

George as "a married bachelor," and who, even when living semi-reclusively under an assumed Christian identity, never missed his daily swim. "I remember during the siege we went to the opera, because at a time when there was no food the opera still served very nice hors d'œuvres and pâtisserie. Whether or not it was prudent, the idea was that you should make the most of your circumstances."

George, who, like Paul, has inherited his father's broad face, pointed out that Tivadar's fondness for the comforts of bourgeois life was not accompanied by a docile bourgeois sensibility. "We didn't preserve ordinariness," George said. "He made us very conscious that these were extraordinary times and that the normal rules didn't apply." In the book, Tivadar writes that at one point young George was required by the authorities to deliver notices to certain Jews that they should report to the Rabbinical Seminary with blankets and food. "This was a profoundly important experience for me," George said. "My father said, 'You should go ahead and deliver them, but tell the people that if they report they will be deported.' The reply from one man was 'I am a law-abiding citizen. They can't do anything to me.' I told my father, and that was an occasion for a lecture that there are times when you have laws that are immoral, and if you obey them you perish."

"Masquerade" contains a great deal of black social comedy; a running theme is Tivadar's efforts to convince his recalcitrant mother-in-law that, all things considered, it really would be best if she stopped regarding the occupation as a personal insult. ("I refuse to go anywhere if the people don't know who I am and I have to pretend I'm somebody else all the time," she said of his attempts to find a safe house for her.) Tivadar's own ease with his assumed identity—he grew a mustache, and went by Elek Szabó—led him, one day during an air raid, to tell a neighbor in the shelter about the time he approached the podium on which Hitler was standing at the 1936 Winter Olympics, just to see how close he could get. "Hardly fifteen minutes had passed after my tale when there was suddenly a great com-

motion," Tivadar wrote. "The shelter commander appeared, surrounded by several officers. . . . It transpired that the air-defense commander, in great excitement that there was someone present who had seen Hitler, had radioed headquarters and a group had come over right away to see this privileged person."

Tivadar's energies, though, were largely devoted to the extremely serious business of procuring papers to save relatives and friends from a new, unimaginable form of terror. "My father was ahead of the curve, because he recognized the moment the Germans came in that this was a different world and one had to act differently," George said. He and Paul agreed that they still try to live by their father's resourceful example. "The funny thing is that in character we probably both inherited a lot more from our mother," George said.

"But the thinking comes from the father," said Paul.

—Rebecca Mead

## DEPT. OF PREPARATION GET YOUR GAS MASKS HERE



The woman in the navy suit peered over the sales desk. "I'm looking to buy a gas mask?" she said.

Rich Kraus, a salesman, nodded and gestured toward the floor, which was piled high with boxes of respirators, protective full-body suits, and germicidal wipes. The woman's eyes widened. She had a particular style in mind—a military gas mask with a special nozzle fitted for a drinking straw—but was told that it was out of stock. "Please don't think I'm a frantic person," she said. "I'm not ordinarily like this."

"We understand," Kraus said. "Awareness is high."

Inside the fluorescent-lit office of Aramsco, a safety-supply company in Long Island City, phones were ringing, the fax machine was spitting out orders, and bewildered sales reps were trying to soothe bewildered customers. "O.K., do you have duct tape at

home?" one saleswoman said into the phone. "Good, because duct tape is your best friend." Aramsco normally sells protective gear to contractors: hard hats for construction sites, respirators for asbestos-abatement projects, HAZMAT suits for chemical spills. Last month, it became a major supplier for World Trade Center rescue workers. But more recently Aramsco has found itself besieged by anxious civilians as well.

"We're not really set up to deal with individuals—we've never had foot traffic before," Kraus said. "I don't even know how these people found us." He rubbed an eye with the heel of his hand and stifled a yawn; the staff had worked until four o'clock that morning, hosting a group of Hasidic Jews who were eager to stock up.

In the warehouse, adjacent to the office, workers were busily rehangng the Budweiser bikini-babe posters that they'd taken down the night before, out of respect for the Hasidim. The warehouse manager, Bruce Schwartz, a man with a gray mustache and a black baseball cap studded with P.O.W.-M.I.A. pins, scanned the half-empty shelves. "This one's been our big seller," he said, pulling down a black gas mask (\$174.30) that Aramsco usually sells to police departments and prisons. Other items included nuclear-biological-chemical respirator filters (\$30), polyethylene protective suits (\$45), and the ominous-sounding "20-Minute Civilian Escape Hood" (\$75). There were hundreds of rolls of duct tape. "It's your best friend," Schwartz said. "You can use it to seal up your windows so nothing can seep in. You can use it to secure your booties and gloves to your suit. It's the greatest."

Back at the sales desk, a Long Island couple was inquiring about deadly biological agents. "Would the germs go from Manhattan all the way to the East End?" the woman asked.

