DEBEVOISE: President Fred Becker,  
19 Jean and Ellen Gerry, Senior Senior Judge Stanley  
20 Brotman and Junior Senior Judge Harold Ackerman,  
21 looking at the medal, friends and colleagues, I want  
22 to thank Fred for your -- first, for inviting my  
23 family; my wife, Trina, and two of my daughters,  
24 Abigail and Molly, and their spouses.

25 Fred, I really liked not that preceding

1 introduction, but the one that came before. The one  
2 that talked about principled intelligence. I'd like  
3 to elaborate on that.

4 I got a message from the Court of Appeals  
5 yesterday. As is quite customary, our cases go to the  
6 Court of Appeals. Now, some judges who only have  
7 intelligence, not principled intelligence, are  
8 reversed for error. I was reversed for serious error.

9 (Laughter.)

10 As I say, that requires principles.

11 I think the nicest thing about this  
12 evening is the opportunity to reflect a minute about  
13 the person in whose name the award is given, Justice  
14 William Brennan, Jr.

15 I had one brief encounter professionally  
16 with Justice Bill Brennan, and you will see it was  
17 much too brief. I had been assigned by Chief Judge  
18 Forman to represent a person accused and who actually  
19 pleaded guilty to murder in a habeas corpus petition.

20 This person, Vincent Cicenía, from nearby  
21 Orange, New Jersey had been taken with two suspects to  
22 the Newark police station at two o'clock in the  
23 afternoon and three of them were separated and they  
24 were being questioned separately by the Newark police.

25 Vincent Cicenía had a very able attorney,

1 who rushed down to the Newark police station and asked  
2 to speak to his client. The police, actually, with  
3 the Essex County prosecutor in charge, said, "No.  
4 We're still working on him."

5 (Laughter.)

6 This was Frank Palmieri, formerly of  
7 Orange, who had a very good record.

8 Every half hour he went to the Newark  
9 police officers, the prosecutor in charge, and said  
10 "I'd like to speak to my client."

11 Each time he was told, "I'm sorry. We're  
12 still working on him."

13 Eventually, at 9:30 he went and said "I'd  
14 like to speak to my client."

15 And the officers in charge said, "Okay.  
16 You can speak to him now. He's given his confession."

17 Some thought, well, eventually he did  
18 plead guilty and Judge Forman assigned me to represent  
19 him on the habeus corpus proceeding before the  
20 District Court of New Jersey.

21 And following the precedent, Judge Forman  
22 decided against me as he said, quote, "with a certain  
23 lack of enthusiasm."

24 It went to the Third Circuit and the  
25 Third Circuit affirmed Judge Forman, repeating that

1 they, too, shared the lack of enthusiasm of the  
2 District Court. Petition for certiorari to the United  
3 States Supreme Court.

4 We arrived at the United States Supreme  
5 Court. They granted certiorari. I got up to argue  
6 the case, walked to the argument table, and much to my  
7 dismay, Justice Brennan got up and walked off the  
8 bench.

9 (Laughter.)

10 I was later informed it was nothing  
11 personal.

12 (Laughter.)

13 It was just that he had sat on the case  
14 when it went to the New Jersey Supreme Court.

15 I'm sad to relate I lost five to three,  
16 but the happy ending of the story is that in 1964, six  
17 years later, the case arose again in Escobedo against  
18 Illinois and Justice Brennan, voting with a five to  
19 four majority, held that this kind of police behavior  
20 was not acceptable under the Constitution of the  
21 United States.

22 So although my association professionally  
23 with Justice Brennan was brief, (Laughter) ultimately,  
24 things worked out.

25 So I think at a time like this, when the

1 Executive Branch of the United States, Department of  
2 Justice, Congress of the United States, certain judges  
3 of the Supreme Court seem more interested in speed  
4 than justice, it is fitting that this Association each  
5 year bring to mind the work of a justice who still  
6 believes that the end of the law is not speed. It's  
7 justice.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. BECKER: Thank you very much, Judge  
11 Debevoise.

12 That completes our program. Enjoy the  
13 evening.

14 (Applause.)

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