

To: OpenStage and NouveauBasBleu. November 15, 2004.

Preface. The sweet and sour theatre of angels and demons which couldn't be done here was done here.

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The recent thespian cohabitation between two of Colorado's finest theater groups was an undertaking of courage, energy, talent, and self-confidence. Lois and I are grateful for your combined efforts to produce such a gripping theater experience. We are old enough to have experienced much of the political, sociological, and psychological background of the play – and we resided in Salt Lake City from 1951 to 1955, a good experience from many aspects.

Somewhat oddly I refer to three pungent points as we heard them this past Sunday afternoon – actually two heard and one not heard. First: “Have you no decency, Sir?!” This declarative question by Joseph N. Welch ranks with the challenging statement by Adlai Stevenson to V. Zorin (1962) in the UN during the Cuban missile crisis: “I am prepared to wait for my answer until hell freezes over...” Second: The reference to Jacob and how “he held on to his birthright unto the end.” Fraternal twin Esau was born first, so he was the rightful heir. Jacob took advantage of Esau's congenital state of suffering from an adrenogenital syndrome (“all red and hairy”) Esau came in famished and ill from a hunt, thinking he was “at a point to die”, so Esau took the lentil soup from Jacob, trading the birthright no good to Esau if he died on the spot. Later, father Isaac was conned by the scheming mother Rebekah to bless Jacob instead of Esau as the birthright recipient. This was one of the most dysfunctional families in the Bible, and the story could be retold in a play about a similar family in the early days of our West, say in Wyoming. It has a good ending: Esau who had sworn to kill Jacob forgave him many years later when each had a family and was prosperous. Armed battle was avoided, and each “lived happily ever after.”

Third: Something I may have missed. I did not hear the name of J. Edgar Hoover included in either of Roy's or Louis's verbal rampage near the end of Perestroika. Probably a good candidate, not that anyone should re-write the script.

Finally, what fine, fine staging, directing, and acting; each and all displayed from beginning to end. With admiration and gratitude,

Robert P. Martin

*Robert P. Martin*