

DEDICATION TO THOMAS SLOAN BOYD JR.

*Reflections of Professor Lawrence Bershad**

Tom Boyd died on July 27, 1992. He was the student most responsible for the creation of the Seton Hall Legislative Bureau, the parent organization of this Journal. Tom served as the Student Director of the Legislative Bureau for the first two years of its existence, his term of office concluding with his graduation in 1975.

Little did I realize, as a new and relatively inexperienced teacher in the fall of 1972, what awaited me when I announced to my criminal law class the somewhat dubious opportunity to work on a legislative project researching victim crime compensation. Immediately after class the first person to my desk was Tom Boyd volunteering to be of assistance "in any way possible." While other students were interested, Tom almost demanded the opportunity to participate in the project, and it was impossible to refuse him — a predicament that many who dealt with him in subsequent years soon came to appreciate.

Tom informed me he was simply a "boy from Arkansas lost in New Jersey. . . just a boy from the hills traveling the country hoping to do some good and coping as best he could with the city folk." As the public found out in the recent presidential election involving Arkansas Governor Clinton, I soon found out that Tom Boyd was anything but an unsophisticated country boy. He was as cosmopolitan, sophisticated and competent in unraveling bureaucracies as anyone I have met before or since.

As we worked on the project and dealt with the complexities of actual legislation, we began to discuss the discernable absence of legislative skills training in law school curricula, and noted that this posed problems to students interested in being involved in the political process during and upon graduation from law school. Day after day Tom and I discussed this and other needs of the law school. Eventually, Tom suggested that we recruit other members of his class to attempt to remedy the situation.

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Leon Sokol was soon dragged into my tiny office and it was explained to me that he possessed political skills and contacts. The three of us began meeting with elected legislative leaders such as Tom Kean, and partisan staff such as Joe Gannon and Joe Gonzales, all of whom were concerned with the perceived needs on the part of the members of the New Jersey State Legislature for professional research assistance in the development of legislation.

Other students brought into the process at this point were Steve Picco, Joan Josephson, and Dan Ellis, as well as Peggy Schaffer and Rick Steen who became the first editors of the Seton Hall Legislative Journal which was published two years later. These students called upon legislators, made investigatory phone calls and visited schools, such as Harvard and Yale, which had legislative programs of one kind or another. Tom and the other students settled on a non-partisan program which would focus on students assisting the legislature on an attorney-client basis bound by the rules of confidentiality so that students could work on legislation without reference to their own feelings and interests in the passage of particular bills. Subsequently, Tom led the group, along with interested faculty, in securing the support of the law school for this project through its accreditation as a course, and secured funding from the legislature.

Within the next two years, over 80 projects of varying complexity were completed for members of the New Jersey State Legislature by the students led by Tom. It was at this point, during Tom's last year at the school, that the first issue of the Seton Hall Legislative Journal was published. By the end of Tom's rule, the Legislative Bureau had over forty members, and was the most vibrant and active group in the law school. This was remarkable inasmuch as it was predicated on the fairly narrow field of legislation.

From its inception, Tom and his cohorts clearly intended that the Legislative Bureau was to be a "hands on" organization, holding classes each week where legislators, lobbyists, and executive branch officials recounted their experiences. This blend of research, bill drafting, classes and the Journal, all under the purview of the Legislative Bureau, directed by Tom, was an exhilarating experience for anyone privileged to be a part of it.

Tom was more than just a leader of a prominent and active student organization, he was symbolic of all of the students, and

in fact, of the law school, at that point in time. He was energetic, competent and unfailingly optimistic. All he wanted was a chance to contribute and to offer that opportunity to others. If there was a need for speakers, seminars or movies for the student body at large, Tom would work tirelessly with the special projects committee at the law school to insure the fulfillment of these goals. If library books had to be moved, and the school had no money to hire workers to move the books, Tom would get a group of law students together to work over several weekends to make sure the books were moved. In the less than grand series of temporary buildings housing the law school, one was able to glimpse the school's future through the eyes of students like Tom who were totally oblivious to the constraints which baffled and dismayed so many of us at the time. In retrospect, those years of the early 70's, with people such as Tom at the helm, provided not merely an insight into what the school was capable of, but, in particular, the enormous potential of its students.

Tom and I lost touch in the past five or six years as we were preoccupied with other matters. There was, however, an occasion in May of 1992 when over 200 alumni of the Legislative Bureau returned to the law school to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bureau's founding. It was a moving moment indeed when Tom Boyd was introduced to the audience, many of whom had only heard of him.

