

1.

May 4, 2009

Laurie Reiley
United States Attorney's Office
-- Middle District of Pennsylvania
P.O. Box 11754
Harrisburg, PA 17108

BY OVERNIGHT MAIL

RE: Luzerne County Corruption, Victim Impact Statements

Dear Ms. Reiley,

In response to your office's offer to consider the statements of victims in the Luzerne County corruption prosecutions, a number of our plaintiffs have written Victim Impact Statements.

I have enclosed seventeen letters; some are from parents, others are from juveniles, and several are written jointly by parents and their children. I expect that we will receive more statements in the coming days and weeks; I will continue to forward you letters that we receive.

Many of our clients are very concerned about confidentiality and have requested that the information contained in these letters not be shared with the press or anyone else. If the need arises to share material from these letters, please let us know so that we can first seek permission from our clients.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached by phone at 215.625.0551 or by e-mail at njesai@jlc.org.

Thank you for your commitment to seeing that justice is done in Luzerne County.

Sincerely,
Neha Desai, Esq.
Juvenile Law Center

Encl.

2.

August 4, 2011

The Hon. Edwin M. Kosik
c/o United States Probation Office
P.O. Box 191
Scranton, PA 18501

BY OVERNIGHT MAIL

RE: United States v. Mark Ciavarella (09-CR-272)

Dear Judge Kosik:

Enclosed please find impact letters from children and families who were victims of Mark Ciavarella's criminal activity. Out of concerns for the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families involved, please do not make these letters public.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Emily C. Keller, Esq.
Juvenile Law Center

3.

(Handwritten, send to U.S. Attorney's office)

4-1-10

Hi Laura —

I had received a letter from the D.A.'s office regarding this juvenile court case.

My granddaughter was a victim of Mark Ciavarella, former judge. Her name is Michelle Yurkanis (sp?). Michelle was residing at my home. I receive Social Security 738.00 per month, most of this money was used up feeding and closing her. While Michelle was sent to the Juvenile Center in Pittston, I had to pay 60.00 for a ride to visit her. I had gone to visit her three times. I had to purchase her clothing, paid 400.00 in fines to Maj. Sharkey, which he had recorded of me paying. She was then sent to Boot Camp. Again I paid her expenses, then they sent Michelle to Cinnamon Hills in Utah — against support her — sent her money. It was a nightmare.

The girl's life is ruined. Michelle had no atty. Former Judge Ciavarella called the shots. I was at her sentencing and could not speak to defend Michelle. He did it his way. Michelle had no one to support her except myself. I am weakhearted because her own mother wouldn't help her....

Laurie, thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I can tell you more.

Sincerely,
Elaine Yurkanis
227 E. Broad Street
West Hazleton, Pa. 18202

(handwritten)

4-28-09

Dear Laurie Reiley

Hi. My name is Bryant Micheal Titus. Im writing about the case that is going on with Judge Ciavarella. When I was younger he put me away for two years for something I didn't do. So if there is anything to do about can you please get me any info you can. I fell that messed up a big part of my life. I was only 12 years old. Well if you can do anything for me it would really help.

Sorry I had to write when Im in state prison. Im going to be here another two month until Im done with this class. Im already paroled.

My address is

Bryant M Titus
HD6589
PO Box 1000
Houtzdale PA 16698-1000

or

Bryant M Titus
1806 Prospect Ave
Scranton PA 18505

Thank you for you time hope to hear from you soon.

(handwritten)

2-9-09

Dear Atty. Carlson:

My son was a victim of Mark Ciavarella for a 1st time offense. He was sent away for 13 months. We were in court maybe all of 3-4 minutes. My husband & I looked at each other and said what just happened here. My son was shackled & handcuffed. He started out at Camp Adam for several weeks then the Juvenile Detention Center and finally at Glen Mills. Probation told us how lucky we were to have our son sent to Glen Mills — he would get an education and learn a trade. I just want you to know neither happened. My son has a learning disability and he was put in a room with a GED book — no instruction. Their idea of VoTech was 1½ hours, 3 nights a week, after being there 6 months. That amounts to 18 hours a month. When I questioned them & told them I wanted a class schedule and record of test grades, they sent a totally fictitious account. I'm telling you this because I think someone needs to look into the corruption at Glen Mills too! I also believe that Ciavarella had to be getting kick backs from Glen Mills too! Since the school was so far away (over 100 miles) I only got to make the trip twice in a year. Could you please look into this school which is not what it proposes to be?

