

May 19, 2007

Dear Judges,

This is a terribly abrupt way to end my relationship with you, the Court and the staff, but this is how it was destined to end, I suspect.

I know all of this comes as a shock to you because you had little idea how messy my personal life was. I did not want my personal life to interfere with my service to the Court - and it did not for the most part. Even now all I will say is that it was difficult to juggle all of the issues - personal and Court-related - but I did the best I could. I tried to maintain my privacy (for example, how many at the Court knew I have a 2-year-old granddaughter?) but in the end, that got in the way



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For more than 10 years I have been the Court's Staff Director. During that time, I have never said no to any assignment the Court or any judge gave me. That has frequently placed me in harm's way. How many of you have called and asked me to "handle" traffic tickets or to get someone out of jail without bond, or to clear up contempt charges pending against friends? How many of you have told your attorney friends to call me about "procedural issues" on cases before the Court? Never once have I declined to help someone you sent to me or refused to solve some problem you had.

Above and beyond my regular duties and the extracurricular tasks you gave me, I have ably represented your interests at the Legislature for almost 10 years. Capital outlay, fee fund legislation, judges' pay raises - I've done it all. And, since Judges cannot engage in politics,

I did that. Under the appellation "legislative coordination," I have lobbied for you for 10 years. Again, by shielding you from the prohibition against lobbying, I put myself in harm's way. The Courts' lobbying efforts in Baton Rouge have become so flagrant, that the appellate courts now have a paid lobbyist. In fact, that lobbyist is a convicted felon. Each month, I send him a check for \$2,084.00. This money comes from funds appropriated for the Court budget each year. In other words, taxpayer dollars are being used to pay a lobbyist for the courts. Again, I have shielded you from this illegal practice. As long as you got your pay raises, you were content to ignore the law.

While my integrity is challenged on the basis one case, you completely ignore your own integrity in the

in the handling of pro se criminal writ applications. For probably the past 10 years, not one criminal writ application filed by an ~~inmate~~ pro se has been reviewed by a judge on the Court. I prepared the rulings on each of those writ applications, and they were signed by a judge, without so much as a glance at the application. In fact, two of the judges on the writ panel never even knew the pro se application was filed, much less being aware ~~to~~ of the application's contents. When the pro se application arrived in the mail, I opened it, prepared a ruling, and sent it to the Clerk's Office for filing. When the application returned to Central Staff after filing, the ruling was already prepared. It was typed on the application and

and the application was signed by a Judge without so much as a glance.

The total turnaround time was usually one or two days. It was obvious that these pro se criminal writ applications were not being reviewed because of the quick turnaround time. Moreover, although research memos are prepared for counseled criminal writ applications, a research memo for a pro se criminal writ application has not been prepared for probably 10 years. You were more than content to let me handle all pro se writs so you would not have to bother with them. Also, the large volume of pro se criminal writ applications inflated the Court's workload figures - even though no judge was involved in the handling of the writ (beyond signing a name).

One other attractive feature of the pro se writ handling system was the money it raised for the Clerk's Fee Fund. For each pro se writ application in a criminal case, the Court charged and received a fee of \$300.00 from the parish where the criminal case was pending. The Clerk's Fee Fund swelled from the money earned on pro se criminal writ applications. It seems ironic now that I earned more money for the Court than any Judge, and possibly all Judges combined. But consider this: Who's integrity is really in question when you have conveniently ignored your duty to review pro se criminal writ applications so you can reduce your workload, present a false picture of the Court's workload, and charge

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Large sums for work you haven't done?

For years I have battled depression, and in the end I guess I have lost that battle. But the facts are the facts, and those matters I have described in this letter will be born out by investigation. I have carefully chosen my words to present an accurate statement of the facts surrounding the matters discussed in this letter.

While my depression proved to be my undoing, each of you must ask yourselves what role you played in this?

Jerry

cc: Louisiana Judiciary Comm.
The Times-Picayune