

CENTER for JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

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BY FAX: 631-843-2953 (10 pages)

BY E-MAIL: alex.martin@newsday.com

February 14, 2003

Alex Martin, Assistant Managing Editor
Newsday
235 Pinelawn Road
Melville, New York 11747-4250

RE: Vindicating the Rights of Long Islanders to be Heard in Opposition to Albany Deal-Making in Long Island Judgeships: An Investigative Expose of the Nomination and Confirmation James Lack

Dear Mr. Martin:

Following up my unsuccessful attempt earlier today to reach you by phone (518-843-2700), enclosed is a copy of my two-page December 23rd e-mail to you¹, which I had also faxed to you on that date. Its RE: clause read, "Vindicating the Rights of Long Islanders to Be Heard in Opposition to Albany Deal-Making in Long Island Judgeship" and its concluding paragraph asked: "Please let me hear from you so I know how to proceed..." Such e-mail/fax followed shortly upon our telephone conversation.

As my December 23rd e-mail/fax reflects, I e-mailed a copy to Rick Brand. I subsequently spoke with Mr. Brand and faxed him a January 2nd letter relating to "An Investigative Expose of the Nomination and Confirmation of James Lack as an Acting Supreme Court Justice". A copy is enclosed. As I explained to Mr. Brand when I spoke with him on or about January 2nd, the explosive "starting point" for such easy-to-accomplish expose is SIMPLY verifying from Lore von Hoffen whether, prior to Governor Pataki's nomination of Senator Lack, she had ever been contacted by his State Judicial Screening Committee about her "road rage" encounter with Senator Lack, and whether, thereafter, she had ever been about it by the State Senate Judiciary Committee.

¹ The referred-to December 16th letter to Senate leadership is being e-mailed to you – as it was on December 23rd.

On January 6th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, I telephoned Mr. Brand (631-843-2722), leaving voice messages inquiring as to whether he had phoned Ms. von Hoffen. None of these messages were returned, even the last one, wherein I indicated that his unprofessional and disrespectful behavior would leave me no choice but to turn to you.

On February 12th, I telephoned Mr. Brand yet again, leaving a voice mail message that unless I heard from him by today, I would be phoning you. No return call.

Please be advised that I have independently sought to contact Ms. von Hoffen – only to discover that her phone number is unlisted. I would appreciate if you would provide me with her number – or, alternatively, if you or Mr. Brand would phone her to say that I would very much like to speak with her. Obviously, the investigative expose I have proposed does NOT cease to exist just because you, Mr. Brand, and others at Newsday have chosen to suppress and “kill it”.

I await your call so that we may discuss the status of such dynamite proposed expose – and whether it is necessary for me to take this serious matter even higher in the supervisory chain.

Thank you.

Yours for a quality judiciary,



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

P.S. Judge Lack's Court of Claims term expires next month – and, at any time, he may be renominated by the Governor – or maintained indefinitely as a “holdover”

Enclosures

cc: Rick Brand/by e-mail:

rick.brand@newsday.com