

PREFACE

I know now how Moses felt — forty years for him to get to his destination, the Promised Land. To satisfy my need to make my book perfect, I could use an additional thirty-seven years; I have reached the Red Sea and the waters don't part. There is an Arab acronym, IBM, which stands for *inshallah, bokra, mounken*, meaning, "With the will of God, tomorrow, maybe." No more tomorrow. No more maybe. I'm stopping here. The book is complete.

I hope all of you — family, colleagues and friends — who read this book will glean the reasons that make Gerry bullish on life.

Now for the thank yous. First of all, to Chris Stelmack, loyal scribe, recipient of my angst caused by the disease writer's block, and corrector of my dangling participles. Wallace Schroeder, an editor of the *New York Times*, who insists on verifying the accuracy of all my comments. If you notice a lot of dates, it is because of Wally's insistence and that of my production specialist, Susan Hayes. If you like the layout, it's because of Susan. The DVD was produced by Stu Lison of Syracuse University in 2006, when I received the university's highest honor for an alumnus — the Arents Award. David Vandepol, who shared many bottles of wine with me while recording my ramblings and who guided me to many brilliant (at least in my mind) insights. My wonderful housekeeper, Alvira, who keeps my mental process stimulated with strong espresso. A special dedication to my wife and ultimate muse, Daphna; my six children — Lauren, Kimberly, Douglas, Thomas, Shelly, and Roy; my eleven grandchildren — Sophie, Eva, Maxwell, Jake, Abigail, Helen, Joshua, Jessica, Rachel, Dean, and Ran (I have my own football team) — for whom this is required reading. To all of my friends out there whose names were inadvertently omitted in my book, consider yourselves lucky. My next book will be even more racy, ribald, and ridiculous.

Stay tuned.

