

SPEECH DELIVERED – MAY 23, 2010
AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR
WHITNEY R. HARRIS

To: Anna, Eugene and the extended family of Whitney R. Harris – thank you for extending the invitation to me.

My name is Greg Peterson. I am the President and co-founder of the Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown, New York. The Center is located near Chautauqua Institution.

If you will permit me, I wish to be personal. I have known Whitney and Anna Harris for just 10 years but value those years as much as anything that has occurred to me.

The Robert H. Jackson Center is designed to advance the legacy of Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson, who was the Chief American Prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trial.

As described by Professor Barrett, there was an extremely close professional and personal relationship between Robert H. Jackson and Whitney R. Harris.

When we started the Center in 2001, it was felt that we needed to gain some instant credibility. It was decided among those in charge, including Professor Barrett, that a conference of surviving Nuremberg prosecutors would be important.

We reached out to Henry King who gladly accepted but said, it will be a success only if Whitney Harris is involved. We reached out to Bernard Meltzer who said it will be a success only if Whitney Harris is involved. We reached out

to Ted Fenstermacher and said it will be a success only if Whitney Harris is involved.

By God, we had to get Whitney Harris involved.

Fortunately, Whitney Harris agreed to come to Jamestown and in his graceful way, said that he would be glad to appear on the panel, and glad to make a major address based on Jackson's work in Nuremberg entitled: "A World of Peace and Justice Under the Rule of Law – From Nuremberg to the International Criminal Court.

It was magic. We filmed and broadcast this and it was picked up by C-SPAN. We were less than 6 months old but Whitney's appearance, his reading of the letter of 1954 from Robert H. Jackson to him, which became the introduction of his book: "Tyranny on Trial" – was electrifying. We really worked Whitney through interviews, speeches and memorialized the event through one of the most iconic pictures of that first date was this one here – where at Chautauqua Institution, he is giving the "Chautauqua Salute."

The Chautauqua Salute is a rare – barely used, sign of high tribute at Chautauqua. Early in Chautauqua history, there was an individual who gave a rousing presentation which moved the audience to tears. The speaker was deaf. So, in lieu of an applause, they pulled out their handkerchiefs and slowly raised it in salute.

Whitney, when he was introduced that evening, by the President of Chautauqua Institution, and in honor of Whitney's service to mankind, had everybody give him the Chautauqua Salute.

At the end of his magnificent speech, he received a standing ovation. In tribute to Robert H. Jackson and the deceased prosecutors, he saluted those who could not hear but no doubt could view from a higher domain. He gave the Chautauqua Salute back to them. This was an incredible moment – and it formed the bedrock of a relationship with our Center which lasted up until his death.

When Whitney accepted the invitation to come to Jamestown, he wrote a letter to me dated September 11, 2001 and I want to share vignettes of it:

Dear Greg,

I have spent this morning watching the TV reports of the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York and other bombings on this tragic September 11. Obviously the United States must be in a state of undeclared war against the terrorists. One recalls the warnings of Justice Jackson in his final address to the IMT:

“Two World Wars have left a legacy of dead which number more than all the armies engaged in any war that made ancient or medieval history. No half century ever witnessed slaughter on such a scale, such cruelties and inhumanities, such wholesale deportations of peoples into slavery, such annihilations of minorities. The terror Torquemada pales before the Nazi Inquisition. These deeds are the overshadowing historical facts by which generations to come will remember this decade.”

Perhaps he missed his forecast by just one year.

Cordially yours,

Whitney

Thereafter, Whitney became a pivotal part of the activities at the Center. He introduced us to Director Haley and Leila Sadat who had been most welcome

in permitting the new Jackson Center to collaborate with The Whitney Harris World Law Institute, and the Washington University School of Law. During our period of existence, Whitney has been involved in 2 publications known as "*Tragedy of War*" and "*Murder by the Millions*," established the first permanent fund to honor Robert H. Jackson, been involved with 2 trips with the Jackson Center to Nuremberg, various Nuremberg speeches, symposiums, and most recently was involved in the creation of the International Humanitarian Law Dialog of which we are celebrating our fourth this fall. He was always there for us. He gave us instant credibility and we cannot ever repay the thanks and gratitude to Whitney Harris, his wife Anna and his family.

Limitations preclude me from going on further, but I would like to conclude with a letter Whitney sent to me after we traveled to Nuremberg in October of 2006. This was an event honoring the 60th anniversary of the Nuremberg Trial.

He stated: "I shall never live long enough to make the 70th anniversary. I am sending something to read on my behalf. Perhaps you will read the following lamentation adapted from a poem I wrote in 1946:

TO DEAR OLD NUREMBERG

Here's to dear old Nuremberg, Nuremberg, Nuremberg

The town we'd gladly leave,

Here's to good old Goering

For him, we'll never grieve.

Here's to Justice Lawrence

No finer judge than he,

Except he will not try
To end our misery,
By declaring this case over
so we can all go home at last.
Cheers to the prosecution gang!
Our victory was vast!

To conclude where I began. A Chautauqua Salute to an incredible man.
Though he may not be hearing this Salute today, we know he is observing and
approving.

Waive the handkerchief.

Rest In Peace, Whitney