Album Leaves

The Memoirs of

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Ninth Leaf

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لطفاً نسخهٔ فارسی این ***برگ از آلبوم*** *را پیشتر در صفحهٔ آغازین این فایل ملاحظه کنید.*

On Discoveries & Inventions

> "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encompasses the world." – Albert Einstein

Most inventions, discoveries and other innovations throughout history have originated in an idea or a theory. Although most often, such ideas owed their success to the knowledge and efforts of the great scientists, one should not underestimate the role played by the laymen, as well as those of chance and accident. Also let's bear in mind that it isn't enough to just have a good idea, for what matters is to bring the idea to fruition, and that's easier said than done. As I recall, a fascinating case in point belongs to the history of the discovery and production of various hormones, insulin and testosterone in particular, which Dr. Abner Levy spoke about awhile ago. In the early 20th century, Mr. Saal "Salomon" van Zwanenberg, co-owner of a large meat factory in the Netherlands, together with Dr. Ernst Laqueur of Amsterdam University and Dr. Jacques van Oss, the scientific advisor at his own factory, opened a new chapter in the global history of science and industry. Among the outcomes of this collaboration, as we may read in Wikipedia, were the founding of the Organon pharmaceutical company, the mass production of insulin from the animal pancreas for medical purposes for the first time in Europe, and thereafter, the

discovery and extraction of testosterone by Ernst Laqueur, and its subsequent production. Meanwhile, to avoid wasting the large amount of healthy meat left over from the slaughters, they also launched a line of canned meat, and thus, the food company known as Zwan was born.

Zwanenberg was much appreciated, loved and admired by the Dutch government and the people for his great services to the society, including the large number of jobs he had created in his country, so far as when the Netherlands was invaded by the Nazi Germany, given the clear and present danger that he and other Jews were faced with, his compatriots aided him and his family to escape the country, and eventually take refuge in England and remain safe from the ensuing catastrophes. At that time, also Laqueur, who was originally Jewish, lost a large portion of his wealth; but fortunately, his life was spared. Following the war, Zwanenberg returned to the Netherlands, continued his work and research, and was awarded an honorary doctorate. Over the years, Organon grew into one of the largest pharmaceutical production and distribution companies in the world; and to this date, the large Zwan Food Group continues, albeit under various ownerships, to produce and distribute a wide range of meat-based and non-meat food products. It's notable that up until the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the pharmaceutical company of Dr. Habib Levy and family remained the exclusive agency of Organon in Iran.

There are several remarkable aspects to this story. For one, the head of the Amsterdam University was a wise and insightful man, so far as the nonacademic status of a butcher didn't make him underestimate the man. To the contrary, as it happened, when Zwanenberg walked into his office with a bag full of the internal organs of the animals, and proposed to carry out research on the left-over glands and make use of them, he took his guest's offer seriously. Moreover, the close collaboration between science and industry led to the vast development of two large industries side by side, one pharmaceutical and the other a food company, both of which, as we noted, continue to this date, including in Amsterdam, to produce and distribute various hormones, as well as the canned meat products, and much more. But of course, over the years, the manufacture of these hormones has shifted to chemical processes, and animal life is no more taken for that purpose. Thence, the seed of a sound idea, as far-fetching and strange as it must have appeared at the time, whether it popped into the mind of a commoner or a scientist, yet nourished by immense knowledge, considerable research, and relentless industry, and supported by the ideal facilities, flourished successfully to yield a bountiful of fruits.

On a more private note, the story in essence echoes a significant personal experience of mine, one which helped me see first-hand how a theory had to go through several stages before it could render any results, if at all, and how arduous that path could be. Many years ago, I was waiting for someone at a parking lot that overlooked a busy highway in Los Angeles. Pacing to and fro to pass time, my attention was drawn to the busy traffic on the road, which appeared strikingly as a streaming river of cars. I thought to myself, "Why shouldn't we harness *this* river to produce power?" I spent some time thinking about the idea, reflecting on how we could produce electricity from the movement of the passing cars. Soon afterwards, the idea had matured enough to be shared with the Department of Energy of the United States. They kindly welcomed the idea; and to help making the invention into a reality and build the first prototype, they offered me a generous grant in the amount of $2,800,000 (two million and eight-hundred-thousand dollars) which I gladly accepted. Subsequently, however, as the written correspondence and other bureaucratic hurdles dragged on, I changed my mind about that huge grant, and I told them that I would build the prototype with my own money; and that I did. Or should I say, I employed two highly qualified and skillful engineers, bore substantial expenses and much trouble, and oversaw the project over a long period of time, until the prototype had been built; and to everyone's joy, the lights were turned on, and the machine passed its final test with flying colors. Thus, the Everlast was born, an invention involving a speed bump, which could be used to generate power from the movement of the cars on the road, virtually anywhere in the world, and especially at the entrance to the highways.

We reported our successful results to the Department of Energy; but as they told us verbally, the expenses I had borne and the initial result were not enough: we still had to bring the project home. They further explained that in order to work, this invention required the consumption of fuel and energy by the automobiles, as they would slow down, stop, or resume movement. And a scheme that demanded consuming energy to generate energy would be of little use. In my opinion, however, one important factor was left unsaid, and that was the efficiency of this machine, i.e. the ratio of the energy produced to the energy consumed. I am certain that this method has a considerably high efficiency rate, which can yet be raised to the ideal levels through further research and experiments.

