

CENTER *for*  
JUDICIAL  
ACCOUNTABILITY



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September 25, 1994

Letter to the Editor  
The New York Times  
229 West 43rd Street  
New York, New York 10036

Dear Editor:

Your September 17th editorial about the New York State Attorney General recognizes that "voters need to know how the candidates intend to handle the job's meat-and-potatoes work of defending the state against legal actions".

We agree--and believe you should alert voters to a particular legal action, defended by the Attorney General. It is a case about which the candidates for that office must be specifically questioned since it will be on the desk of whomever is elected our next Attorney General.

The case, entitled Sassower v. Hon. Guy Mangano, et al., directly affects the public. It charges high-ranking judges with abusing their judicial office for political, retaliatory purposes. It is instructive to see how the Attorney General defended the judges sued in that legal action. He refused to enforce the law and rules governing judicial disqualification and

permitted the very judges sued in the proceeding to decide their own case. How did the judges decide? Predictably, they granted the motion of their own attorney, the Attorney General, and dismissed the case against themselves. This may sound like something out of Alice in Wonderland, but the result has been a very real cover-up of judicial corruption--aided and abetted by the Attorney General.

Presently, the matter is before our State's highest Court, the New York Court of Appeals--where the Attorney General argues--without the slightest legal authority--that there should be no appellate review of his judicial clients' self-interested decision in their favor.

For the voting public to choose intelligently who should be our next Attorney General, the press must insist that each candidate respond to the facts of this extraordinary case. Those facts show that a major governmental scandal has taken place and that our constitutional rights are imperiled by the very government officials whose duty it is to protect those rights, including the Attorney General of the State of New York.

Any candidate who cannot unequivocally condemn the abandonment of the most basic rule of law that "no man can be the judge of his own cause" lacks the competence and courage required of our State's highest law enforcement officer.

Finally, since the next Attorney General will, upon taking office, have the irrefutable evidence of judicial corruption that is fully documented in this case, the issue of judicial corruption is not an abstract one. It is immediate and grave. Consequently, the candidates must also define the role that the Attorney General will play, as "the People's lawyer", in safeguarding the integrity of our third branch of government. At present, the Attorney General's office neither investigates complaints of judicial corruption nor even refers them for investigation.



ELENA RUTH SASSOWER, Coordinator  
Center for Judicial Accountability

The Center for Judicial Accountability is a non-partisan citizens' group working to improve the quality of the judiciary.