"Depends on the wind," the salesman said.

"Oh, my God!" the woman exclaimed, clapping a hand to her heart. "O.K., here's maybe a silly question. Do you have masks for dogs?"

"A lot of people have been asking, but no," the salesman said. He totalled up their order: four protective

suits, bootees, gloves, gas masks, and filters—\$1,109.13. “We were going to buy a home-entertainment system, but instead we’re getting this,” the woman said. Her husband had worked a block from the World Trade Center; their daughter had worked at Seven World Trade and had been having nightmares since the attack. “I don’t know if we’ll ever use this stuff, or if it’ll even help,” the woman said. “I just want to feel like I did whatever I could to protect my family.”

“Hey, do you guys have duct tape at home?” the salesman asked them. “Because that’s your best friend right there.”

One shopper wondered whether the Aramsco employees kept any protective gear in their own homes. “Of course not,” Schwartz said. “You can’t live your life worrying about that sort of thing.”

—Sabrina Rubin Erdely

## THE HILL

### PAT LEAHY RECALLS A STING



Ever since September 11th, Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill have been working together in an unusual spirit of unity. But there has been one stubborn exception. Patrick Leahy, a liberal but not generally militant Democratic senator from Vermont, almost single-handedly held up Attorney General John Ashcroft’s urgent request for a new antiterrorism bill.

Last week, before a tentative agreement was announced, the wrangling became noticeably bitter. Ashcroft, a former colleague of Leahy’s in the Senate, who was confirmed as Attorney General only over Leahy’s strenuous opposition, accused Leahy, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, of dawdling. “Talk won’t prevent terrorism,” Ashcroft said pointedly, after Leahy refused to approve the Administration’s proposed expansion of police powers, without further review and amendment. One of Leahy’s Republican colleagues suggested that his foot-

dragging might prove dangerous to the public welfare at a time when there is a real threat of new terrorist attacks. Originally, Ashcroft had wanted his package of expanded law-enforcement tools to be approved within a week. But, three weeks after the attacks, the two sides remained deadlocked.

In an interview last week, Leahy explained that his concerns about the antiterrorism bill arose, in part, out of his own experience with the consequences of unchecked police power. Most people think of Vermont, where Leahy’s professional life began, as a place where civil liberties are revered sometimes to the point of absurdity. But in the early nineteen-seventies, when Leahy was the state’s attorney in Chittenden County, he discovered how those liberties were being abused in his jurisdiction. A former state trooper named Paul Lawrence, who was working as an undercover narcotics agent, was gaining prominence and popularity with prosecutors all over the state because of his high arrest rate. With Lawrence’s detective work, prosecutors were cracking drug rings and sending dealers off to jail with admirable efficiency. In St. Albans, a depressed town just south of the Canadian border, officials were delighted because the local jail was filled with young drug offenders, while the streets and parks were finally clear of rowdy teen-agers. But Leahy, whose district included the state’s largest city, Burlington, began to hear disturbing talk about Lawrence’s methods. So he set up a sting. He brought in an undercover cop from Brooklyn, who was dubbed the Rabbi, and made sure that the Rabbi was described to Lawrence as a major drug dealer who was new in Burlington. One day, Leahy and his colleagues watched from across the street and listened in on a wire as the Rabbi sat down on a park bench and began reading a newspaper. They observed Lawrence as he walked past the Rabbi, without speaking to him. Soon afterward, Lawrence returned to the state office building with a bag of heroin, which he said he had bought from the Rabbi. He then went back a second time and repeated the exercise, returning with more narcotics. Lawrence said that he was ready to make an arrest.



Senator Patrick Leahy

Instead, Leahy and his men arrested Lawrence, who was subsequently convicted of perjury and jailed. Vermont’s governor was forced to pardon seventy-one people who had been put in prison as a result of Lawrence’s police work. “The tragedy was that many of them really were drug dealers, but we had to let them out because of Lawrence’s role,” Leahy recalled last week. “But the most awful thing was that there was one person who couldn’t be pardoned. He had committed suicide.”

Having come under considerable fire for slowing Ashcroft’s antiterrorism legislation, Leahy was eager to explain his position. “I have great respect for law enforcement,” he said. “But we also need checks and balances. As they say, absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

By the middle of last week, Leahy was able to reach an accommodation with the Justice Department and the White House on new laws that will expand the powers of various law-enforcement agencies to share privileged information without getting a court order, to do roving wiretaps, to eavesdrop on computer communications to a greater extent than is currently possible, and to detain, for a limited number of days, immigrants who are suspected of but not charged with terrorist activities. “I think we’re pushing the constitutional envelope,” Leahy said, “but it’s better than it was.”

—Jane Mayer