In retrospect, I realize that in what followed, I made two major mistakes. First, I rejected an offer by one of the largest companies with ties to the government to realize this plan, when my

son Mehran and I had gone to meet with them — because as the first condition, they wanted to own the patent rights. Second, I didn't take the advice of an acquaintance of mine, who told me, "Mr. Gabay, it'll be impossible to test this idea in the American highways. Bring it over, and try it out in Indonesia!" Thus, the prototype of Everlast, despite the enormous efforts that went into the project, has been gathering dust for years in my personal storage facility, and I have not yet been able to see it through completion. Personally, I've had no doubts about the potential value of this scheme; and as such, especially given my current health status, I'm willing to offer this invention for free to qualified and interested individuals or universities, so that they can further carry out the research and bring this project to fruition. To learn more about the Everlast, you're welcome to read the following short illustrated report in English, made available for free to the public on my website:

Everlast, LLC.: Speedbump for Electrical Power Production
http://babanouri.com/En/EVERLAST.pdf

Indeed, sooner or later, all kinds of new ideas can occur to anybody: what matters is to take them seriously, choose the best among them, pursue them the right way, and bring them to fruition. Many a time that I've seen how a good idea can land in a good place; but of course, sadly, the opposite can also be true. For an unsound idea could lead to some serious damage, even to the destruction of an individual or the society. At the end of the day, it depends on the intention and knowledge of who implements the idea, as well as the existing opportunities, capabilities and facilities.

Indeed, it's always possible for an innovation, as good the intention behind it may be, to bring about some unpleasant consequences. I suspect one such case happened to one of my dearest relatives. God endowed my brother with a son, who was named Morad after our father. Morad was a good, intelligent and handsome child, with an interesting physical trait, that is, his eyes were of two different colors. At the age of two, the child began to cough frequently, and no doctor could cure him. Dr. Boghrat Safaei, a university professor and a dear friend of mine, examined him and said, "Dr. Farhad has brought a special device to Iran that's proven to be effective. Take the child to his office on Pahlavi Avenue, near Vaziri Alley, Tehran, to 'place him under the electricity' [likely a special light or radiation source]. He'll be cured." They took

the child to Dr. Farhad, and he placed him so to speak 'under the electricity'; and the child was completely cured. Interestingly, also our accountant went to Dr. Farhad for back pain, and received the exposure; he too was cured. That same accountant told us that "his Highness Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi also has been treated by this device, and has been exposed to it." But unfortunately, as I witnessed, 30 years later, our Morad, as well as our accountant and the Shah of Iran, all three suffered leukemia, and pass away from this form of cancer. As it turned out, the device emitted a type of radiation that wasn't good for people. I should admit that I neither have the expert knowledge, nor the adequate data, to ascertain that device caused their illness; nevertheless, so far as possible, I simply reported what I observed, and my suspicions about it.

Before his illness broke out, Morad immigrated to the United States, graduated from the university, and together with his brother, engaged himself in the real-estate and construction business. They were both very successful. At 32, he married his beautiful bride, and the two of them went to Hawaii to spend their honeymoon. In Hawaii, Morad fell sick, and they rushed back to Los Angeles. And sadly, he was diagnosed with leukemia. Throughout that crisis, and at every step of the ordeal, his young bride stood by her husband with utmost care and kindness. Morad's uncle, Mr. Mousa Mousa-zadeh also stepped forward and donated from his bone marrow to his nephew; but alas, the treatment didn't work. Tragically, shortly afterwards, Morad passed away in the city of Dallas, Texas, where his uncle lived, surrounded by the gentleman, me and several others. Morad's death was a terribly painful event, which broke the family apart, with consequences that have lasted to this day. Before long, his father, my brother, passed away, too; and the other son would never find relief from the sorrow of losing his brother and the void left behind. Years later, he still lives affected by that tragic incident.

To reiterate, although carefully but with a strong suspicion, I personally think that the illness was caused by the said device, one invented in a larger and more developed country, but which, as it would turn out, was put to premature use in Iran. Unfortunately, that device emitted a harmful and maybe even carcinogenic radiation; and if I'm right in my suspicions based on what I saw and reported above, the individuals exposed to its radiation would develop leukemia. It's regretful that this wrong continues to this date, as the larger and more developed countries, and colossal companies, tend to first try out their inventions and discoveries, even their latest means of warfare, in the second and third world countries; why, anywhere that a war breaks out, they

haste to “gift” a number of such weapons to the warring parties, mostly intended for tests and subsequent product evaluation.

Let us hope that the good ideas will continue to thrive, and let us hope that we shall all value life across our planet.

Thank you.

Wishing you all the best of days.

Norman “Nourollah” Gabay
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For free copies of this and other writings by Norman “Nourollah” Gabay, please visit his website at www.BabaNouri.com . The website is home to an archive of the author’s articles, essays, notes, and books in Persian and English, including *An Invitation to Reason*, *A Dictionary of the Kashani Jewish Dialect*, and soon, *Be Up to Date* (in progress).