

ROGER B. SMITH

Thank you, Ambassador, Mrs. Bush, Chairman Pratt, Mr. Molotov. Thank you so much. And let me say what an honor it is to be selected for this very, very distinguished award here tonight. You know, I would say that whatever I may have accomplished over the years--it's all been in a very, very large and complex organization.

So, I thought, tonight, I would give you just a very few thoughts on conscience from a perspective that, perhaps, I know the best. So, what about the conscience of a business organization? Can there really be such a thing? We all know the stereotype. Corporations have no conscience. They have no souls. They are totally immoral entities. They do whatever their markets and whatever their profits require. Well, take my word for it, don't accept that. Corporations are like people. Some have a pretty strong conscience. Others, I'm sorry to say, do not.

Well, how do we know whether a corporation has a conscience. Well, if a corporation has a conscience, it truly cares about its customers. It gives them value and quality with every purchase. If a corporation has a conscience, it truly cares about its employees. It provides them with compensation and training that are second to none. If a corporation has a conscience, it truly cares about the environment. It's sensitive to the environmental effect of its products, and its manufacturing facilities. If a corporation has a conscience, it conforms to the highest standards of

ethical behavior--and it operates with a strong respect for the law wherever it does business.

And finally, if a corporation has a conscience, it regards the right to exist and to do business as a public trust. So, it contributes to society through taxes, wages, dividends, and charitable contributions, and in other ways, to help justify its existence.

Now, if that's all true, where is the conscience of the corporation? Does it have its own little office right between the financial staff and the legal department? Well, no. That's not the way it works. The conscience of the corporation makes its appearance in the behavior of its people. The people of the company behave in ways that actually lead to the organization doing all the things that I've just described.

But, here's the catch. They do it because they believe that this is the kind of company we really are. And, they're right, if you think about it--because they are making the company that way.

Now, one last thought. The conscience of an organization must be maintained by everybody--in every function, at every level, of the corporation. Now, some people do it, I must admit, more than others--in word and deed. They consistently act to promote the goals I mentioned. These are the peoples, the ones that we like to call leaders. And, cultivating that kind of leadership throughout our organizations must be one of America's highest priorities.

So, thank you very much for this award. It was a great honor to receive it. (Applause)

RABBI ARTHUR SCHNEIER

May I ask Mrs. Roger Smith to join us so that she can enjoy this wonderful moment of happiness for years to come. Mrs. Smith? (Applause)