Also, given what was done to these children, 87 months at a federal prison is not enough. So many lives were ruined because of greed. I, like so many other parents, just want my son's record expunged. He wants to go into the service but can't. He can't get financial aid for college. This will follow him around for the rest of his life.

Conahan and Ciavarella should be treated the same way they treated our children — put them in handcuffs and shackles and send them away for a long, long time.

Sincerely,
Rosemarie Cressman
parent of David (or Jared) Cressman

4.

(originals sent to the probation office)

April 16, 2009

The Honorable Edwin M. Kosik
United States District Judge
c/o Douglas S. Moyle
United States District Court
Middle District of Pennsylvania
Probation Office
P.O. Box 191
Scranton, PA 18501-0191

RE: UNITED STATES V. JUDGE MARK CIAVARELLA
DOCKET NO: 3:CR-09-028
VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

Dear Judge Kosik:

As the Luzerne County District Attorney, I am providing a victim impact letter to you regarding the actions of Judge Mark Ciavarella and the impact it has had on our Juvenile Court System.

As a result of the actions of Judge Mark Ciavarella, the Luzerne County District Attorney's Office has been ordered and mandated to identify and review juvenile cases heard in Luzerne County during the calendar years 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 in order to determine which files can be disposed of pursuant to the First Interim Report and Recommendations of the Special Master, Judge Arthur E. Grimm. Needless to say, there are thousands of files which must be meticulously evaluated by personnel in our office.

Further, please keep in mind that this is simply the First Interim Report and Recommendation of the Special Master. It deals exclusively with low level misdemeanor cases and summary motions. Judge Grimm has not yet addressed the issue of the more serious cases handled during the years of 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. I anticipate the real possibility of having to readjudicate many of those more serious matters.

And, as a result of Judge Grimm's findings, we have had to request additional personnel from our County Commissioners to complete the task, namely two Assistant District Attorneys and two support staff.

The Luzerne County District Attorney's Office has had an ever increasing caseload, as well as an exploding homicide rate. Our office was also hit hard by layoffs caused by the budget crisis, losing ten staff positions.

The effects of the actions of both Judge Ciavarella and Judge Conahan will be felt throughout our County for a very long time. I have had to field phone calls on a daily basis, not only from local media outlets, but from national media outlets as well, regarding the impact of the Judges' actions upon our legal system. Quite simply put, it has been devastating and will be a mark on the name of our County for years and years to come.

I thank you for the opportunity to address the issue, Your Honor.

Very truly yours,
JACQUELINE MUSTO CARROLL
District Attorney

5.

April 17, 2009

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

The Honorable Edwin M. Kosik
United States District Court
Middle District of Pennsylvania
William J. Nealon Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse
235 North Washington Avenue
Post Office Box 1148
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18501

RE: U.S. V. Mark A. Ciavarella Jr. and U.S. v. Michael T. Conahan
US(MDPA) No. 3:09-CR-028

Dear Judge Kosik:

This is in response to your request that I furnish a letter describing the impact that the pending federal criminal proceedings involving former Luzerne County judges Michael T. Conahan and Mark A. Ciavarella have had on the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County.

While it appears that the “factual basis” underlying the judges’ guilty pleas to “honest services” and related charges continues to be someone controverted by the defendants, it is clear that the scandal has brought disgrace and disrepute not only to them, but also to our entire court system. The defendants, by their conduct and actions, have wreaked havoc on our court. Unfortunately, these events have occurred against the backdrop of the Luzerne County court having been described as “the most dysfunctional court in the state” as recounted by one of the tribunals presiding over the *Lokuta* judicial misconduct trial, at which both defendants testified, the outcome of which remains under appellate review. Overall, it is likely that despite the utmost efforts of the remaining judges to maintain the function of the courts and to focus on restoring public trust and confidence in the courts, this will take years to happen. We have been suffering from a level of distrust in recent months that has been difficult for everyone including not only Common Pleas Court judges but also Magisterial Justices and lawyers.

