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CENTER for JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

P. O. Box 69  
Gedney Station  
White Plains, New York 10605-0069

Tel. (914) 421-1200  
Fax (914) 684-6554  
E-Mail: probono69@aol.com

FAX COVER SHEET

This fax transmission consists of a total of ~~12~~<sup>14</sup> pages including this cover page. If you have not received all the pages, please call (914) 421-1200.

DATE: 2/16/96 TIME: 4 pm

TO: Al Quatt TITLE: NY Post

FAX #: <sup>212</sup> 930-5842 RE: follow-up to yr phone call

FROM: Elena Sassorjer

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MESSAGE: This is a judicial  
Watergate !!

We look forward to you  
proving it to yourself !!  
All the documents are  
at your disposal

SASSORJER v COMMISSION IS THE CASE  
(#95-109141) THAT WILL BRING THE  
COMMISSION DOWN -  
+ rightfully so!

CENTER for JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC. is a national, non-partisan, not-for-profit citizens' organization raising public consciousness about how judges break the law and get away with it.

# The New York Times

## Where Do You Go When Judges Break the Law?

FROM THE WAY the current electoral races are shaping up, you'd think judicial corruption isn't an issue in New York. Oh, really?

On June 14, 1991, a New York State court suspended an attorney's license to practice law—immediately, indefinitely and unconditionally. The attorney was suspended with no notice of charges, no hearing, no findings of professional misconduct and no reasons. All this violates the law and the court's own explicit rules.

Today, more than three years later, the suspension remains in effect, and the court refuses even to provide a hearing as to the basis of the suspension. No appellate review has been allowed.

Can this really happen here in America? It not only can, it did.

The attorney is Doris L. Sassower, renowned nationally as a pioneer of equal rights and family law reform, with a distinguished 35-year career at the bar. When the court suspended her, Sassower was *pro bono* counsel in a landmark voting rights case. The case challenged a political deal involving the "cross-endorsement" of judicial candidates that was implemented at illegally conducted nominating conventions.

Cross-endorsement is a bartering scheme by which opposing political parties nominate the same candidates for public office, virtually guaranteeing their election. These "no contest" deals frequently involve powerful judgeships and turn voters into a rubber stamp, subverting the democratic process. In New York and other states, judicial cross endorsement is a way of life.

One such deal was actually put into writing in 1989. Democratic and Republican party bosses dealt out seven judgeships over a three-year period. "The Deal" also included a provision that one cross-endorsed candidate would be "elected" to a 14-year judicial term, then resign eight months after taking the bench in order to be "elected" to a different, more patronage-rich judgeship. The result was a musical-chairs succession of new judicial vacancies for other cross-endorsed candidates to fill.

Doris Sassower filed a suit to stop this scam, but paid a heavy price for her role as a judicial whistle-blower. Judges who were themselves the products of cross-endorsement dumped the case.

Other cross-endorsed brethren on the bench then viciously retaliated against her by suspending her law license, putting her out of business overnight.

Our state law provides citizens a remedy to ensure independent review of governmental misconduct. Sassower pursued this remedy by a separate lawsuit against the judges who suspended her license.

That remedy was destroyed by those judges who, once again, disobeyed the law — this time, the law prohibiting a judge from deciding a case to which he is a party and in which he has an interest. Predictably, the judges dismissed the case against themselves.

New York's Attorney General, whose job includes defending state judges sued for wrongdoing, argued to our state's highest court that there should be no appellate review of the judges' self-interested decision in their own favor.

Last month, our state's highest court — on which cross-endorsed judges sit — denied Sassower any right of appeal, turning its back on the most basic legal principle that "no man shall be the judge of his own cause." In the process, that court gave its latest demonstration that judges and high-ranking state officials are above the law.

Three years ago this week, Doris Sassower wrote to Governor Cuomo asking him to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the documented evidence of lawless conduct by judges and the retaliatory suspension of her license. He refused. Now, all state remedies have been exhausted.

There is still time in the closing days before the election to demand that candidates for Governor and Attorney General address the issue of judicial corruption, which is real and rampant in this state.

Where do you go when judges break the law? You go public.

Contact us with horror stories of your own.

**CENTER for  
JUDICIAL  
ACCOUNTABILITY**

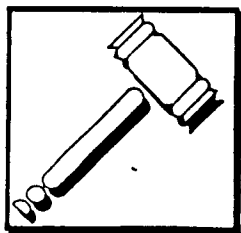


TEL (914) 421-1200 • FAX (914) 684-6554  
E-MAIL [probono@delphi.com](mailto:probono@delphi.com)

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\* Highest ranking judicial nonsense of the commission



**Action Taken in 1994**

Following are summaries of the Commission's actions in 1994, including accounts of all public determinations, summaries of non-public decisions, and various numerical breakdowns of complaints, investigations and other dispositions.

**Complaints Received**

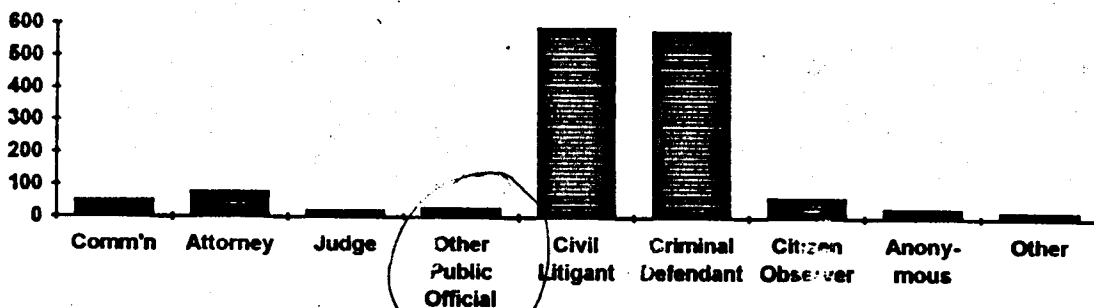
In 1994, 1438 new complaints were received, marking the third consecutive year in which the number of complaints exceeded 1400. Of these, 1230 (85.5%) were dismissed by the Commission upon initial review, and 208 investigations were authorized and commenced. In addition, 154 investigations and proceedings on formal charges were pending from the prior year.

In 1994, as in previous years, the majority of complaints were received from civil litigants and defendants in criminal cases. Others were received from attorneys, law enforcement officers, civic organizations and concerned citizens not involved in any particular court action. Among the new complaints were 49 initiated by the Commission on its own motion. A breakdown of the source of

complaints received in 1994 appears in the following chart.

Many of the new complaints dismissed by the Commission upon initial review were clearly without merit or outside the Commission's jurisdiction, including complaints against judges not within the state unified court system, such as federal judges, administrative law judges and New York City Housing Court judges. Absent any underlying misconduct, such as demonstrated prejudice, conflict of interest or flagrant disregard of fundamental rights, the Commission does not investigate complaints concerning judicial decisions. The Commission is not an appellate court and cannot reverse or remand trial court decisions.

**Sources of Complaints Received in 1994**



→ The D.A. would fit in this band, I believe \* check with Commission