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Ted Stein: Recollections of a Friend and Colleague

Joan F. Hartman*

Measuring the impact of Ted Stein's tragic death presents a difficult task, because his contributions to colleagues and friends were so large and various. Ted possessed a multitude of admirable qualities and unlimited potential for further contributions to the development of international legal theory, to the Law School, to the community, and to his family.

The preeminent element of Ted's brilliant professional career was his deep engagement with and commitment to international law. Even during his undergraduate years at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Ted had already dedicated himself to a career as an international scholar. He pursued this aim at Harvard Law School, where he served as Articles Editor for the *Harvard International Law Journal*. Following his clerkship with the Honorable Irving L. Goldberg of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, Ted began his professional involvement with international law. As an Assistant Legal Adviser in the State Department Office of Legal Adviser, Ted played a role in shaping the arguments for the United States in the *Iranian Hostages Case* brought against the Islamic Republic of Iran before the International Court of Justice. In 1980 Ted joined the faculty of the University of Washington School of Law, where he was promoted to professor in 1985. In 1983 he visited at the University of Michigan School of Law.

Ted's career as an international scholar was far shorter than anyone could wish, but was so impressive that his loss was felt keenly by the many members of the international scholarly community who were familiar with his work. Ted's scholarship was marked by lucidity, thoroughness, and fresh reflection upon fundamental issues. These characteristics were also well reflected in his posthumously published piece in the *Harvard International Law Journal*.¹ Perhaps best known were his two articles published in the *American Journal of International Law*.² In addition to his scholarly writings, Ted made two impressive oral presentations at annual meetings of the American Society of International Law, speaking in 1982 on the "ICJ Decision in the Libya-Tunisia Continental Shelf Case" and in 1984 on

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1. Stein, *The Approach of a Different Drummer: The Principle of the Persistent Objector in International Law*, 26 HARV. INT'L L.J. 457 (1985).

2. Stein, *Jurisprudence and Jurists' Prudence: The Iranian-Forum Clause Decisions of the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal*, 78 AM. J. INT'L L. 1 (1984); Stein, *Contempt, Crisis and the Court: The World Court and the Hostage Rescue Attempt*, 76 AM. J. INT'L L. 499 (1982) (winner of the Francis Deak prize in 1983 from the American Society of International Law).

“Decisions of the U.S.-Iran Claims Tribunal.” In 1985 he was elected to the Executive Council of the Society.

I met Ted after his first year of teaching, when we were both attending the Parker School of Foreign and Comparative Law at Columbia University in the summer of 1981. From the beginning, I was deeply impressed by Ted’s unique ability to combine seriousness and probing reflectiveness with humor and relaxed friendliness. My discussions with Ted at the Parker School eventually led to my joining the Washington law faculty in 1984. My first years at Washington were deeply enriched by the collegueship and friendship Ted offered so genuinely and freely.

In addition to his deep commitment to the field of international law, Ted was a highly successful and dedicated teacher of first year and advanced courses in civil procedure. At the time of his death, he was planning to devote his summer to projects for two sets of teaching materials, one on the international legal system and the other on law and the marine environment in collaboration with Professor William Burke. Ted was deeply interested in the Law School and selflessly served on many committees. He was an effective recruiter on the Initial Appointments Committee and devoted himself to the interests of the students as adviser to the International Law Society, the Jessup Competition teams, and the Clerkship Committee, among others. The grief felt by his former students is perhaps the best reflection of Ted’s love for teaching and his effectiveness as an educator.

Ted was deeply interested in other people, both in their thoughts and in their personal well-being. As a colleague, he seemed always able and indeed eager to take time from his crowded schedule for an open and serious exchange of ideas. His insight, patience, and intellectual curiosity made him an invaluable resource to his fellow faculty members. Ted made a point of unobtrusively seeking out those who seemed unhappy. Ted appeared unusually capable of handling stressful situations, perhaps because in his life he had achieved an enviable balance of professional accomplishment, a loving and close family, and deeply felt religious belief. His most endearing characteristics were his warmth, his sincerity, and his ever-ready self-deprecating humor, which complemented his very real ambition and seriousness. The memory of Ted’s laughter remains with many who were his friends.

Ted’s death was a senseless and incomprehensible tragedy. Because his loss is felt in so many ways, those who knew him will not forget the great friend and colleague that he was. One hopes that this issue of the *Washington Law Review* will enable new members of the Law School community, and others who did not know Ted, to appreciate his lasting accomplishments.