



The Officers' Log

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VICE PREZ OF 'AWARENESS'



Actors Billy Gardell and Louis Mustillo (as Vince) in CBS's *Mike & Molly*

In the last *Log* we reported that we were reaching out to CBS-TV's Vice President of Diversity concerning the *CSI Vegas* dialogue "*As the Italians say: if you want to live a little you have to cheat a little.*"

While we were communicating with VP Tiffany Smith-Anoa'i about *CSI*, another CBS primetime show hit bottom with an Italian slur. On May 13th, the comedy hit *Mike & Molly* had dialogue between the regular wise-cracking Italian American character Vince and a farmer. The two traded insults beginning with "cracker" and "greaseball," moving on to "Italian female mustaches" and "roadkill jokes" and finally peaking with the farmer calling Vince a "wop."

In a number of emails and telephone conversations, our executive director John Mancini asked that both "Italians" in the *CSI*

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GRODIN VS IACONIS

"To hell with Latin" is how actor and radio talk show host Charles Grodin denounced our Chairman Rosario Iaconis's homage to Latin in the *NY Times* on April 15th. Listen to him at: <http://newyork.cbslocal.com/audio/889-charles-grodin/the-pain-of-latin/>

Clearly, at a loss for subjects to rant about, Grodin told his listeners on local New York CBS-Radio about "Iaconis of the Italic Institute" and how boring and useless Latin really



Actor Charles Grodin. You might remember him as the dad in the 1992 kids' movie *Beethoven*

is, how Grodin suffered through it during adolescence.

Note to Chuck: Having contributed over 300 words directly into English (like the "*versus*" in this title) and almost 50% of our vocabulary roots,

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LA CASA REVERSE

The New York State Supreme Court has sided with Columbia University in dismissing our suit over *La Casa Italiana*.

Using form over substance, Judge Marcy Friedman would not recognize either the Italic Institute or the Paterno Family as bonafide plaintiffs. Citing the paucity of case law allowing descendants of donors to question the misuse of donations, Friedman wasn't about to set a new precedent. She also refused to allow us access to additional Columbia archives.

Executive Director John Mancini, who has spearheaded this effort, was not surprised by the decision. "Our attorney warned us it was an uphill battle." said Mancini. "Universities have spent millions of dollars on lawyers to prevent donors from questioning them. If I wanted to endow an Italian program I'd build my own university first rather than trust the money to academic autocrats."

Even the university's newspaper, *Columbia Spectator*, has voiced objections to *La Casa*'s restricted access and Director David Freedberg's autocratic ways. "We lost part of our identity..." said Jo Ann Cavallo of the university's Italian department being forced out of *La Casa* in 1990.

Our governors are weighing a new appeal to New York's Attorney General who oversees non-profits like universities. The AG always has court standing.

YOUR GENEROSITY

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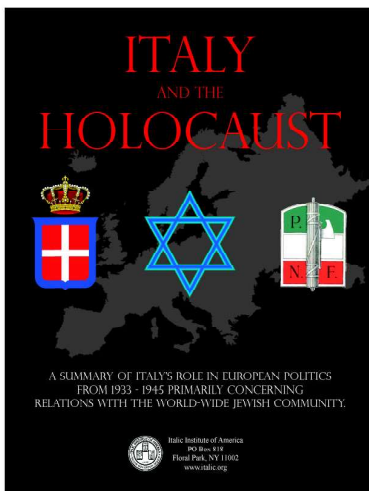
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SINATRA & ISRAEL



Frank Sinatra meets Israeli Premier Ben-Gurion
in 1962

(Excerpted from the website of the
Israeli Federation of Histadruth)

Francis Albert Sinatra may have been one of America's most famous Italian Catholics, but he kept the Jewish people and the State of Israel close to his heart, manifesting life-long commitments to fighting anti-Semitism and to activism on behalf of Israel. Sinatra stepped forward after the war, when big names were needed to rouse America into saving Europe's remaining Jews. He sang at an "Action for Palestine" rally in 1947.

Few know that he also sat on the board of trustees of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and donated over \$1 million to Jerusalem's Hebrew University, which honored him with the Frank Sinatra International Student Center. As the result of his support for the Jewish State, his movies and records were banned in some Arab countries.

Sinatra helped the Zionist terror organization Haganah, during Israel's violent birth. Teddy Kollek, former mayor of Jerusalem, relates in his autobiography how in 1948 he needed to smuggle a million dollars in cash to a ship New York. There was an arms embargo at the time imposed by President Harry Truman on aiding Jewish fighters in Israel. The young Kollek, afraid of being followed, spotted Sinatra at a bar and asked his help. Sinatra reportedly agreed and delivered the money in a paper bag to the ship's captain.

