

Written by Patricia Turnier LL.M
Thursday, 02 May 2013 21:02



Vice President
Senator
Adlai E. Stevenson I
E. Stevenson III

Governor
Adlai E. Stevenson II

Adlai

Perchance no American family has been actively involved in public office and politics for as long as the Adlai Stenvensons' dynasty, starting with Jesse W. Fell (1808-1887) in the 1830s, including Vice President Adlai I (1835-1914)¹, Governor Adlai II (1900-1965) and U.S. Senator Adlai III. Notably, Fell was Abraham Lincoln's sponsor. Without Fell, the course of U.S. history would have been altered and Lincoln may never have been president.

Aforementioned, Adlai Ewing Stevenson III, born in 1930, was the Senator of Illinois from 1970 until 1981. Measured by a host of demographic factors, such as race, income, education, immigration and rural-urban composition, Illinois is America's most representative state,

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according to the Census Bureau. Illinois had its difficulties with elected officials, but we cannot forget that it is also the home of Abraham Lincoln and Mr. President Barack Obama. In between those two Illinois Presidents, prominent public servants from the state have included five generations of the Stevenson family.

Stevenson III is a Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War; he became a captain in 1961. Later he served as a law clerk for the Illinois Supreme Court. He was admitted to the bar in 1957 and started his practice in Chicago. Stevenson III was a partner in the large law firm of Mayer, Brown and a member of the Illinois House of Representatives between 1965 and 1967, a State Treasurer from 1967 until 1970 when he was elected to the U.S. Senate. In 1976, Chicago's Mayor Daley wanted Stevenson III to run for President. In this regard, Stevenson III became one of six finalists for the vice presidential nomination at the 1976 Democratic Convention in New York.

Stevenson III as Illinois State Treasurer between 1967 and 1970 quadrupled earnings on the investment of State funds, while cutting the budget annually. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1970, succeeding the deceased Senator Everett Dirksen and was re-elected in 1974—both times by record-breaking margins. Stevenson III retired from the Senate in 1981. He became the Democratic candidate for Governor of Illinois in 1982 and 1986. Stevenson III supported the U.S. and UN sustained “two state” formula for peace in the Middle East. An attempt to distance America from the settlements policy of the Likud government of Israel in 1977 with a significant decrease in U.S. funding of the Jewish state led to his defeat in the 1982 election for Governor of Illinois. Though the election was virtually tied and widespread election irregularities were reported, including a failed punch card system for recording votes, the Illinois Supreme Court denied Stevenson's request for a recount by one vote. Many people also believe the fact that Stevenson III wanted an investigation into the USS Liberty incident after the 1967 attack by Israel created hurdles to his later efforts to become a governor.

Stevenson III was again nominated for Governor in 1986 by the Democratic Party with the largest plurality of all candidates of both parties. However, the candidates of the LaRouche cult were nominated for Lt. Governor and Secretary of State, compelling Stevenson III to surrender his nomination and run as an independent. He won 40% of the vote but lost to incumbent Republican Governor Jim Thompson. The Illinois Democratic Party's most senior leaders wanted Stevenson III to run anew for Governor in 2002, assuring him no primary opposition, but the campaign didn't materialize because the former Senator was reticent due to his age.

As mentioned, Stevenson III is a former U.S. Senator. In the Senate, Stevenson served on the Commerce Committee (Chairman of the Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space),

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Banking Committee (Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Finance) and Intelligence Committee (Chairman, Subcommittee on the Collection and Production of Intelligence).

Stevenson III was also the most junior member of the Senate Majority's Policy Committee. He co-authored the energy legislation of the mid-1970s, including legislation to implement the Department of Energy's fuel efficiency standards, emergency natural gas pricing, and projects for the development of alternative energy sources. Furthermore, he authored the *International Banking Act*

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Collection and Production of Intelligence, he also conducted the first Congressional in-depth studies of terrorism, introducing the *Comprehensive Anti-Terrorism Act of 1979*

with predictions of "spectacular acts of destruction and disruption," including an "international terrorist scene."

Since living in London after WWII where he studied at Harrow School, Stevenson III has traveled, worked and served in many capacities in more than 80 countries. His private sector career focused on international matters, especially international finance and East Asia. He organized the HuaMei Capital Company, the first Sino U.S. financial intermediary where he stayed a director. He is a past President of the U.S. Committee of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, former Co Chairman of the East Asia Financial Markets Development Project, former President and Chairman of the Japan America Society of Chicago, former Chairman of the Midwest US Japan Association, a member of the U.S.-Korea Wisemen Council and so on.



