

CENTER *for* JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

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March 26, 1997

David C. Vladeck, Director
Public Citizen Litigation Group
1600 20th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

RE: Devising Solutions to Promote/Protect Active Citizenship

Dear Mr. Vladeck:

Thank you for returning my call last Thursday. I can well appreciate the number of requests for assistance that Public Citizen receives each day and what you described as the "triage" you must do. However, the plain fact is that the average citizen, who meets his/her duty of active citizenship, is left "high and dry".

Indeed, it is sad beyond words that notwithstanding all these many, many year in which Ralph Nader has exhorted lawyers to public service, you, who is in Washington, up to your elbows in public interest law, were unable to identify where I might turn for pro bono help for a case about active citizenship -- other than the ACLU, whose resources you described as one staffer and one lawyer -- or something on that level.

Although you stated that the major law firms in Washington each have a "pro bono coordinator", you told me that it was "extremely unlikely" that they would take the case. And you were not much more optimistic about the D.C. bar. You told me that they want fee cases where they could make at least \$150 an hour. This I couldn't quite reconcile with the concept of "pro bono" service.

I hope you are sufficiently troubled by the fact that, as my case demonstrates, ordinary citizens have *no* patron protecting them in a legal sense when they come to Washington to participate in government, that you will help devise a solution. May I suggest that Public Citizen begin by opening a file containing information about such cases.

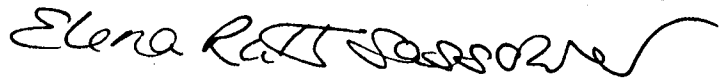
For that reason, I am returning to you the *original* of my March 11, 1997 coverletter to you, which you sent back to me under your March 14, 1997 letter. While I appreciate that you also sent back the documents it had transmitted, I was disconcerted to have that *original* coverletter returned. Indeed, as my coverletter reflects, the ACLU had already declined to provide me assistance when I turned to Public Citizen.

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Finally, because I am sure that among the cases which Public Citizen turns away, *without* referral, are cases about judicial misconduct, perhaps you will keep in your Rolodex a listing for the Center Judicial Accountability, Inc. I was most disappointed that CJA's informational brochure, in seemingly unread condition, was among the materials you sent back. Although CJA does not presently have the resources to provide legal assistance for cases involving judicial selection or discipline issues, that is one of our long-term goals.

In the meantime, we are building our documentary archives and forging a network of concerned citizens nationwide. To that end, and in the hope that you will spread the word about CJA's work, I enclose several copies of CJA's brochure.

Yours for a quality judiciary,



ELENA RUTH SASSOWER, Coordinator
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc.

Enclosures
cc: Ralph Nader

P.S. I note that Public Citizen has a consumer guide entitled, "*Representing Yourself*". Since I most probably will be doing just that, I enclose a check in the amount of \$13 -- the indicated cost of the guide, which I hope you will send me as soon as possible. Additionally, I enclose a \$35 check for a "combination membership" in Public Citizen. Notwithstanding Public Citizen was unable to provide the assistance I had hoped, I greatly appreciate the important work that you do.