

COVEY T. OLIVER

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While we were both at Penn, our joint interests in strong United States support for the United Nations and related international organizations drew the Olivers and the Jacobs closely together, wives and husbands both. The mixture of international idealism with practical diplomatic experience that was brought to bear on living room discussions, course planning, the organization of civic action, and concrete policy initiatives made our relationship at once intimate and invigorating. We were colleagues and partisans, soulmates and crusaders.

Covey's urbane lifestyle so befitting an ambassador, and his academic sophistication so impressive in a law school forum, tended to mask the fervor of his internationalist commitments. How could so elegant a scion of the Establishment be at heart and in professional practice a radical critic of the abuse of power in the pursuit of narrow interests, dedicated to reform of both the structure and purpose of the state system? His effectiveness as a reformer from within was enhanced by the bounciness of his humor and the sheer delight he took in swapping repartee with anyone and everyone, whatever his or her persuasion. His warmth disarmed suspicion and unfroze antagonisms. But his own convictions were always there to see, however at odds they might have been with those of the company at hand. And were there to be any doubt, one could count on Barbara Oliver in a quiet aside to set the record clear and direct the course of discussion to the gut issue.

To these partners in American diplomacy and professional leadership we owe much in the struggle to retain faith at home and abroad in the present viability of the Wilsonian tradition that they have themselves so faithfully represented.

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