

CENTER for JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

P.O. Box 69, Gedney Station
White Plains, New York 10605-0069

Tel. (914) 421-1200
Fax (914) 428-4994

E-Mail: judgewatch@aol.com
Web site: www.judgewatch.org

Elena Ruth Sassower, Coordinator

BY FAX: 212-643-7828 (6 pages) & E-MAIL: rschwartz@edit.nydailynews.com

TO: Richard Schwartz, Editorial Page Editor
New York Daily News

FROM: Elena Ruth Sassower, Coordinator

RE: Editorial Endorsements for Attorney General and Governor

DATE: October 8, 2002

Thank you for your prompt return call yesterday – a prelude, I hope, to a meeting with the editorial board, as I repeatedly requested of Michael Aronson, beginning more than ten months ago at the inception of the Daily News' "Judging the Judges" editorial series.

Based on this on-going editorial series, whose latest installment was just last week, it would be grossly incongruous for the Daily News to endorse the re-election of either Attorney General Spitzer or Governor Pataki, as each has been actively complicitous in the corruption of the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct -- the sole state agency whose duty it is to "judge the judges". This is fully documented by the file of my public interest lawsuit against the Commission – one additionally documenting that Governor Pataki has corrupted the process by which he has made hundreds of judicial appointments during his nearly eight years in office¹. This includes corrupting the process of "merit selection" to the New York Court of Appeals – a process your "Judging the Judges" series has held up for emulation as recently as in your last week's editorial.

Highlighting the politically explosive significance of this lawsuit file is my story proposal, "The REAL Attorney General Spitzer – not the P.R. Version", already presented to Daily News Albany correspondent, Joe Mahoney, for election coverage². A copy of this proposal

¹ Among these judicial appointments is that of then Westchester County Executive Andrew O'Rourke. The Daily News itself gave the title "O'Rourke's Appointment was Illegal" to my Letter to the Editor relating thereto -- whose importance, even as expurgated, it recognized by featuring it in its special box (2/13/98).

² As relates to Mr. Spitzer, coverage would expose the scandalous facts underlying my two further Letters

is enclosed, revised for clarity.

Because the fully-documented facts, outlined by the proposal, would “rightfully end Mr. Spitzer’s re-election prospects, political future, and legal career” and have “repercussions on Governor Pataki...similarly devastating”, I request that a copy of this six-page transmittal be provided to each and every member of the Daily News editorial board so that they may evaluate the board’s proper course of action.

Needless to say, I am now – as I was more than ten months ago – ready to meet with the board, either collectively or individually, and based on the lawsuit file, assist it in *independently* verifying, within the space of a few hours, the most salient aspects of this extraordinary story – relating to both Attorney General Spitzer and Governor Pataki. This includes from the substantial portion of the lawsuit file that has been at the Daily News ever since I hand-delivered it with my November 30, 2001 letter to Mr. Aronson³.

to the Editor, “*Who Judges the Judges?*” (9/12/99) and “*Judicial Reforms*” (12/7/01), the importance of which, even sharply-expurgated, the Daily News also recognized by featuring in its special box. Indeed, the hoax of Mr. Spitzer’s “public integrity unit” – which my story proposal details – was the subject of “*Who Judges the Judges?*”.

³ The portion of the lawsuit file at the Daily News consists of the appellate papers before the Appellate Division, First Department – the most voluminous of which is my August 17, 2001 motion for, *inter alia*, sanctions against Mr. Spitzer, *personally*, his referral for disciplinary and criminal prosecution, and his disqualification from representing the Commission. This, by reason of his fraudulent respondent’s brief, which I so-documented in a 66-page line-by-line critique (Exhibit “U” to the motion).

As particularized by my January 17, 2002 reargument motion (Exhibit “B-1” thereto, pp. 4-7), sent to Mr. Aronson, certified mail/rrr, under a January 22, 2002 coverletter, the Appellate Division denied this fully-documented and uncontroverted August 17, 2001 motion *without* reasons, *without* findings, and by **FALSIFYING** the relief sought.

