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Dear Elana Ruth Sassower:

I am responding to your June 28 fax to me regarding the material that you sent concerning Project Censored's nomination procedure. I apologize for taking so long to reply to your original letter, but in part the delay has been because I did not know how usefully – or positively -- to respond to you after I had reviewed your materials, and I am afraid you are not much going to like my present response. The document that I reviewed most closely from what you sent me was your October 15, 1996 letter to Project Censored (which I believe you highlighted to me as best summarizing your case).

In general I found your account of the events surrounding your contention of NYT censorship to be highly detailed but ultimately confusing concerning the issues you want to raise. It was only after I had reread the letter that I realized that your main concern was not that the NYT was censoring a story or subject matter altogether, but that they were not covering your contribution to the debate – hence your repeated use of the term “black-balling”. As I was reading through I was trying to figure out exactly what was being censored and beyond a few dramatic but ultimately vague phrases I realized I could not do it clearly on the basis of what you wrote. What I did get from the letter was a very strong sense of outrage on your part that CJA was not being sufficiently recognized by the NYT. This sense was underscored when you mentioned the fact that indeed the NYT (as well as other media outlets) was covering these issues and from the kind of perspective that you would take (and sometimes reporters would take your material without attribution) but that your organization was being cut out of the debate. I realize this must be very frustrating but I do not believe that it constitutes the kind of censorship that Project Censored is interested in exposing.

Parenthetically, having read your October 15 letter (as well as its attachments) as carefully as I can, I am still not at all sure what exact facts have been suppressed in the area of judicial appointments. The test I use is trying to articulate the most pertinent aspects to someone else who knows nothing of the case. When I attempted this, with your letter in front of me, I could not do it easily or at all clearly. I imagine this to be the response from others whom you submitted this to, and the numerous non-replies to your

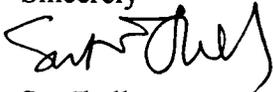
sending out this material might just reflect this confusion. My expertise is not in this area and I realize that this confusion could just be reflective of my own inability to understand what might otherwise be totally obvious to others. Or it could be that your writing does not clearly articulate in non-legalistic language what is at stake. I also think you are too fixated on the NYT. There are other outlets that might be interested in these kinds of issues and my advice would be to target these and to downplay the role of CJA.

On the issue of Project Censored's procedures, there is nothing in this case that leads me to believe that there are serious flaws in the nominating process. On the issue of what constitutes a censored story, I will continue to pursue this with the staff of Project Censored.

On the issue of Project Censored dropping the "why" part of the title, I have discussed this with the publisher and he assured me that it was a marketing decision and nothing to do with content. Having reviewed the most recent 1998 issue of the Project Censored book I am convinced this is correct. Indeed there are a couple of superb pieces (by Robert McChesney and Peter Phillips) on the "why" question.

I am sorry not be more encouraging. I will return the large box of material that you sent to me by separate mail.

Sincerely



Sut Jhally

cc. Peter Phillips