

The saga of my friendship with Tom Coleman is almost a decade old, and begins, quite fittingly, with one of those notable acts of Bill Kelley, whose role as royal remembrancer of this Committee has never been contested. Bill sent me a copy of a letter which had been published by a then-law student at Loyola University in Los Angeles by the name of Thomas Coleman. He felt that the writer of the letter was worth looking into as a potential Committee member. I, too, was immediately taken by the communication, not only by the subject of it, which I no longer remember, but particularly by the language in which it was couched. I decided to write to the law student, and suggested that he might wish to attend our forthcoming meeting in Buffalo, New York. The rest, of course, is recorded Committee history.

My relationship with Tom Coleman over the years since has been a very special one, encompassing several different dimensions. It has been that of teacher to student -- sometimes even finding myself in loco parentis -- legal associate and co-counsel, close personal friend and confidant, co-chairman with Tom of the Committee, even business advisor. For one who is not a blood relative, I suspect I ^{have been} as close to Tom Coleman as anyone except for his immediate family. I say this because when I discuss the qualities that I am about to mention, I believe I speak from wide personal knowledge.

I shall begin with Tom's fine mind, with his superior ability, and with his outstanding powers of comprehension. However, I do not mention these for purposes of commendation. Tom bore absolutely no responsibility for his talents. He received them as a free gift, either from his Maker or as part of his biological inheritance bequeathed him by his parents. Thousands of people are similarly blessed. What does set Tom off from others is the use he has made of his intellectual endowment. In an age when young people continue to flee from responsibility through such facades as "consciousness-raising" drugs, dropping out, and other forms of immediate gratification, Tom Coleman has never succumbed to the prevailing cult of laziness. He worked, he worked hard, and he continues to work hard with conscientiousness and dedication. Through his work he demonstrates that he is a fitting proprietor of the intellect which is his.

I pass now to a far higher quality. Not everyone is fortunate enough to possess a fine mind. But all of us, high or low, powerful or humble, rich or poor, are called upon to make decisions, to act in one way rather than in another, to do something or to refrain from doing something. In the course of making a decision, the question not infrequently arises, or at