

Dinner

In Observance of

The One Hundred Sixty-Ninth Anniversary

Of the Ratification of

The Bill of Rights

Seven O'Clock, Thursday, December Fifteenth, 1960

SERT ROOM, THE WALDORF-ASTORIA

Park Avenue and Fiftieth Street

New York City

EMERGENCY CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE

The Bill of Rights

by Justice HUGO L. BLACK

from address at New York University, February 17, 1960

SINCE the earliest days philosophers have dreamed of a country where the mind and spirit of man would be free; where there would be no limits to inquiry; where men would be free to explore the unknown and to challenge the most deeply rooted beliefs and principles. Our First Amendment was a bold effort to adopt this principle—to establish a country with no legal restrictions of any kind upon the subjects people could investigate, discuss and deny. The Framers knew, better perhaps than we do today, the risks they were taking. They knew that free speech might be the friend of change and revolution. But they also knew that it is always the deadliest enemy of tyranny. With this knowledge they still believed that the ultimate happiness and security of a nation lies in its ability to explore, to change, to grow and ceaselessly to adapt itself to new knowledge born of inquiry free from any kind of governmental control over the mind and spirit of man. Loyalty comes from love of good government, not fear of a bad one.

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