These appellate papers are now in the possession of Larry Cohler-Esses. He is supposed to review them and report on their significance to his editor, Russ Hoyle. Mr. Hoyle gave him that assignment after I contacted Edward Kosner, requesting supervisory oversight of Mr. Hoyle’s refusal, *without reasons*, to authorize an investigative expose of the evidence of the Commission’s corruption, as exposed by the lawsuit file. Nevertheless, and despite Mr. Cohler-Esses’ knowledge of the electorally-explosive ramifications of the lawsuit, he appears to be proceeding very slowly with his review – and deliberately so. Indeed, as recently as yesterday, he again rejected my offer to facilitate and expedite such review by meeting with me so that I could “explain the three categories of evidence, encompassed by the lawsuit, establishing the Commission’s **CORRUPTION**”. As I have repeatedly told Mr. Cohler-Esses, with my assistance, it would take him “**NO MORE THAN AN HOUR OR SO** to *independently* understand with his *own* eyes and brain that the Commission has been the beneficiary of **FIVE** fraudulent judicial decisions without which it would NOT have survived three separate legal challenges – including my own”. (my September 19, 2002 letter to Russ Hoyle, with a copy sent to Mr. Cohler-Esses).

By way of postscript, I apprised Mr. Cohler-Esses yesterday that the Commission is now the beneficiary of **SEVEN** fraudulent judicial decisions – the latest two being from the Court of Appeals – as to which no more than five minutes is needed to verify their fraudulence – and the fact that Chief Judge Kaye’s cover up of judicial corruption is not just confined to her administrative inaction, highlighted in “*Judicial Reforms*”.

Stena Lur
Sassone

STORY PROPOSAL FOR ELECTION COVERAGE**The REAL Attorney General Spitzer -- Not the P.R. Version**

The most salient aspects of this story proposal can be independently verified within a few hours. The result would rightfully end Mr. Spitzer's re-election prospects, political future, and legal career. Its repercussions on Governor Pataki would be similarly devastating.

* * *

Repeatedly, the public is told that Eliot Spitzer is a "shoe-in" for re-election as Attorney General⁴ and a rising star in the Democratic Party with a future as Governor and possibly President⁵. The reason for such favorable view is simple. The press has *not* balanced its coverage of lawsuits and other actions *initiated* by Mr. Spitzer, promoted by his press releases and press conferences, with any coverage of lawsuits *defended* by Mr. Spitzer. This, despite the fact that defensive litigation is the "lion's share" of what the Attorney General does.

The Attorney General's *own* website identifies that the office "defends thousands of suits each year in every area of state government" -- involving "nearly two-thirds of the Department's Attorneys in bureaus based in Albany and New York City and in the Department's 12

⁴ "Court of Claims Judge to Face Spitzer", (New York Law Journal, May 15, 2002, John Caher, Daniel Wise), quoting Maurice Carroll, Director of Quinnipiac College Polling Institute, "Spitzer has turned out to be a very good politician, and he is just not vulnerable"; "[Gov. Pataki] could pick the Father, Son and Holy Ghost and he wouldn't beat Spitzer"; "The Attorney General Goes to War", (New York Times Magazine, June 16, 2002, James Traub), "Spitzer's position is considered so impregnable that the Republicans have put up a virtually unknown judge to oppose him this fall -- an indubitable proof of political success"; "The Enforcer" (Fortune Magazine, September 16, 2002 coverstory, Mark Gimein), "he's almost certain to win a second term as attorney general this fall".

⁵ "Spitzer Pursuing a Political Path" (Albany Times Union, May 19, 2002, James Odato); "A New York Official Who Harnessed Public Anger" (New York Times, May 22, 2002, James McKinley); "Spitzer Expected to Cruise to 2nd Term" (Gannett, May 27, 2002, Yancey Roy); "Attorney General Rejects Future Role as Legislature" (Associated Press, June 4, 2002, Marc Humbert); "Democrats Wait on Eliot Spitzer, Imminent 'It Boy'" (New York Observer, August 19, 2002, Andrea Bernstein), "many insiders already are beginning to talk -- albeit very quietly -- about the chances of a Democrat winning back the Governor's office in 2006. At the top of their wish list is Mr. Spitzer, whose name recognition has shot through the roof in the last year, private pollsters say, and who appears -- for now, at least -- to have no negatives."