The origins of Sinatra's love affair with the Jewish people are not clear but, for years, the Hollywood icon wore a small

mezuzah around his neck, a gift from Mrs. Golden, an elderly Jewish neighbor who cared for him during his boyhood in Hoboken, N.J. Years later, he honored her by purchasing a quarter million dollars' worth of Israel bonds. *Time Magazine* reported that Sinatra walked out on the christening of his own son when the priest refused to allow a Jewish friend to be the godfather. As late as 1979, he raged over the fact that a Palm Springs cemetery official in California declared that he could not arrange the burial of a deceased Jewish friend over the Thanksgiving holiday. Sinatra threatened to punch him in the nose.

Sinatra famously played the role of a pilot in *Cast a Giant Shadow*, the 1966 film filmed in Israel. He donated his salary to the Arab-Israeli Youth Center in Nazareth.

His other acts of generosity included donating a significant contribution to the making of *Genocide*, a film about the Holocaust. He also starred in *The House I Live In* (1945), a ten-minute short film made to oppose anti-Semitism at the end of World War II, which received an Honorary Academy Award and a special Golden Globe award in 1946.

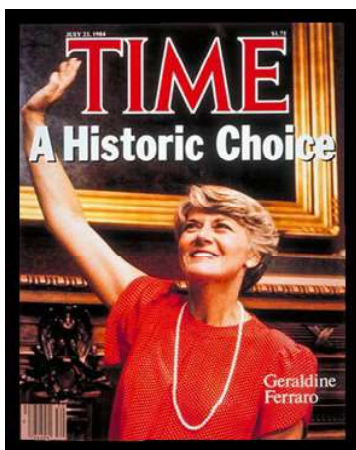
Sinatra visited Israel a number of times and in 1975 he sang for a benefit concert in Jerusalem.

VIDEO ON-LINE

Back in 1991, we produced our first educational video, *Roman Law in America*, narrated by the late Geraldine Ferraro. Last month, our original filmmaker and Institute member, Frank Vitale, was able to utilize his video master to make new DVDs of it.

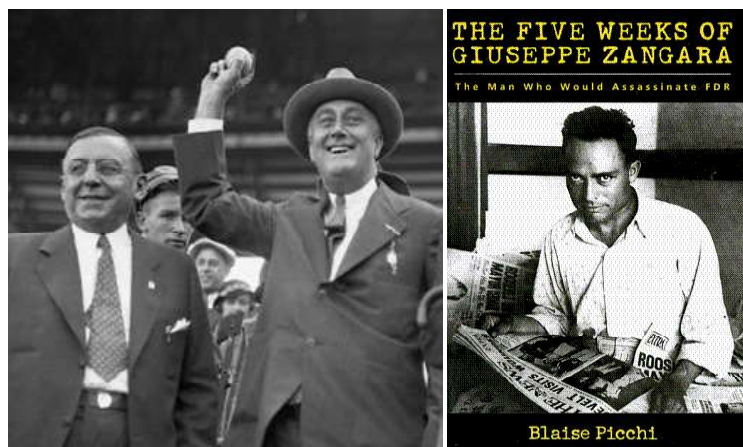
We can now offer the 19-minute DVD to schools. The film demonstrates the direct connection between our classical heritage and principles we take for granted today such as natural law, the right of privacy, and the extension of citizenship.

Thanks to our webmaster Tony Buttitta, you can view the film on our website (www.italic.org) under the heading Galleria Italica. If you know any teachers of Italian, Latin, or Social Studies, that may be interested in obtaining the DVD, let us know and we can provide one at no charge.



Geraldine Ferraro's run for U.S. Vice President in 1984

MOB HIT, REALLY?



Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak and FDR. Cermak's killer, Zangara

On February 15, 1933, the reform mayor of Chicago Anton Cermak was shot in Miami during a rally for President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt. The gunman, an Italian immigrant named Giuseppe Zangara, was aiming at FDR. The president wasn't touched but Cermak died a few days later. A thorough investigation by both the Miami police and the U.S. Secret Service concluded that FDR was the only intended target and that Zangara acted alone, for anarchist motives. He was tried and executed a few weeks later.

A number of years after the attack, journalist Walter Winchell of the *Chicago Tribune* launched a campaign to link Cermak's murder to the Al Capone/Frank Nitti Outfit. It was, according to Winchell, a mob rub-out, payback to Cermak for cleaning up the Chicago rackets. Winchell had absolutely no evidence except that both Zangara and the Outfit bosses were Italians. In fact, the Secret Service had considered that angle and discarded it. Zangara was mentality unbalanced, had never been to Chicago, and was a house painter by trade in New Jersey.

