

## CENTER *for* JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

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BY FAX: 202-457-7979 9 pages

February 4, 1999

Ms. Stephanie Lambidakis  
CBS NEWS

RE: Media-Unreported Impeachment Stories

Dear Ms. Lambidakis:

It is now three weeks since our Thursday, January 14th phone conversation in which I detailed *media-unreported* stories about *official* misconduct by Chief Justice Rehnquist and the House Judiciary Committee, with the potential to blow apart the Senate impeachment trial of the President. Your enthusiastic response led me to devote the rest of that day readying a Fed-Ex transmittal to you of the substantiating documentation: CJA's November 6, 1998 impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Rehnquist and our FIVE-YEAR correspondence with the House Judiciary Committee about how it handles the hundreds of impeachment complaints it receives against federal judges.

The Fed-Ex delivery should have reached you on Friday, January 15th. On that day -- and on Monday, January 18th -- I left messages on your voice mail, one or both of which requested that you let me know whether I was free to turn to other media with the stories -- or whether CBS NEWS would want an exclusive. Your response was not even the courtesy of a return call.

Please advise what your intentions are relative to these two powerful, news-making stories. It would help considerably if you would explain why, notwithstanding your great interest when we spoke on January 14th and their obvious relevance to unfolding events, you neither got back to me after you received the substantiating materials -- nor returned them to me.

Although it seems that the President's Senate impeachment trial will conclude next week, that is NOT the end of impeachment. There remain hundreds of citizen-filed impeachment complaints against federal judges "lying fallow" in the House Judiciary Committee -- including three we filed, of which you have copies. The most recent of the three is CJA's November 6, 1998 impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Rehnquist.

Enclosed are CJA's two press releases, "House Judiciary Committee Ignores and Conceals Hundreds of Judicial Impeachment Complaints" and "Impeachment Complaint against Chief Justice Rehnquist" -- which separate out, as well as "dumb down", the two stories presented to you on January 14th on a single press release. To date, the ONLY "reporting" has been in the Village Voice -- in a column so distorted and vague as to require me to write a Letter to the Editor. Copies of both the column and the expurgated published Letter are enclosed.

February 4, 1999

As set forth in the post-script to my January 14th coverletter to you, the transmitted materials were extremely costly and time-consuming for our non-profit citizens' organization to reproduce and assemble. If CBS NEWS does not intend to pursue the major stories they present, we need them back so that we may pass them on to other journalists.

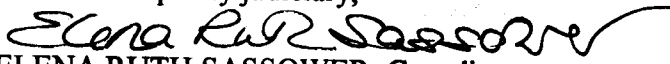
Before such materials are returned, however, please provide them to the CBS reporter(s) whose "beat" is the U.S. Supreme Court. As pointed out in our November 6, 1998 impeachment complaint against the Chief Justice (at p. 4), the National Commission on Judicial Discipline and Removal assumed that:

"any publicly-made (non-frivolous) allegations of serious misconduct...against a Supreme Court Justice would receive intense scrutiny in the press ..." [1993 Report, at p. 122]

Since even cursory examination of our November 6, 1998 complaint reveals that it is "non-frivolous", and that the "serious misconduct" it presents meets the standard for impeachment "under the most stringent definition of impeachable offenses", the response of such CBS reporter(s) -- as well as your own response and that of others at CBS NEWS -- will put the National Commission's assumption to an important empirical test. As should be obvious from the materials I sent you, everything CJA does is empirically-based.

I look forward to your call so that we may discuss where matters stand.

Yours for a quality judiciary,

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

Enclosures

P.S. One of the reasons I was particularly pleased to give CBS NEWS the "lead" on these media-*unreported* impeachment stories is that 25 years ago, in the tumultuous period when the House Judiciary Committee was considering impeachment articles against President Nixon, I was interviewed for the July 6, 1974 broadcast of CBS NEWS by its then Supreme Court/legal correspondent, Fred Graham. Mr. Graham interviewed me on the steps of the Supreme Court as the first and, indeed, the only one on line for the Monday, July 8, 1974 Supreme Court argument of *United States v. Richard Nixon*, "the tapes case". Needless to say, this prompted the other media to "jump on the bandwagon" -- including The Washington Post, which ran a front-page story, as well as my picture [7/8/74], and The New York Times, which put my picture on its front-page [7/8/74], with a story the following day.