



BOARD OF HENNEPIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

A-2400 GOVERNMENT CENTER
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55487-0240

December 1, 2000

Mr. Alan Kalmanoff
Executive Director
Institute for Law and Policy Planning
2613 Hillegass Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear Kal:

I received your November 15 letter requesting comments from me regarding your work here in Hennepin County. I don't really have that many to offer. To be candid, I found your performance to be mixed.

On the positive side you were able to engage the judges with the proposition that resources are limited and that the judiciary is not the only operating department within the rubric of criminal justice. It seems as though you helped them to accept an analysis by the National Center for State Courts that might move us more toward a "blocking" arrangement than we were previously. In addition I believe you were able to hold the attention of the CJCC members on occasion and reinforce that we all need to work together to make change happen.

However I found some of your work to be of marginal benefit. The report made some observations that I thought were inaccurate concerning the County Board's intentions and in some ways failed to recognize that the County Board has a legitimate role to play in motivating operational responses from the departments. Your services were also quite expensive. Hennepin County paid you in excess of \$300,000.

Finally I thought your style was . . . interesting. Assigning yourself the title of "Special Master" was downright humorous. Some of your working relationships with department heads suffered as a result of your style I think and led to a less productive final result than might have been possible.

In summary, I will say that I am glad to have met you. You are certainly a memorable personality and I will keep your contact information on hand should I run into someone who could benefit from your unique style, skills and abilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Opat", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Opat
1st District Commissioner