Jesse W. Fell

Stevenson III explored U.S. history and culture from his family's role in U.S. politics in *The Black*

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Book. It represents American history as experienced by one of the most prominent families of the United States. The book is named for a binder filled with anecdotes, aphorisms, maxims, bits of wit that expanded within his family over the generations and became a source of material for Stevenson's book. It includes stories of Jesse Fell, the great-great-grandfather of the author and Abraham Lincoln's sponsor and Adlai E. Stevenson I (1836-1914) from his beginnings as a County Prosecutor, a one term Member of Congress, famously the first Assistant Postmaster General in Grover Cleveland's first administration (where he replaced 40,000 republican postmasters with at least as many Democrats). Later, he became the twenty-third Vice President of the United States under Grover Cleveland's second mandate—Cleveland was the only President in America's history to serve two non-consecutive terms (1885-1889 and 1893-1897) and the sole individual to be counted twice in the numbering of the presidents. Stevenson's son, Lewis, Illinois Secretary of State, added little to the collection. However, Lewis' son, Adlai II, known to friends and family as 'the Guv,' expanded the black binder during his time as an official in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, the thirty-first Governor of Illinois (1949-1953), Democratic presidential candidate in 1952 and 1956—losing both times to Eisenhower—, and the fifth U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (UN). In October 1962, while ambassador to the UN during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Adlai II confronted the USSR over the Cuban Missile Crisis. This confrontation is considered one of the most memorable moments in the history of the United Nations.

In 1960, several friends of Stevenson II tried, against his express wishes and without success, to get the Democrats to nominate him for the presidency for a third time. Notably, Stevenson II is considered as a heroic figure: an eloquent and brilliant statesman who had the courage to criticize demagogues, such as Senator Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon, prior to his presidency, in an epoch when few Democrats were willing to do so. During the Vietnam War, under Johnson's administration, Stevenson II's wish to start negotiations with North Vietnam through the UN, was denied by the President of the U.S. Moreover, Stevenson II was opposed to capital punishment, like his son Stevenson III when he was later involved in politics.

In The Black Book readers learn about the ideas of other political figures, such as President Lincoln. Noteworthy, it has been mentioned in the media that, apart from references to Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, the apostate Republican, The Black Book contains no positive comments about the Republican party. The author is straightforward regarding his position as a Democrat and his reference to Republicans is intended to be humorous. The book offers insight into the time period over which the original black book was compiled. Some parts penned erstwhile (during the Civil War era, for instance) are racially insensitive. Thus, it reflects the public attitudes scattered at the time. All of the information in The Black Book

is shared in context: the author describes what is happening in the colonies, the socio-historical events surrounding the particular epoch during Jefferson's administration and so on.

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More specifically, The Black Book covers many themes: philosophy, the influence of money in American politics, including the financial resources of the defense industry, the abuses of and by the press; the perception of America outside its borders especially in China which offers a more nuanced portrait of the U.S., past presidents and presidential candidates of both traditional parties; historical figures and events, such as the Civil War with its major actors, etc. Stevenson III also shares with the readers the victories and struggles of his political career. The Black Book is a road map for other studies that seek to use politics as a means to understand larger socio-historical situations.

Overall, The Black Book is a window on America during the last centuries. It is very informative. The book is not only about Stevenson III but also about his family's legacy, its role in the social and historical contexts of the U.S. over several generations, and its members' thoughts and analysis on different issues since the 1800s. Furthermore, the book covers foreign policy with the benefit of experience collected throughout the years, as well as the perspectives of the Stevensons regarding the crosscurrents of cultures and history. The readers will also find information about the intertwined dynamics of economics and politics. The book is penned in an original manner. Rather than being organized chronologically, the narrative goes back and forth through history, with maxims, aphorisms and anecdotes.

It is worth noting that Stevenson III has a wealth of historical information at his disposal, a rich insight into America's past. Hence, in 1981, Stevenson's records, filling 961 file drawers, were donated to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (formerly the Illinois Historical Library) in Springfield. It became the state's largest archive. Other transfers were made in 1986. Since then records, including several hundred speeches and articles, have been maintained in digital form but have not been organized, catalogued and, as yet, sent over to the Library. Speeches and articles will, from time to time, be posted on Stevenson's website www.adlai3.com.

Governor Stevenson's records are available at the Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library at Princeton, University, save for documents relating to his years as Governor of Illinois, which are kept at the Illinois Historical Library. Other family records, including the documents of Vice President Adlai Stevenson and Jesse Fell (Abraham Lincoln's patron) are available at the Milner Library, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois. The University was endowed and established by Fell.

