

Remembering Abraham Ribicoff

**Remembering Otho R. Brown, Michael Logan,
Linda Blogoslawski Mlynarczyk and Frederick W. Rubelmann, III**

Connecticut: State of Diversity

Remembering Abraham Ribicoff

Abraham Ribicoff is the only person in our nation's history to have served as a state legislator, a municipal judge, a U.S. Representative, a governor, a cabinet secretary and a U.S. Senator.

An unparalleled record of public service, achieved by a unique public servant.

Abraham Ribicoff, who passed away this year, represented the people of Connecticut and served the citizens of the United States for more than four decades with dedication and distinction, with compassion and vigor, with boldness and integrity.

The son of immigrant parents, he began his climb to the height of political leadership and government service in New Britain. While his distinguished career brought him to many corners of the globe, Connecticut always remained with him.

Many remember his leadership as Governor of Connecticut, whether for mending the havoc of the floods of 1955, saving lives with his highway safety program, instituting court reform, or achieving significant advances in education and health.

Still more remember his service as a member of President Kennedy's cabinet and as a member of the United States Senate, where his imprint on foreign and domestic policy continues to be felt today in areas from international trade and government efficiency to improved health services and education opportunities.

Abraham Ribicoff, a historian once said, had an unerring instinct for the right move at the right time in the complicated game of politics. He was a man of principle and compassion, a man of character and decency, a man of vision and conviction. He spoke his mind in memorable ways and stood his ground when the cause was just and right.

From his first election to the Connecticut General Assembly in 1938 through his retirement from the United States Senate upon the completion of his third term in 1981, Abe Ribicoff made a difference. Through his words and his deeds, he affected the course of his times, and made better the lives of his fellow citizens.

Abraham Ribicoff has secured his place in history. It is a legacy that will long endure.

Remembering Otho R. Brown, Michael Logan,

Linda Blogoslawski Mlynarczyk and Frederick W. Rubelmann, III

In a moment, our world changed.

As citizens of Connecticut, as husbands or wives, as parents or children, we felt the horror of the morning of March 6 of this year in our soul and to our core.

In an instant, before anyone could truly comprehend the tragedy that was unfolding, the lives of Frederick W. Rubelmann, III, Linda Blogoslawski Mlynarczyk, Michael Logan and Otho R. Brown were abruptly and violently ended.

The State of Connecticut is really a small community, and the "family" of state workers is much smaller still. The events of life, as in many workplaces, are often occasions to be shared. Joy upon the birth of a child or the wedding of a friend. Solace and comfort during an illness. On this day, however, the event was of a magnitude difficult to comprehend. The sadness and shock, grief and disbelief all intertwined as we shuddered with the reality of what had tragically occurred.

The family of state employees and our State of Connecticut has never before experienced such helplessness, such anguish, or such sorrow. And as we learned of the lives of these wonderful, talented, dedicated and caring individuals, our heartache only deepened.

As the Office of Secretary of the State publishes this annual volume this year, we remember and honor their accomplishment and dedication to public service and to their families. As readers refer to the information catalogued on these pages and interact with the hundreds of state and local government officials listed here, we know that they will think often -- with appreciation and gratitude -- of the employees of the Connecticut State Lottery who were taken from us that day.

Even as time passes, their memory still remains strong. We continue to maintain a special place in our hearts for the family and friends of our former fellow public employees, and all of us in this "land of steady habits" endeavor to serve as a sustaining source of comfort.

The family of Connecticut will not forget the individual or collective contributions of Michael Logan, Otho R. Brown, Linda Blogoslawski Mlynarczyk and Frederick W. Rubelmann, III to the fabric of our state, nor will our support for the families that must grapple with this tragedy each and every day ever wane.

Connecticut: State of Diversity

Qui transtulit sustenit. He who transplanted still sustains.

The official motto of the State of Connecticut tells the story of our state. We are a state of immigrants, and a state of ever-growing diversity. Although dubbed the "land of steady habits," we have seen generations of change, as people of varied ethnic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds have joined our communities and added to the texture of life in our state.

As we approach the next millenium, new trends continue to emerge and new neighbors continue to arrive. We are, as the people of Connecticut, very much a work in progress.

Connecticut's evolution has occurred in waves and in trickles, as people from throughout the world have been drawn to our state for a myriad of reasons and under a host of circumstances, for as long as history has been recorded here.

Migration to our borders has been driven often by poverty in native lands, by the opportunity for economic security or religious freedom, by the chance to own land and a stake in one's future, or by the need to escape persecution or evade famine. For those native to this land or brought here against their will, only the passing of generations and sometimes intense struggle have permitted the hard-fought opportunity that others sought to achieve centuries earlier.