But traditions die hard, and almost every year some journalist in Chicago dredges up the old Winchell tale. This year was no different. Columnist John Kass of the *Tribune* dusted off the mob "hit" last March. But this time, our institute had a rebuttal for Kass, as well as for Chicago Alderman Ed Burke, who fancies himself an "unofficial" Chicago historian. Some years ago, we acquired the only book on the Cermak murder (above), written by Italian American attorney Blaise Picchi of Florida. We contacted Mr. Picchi about the Kass column. Incensed, he dashed off an op-ed piece to the *Chicago Tribune* refuting Kass and anyone else who disseminated the mob-based urban legend. The *Tribune* editors took a pass on such an authority.

Like Whack-a-Mole, our institute will be back with Mr. Picchi next March and try again to separate America from its obsession with Italian conspiracies.

OUR FIGHTING IRISH FRIENDS

We've often noted the irony that non-Italians have a far better appreciation of Italic culture than the great majority of Italian Americans. For example, opera companies, art exhibits, Italian language programs, and even public buildings are generously supported by Jewish and Anglo Americans. And when it comes to defending us in the media, many Irish Americans do a better job than journalists with vowels at the end of their names.

The recent death of actor James Gandolfini reminded our President Bill Dal Cerro of the Irish who came to our rescue. During the horrific run of HBO's *The Sopranos*, which pummeled our culture on a yearly basis from 1999 to 2007, Maureen O'Donnell, a staff reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times* (and married to an Italian American man), wrote a blistering critique of the show during its final year, noting the cultural damage it had inflicted. But, even earlier, in 2002, yet another Irish American in Chicago, the late sociologist-priest



The late-Father Andrew Greeley

Father Andrew Greeley, stated: "Violence on American television is not politically incorrect, it would seem, so long as Italians are both the perpetrators and victims. The phony picture of Italian personality, family structure, and culture, absorbed from all

previous mob movies, is pushed further than in the past. The theme, the series assumes, is that Italian family and loyalty are systematically applied to organized crime. Can one imagine a series like this based on a Jewish, an American Indian, or an African American family, viewed in its criminal behavior? There would be noisy protests and solemn editorial warnings. But because *The Sopranos* is about Italians, it's all right."

Greeley also reminded viewers of a quote by Rep. William Dillingham (R-NY) from a century ago, calling Italians "innately criminal" when trying to pass more restrictive immigration laws. Greeley was astonished that such prejudice was still with us one hundred years later, now being acclaimed as "art."

CBS, from p. 1

dialogue and "wop" in *Mike & Molly* be deleted before reruns and syndication. These episodes can have an indefinite cable lifespan in syndication, often decades.

Tiffany appreciated our concern and felt our pain. However, she told us that she had contacted the writer at *CSI Vegas* and made him aware of our feelings, the same with *Mike & Molly*. Tiffany felt that she had served her purpose in spreading "awareness," and ended our discussions.

Perhaps we missed the media announcement declaring that political correctness is dead. If that is the case, perhaps the major networks will be regaling us with lighthearted jokes about k-kes, n-ggers, and ch-nks. But until we get the memo, we will pursue our quest for national respect.

On June 7th, we filed two complaints with the FCC and sent a candid letter to Tiffany's boss, President Nina Tassler at CBS.

Says President Bill Dal Cerro: "We are learning that 'awareness' is not something you spread but shovel." ****

Grodin vs Iaconis, from p. 1

Latin would have to go to "*inferno*" rather than the Germanic "hell."

As we noted in previous *Logs*, more American students take the Latin AP tests than Italian (6,044 vs 1,806).

Quoth Iaconis: "In order to soothe his savage breast, Mr. Grodin would be wise to consult a timeless Latin adage: *Ira furor brevis est* (Anger is a brief madness.)" >>>

[Iaconis's letter to the New York Times \(4/9/13\):](#)

Like the United States Marine Corps, Jukka Ammond [a Latin professor broadcasting on Finnish radio] remains semper fidelis to the lingua franca of Western civilization, Latin. But the educator's predilection for alma mater Italia's ancient tongue isn't just a "symbolic" flight of linguistic fancy.

In addition to serving as the foundational lexicon of the law, science, medicine and governance, Latin is hardwired in the American national character. From the founding fathers' res publica to E pluribus unum, which adorns the Seal of the United States, to our notion of citizenship (Civis romanus sum), the vernacular of Virgil, Cicero and Ovid is no terra incognita.

*Ceteris paribus (all else being equal), a knowledge of Latin helps us appreciate John F. Kennedy's reference to our "ancient" heritage." And scientia est potentia: knowledge is power. -R.A. Iaconis, Italic Institute. *****

