



# A Just Cause: The Impeachment and Removal of Governor Rod Blagojevich

*Bernard Sieracki*

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During the predawn hours of December 9, 2008, an FBI team swarmed the home of Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich and took him away in handcuffs. The shocking arrest, based on allegations of corruption and extortion, launched a chain of political events never before seen in Illinois. In *A Just Cause*, Bernard H. Sieracki delivers a dynamic firsthand account of this eight-week political crisis, beginning with Blagojevich's arrest, continuing through his impeachment and trial, and culminating in his conviction and removal from office. Drawing on his own eyewitness observations of the hearings and trial, the comments of interviewees, trial transcripts, and knowledge gained from decades of work with the Illinois legislature, Sieracki tells the compelling story of the first impeachment and removal from office of an Illinois governor, while providing a close look at the people involved.

*A Just Cause* depicts Blagojevich as a master of political gamesmanship, a circus ringmaster driven by personal ambition and obsessed with private gain. Sieracki examines in depth the governor's unethical behavior while in office, detailing a litany of partisan and personal hostilities that spanned years. He thoroughly covers the events leading to Blagojevich's downfall and the reactions of the governor's cohorts. The author discusses the numerous allegations against Blagojevich, including attempts to "sell" appointments, jobs, and contracts in exchange for financial contributions. Sieracki then exhaustively recounts Blagojevich's senate trial and the governor's removal from office.

This engrossing volume is both a richly detailed case study of the American checks-and-balances system and an eyewitness account of unprecedented events. It will appeal to anyone interested in the stunning, true tale of a state upholding the maxim "The welfare of the people is the supreme law."

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