

Milking the Issue: An Award for

By Art Buchwald

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Chutzpah is a Yiddish word which means "unmitigated effrontery or impudence." There is no comparable word in the English language. The classic example of chutzpah is the young man who murdered his parents and then asked the court to show mercy because he was an orphan.

Every so often something appears in the newspaper which gives you new faith in chutzpah. Last Sunday a small United Press International item in my paper said the Associated Milk Producers, Inc. (AMPI) had asked for the return of the \$10,000 cash that was introduced in the bribery trial of former Treasury Secretary John B. Connally.

AMPI officers testified they had given Jake Jacobsen, their lawyer, the money to "reward" Connally for his work in getting higher milk supports for the producers. Jacobsen testified he turned over the money to Connally.

Then after Watergate Jacobsen became worried and asked for \$10,000 from Connally to put in a safe deposit box in case the feds wanted to know where the money was. Connally gave it to him in a cigar box. When Connally became worried that the bills were not old enough, Jacobsen said Connally gave him another \$10,000. (I won't bother you with this ten grand as it will only confuse you.)

Connally's lawyers got Jacobsen to admit that AMPI had given him not \$10,000 but \$15,000 to "reward" Connally. When asked what he did with the other \$15,000, Jacobsen "thought" he must have given it to Connally, too.

The money was stacked on the prosecutor's table in the courtroom and waved around all during the trial.

A jury of his peers decided Connally was innocent and Jacobsen had been lying.

Which now brings us to who owns the money that the government had used as evidence.

Amazing Chutzpah

Capitol Punishment

We know it isn't Connally because he said he was never given any money by Jacobsen and he never gave any money to Jacobsen. (Though heaven knows Connally can use the \$10,000 after he gets his legal bill.)

The money could belong to Jacobsen then; but since it was given to him by AMPI with the clear understanding he would give it to Connally, there is some question if Jacobsen carried out his instructions.

Since Jacobsen is bankrupt the \$10,000 presumably does not belong to him but to his creditors, and the government could turn it over to them.

Yet if the money was spent, as the government claimed, to influence higher milk supports, then it was used in the commission of a crime. And any money used in a crime cannot be returned to the person who committed the felony.

This leaves our friends at AMPI. To their credit, although they have said they gave Jacobsen \$15,000, they

are only asking for the return of \$10,000, which shows they're all heart.

After reviewing all the facts in the case I have concluded it's only fair that AMPI be given their \$10,000 back, but with a few strings attached.

One is that if they get the money back they will not give it to any of their lawyers to "reward" worthy politicians for jacking up the price of milk.

If they must spend the money let them give it to Mark Spitz who is trying to get all the kids in America to drink more milk for strong teeth and bones.

As for the \$15,000 left over, I think that belongs to the American people. The trial of Connally cost all of us at least \$500,000, and if we can get back one per cent of our money I guess we can't complain.

In the meantime, AMPI is the leading candidate for the 1975 National Chutzpah Award, which by some strange coincidence is now worth \$10,000.