Regional offices.”⁶ It is therefore appropriate that the press critically examine at least one lawsuit *defended* by Mr. Spitzer. How else will the voting public be able to gauge his on-the-job performance in this vital area?

Our non-partisan, non-profit citizens’ organization, Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), proposes a specific lawsuit as ideal for press scrutiny. The lawsuit is against a single high-profile respondent, the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct, sued for corruption – and is *expressly* brought in the public interest. It has spanned Mr. Spitzer’s tenure as Attorney General and is now before the New York Court of Appeals. Most importantly, Mr. Spitzer is *directly familiar* with the lawsuit. Indeed, it was generated and perpetuated by his official misconduct – and seeks monetary sanctions against, and disciplinary and criminal referral of, Mr. Spitzer *personally*.

As you know, Mr. Spitzer’s 1998 electoral victory as Attorney General was so razor-close that it could not be determined without an unprecedented ballot-counting. Aiding him was Election Law lawyer, Henry T. Berger, the Commission’s long-standing Chairman. What followed from this and other even more formidable conflicts of interest was predictable: Attorney General Spitzer would NOT investigate the documentary proof of the Commission’s corruption – proof leading to Mr. Berger. This necessitated the lawsuit, *Elena Ruth Sassower, Coordinator of the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc., acting pro bono publico v. Commission on Judicial Conduct of the State of New York* -- which Mr. Spitzer has defended with litigation tactics so fraudulent as would be grounds for disbarment if committed by a private attorney.

The lawsuit file contains a breathtaking paper trail of correspondence with Mr. Spitzer, spanning 3-1/2 years, establishing his *direct knowledge* of his Law Department’s fraudulent conduct in defending the Commission and his *personal liability* by his wilful refusal to meet his mandatory supervisory duties under DR-1-104 of New York’s Code of Professional Responsibility (22 NYCRR §1200.5).

Added to this, the lawsuit presents an astonishing “inside view” of the hoax of Mr. Spitzer’s “public integrity unit” – which, by September 1999, was cited by Gannett as having “already logged more than 100 reports of improper actions by state and local officials across New York” (“*Spitzer’s Anti-Corruption Unit Gets off to a Busy Start*”, 9/8/99).

⁶ See www/oag.state.ny.us/: “Tour the Attorney General’s Office” – Division of State Counsel.

Exposing the hoax of Mr. Spitzer's "public integrity unit" properly begins with examining its handling of the first two "reports" it received. These were from CJA and involved the very issues subsequently embodied in the lawsuit. Indeed, I publicly handed these two "reports" to Mr. Spitzer on January 27, 1999 *immediately* upon his public announcement of the establishment of his "public integrity unit". This is reflected by the transcript of my public exchange with Mr. Spitzer at that time, transcribed by the New York Law Journal

The first "report", whose truth was and is *readily-verifiable* from the litigation files of Mr. Spitzer's Law Department, required Mr. Spitzer to "clean his own house" before tackling corruption elsewhere in the state. At issue were the fact-specific allegations of CJA's \$3,000 public interest ad, "*Restraining 'Liars in the Courtroom' and on the Public Payroll*" (New York Law Journal, 8/27/97, pp. 3-4), as to a *modus operandi* of fraudulent defense tactics used by predecessor Attorneys General to defeat meritorious lawsuits, including a 1995 lawsuit against the Commission, sued for corruption. This in addition to fraudulent judicial decisions, protecting judges and the Commission.

The second "report" was of no less transcendent importance to the People of this State. It, too, was substantiated by documents. These were provided to Mr. Spitzer, including documents as to the involvement and complicity of Governor Pataki. At issue was not only the Commission's corruption, but the corruption of "merit selection" to the Court of Appeals. Reflecting this was my published Letter to the Editor, "*An Appeal to Fairness: Revisit the Court of Appeals*" (New York Post, 12/28/98) – whose closing paragraph read: "This is why we will be calling upon our new state attorney general as the 'People's lawyer,' to launch an official investigation."