To summarise, Stevenson III went to Harvard Law School and became an alumnus in 1957, before commencing a political career. He was a U.S. Senator with special responsibilities for international finance and trade, space policy and intelligence. He was the first Chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee charged with implementing a code of ethics, which he helped draft.

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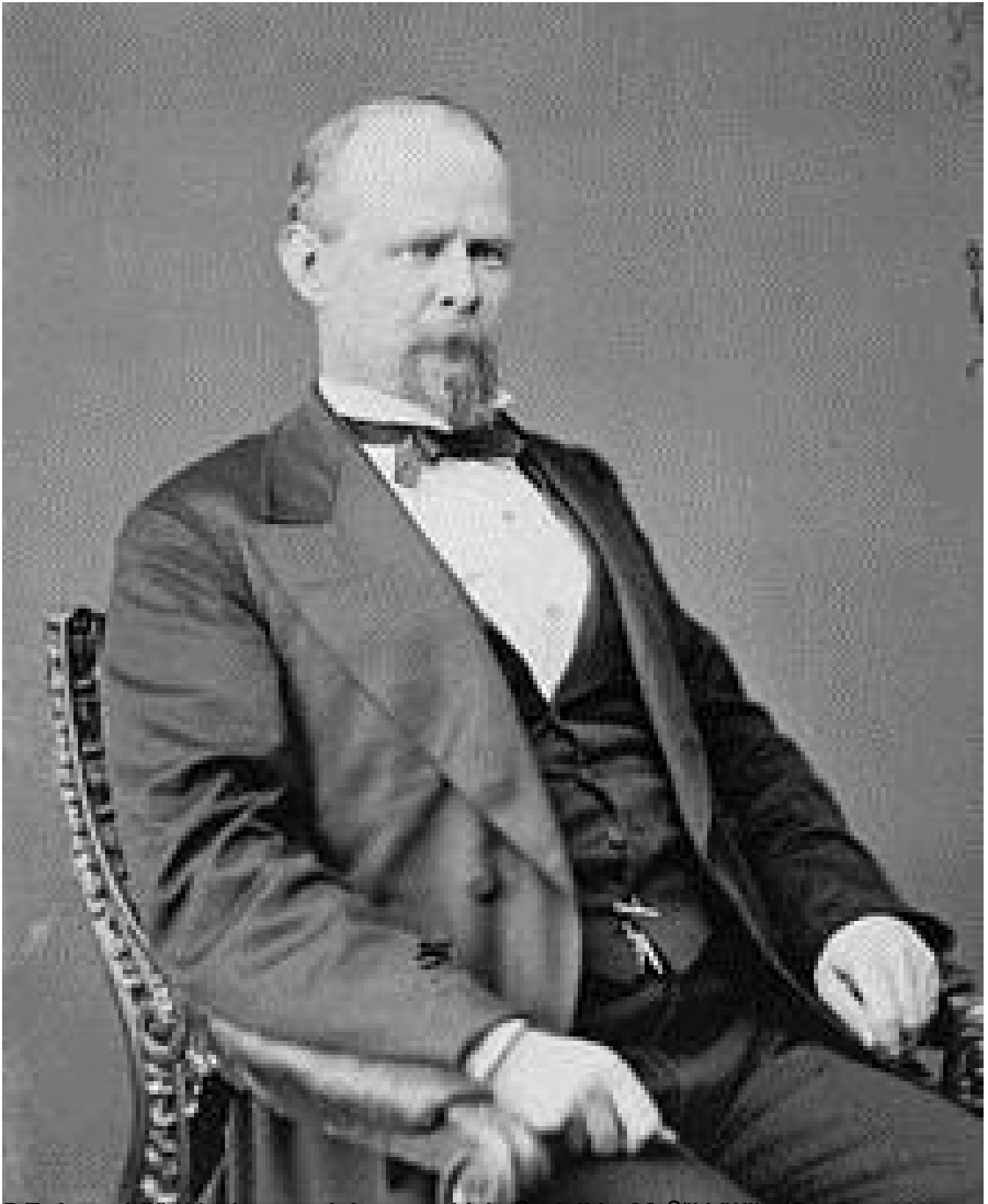
Stevenson III was also chairman of a Special Committee, which restructured the Senate committee system (for the first time since it was organized in the early nineteenth century) and served on the Democratic Policy Committee, among other responsibilities. In 1976, he became a finalist for Vice-President during the convention. Stevenson III won the *Best Legislator Award* from the Independent Voters of Illinois. The former Senator has lectured broadly and authored numerous articles. He is the recipient of multiple honors, including Japan's Order of the *Sacred Treasure* with Gold and Silver Star and is an Honorary Professor of Renmin University, Beijing, PRC. Stevenson III is currently active with the Adlai Stevenson Center on Democracy. Adlai E. Stevenson III is the Chairman of SC&M Investment Management Company. In addition, he serves on the boards of other civic and business organizations.

