Gertz, '30, helps free long-time prisoner Paul O. Crump

Elmer Gertz is known as a persistent, resourceful, and tireless attorney. It took him over fourteen years to win his famous libel case against Robert Welch, Inc., the publishing arm of the John Birch Society. It took only thirteen years to win another important libel case, Zeinfeld v. Hayes Freight Line. But it took thirty-one years to get Paul O. Crump out of jail.

Paul Crump, as a young man, was convicted of a payroll robbery and sentenced to death forty years ago. He was kept alive during the next ten years through involved litigation. During that period, Crump became rehabilitated in the opinion of the then-Governor Otto Kerner. In August 1962, Gertz and a group of lawyers persuaded the governor to commute the death sentence of Crump and order him confined to life. After that, Gertz alone remained as Crump's lawyer and tried every means to get him paroled, without success.

Then, a young lawyer, Donald S. Rothschild, became associated with Gertz in his efforts to get Crump released. In his memoirs, To Life, Gertz said that he would not retire from the practice of law until he got Crump out of prison.

Finally, on February 19, 1993, Elmer Gertz, now in his eighty-sixth year of life and sixty-third year as a lawyer, succeeded in his efforts to release Paul O. Crump from prison. Gertz and Rothschild intend to write a book on their experiences in this case as they believe it holds several legal lessons.

by Donald Yellon from San Francisco, George Wise from Long Beach, California, and Larry Howe, Harold Katz, and Jim Van Santen from Chicago.

Seventeen members of the class and twelve spouses, with a child and grandchild thrown in here and there, attended our reunion. After spending a great day at the Law School attending meetings and seminars, we gathered at Spiaggia on the Near North Side for a happy get-together. After dinner, Wally Blum '41 and Kate and Edward Levi '35 joined us for a brief time. Happily, before the evening got-together, we had great fun at a lunch with Edward and Walter when Geof Stone hosted us all at the Law School. Those attending were Tom Alexander, Don Cronson, Jim Evans, Harold Green, Larry Howe, Harold Katz, Julius Lehrer, John Pederson, Lawrence Rabb, John Rogers, John Schindler, Joseph Sheeks, Arthur Simms, Jim Van Santen, Jacob Ward, Ira Wender, George Wise, and Don Yellon.

The prize for traveling the farthest goes to Don Cronson who resides permanently in Geneva, Switzerland, and who was full of great European stories.

Most of our class members attending the reunion were also able to attend the Law School Alumni Association dinner the evening of May 13, when we met and listened to sparkling comments from Hugo Sonnenschein, president-elect of the University. We all agreed that Mr. Sonnenschein will brilliantly carry on the traditions of our University, even though he has the misfortune of not being a member of the bar.

Our 40th Reunion was a three-day, grand and glorious event. The 45th Reunion Committee is under the superbly capable hands of Jerry Spector, a classic Bear fan who really knows a matzoh ball from a football. So think about 1996. I still have some programs from the Reunion. Write if you want one.

Our Class Scholarship now stands at over $41,000 and currently pays $1,700. Dick Badger, Dean of Students, wrote me that the award for the 1992-1993 academic year went to Charles Haywood. He has a B.A. in History from Indiana University and studied at Budapest University of Economics. He's on the Law Review, is a Phi Beta Kappa, active in Street Law (teaching inner-city high school students about law), the Federalist Society (all you WWK loyalists should note that), and he was a delegate to the 1988 Indiana Republican Convention, a Republican precinct captain and more. Sorry Ab. He has done many more things and he represents the unusually high standards and achievements of those who receive our help. Congratulations to him and to all supporters of this wonderful expression of interest in our past and the Law School's future.

Bob Kharasch has really moved

Mark your calendars for May 5-7, 1994, for the Forty-fifth Reunion of the Class of ’49. You will be contacted by a member of the committee who will fill you in on the details. Keep your eye out for the official brochure with registration materials which will be mailed in March.