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Lawyer Harold B. Soloveitzik; legal activist, philanthropist

SOLOVEITZIK, Harold B.

June 4, 2004. Residence, 13 Pleasant St., Westerly. Uncle of Bonnie Light of Springfield, MA and Attorney Charles Soloveitzik of Westerly. A Memorial service will be held 11 a.m. Monday, June 7th in the Congregation Sharah Zedek, Union St., Westerly. Interment to follow in the Hebrew Benevolent Association Cemetery, Preston, CT. Family shall observe a period of morning at Mr. Soloveitzik's home between 5:30-7:30 p.m. Monday, June 7th and Tuesday, June 8th.

There shall be no other calling hours. In lieu of flowers contributions in Mr. Soloveitzik's memory to the Rhode Island Chapter of the NCCJ Fund, c/o The Rhode Island Foundation, 1 Union Station, Providence, RI 02903. The Buckler-Johnston Funeral Home 121 Main St., Westerly, RI is in charge of arrangements.

WESTERLY — Harold B. Soloveitzik, 90, of Pleasant Street, a philanthropist and former lawyer, and president of the Rhode Island Bar Association, died yesterday at home.



A practicing attorney for almost 60 years, he had been the town solicitor in Richmond and Block Island, and president of the Rhode Island and Washington County bar associations before retiring in 1996.

As president of the Bar Association, he was a proponent for reforming the judicial nomination process and refused to review the lame-duck nominations of former Gov. Philip Noel.

Speaking on behalf of the Rhode Island Bar Association Executive Committee, he wrote in a letter to Noel, "Our very deep concern relates to the widespread public belief, public cynicism, if you will, to the effect that the present appointment process is tainted; that persons named may owe their nominations to considerations other than their qualification to serve as a member of the judiciary."

Former Gov. J. Joseph Garrahy, who was waiting to take office at the time agreed with this postion and also urged Noel to hold off on making any judicial appointments until a new screening process could be put in place.

Mr. Soloveitzik represented many homeowners' associations in South County, opposed the designation of public rights of way, and demanded quick action on several occasions when it came to the zoning of areas in Charlestown and Misquamicut to preserve the beaches and prevent commercialization.

As solictor on Block Island in 1965, he suggested appointing an island resident as a commisioner of the District Court to accept pleas, fix bail and assign hearing dates in Westerly when public drinking and sleeping on the beaches was becoming a problem.

Various organizations, including the Narragansett Council of Boy Scouts, the Rhode Island Foundation, the National Conference for Community Justice and the University of Rhode Island, have honored him with awards for his contributions and support.

He had also been honored by the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, and the United Jewish Appeal.

He was an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II, serving in North Africa as a radio operator.

Mr. Soloveitzik was educated in the Westerly school system, received a bachelor's degree in 1935 from the former Rhode Island State College, now URI, and graduated from Boston University School of Law in 1938.

Born in Westerly on Sept. 29, 1913, he was a son of the late Solomon and Buni (Leibovitz) Soloveitzik.

He enjoyed traveling, especially throughout the Mediterranean, landscaping, and swimming in the ocean.

He leaves a niece, Bonnie Light of Springfield, Mass.; a nephew, Charles Soloveitzik of Westerly; and a great-niece and a great-nephew. He was the brother of the late Abraham, Samuel, Florence and Ella Soloveitzik.

A memorial service will be held Monday at 11 a.m. in Congregation Sharah Zedek, 6 Union St. Burial will follow in Hebrew Benevolent Association Cemetery, Preston, Conn.