On a more personal level, Stevenson III manages a farm near Galena, Illinois. Moreover, he maintains an office and home in Chicago. He lives with his wife, Nancy Stevenson. The couple has two sons, two daughters and five grandchildren.

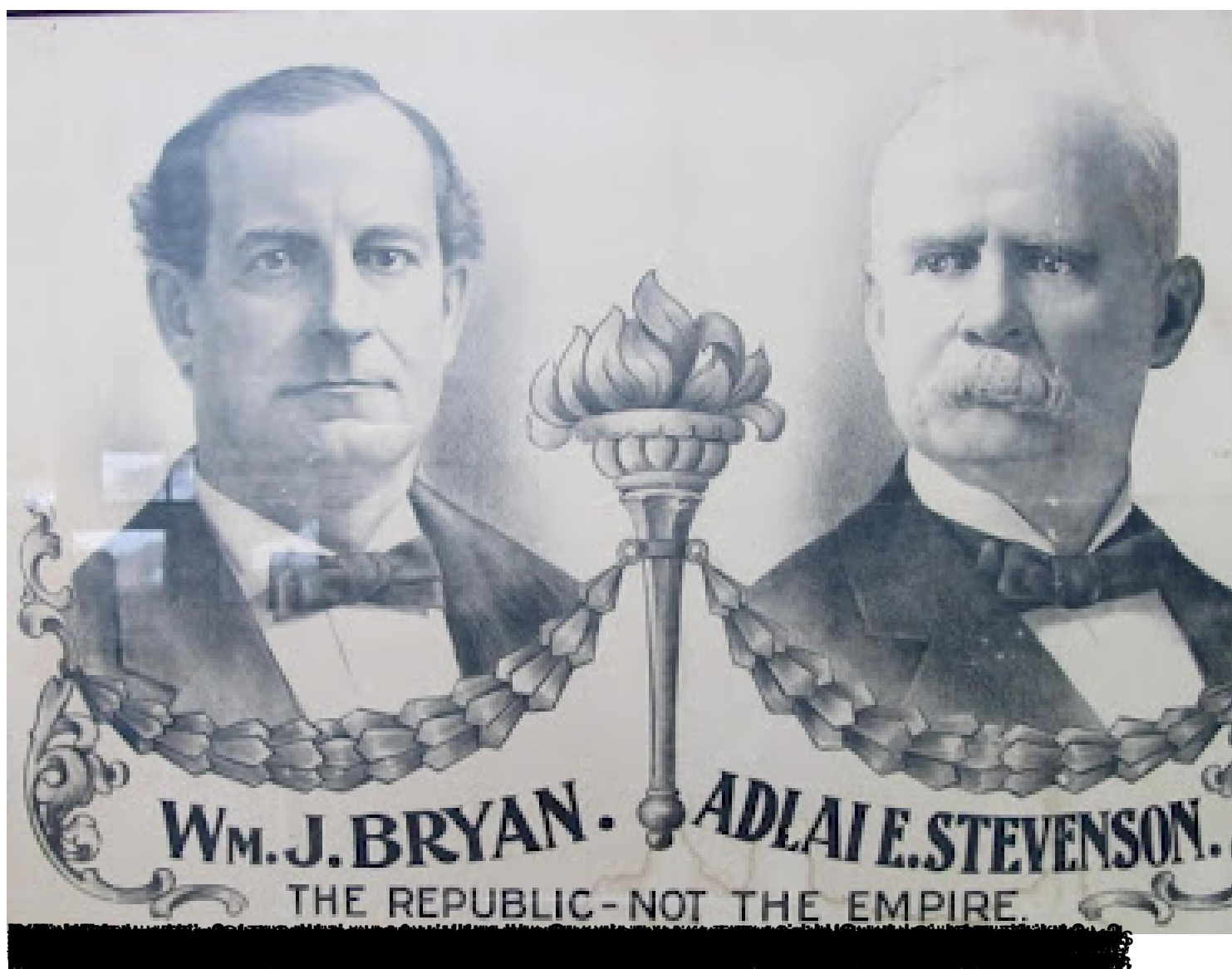
Here the author shares his views about his book, the media and the legal profession among other themes. We spoke to the former Senator Adlai Stevenson III from Quebec, Canada on November 29th 2012. This interview was conducted by the Editress-in-Chief/Legalist Patricia Turnier, LL.M (Master's degree in Law) and it is Stevenson's first Canadian exclusive interview.

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