Because of their conduct, I am under a directive from the Supreme Court to provide periodic reports on the administration of our court. This demonstrates that not only is there an attitude of distrust in our citizenry, but also intense scrutiny by the highest court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The media frenzy regarding these matters has likewise been overwhelming. In addition to a constant, almost daily, barrage of local media coverage of “the court

corruption scandal in Luzerne County”, which is also repeated in statewide publications such as The Legal Intelligencer and Pennsylvania Law Weekly, they have relentlessly maintained a negative focus on our court system for several months now. Also, the national media (20/20, New York Times, and People Magazine, etc.) has followed suit. This has resulted in the image of our justice system suffering far beyond the reaches of Luzerne County.

What can be said in a positive light is that the increased scrutiny resulting from the prosecution of these breaches of the public trust has created a tremendous resolve between me and the court en banc to prevent such occurrences in the future. We have endeavored to enhance court governance and judicial administration in several areas, concentrating on greater transparency, broader participation by the entire court in setting policy and procedures, and making ourselves more accountable.

In closing, I can’t help but observe that both individuals charged with the administration of justice have inflicted irreparable harm occasioned by their misconduct, but the same justice system that has been tarnished must now be relied upon to mete out appropriate punishment for the harm that has been done.

Very truly yours,
CHESTER B. MUROSKI
President Judge
11th Judicial District of Pennsylvania
Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County

6.

Maureen A. Goryl
312 Walnut Street
Luzerne, Pa. 18709
August 18, 2009

Mr. Leonard R. Bogart
U.S. Probation Office
P.O. Box 19
Scranton, Pa. 18501

Mr. Bogart,

I am writing to you on behalf of my son, David Goryl, and our family. David was 12 years old when he was sent to Camp Adams for a rock throwing incident that involved two brothers and my son. At the time, our parish priest was a friend of Judge Ciavarella's and offered to speak to him on my son's behalf. The priest was told that Judge Ciavarella was going to send my son away to make an example of him because he was a Boy Scout with a commendation from Gov. Tom Ridge.

Throughout our ordeal we were never advised of my son's rights including a right to an attorney. My husband and I specifically asked if we needed a lawyer during the intake hearing. We were told no. Since it was my son's first run-in with the legal system he was probably going to get probation. My husband and I did get an attorney after the intake hearing but before the trial. Our attorney, Louis Sciandra, met with us and took down our information. We also gave him all the paper work from the juvenile department. He told us he would look it over and would check out where the incident happened as we all talk to the persons involved in the incident. He never did that. When it was time for my son's hearing in front of Judge Ciavarella, the judge ranted and raved about my son being a terrorist let loose on the streets of Luzerne County. He said almost nothing to the two other boys (ages 13 and 7). The entire hearing took less than 5 minutes — the courtroom was filled and the Judge Ciavarella never conducted a colloquy. No one was allowed to say anything, including our lawyer. We had some documents prepared to give the Judge on David's behalf, one of which was the Commendation. He picked out the Commendation and used it to ridicule my son. David was handcuffed and shackled and lead away. My husband and I and the rest of our family stood there in shock. I fainted in the courtroom and they had to clear it. David was sent to Camp Adams for 35 days. He was never advised of his rights, in fact, while he was in Camp Adams he developed a medical emergency. Our pediatrician's office called me to tell me about it. When I called the Camp to ask to speak to my son they wouldn't let me talk to him. I called Sandra Brulo to ask her to speak to my son and told her that he had rights. She answered me "You're son has no rights, he gave them up when he decided to become a criminal." During this time, my husband was undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. The stress was affecting his treatment. Dr. David Greenwald wrote to Judge Ciavarella asking him to possibly put David on house

arrest or perhaps release him a little early from Camp Adams. We received a letter back from Judge Ciavarella saying the request was denied. When he was released from Camp Adams he was on probation for 9 months and was also give community service.

David is now 19 years old. He became an Eagle Scout, graduated from high school, and has a job. We are very proud of him! I know you hear this all the time, but David did not throw the rock in the above mentioned incident. The older boy admitted to it after the fact.

We are trying to put this behind us, but it is very difficult. WE THOUGHT WE MIGHT RECEIVE SOME JUSTICE WHEN SEVERAL of the lawyers and the Juvenile Law Firm decided to file their lawsuits. As it turns out, we couldn't file suit because David's case occurred in August 2002 and because he was sent to Camp Adams and not the Pittston Juvenile Center.

