

**Rotary District 5580 Winning Essay**  
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The Four-Way Test

As a new junior rotarian, there are many things that are unfamiliar to me, with invocations, the ringing of the bell, and fining being just a few among them. Consequently, you can probably imagine my surprise when I experienced déjà vu upon learning about the Rotary Four-Way Test for the first time. Like John Stuart Mill's Act and Rule Utilitarianism which I learned about in Ethics class, the Four-Way Test is another ethical theory that helps people make the right choices in everyday situations. This test evaluates actions based on their truthfulness, fairness, goodwill, and benefit to others. Although there are many people whose actions go along exactly with the Four-Way Test, my brainstorming process was short because there was only one person that my mind was set on: Judge James L. Robart, or to some, known simply as "the judge that has been in the news lately." James L. Robart is a judge from Seattle, who has recently halted the immigration ban that blocked citizens from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen from entering the United States for 90 days, and all refugees for 120 days. Although Judge James L. Robart has faced ridicule by the president himself, the Four-Way Test has shown that his decision was the best course of action.

The first step of the Four-Way Test is *is it the TRUTH?* In other words, was Judge James L. Robart's ruling in accordance to laws, and did he make a decision with factual evidence? He used the fact that the defendant did not use enough evidence that the US needs protection due to terrorist threats. Moreover, he argued that the ban goes against the constitution because of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which banned discrimination against immigrants based on nationality. In this way, he saw the truth in the courtroom to make the decision of halting the

ban. Judge James L. Robart was also truthful because he did not ignore the anxiety, discontent, and anger that Americans throughout the country had. He knew that the US was built on generations of immigrants, and suddenly imposing the immigration ban would not stand with America's beliefs of being a melting pot. He chose to hear the voices of the airport protests to take action against what was dividing up America. For these reasons, Judge James L. Robart saw the truth in the courtroom as well as the truth that an overwhelming part of the US population was not in favor of the immigration ban.

The second step of the Four-Way Test is *is it FAIR to all concerned?* The immigration ban was not fair to banned immigrants and refugees. It was primarily set up for less terrorism, while in fact, none of the seven countries on the ban list had been arrested for domestic terrorism charges since 9/11. However, this ban targeted primarily Muslim countries, creating more unnecessary Islamophobia. More than 50 years ago, discrimination against immigrants based on national origin was outlawed, but the President's executive order went against this. Judge James L. Robart's decision established equality, not based on nationality, religion, or race. His decision also helped immigrants from the seven banned countries have equal opportunities as the immigrants not on those list. I believe he saw those immigrants and refugees as people just like any regular person, wanting the best for their family. Judge James L. Robart helped to give immigrants and refugees the same opportunity for a better life, and get to the US in a quickly manner. Although the immigration ban was fair to immigrants that weren't on the ban list, it was not fair to those on it. Judge James L. Robart's decision differed because it was fair to everyone involved.

The third step of the Four-Way Test is *will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?* While the immigration ban created more tension between the United States and the countries on the ban list, Judge James L. Robart helped to restore the benevolence. With his actions, the US is now able to open its arms to incoming immigrants and refugees instead of turn them away until the waiting period was over. He has also helped separated families reunite sooner instead of waiting for the ban to lift. Since violence, human rights abuses, and less employment opportunities are frequent in Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen, he has helped to bring in immigrants and refugees before life gets even worse than it is now. In these ways, I think Judge James L. Robart's actions built goodwill and better friendships.

The fourth step of the Four-Way test is *will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?* I believe that Judge James L. Robart's actions helped not only the immigrants and the refugees, but also the United States as a whole. In fact, studies have shown that immigrants and refugees are beneficial to Americans because they boost our economy instead of reduce native employment rates as some people think. They also helps unite the world and spread new ideas and languages. More immigration helps people escape dangerous countries, and in turn brings many positive aspects into the US. I believe that Judge James L. Robart's ruling benefits all concerned because it helps those who want to come to the US as well as those already in the US.

In conclusion, Judge James L. Robart's ruling has followed all the steps of the Four-Way Test, which in turn shows that he has guided the United States in the right path. Although he faced ridicule by some and decision making was definitely not easy, his rightful decision making has helped to create a better America. In many ways, he has helped immigrants and refugees come to the United States without a long waiting period, and put America's best foot forward to

help foreigners in need. In the future, America's policies on immigrants and refugees could change again for the better or for the worse, but Judge James L. Robart has been a guiding light in this time of confusion and has brought relief to many people nationwide.