

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
for the  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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# NEWS RELEASE

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HONORABLE CHARLES L. BRIEANT  
CHIEF JUDGE

For Immediate Release: March 1, 1991

CHIEF JUDGE BRIEANT APPOINTS ADVISORY GROUP TO  
IMPLEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE CIVIL JUSTICE REFORM ACT 1990

Chief Judge Brieant announced today that, after consulting with the judges of the Southern District he has appointed an Advisory Group in order to implement section 478, Title 28, U.S. Code. The members of the Group will serve a four year term.

The Southern District of New York is scheduled to be designated as one of ten pilot districts chosen by the Judicial Conference of the United States to implement a Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan by December 31, 1991. The remaining Courts throughout the country which are not pilot courts or Early Implementation Districts have until December 1, 1993 to implement plans.

The duties of the Advisory Group appointed by Chief Judge Brieant are to assess the status of the criminal and civil dockets in the district and advise the court in the development of its

Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan. In making its recommendations for the plan, the Advisory Group will

- \* identify trends in case filings and in the demands being placed on the court's resources;
- \* identify the principal causes of cost and delay in civil litigation, giving consideration to the effect on the docket of local court practices and the ways in which litigants and their attorneys approach conduct of litigation; and
- \* examine the extent to which costs and delays could be reduced by a better assessment of the impact of new legislation on the courts.

Chief Judge Brieant noted that the Group's membership accommodates the major categories of litigants in the court as recommended by the Act. It also includes the District Court Executive as a member. Judge Robert W. Sweet, who is Chairman of The Court's Committee on Judicial Improvements will be Chairman of the Advisory Group. Chief Judge Brieant and Edwin Weseley, Chairman of the Advisory Group of the Eastern District of New York, will serve as ex-officio members.

The following are appointed as members: Marcia Alazraki, Robert L. Conason, Philip L. Graham, Jr., Judge Thomas P. Griesa, Edna Wells Handy, Henry L. King, Clifford P. Kirsch, Joseph T. McLaughlin, Stacey J. Moritz, Benito Romano, Shira A. Scheindlin, Lorie A. Slutsky, and Gerald Walpin. Background of the members is as follows:

Honorable Robert W. Sweet - **Chairman** - Judge Sweet was appointed a district judge in the Southern District of New York on April 28, 1978. He presently serves as Chairman of the Court's Judicial Committee for Improvements and the Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System. Prior to his appointment, Judge Sweet was a partner at Skadden Arps Slate Meagher and Flom. He served as Deputy Mayor of the City of New York in the Lindsay administration, and had been an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York.

Marcia Alazraki is a partner of Shea & Gould and head of that firm's Insurance group. She has served as Deputy Commissioner Tax Enforcement, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance and also as Executive Assistant to Hon. Mario Cuomo, Governor of New York. She formerly served as Deputy Superintendent of Insurance, State of New York.

Robert L. Conason, is a senior member of Gair, Gair, Conason, Stergman & Mackauf. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and of numerous other professional associations. He is author or co-author of "Trial of a Negligence Case," "Joinder of Multiple Defendants," "Jury Instructions - Protecting the Record," "Unnecessary Surgery," Matthew Bender's "Damages In Tort Actions," and other educational articles directed to attorneys representing plaintiffs in tort cases.

Philip L. Graham Jr. is a member of Sullivan & Cromwell where he has engaged in litigation, mainly in securities, banking, tort and insurance matters. Mr. Graham sponsored and directed Sullivan & Cromwell's Pro Bono Externship Program. Under this program, the firm provides a full time associate attorney to represent indigent civil litigants in the Southern District of New York who cannot obtain representation from the Court's pro bono panel. Pro Se cases now exceed 15% of the Court's civil filings.

Honorable Thomas P. Griesa has been a district judge of the Southern District of New York since June 30, 1972. Prior to his appointment he was a litigation partner at Davis Polk & Wardwell and has the greatest seniority among the active judges of the Court who are not eligible to take senior status. He has served as an attorney in the Admiralty Section of the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

Edna Wells Handy is Vice President Legal Affairs and General Counsel, New York City Health & Hospitals Corporation. She served as Executive Director of New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities, Assistant District Attorney, and Bureau Chief, Kings County; and Assistant United States Attorney, Southern District of New York.

Henry L. King is Chairman and Managing Partner of Davis Polk & Wardwell. He is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and Served as President of the New York State Bar Association (1988-89). He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a Trustee of Columbia University.

Clifford P. Kirsch is District Court Executive of the Southern District of New York. He served as Clerk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, District of New Jersey; as Deputy State Court Administrator of The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and as Trial Court Administrator in Pennsylvania.

Joseph T. McLaughlin is a litigation partner in Shearman & Sterling and chairman of its committee on continuing legal education for the firm's associate attorneys. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, engaged in general litigation with emphasis on international arbitration, contested mergers and acquisitions, corporate, banking, products liability and environmental disputes. Mr. Mc Laughlin is a Director and has

served as Chairman (1987-88) of the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest.

Stacey J. Moritz, is Chief of the Civil Division, United States Attorney's Office of the Southern District of New York. She was a member of the firm of Schulte Roth & Zabel.

Benito Romano is a member of Willkie Farr and Gallagher, who served as United States Attorney of the Southern District of New York in 1989 by interim appointment of Attorney General Dick Thornburgh. He was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in that office from 1984 to 1986, including service as Deputy Chief Appellate Attorney, and also as Chief of the Public Corruption Unit, as well as Associate United States Attorney, the third ranking position in that office. Mr. Romano specializes in general litigation in the state and federal courts.

Shira A. Scheindlin is member of the law firm of Herzfeld & Rubin. She has served as U.S. Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of New York; General Counsel, New York City Department of Investigation; and Administrative Assistant United States Attorney and Deputy Chief, Economic Crimes Unit, Eastern District of New York.

Lorie A. Slutsky is President of the New York Community Trust; a community foundation with assets of over \$600 Million and a grant

making budget of \$40 Million. Ms. Slutsky has a Bachelors Degree in Political Science, Magna Cum Laude from Colgate University and a graduate degree in public policy from the New School for Social Research. A non-lawyer, she has been with the New York Community Trust for her entire career. A trustee of Colgate University, she is also Chair of the Governmental Relations Committee of the Non-Profit Coordinating Committee of New York and a Director of the United Way.

Gerald Walpin, a Senior Partner at Rosenman & Colin is Chairman of that firm's litigation department, and has specialized in federal securities matters. Before joining the firm, Mr. Walpin served as a law clerk to Southern District judges, Edward J. Dimock and Frederick van Pelt Bryan and then served for five years as the Chief of Special Prosecutions for the United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York.

Chief Judge Brieant expressed his appreciation to the members of the Group for their willingness to participate in this important effort. He noted that a large number of people had volunteered or had been recommended to serve, but were not appointed solely in order to keep the group within reasonable size limitations.

For further information

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