I am writing you this letter to ask you to please consider my son, David, and all the other children we were sentenced by Judge Ciavarella during his tenure as judge from 1996 to 2008. It is my belief that if he was taking kickbacks in 2003-2008, he was probably takking kickbacks in 1996-2002. Camp Adams was never investigated as far as I know, however during the year my son was sent there (2002), most of the kids that were placed were put in Camp Adams. It is interesting to note that the Juvenile Facility in Wilkes-Barre on Water Street was still being used at the time my son was sent to Camp Adams. Why wasn't that being used? What did Judge Ciavarella have to gain by sending kids to Camp Adams? As you look over all the evidence you have so far, I ask you to think about this letter. Maybe we could talk to you. Maybe all the other kids sent away to Camp Adams between 1996-2003 could get to voice their experences. I think that would only be fair! Please consider this when you decide on a sentence for judge Ciavarella. A trial would also be a good idea. It would give everyone some sense of the horrendous injustice that was perpetuated on my son and all the others who were victims of Judge Mark Ciavarella's form of justice.

Thank you for taking the time to read this rather lengthy letter.

Sincerely,
Maureen Goryl (Maureeng312@aol.com)

8.

(handwritten)

8/5/11

Your Honorable Judge Kosik,

I am writing this on behalf of my son, Ryan Ahearn. He was one of the "cash for kids."

A little background about him. He was the product of a deadbeat dad. His dad's girlfriend belittled him. He loved bike riding and skate boarding. Later, he loved snow boarding.

When he was in 6th grade he was called into the Pittston police station and told he had been writing graffiti all over Pittston. He admitted he wrote on a dumpster the word Phish. He had his friends were seen in front of Judge Ciavarella.

That is when his life went from happy to total depression.

He was labeled "one of those kids" by teachers and even family. In 9th grade he was sentenced to probation for the graffiti and could not be involved in sports which is his life.

At the sentencing Judge Ciavarella said he should be sentenced to 1 day at Camp Adams for every dollar of damage. The dumpster worth was \$1,800.00 (By the way, the dumpster is still there without anything being done to it) I passed out thinking he would be there for 1800 days.

He had to report to a probation officer every day, be home by 6 PM, no sports or sporting events, and class at CYC. Thank God his lawyer negotiated this.

Now he is 18 years old and is angry that his youth was taken from him.

The papers are saying that 5,000 kids is too large a number of those who were affected by Judge Ciavarella's actions.

When you take into consideration entire families, friends and potential employers, neighbors, classmates, teachers and on, and on that judged these kids, the numbers are low.

Judge Ciavarella has not displayed one ounce of remorse. He should spend the rest of his life realizing all the harm he caused these children. Our area will never be the same. He has disgraced Luzerne County and its judicial system. Honestly, I do not feel he has the right to live a happy life! Not after all he has done.

Sincerely,
Donna M. Ahearn
570-212-2348
389 North Main St
Pittston PA 18640

9.

(Handwritten, sent to Kosik's Moscow home.)

3-11-11

Dear Your Honor,

My name is Sandy Fonzo. I'm the woman, the mother, who confronted the ex-Judge Ciavarella after his trial.

I am sorry if you feel I am invading your privacy at home, but I have an overwhelming need to get my message directly to you, from one human being to another.

Your honor, I have been through hell and back because of this man for over 8 years. He has made sure, from the beginning, that my fight for my child, always just hit a wall.

I have felt like a failure as a parent, hopeless, helpless, and every other Godforsaken emotion there is. I watched as my son fell deeper and deeper into despair and spiral down a bleak path — all due to the negative impact this man has placed on him. No one would help — no one would step up — Ciavarella had his hands in it all!

He has taken everything from me! That day on the courthouse steps, it couldn't be contained any longer — I just exploded.

Please!! I beg you with everything I have left!! Show these kids and families that there is justice!!

This is an American travesty!! These are all of our children — our future generation of judges, lawyers, police officers...

How do they recover??

They can begin to recover by showing them that the bad guy who wrangled them so is paying the consequence.

They will then have a fresh start. They need to know that they were not the bad ones... they were only kids!!

Ciavarella was the adult here!! He was the bad one!!

Show them that the "Bad guy" will be held accountable for his actions.

Your Honor, my son and all of these children were robbed of their well-being by Ciavarella.

He should be punished harder than any other — because he abused his power!! Our children's best interest is not what mattered to him — he had an ulterior motive! GREED!

Please send the message out that there is justice!!

Send the message out of CHANGE!!

Send the message to all others in authority that THIS CAN NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN!! ANYWHERE!!

