

July 3, 2008

Mr. James Winters

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Miami, Florida 33137

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Michael B. Mukasey  
Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear President Bush and Attorney General Mukasey:

I am requesting a pardon for my father, Charlie Winters, for his conviction in 1949 for conspiracy to export and exporting aircraft to a foreign country in violation of the Neutrality Act. The conviction arose because, before I was born and before this country actively supported the State of Israel, my father provided several airplanes to Israel for use in defending its borders. He pled guilty and served time in prison from March 29, 1949 until November 17, 1949 when he was released on probation.

My father was 51 years old when I was born, but it was not until his death 20 years later that I began to learn of these events in his past. He never spoke about his actions leading up to the conviction or his time in prison, and I am sure this was because he did not want me to know him as a felon. I first learned of the significance of his life when I saw blue and white flowers everywhere when he passed away, colors having special symbolic meaning in Judaism, and I began to hear pieces of the story and ask questions.

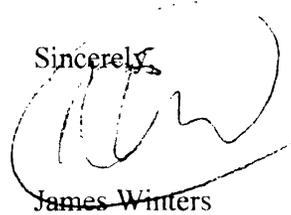
My father was a good honorable man and a good father. He was relatively quiet most of the time, except when he was making jokes it seemed. He taught me to play golf and was actively involved with Shriners of North America for as long as I can remember. He was also a staunchly proud American; it meant a great deal to him when I went into the Marines. In fact, my last and most cherished memory of him was in his last moments before he died when he saluted me as his way of saying goodbye.

My father taught me that morals should guide my decisions. I have no doubt he had mixed feelings about his past -- on the one hand he felt strongly about the cause (he maintained a close relationship with Al Schwimmer who was also convicted of violating the Neutrality Act, and he

chose Israel as his final resting place), but he also technically violated US law and served time in prison for doing so, and never spoke a word of this to me, his son.

My father was a humble man who was very much a role model for me, but he passed away before I was old enough to give back to him. I request now that you grant him a posthumous pardon so history will reflect that his actions in helping Israel during a critical time were honorable and reflective of the United States' ultimate position toward Israel, and not actions for which he should forever be labeled a felon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Winters', written over the printed name below it.

James Winters