

Conversations with Professor Sir Elihu Lauterpacht Postscript

Date: 30 May 2008

Between January and May 2008, Sir Elihu was interviewed seven times at his home in Herschel Road Cambridge to record his reminiscences of seventy years of his own, and his father's associations with the Faculty. The interviews were recorded, and the audio version is available on this website with this transcript of those recordings. The questions and topics are sequentially numbered in the six interviews for use in a database of citations made across the Eminent Scholars Archive to personalities mentioned therein.

Interviewer: Lesley Dingle (**questions and topics are in bold type**)

Sir Elihu's answers are in normal type.

Comments added by LD, *in italics*.

All footnotes added by LD.

183. Sir Eli, you have told me of your concern at having failed to speak appreciatively of the many people who've helped you in your career. I wonder whether you would like to say something by way of a postscript to your interviews?

Well, what I'm about to say is to be contrasted with the six interviews that we've already had. These interviews were all relatively extemporaneous, they weren't specially prepared. I did not speak from a prepared script, but what I have to say now has been more carefully thought out.

As I read over the transcript of the six preceding interviews, I was struck by the dominating focus of their attention to what I, myself, have done over the years. This was, perhaps, inescapable as the questions that I was asked were about me and the answers were, accordingly, limited. But on reflection, I feel that to pass over in silence the role that others – family and friends – have played in my life would look ungrateful, as if I did not care or remember what they had done for me.

I must begin with my parents. My father was a wise and forward-thinking person. He had a clear vision of what he thought I should be - an academic and international lawyer and he guided and encouraged me accordingly. Losing him, when he was only 62 when I was 32, was a very great loss. I have tried to perpetuate his memory even beyond the enduring quality of the major works that he, himself, published in his lifetime by producing the five volumes of the Collective Papers and initiating a series of Hersch Lauterpacht Memorial Lectures at the Centre in Cambridge, and now named upon the initiative of the present Director Professor James Crawford, the Lauterpacht Centre in honour of my father and, very kindly incidentally, of myself.

My mother was the best of mothers, loving, caring, hardworking and supportive. When the occasion arose, she did not hesitate to encourage me to pursue a path that would separate her



from me for three years when she was already 75. That was when I went to Australia in 1975 to become the legal adviser of the Department of Foreign Affairs there. Well, happily, she lived on for another eleven years after my return in 1978, continuing in her own house in Cranmer Road, just opposite what is now the Centre, until the very day of her passing.

And then there are the others of my family. What they have done has been to tolerate and abet my commitment to work. Did it help me? No doubt it did, but at a cost to me of the idea of relaxation, family enjoyment and cultural involvement. I've had two wives. The first, Judy was with me from 1955 until she died in 1970. The second, Kathy, whom I married in 1973 is still with me. They have borne and bred my four children and maintained the house in which I have spent my labouring hours. I speak of them with love and gratitude, never to be forgotten.

And then there have been the four children: Deborah, Gabriel, Michael and Conan, who in youth, perhaps, saw less of their father than they should have, but they have stuck by me with a devotion and loyalty that makes any reunion with them, collectively or individually, a source of great joy to me and into this circle they have now brought my five grandchildren, as well in the case of Gabriel and Michael, their charming spouses.

Now, I just want to end this with a recollection of those who helped me in my career, particularly in the early years. Some, I have already mentioned: Joe Addison of Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and John Gauntlet of Linklaters and Paines, Win Haight of Shell. They all took a young man under their wings and greatly promoted his professional career. As to my academic career, my Cambridge College, Trinity, has played an important part since 1953 when I became a Fellow. My colleagues there have never questioned the time that I spent elsewhere and over the years, when I was actively teaching, my pupils appear to have welcomed and remembered appreciatively the interlocking of my professional with my academic employment.

Those years, particularly in the late 1960s and early 1970s, were marked by the close association that I had with my other three law teachers, colleagues in Trinity, Tony Jolowicz, Gareth Jones and Tony Weir. And I cannot fail to mention two of my British colleagues outside the college and the university to whom I am particularly indebted: Rosalyn Higgins, now President of the International Court of Justice, whom I am honoured to recall as a pupil 40 or so years ago and Christopher Greenwood, whose work on the International Law Reports I have already mentioned. Nor should I forget my judicial and arbitral colleagues, none so supportive as the late Sir Arthur Watts and the same is true of the many close associations that have been formed with colleagues overseas, especially Steve Schwebel and Prosper Weil and with former students who have gone on to careers of great distinction. Also, I should recall the four persons with whom I worked most closely and who supported me greatly during my three years in Australia: Lionel Murphy, the then Attorney General of Australia, Bob Ellicott the then Solicitor General who was followed by Maurice Byers and Clarrie Harders who was the head of the Attorney General's Department.

I could, of course, go on with such acknowledgements to many others in the college and



University and in my chambers in the Temple of which I've been a member for nearly 60 years, but I've now said enough to remedy I hope, at least in part, my failure to speak of them adequately in the earlier interviews. And to those whom I have not mentioned, too numerous to name, whom I am fortunate enough also to count as my friends or benefactors, I offer my warmest thanks and tender my apologies.

Thank you, Sir Eli.