As detailed by the lawsuit file, not a peep was thereafter heard from Mr. Spitzer or his "public integrity unit" about these two "reports". Endless attempts to obtain information regarding the status of any investigations were all unanswered. Indeed, Mr. Spitzer's only response was to replicate the fraudulent defense tactics of his predecessor Attorneys General, complained of in the first "report". This, to defeat the lawsuit which I, acting as a private attorney general, brought to vindicate the public's rights in the face of Mr. Spitzer's inaction born of his conflicts of interest.

What has become of the "more than 100 reports of improper actions by state and local officials across New York" cited by Gannett as having been "already logged" by September 1999. And what has become of the hundreds more "reports" presumably "logged" in the three years since? A "search" of Mr. Spitzer's Attorney General website [www.oag.state.ny.us/] produces only *seven* entries for the "public integrity unit", with virtually *no* substantive information about its operations and accomplishments.

That the media-savvy Mr. Spitzer should offer such few and insignificant entries is startling, in and of itself. Even more so, when juxtaposed with Mr. Spitzer's specific promises from his 1998 election campaign that his "Public Integrity Office" would be "empowered to":

- (1) **"Vigorously Prosecute Public Corruption...Using the Attorney General's subpoena powers...to conduct independent and exhaustive investigations of corrupt and fraudulent practices by state and local officials";**
- (2) **"Train and Assist Local Law Enforcement...And if a local prosecutor drags his heels on pursuing possible improprieties...to step in to investigate and, if warranted, prosecute the responsible public officials";**
- (3) **"Create a Public Integrity Watchdog Group...made up of representatives of various state agencies, watchdog groups and concerned citizens...[to] recommend areas for investigation, coordinate policy issues pertaining public corruption issues, and advocate for regulations that hold government officials accountable";**
- (4) **"Encourage Citizen Action to Clean Up Government...[by] a toll-free number for citizens to report public corruption or misuse of taxpayer dollars";**
- (5) **"Report to the People...[by] an annual report to the Governor, the legislature and the people of New York on the state of public integrity in New York and incidents of public corruption".**

The foregoing excerpt, from Mr. Spitzer's 1998 campaign policy paper, "*Making New York State the Nation's Leader in Public Integrity: Eliot Spitzer's Plan for Restoring Trust in Government*", is the standard against which to measure the figment of Mr. Spitzer's "public integrity unit". Likewise, it is the standard for measuring Mr. Spitzer's 2002 re-election website [www.spitzer2002.com], which says nothing about the "public integrity unit" or of public integrity and government corruption, let alone as campaign issues.

I would be pleased to fax you any of the above-indicated documents or other items, such as the article about the lawsuit, "*Appeal for Justice*" (Metroland, April 25-May 1, 2002). Needless to say, I am eager to answer your questions and to provide you with a copy of the lawsuit file from which this important story of Mr. Spitzer's official misconduct and the hoax of his "public integrity unit" is *readily and swiftly verifiable*.

ELENA RUTH SASSOWER, Coordinator
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

Subj: Editorial Endorsements for Attorney General & Governor
Date: 10/8/02 6:08:16 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Judgewatchers
To: rschwartz@edit.nydailynews.com
CC: ekosner@edit.nydailynews.com, jmahoney@edit.nydailynews.com,
rhoyle@edit.nydailynews.com, lcohier-esses@nydailynews.com
File: 10-8-02-dailynews-schwartz.doc (43520 bytes) DL Time (115200 bps): < 1 minute

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

Attached is my 6-page transmittal, previously faxed. The e-mail format may be easier for you to distribute to the editorial board members, as requestd.

Thank you.

Elena Ruth Sassower, Coordinator
 Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
 (914) 421-1200

TRANSMISSION VERIFICATION REPORT

NY Daily News
Richard Schwartz
Editorial Page
Editor

TIME : 10/08/2002 17:01

NAME : CJA

FAX : 9144284994

TEL : 9144211200

DATE, TIME	10/08 16:56
FAX NO. /NAME	12125437828
DURATION	00:04:12
PAGE(S)	06
RESULT	OK
MODE	STANDARD
	ECM