Tom was obviously ill, having suffered a heart attack in the winter, but as he stood up and spoke to those in attendance, his voice grew stronger as he remembered the days of the Legislative Bureau's founding and the possibilities for growth that lay ahead. He received a standing ovation honoring his service.

Privately, when speaking with me that evening, he told me of the doctor's dire predictions for him, but then pulled me close and whispered optimistically as always, "If there is a way to beat this, I'll find it!" Sadly, this was the only time I knew Tom Boyd to be wrong and to be bested by anything.

Over the years since 1972, I have been associated with many students in innumerable undertakings and I have seen other students creatively challenge existing institutions. However, never has one student meant more to me, nor to this institution than Tom Boyd. His loss is irreplaceable, but in another sense Tom Boyd will always be part of the special community of those of us

who were granted the joy of working with him and at his side. Tom set standards at the law school which, for many of us, will forever remain unequaled.

*Reflections of Leon J. Sokol, Esq.***

Tom Boyd was an extraordinary person whose presence at Seton Hall University School of Law left a lasting memorial to his accomplishments. He came to Seton Hall already having accomplished a significant amount in his life. A graduate of the University of Arkansas where he earned both Bachelors and MBA degrees, Tom served in Vietnam as a Naval Lieutenant where he became the youngest department head in the history of Fleet Air Wing II. After a short tenure with the Proctor and Gamble corporation, he decided to enter law school and came to Seton Hall.

Upon beginning his legal studies, Tom recognized that New Jersey needed an institution dedicated to legal support for its legislative activities on a non-partisan basis. He also foresaw the need for a training ground for young lawyers who would eventually seek careers in the legislative branch of government. Hence, the Legislative Bureau was born. Tom guided and nurtured the Bureau for two years, leaving it as a mature, well functioning organization.

As Student Director, he oversaw the Bureau's operations and tirelessly negotiated with the administration, the University and the Legislature for continued support. It was Tom who broadened the Bureau's activities to include the Congress, and he eventually was tapped to join Congressman Peter Rodino's staff three months before he completed his third year of law school. Tom moved to Washington, making arrangements to complete his third year long distance. Tom, as only he could, managed to fit in studying, finals and the Bar Exam while attending to his full-time duties at Congressman Rodino's office. These were exciting times for Tom after the Watergate hearings. As recognition of his extraordinary abilities, Tom was named Chief of Staff by Congressman Rodino during the first year Tom worked for him.

Tom left his mark on Capitol Hill. His interest in computers

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and automation techniques resulted in the creation of one of the first automated Congressional offices which became the model for others to follow. As Congressman Rodino's top aide, Tom had access to the Country's most important seats of power. He conducted business regularly with the White House on behalf of the Congressman, and rapidly became one of the most respected staff members on Capitol Hill.

Within four years, Tom joined Mobil Oil Corporation as an Executive and Legislative Counsel. He was given a variety of assignments, including representing Mobil at the Business Roundtable, an organization of major corporations which addressed their national legislative program. In 1980, the agenda turned to reform of the federal pension laws (ERISA). Despite the fact that Tom was probably the youngest person at the Roundtable, every one eventually looked to Tom for leadership, and he was the person who forged the agreement resulting in the ERISA amendments of 1980. His work in this area brought him national recognition, which eventually led to his joining the Equitable Life Insurance Company as Vice-President for Employee Pension Benefit Programs.

Tom left Equitable to return to New Jersey and the private practice of law. He joined the firm of Sokol, Behot & Fiorenzo where he specialized in regulatory matters. Here again, Tom excelled, demonstrating an extraordinary combination of legal ability and negotiating skills.

Bergen County faced a solid waste crisis when it was ordered to close its County landfill, and the Bergen County Utilities Authority was faced with the impossible task of building, and having operational within ninety days, a transfer station capable of handling the 1,000,000 tons of garbage generated by the County in a year. Everyone believed the task was impossible except Tom who served as Counsel to the BCUA. By agreement, he was placed in charge of the project to negotiate all government agency approvals and contracts for construction and equipment, and coordinating the efforts of all staff and professionals involved in the project. The result was that in ninety days, a 200,000 square foot building and transfer station was constructed and operating. This was the largest facility of its kind in New Jersey. Tom continued to demonstrate his extraordinary ability to work with the State and Federal bureaucracies until he was forced to

retire because of ill health. Tom was a great lawyer and is sorely missed.

Tom never lost his interest and his love for the Legislative Bureau, and maintained contact with its faculty and student leaders, providing assistance whenever he could. Now that the Bureau has celebrated its 20th anniversary, we must look back and recognize that this is Tom Boyd's "Baby" which has fulfilled all of his dreams and objectives for it.