Remarks

Abstract

Remarks by Rudolph W. Guliani in memory of Bill Tendy.
REMARKS

Hon. Rudolph W. Giuliani*

PROF. RICHMAN: Our next speaker is The Honorable Rudolph Giuliani, Mayor of New York. Obviously, he would be welcome at Fordham anytime, but it is particularly fitting that he is here today. He is known to all as a great friend of Bill Tendy.

He is also somebody who held just about every important job a federal prosecutor can have. He joined the Southern District U.S. Attorney's Office in 1970. He rose to become Chief of Narcotics there, then Executive U.S. Attorney. Soon afterward, he went to Main Justice, where he served as Associate Deputy Attorney General and Chief of Staff to the Deputy Attorney General, and then Associate Attorney General. In 1983, he was appointed United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York and held that post until 1989. The rest is history.

On a personal note, I can just recall starting as a wide-eyed assistant in his office, and being told that the marching orders from on top were to figure out what was the right thing and to do it. It was a privilege to work for him and it is a privilege to introduce him today.

MAYOR GIULIANI: Thank you, Dan, for that very kind introduction.

I apologize for being late. I had difficulty getting a taxi coming over here. It is true, I did. It was also very, very embarrassing, because I learned, as all of you did as a New Yorker, how to hail a taxi — you go like this, right? But when I do it now, they do something else in return.

I also want to thank Fordham for hosting this. I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to be able to say a few words about Bill Tendy and to remember him, because the memories that I have of Bill Tendy, like all of you, are very inspirational ones and personally very, very warm ones. I am sure just about everyone in this room knew him was someone who helped to form our careers, form our personalities, and someone who was an exceptional human being. He combined a tremendous love for the law, a tremendous love for being a prosecutor, and a tremendous love of life, and all of it came out as one singular whole from Bill.

* Mayor, The City of New York.
The pleasure of working with him was absolutely tremendous. He was an alumnus of this Law School, the Class of 1949. He was tremendously dedicated to his wife, Anna, and to their seven children, some of whom followed their father’s career as lawyers. He was a man of very, very strong character, very strong intellect, and very strong opinions, and he was blessed with a very infectious laugh and a tremendous love of life. He was able to inspire the people around him.

I remember conversations with him on every subject imaginable, but particularly about his family house on Lake Champlain and his great love, which is very similar with me, of opera, and our discussions of opera that were absolutely terrific.

I remember one time he was with me when I gave a speech to the Metropolitan Club. At the end of the speech, a lady put up her hand and said: “It says in New York Magazine that you are an opera lover. If you are such an opera lover, would you have prosecuted Floria Tosca for murder?”

I thought about it and I looked at Bill. I said, “You know, that would be impossible, even given your opinion that I am such an over-zealous prosecutor.”

She said, “Why?”

I said, “Because she was dead at the end of the opera.”

Bill enjoyed that very much.

Bill also enjoyed the very first detective dinner that we went to, that he took me to when I was U.S. Attorney. The basis of this was, of course, to expand our relationship with the New York Police Department, and also to see how fast I would get drunk. So we sat there with a group of detectives. Bill ordered a scotch and I ordered a scotch and all the detectives ordered beer or a scotch. Then they got to Denny Young, and Denny ordered tea. Remember that day? Bill made sure that he did not get his tea. I will not tell you how Bill described that, because at Fordham Law School I cannot use the language that Bill used.

Bill’s career in public service spanned four decades. It began in 1957. He witnessed all of the changes in the federal prosecutors’ offices that have taken place in the 1950s, the 1960s, the 1970s, and into the 1980s. It was during Bill’s time as Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney that federal prosecutors began to effectively create a response to white-collar crime, which was something I am not even sure was described as white-collar crime when Bill first started — organized crime, governmental fraud, securities fraud and tax evasion.
The U.S. Attorney’s Office that Bill was part of at the end of his career was very, very different than what it was at the beginning of his career, and Bill helped to guide all of that with a common-sense approach to making decisions about what should and should not be prosecuted that you just cannot teach anybody. They just have to have that instinct and that feeling and that understanding of humanity.

He spanned the pre-computer era, where in the U.S. Attorney’s Office everything was done with the steno pool and carbon paper and Assistants did their own briefs, sometimes wrote them out by hand, to the computer age, but kept through all of it the singular thing that is important, which is a tremendous dedication to principle — and really, beyond principle, a humanity about the decisions, to really distinguish between things that should be prosecuted and things that should not, things that should be pursued and things that just were maybe the product of tunnel vision or being too technical. Bill had a tremendous ability to see the difference between the two.

I think people in prosecutors’ offices could learn a lot by consulting Bill’s career. And the street sense that he had is unmatched. I remember in all of the decisions we made to hire Assistant U.S. Attorneys that Bill would always argue that we needed a mix of people who had different backgrounds, different experiences, and brought different things to the job and different things to the office. What he was really saying is that you need in a U.S. Attorney’s Office — and this is true of a local prosecutors’ office as well — people who understand the street, who understand human conduct, human ingenuity.

He was a very close friend of the judge that I had the great honor of being a law clerk for, Judge Lloyd McMahon, because he prosecuted the Ben Venner case in front of Judge McMahon, the case in which the defendant threw a chair at the prosecutor, erupted, tried to threaten and kill jurors, and eventually Judge McMahon had the restrained response of tying him up and gagging him in the courtroom, which was upheld in the Court of Appeals. Needless to say, Bill and Judge McMahon saw eye-to-eye on the way to handle this. Even before I met Bill, I had a very high opinion of him because of Judge McMahon’s view of him.

So I want to thank you for doing this. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity, as Bill’s friend, to remember him. And I have to say that, as Mayor of New York City, I see the results of a tremendously strong collaboration between federal law
enforcement and local law enforcement, which was also something that Bill helped to work on and helped to create.

It was not always that way. The fighting and disputes that went on between local prosecutors and federal prosecutors, and more importantly, between law enforcement agencies — police department, the FBI and Bureau of Narcotics — used to lead to tremendously bad results. Bill, understanding how to pull all of that together, has created a different situation for us.

So thank you very, very much for doing this for Bill. I just wish he were here with us.