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September 09, 2010

AIPAC and the never-ending case

When a federal judge deploys an exclamation point in an opinion, you know something unusual is going on.

On Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Richard Leon [tried to dispense](#) of a case entitled *Akins v. Federal Election Commission*. The excruciatingly long-running case really involves, though, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, AKA AIPAC. A number of former ambassadors, congressmen and government officials critical of the pro-Israel lobbying group sued the Federal Election Commission after the FEC declined to regulate AIPAC as a political committee.

The date of that original lawsuit? 1992.

In the meantime, three of the original plaintiffs have died and the case has had a tortured path up and down the appellate path. On Wednesday, for reasons that may or may not be worth exploring, Judge Leon dismissed the case with these heart-felt words:

"This never ending legal saga has spanned almost twenty years, multiple administrative complaints, and the careers of numerous Judges and Justices. To say the least, the time to complete the judicial review of these FEC decisions is long overdue. While time will tell what role, if any, this Opinion will have played in this interminable legal drama, I certainly trust that I will be the last District Judge that has to wrestle with this seemingly inexhaustible Hydra."

Oh, and the exclamation comes when Judge Leon exclaims, *"Unfortunately, this appellate odyssey had only just begun!"*

Posted by Mike Doyle at 10:54 AM | [Permalink](#)
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I have no comment, I have a question. What difference would it make were the FEC to register AIPAC as a political committee? thanks for answering

Posted by: carlo | [September 10, 2010 at 09:29 AM](#)



Q: Which is the strongest creature in the world?
A: The snail. It carries its house on its back.

Posted by: [luxury phone](#) | [September 12, 2010 at 09:23 PM](#)

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"Suits & Sentences" is a legal affairs blog written by Michael Doyle, a reporter for [McClatchy's Washington Bureau](#). He was a Knight Journalism Fellow at Yale Law School, where he earned a Master of Studies in Law; he also earned a Masters in Government from The Johns Hopkins University with a thesis on the Freedom of Information Act. He teaches journalism as an adjunct instructor at The George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.



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