

Introduction of Mr. Ben Stein

by

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We have many more people today than we usually have at a Bureau of Economics seminar, from which I draw two inferences. First, our speaker needs no introduction; and, second, people are here to hear him, not me. I did, however, want to say a few words about how this talk came about.

Two weeks ago in the Sunday *New York Times*, Mr. Stein had an article about his father, Herbert Stein, who was Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Presidents Nixon and Ford and who, after leaving public service, wrote eminently readable columns about economics for a variety of widely-read publications including the *Wall Street Journal* and *Newsweek*. I was a great admirer of Herbert Stein. He did economic analysis as objectively as he could; he was able to explain it in plain English; and he did so with a sense of humor. As I thought about it, I realized that he embodied all that I think we should strive for in the Bureau of Economics at the Federal Trade Commission.

So, as a long shot, I sent Mr. Stein an e-mail asking him if he would speak to us about the legacy of his father. Much to my surprise and delight, he said “Yes.” In our subsequent correspondence to make the arrangements, I learned what I gather many others here already knew. Mr. Stein once worked at the FTC. So, while I could introduce our speaker today as famous movie actor, television personality, former White House speech writer, or economics columnist, instead, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you FTC alumnus, Mr. Ben Stein.

* Director, Bureau of Economics, United States Federal Trade Commission. The occasion for this introduction was Mr. Stein’s talk to the FTC staff, June 21, 2006 at the FTC Conference Center, Washington, DC. These comments do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Trade Commission or any individual Commissioner.