

TRAILBLAZERS

POLITICAL ACTIVISM | 1ST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

THEODORE J. BOUTROUS JR. GIBSON, DUNN & CRUTCHER LLP



PIONEER SPIRIT During 2016, when then-presidential candidate Donald Trump threatened to sue all the women who made accusations against him and declared the press the enemy of the people, Theodore J. Boutrous Jr. tweeted an offer to represent them for free. “I didn’t realize at the time that it would be an ongoing battle for the next four years.”

TRAILS BLAZED Boutrous represented CNN chief White House correspondent Jim Acosta in restoring his press pass after it was revoked by the White House in retaliation for his questioning the Trump administration’s immigration policies in 2018. “We obtained a temporary restraining order and got his pass returned within four days. It was a significant marker for freedom of the press. It also showed that journalists were willing to fight back and the courts would step in to protect First Amendment rights.” Boutrous also represented Playboy reporter and CNN political analyst Brian Karem in blocking the suspension of his press pass following his verbal altercation with Sebastian Gorka, who was serving as deputy assistant to President Trump. He also represented Mary Trump after the president and his family tried to suppress the publication of her tell-all book. “The court stepped up with the decision that you cannot get a prior restraint in a matter like this. Protecting the freedom of the press and journalism is in the public interest.”

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Boutrous believes President Trump’s attacks on the press and willingness to use the courts to suppress free speech have emboldened government officials and private citizens. “It poses serious dangers to our democracy, and we need to fight to keep the ability to report on certain issues. Phase two will be fighting off the lawsuits on First Amendment rights and informing the public of its importance.”