The *Connecticut State Register and Manual* in 1887 devoted 12 pages to a listing, by individual name, of members of the clergy in Connecticut and but a handful of religions were represented. Inhabitants of British Colonial descent dominated our state at its founding and in the years immediately following, but Connecticut, as did America, soon began to change.

Our founding communities of Wethersfield, Windsor and Hartford gave way to growing urban centers throughout the breadth of Connecticut. Like other cities in the Northeast, Connecticut's urban centers were transformed throughout the nineteenth century from ethnically homogeneous towns into bustling cities with large, diverse and growing populations of various cultural backgrounds.

We were at times a state of paradox, with separateness as evident as diversity. While a leader in offering opportunity to new citizens, we elected a Governor in 1855 who campaigned on an anti-immigrant platform; while in 1833 Connecticut's State Heroine, Prudence Crandall, established the first academy for African-American women in New England, the state General Assembly soon made its operation illegal. This contradiction is also evident in the election of local black governors by the African population even before they had individual rights as citizens and the numerous enclaves of ethnicity formed in our cities as new immigrants arrived.

The cultural mix of Connecticut quickly came to include French Canadians, Irish, Poles, and Hungarians; exiles from the Jewish villages and ghettos of Eastern Europe, and Slavs, Swedes and other Scandinavians. Later we would see Italian, German, French, Scottish and Portuguese, among the thousands that would establish their future in Connecticut. In the later part of this century, new populations of Puerto Ricans and other Latinos, West Indians, Russians and Asians increasingly are making Connecticut their home.

The immigrants and the descendants of immigrants struggled mightily to succeed in their new land, and achievement came only grudgingly when it came at all. We have had our share of landmark events reflecting advances, and we have witnessed generations of our fellow citizens endure blatant unfairness and injustice, bitter prejudice and hateful oppression. Evolving and expanding diversity has at times brought friction, turmoil, and even sporadic violence, but has served in the long run to enrich the lives and legacy of Connecticut and its people, laying the groundwork for a future that is brighter, fuller and more satisfying.

It was in Connecticut that in this half-century Thirman Milner was elected New England's first African-American big-city Mayor, and that Governors John Dempsey, whose parents emigrated from Ireland, Abraham Ribicoff, the state's first and only Jewish Governor and a son of immigrants, and Ella Grasso, the nation's first woman Governor elected in her own

right and the daughter of Italian immigrants, achieved political success. This year in Connecticut, Latino candidates seek statewide office for the first time.

Democracy is most dynamic when community members work together and feel deeply that by doing so they can make a difference in their personal and collective lives. Achieving that reality does not come easily, regardless of the rewards. Too often, the fundamental elements of our identities--race, class, gender, religion, civic group membership, place of residence and language--constitute the very sources of our separateness and group antagonisms. Valuing our diversity while discovering our common interests is essential to the cohesion and vitality of our communities, and that is where efforts in Connecticut are intensifying as the current century draws to a close.

Today, in Connecticut, the thriving range of ethnic, religious and cultural life offers all of our citizens a local window on our world; the chance to witness, participate in and learn from the vast array of heritage that is now represented in our state. At the same time, we continue to have incidents of hate and bias, challenges in the courts and in the legislature to address racial segregation and opportunity in our schools, and concerns about public policies that perpetuate rather than dispel stereotypes and prejudices. Yet, it is in Connecticut that opportunity, while imperfect still, is expanding for all our citizens.

Around Connecticut, we see more being done now to reap the harvest of opportunity that diversity offers, amongst all segments of our population, than ever before. We see children learning about each other, and doing so increasingly together. We see our suburbs beginning to reflect the spectrum of diverse citizenry that once existed only in cities. We see intensifying efforts to initiate and sustain dialogue across the divides of difference necessary to further genuine understanding and progress. We see greater recognition of the economic as well as social advantages of a diverse community in an increasingly global society. We see meaningful and integral contributions and representation in business and in the arts, in government and in the neighborhoods, in academia and in the professions, in virtually every walk of life.

However substantial the gains, achieving a diverse community not at odds with itself remains an ongoing struggle--but one that has clearly been joined. There are many new challenges, from economic polarization to diminishing diversity in our cities, which are critical to our future and which demand our attention. Discrimination has not been eradicated and some have yet to enjoy the full measure of their civil rights. Our vigilance and commitment must be renewed and strengthened. That need does not, however, diminish the significance of the distance we have traveled as a state and as citizens. More than at any time in our state's history, we are a state of diversity.

As the next century approaches, the transplanted peoples of Connecticut have the opportunity not simply to sustain, as our state motto suggests, but to thrive. This edition of the *Connecticut State Register and Manual* is dedicated to the individuals of past, present and future generations whose commitment and willingness to struggle to ensure diversity brings honor to our state.

Miles S. Rapoport
Secretary of the State