Oh God... Judge Kosik!! I cry so hard... writing this — while sitting at my son's gravesite!! Please let justice prevail in the end!!

It's not fair that we have to sit back and watch him play these legal game any longer... Especially since this is our money that he's using for this nonsense. We don't want to worry about a loophole.

He's had 2 years already — our children had 1 minute!! And that minute meant nothing to him!

He needs to be taken out of society. Maybe then — after plenty of time to reflect — just maybe — someday — he will at least tell us "I am sorry"!!

Your honor, he killed my baby — my one and only son, my world, my life, MY EVERYTHING!!

Please don't let him get away with this!!

Sentence him to prison for the maximum sentence allowed by law!

Then maybe we can all breathe a little easier and maybe even begin to heal.

With all my heart and soul,

Sandra D. Fonzo
Ed's mom forever!

12.

August 7, 2009

District Judge Edwin Kosik
235 N. Washington Ave.
Scranton, PA 18501

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this letter in regards to my stay in PA Child Care in Pittston after being illegally locked up by Judge Mark Ciavarella. I was put in PA Child Care without defense and without an attorney. I was charged with simple assault. I was sent to court because a teacher laid hands on me for no reason and I defended myself. When I went to court the teacher who laid hands on me came with me, as did a staff from the group home I was in at the time. Ciavarella did not listen to my defense from the teacher or the staff member, he also denied me an attorney, even though no one waived my right to an attorney. During my stay at the detention center I frequently had to wait for medical attention. The teachers and staff members were very cruel, and often didn't break up fights. When I arrived in the detention, I was placed in a dorm with 17 girls and since I was the only guy I had to wait until last for everything. While I was at the detention center, I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. There were times when I would have to wait an hour or two to receive my insulin, which really messed up my sugar levels. They would lock us in our rooms at night and we would often have to wait for hours for a staff to let us out to use the bathroom. We also weren't allowed to talk to other residents. Sometimes the staff members would restrain us just for the fun of it. I really hope that nothing like this ever happen to anyone ever again.

Sincerely,
Cody Anderson

15.

February 26, 2011

Honorable Judge Edwin M. Kosik,

I am begging you from the bottom of my heart to please give Mark Ciavarella the long hard sentence he deserves in a hell hole such as those boot camps where he loved to send juveniles. I'm begging you for 25 years or more.

My son, Shane Bly, was 13 years old when he went into an old abandoned school on the Main Street where we live in Sugar Notch on a Sunday afternoon.

He was sentenced by Mark Ciavarella to Camp Adams so much for the first offense leniency theory. One question was asked, how are your grades; he was an honor roll student. You can smart at camp. He was handcuffed and shackled in front of me and my husband.

Shane, now 22 years old, has never been the same after being at Camp Adams. He abuses drugs and alcohol and is in and out of jail. He is now serving a state sentence.

Mark Ciavarella sending Shane to a boot camp at 13 with drug dealers, gang members and violent criminals killed Shane and killed our family. Mark Ciavarella never even sent someone to check into what kind of home Shane was living in. Shane has a loving mother, father, sister and brother. Shane has his own room, food, clothing, anything he wanted within reason. He also had discipline.

Our family suffers every day so again I'm begging that he gets more than 25 years. I also believe he should have gone straight to prison and been handcuffed and shackled in front of his family.

Sincerely,

Linda,
Kevin Sr.,
Janine, 27 years old, sister
and Kevin, 19 year old, brother, Bly
Sugar Notch, Pa.

16.

2/23/2011

United States District Court
Middle District of Pennsylvania
William J. Nealon Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse
235 North Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 856
Scranton, Pa. 18501-0856
Chambers of Judge Edwin M. Kosik

Dear Judge Kosik:

I was one of the “kids for cash” I went away for 13 months for a first time offense when I was 15. I spent some time at Pa. Child Care and Camp Adams but most of that time was at Glen Mills which was torture. I plead guilty without benefit of an attorney because I was. I never dreamed I’d be taken out in handcuffs and shackles and not get to say good-bye to my parents. I was promised a GED and classes but that didn’t happen. When my mom insisted on a class schedule and grades, one was fabricated. The staff there beat on you so I couldn’t really tell my Mom what was happening or it would be worse. We were forced to sit on the floor for hours with knees tucked under our chins and staring forward. Anyway, I did my time and paid restitution — I took accountability. Now it’s Ciavarella’s turn to do the same. I really wanted to see him taken out in handcuffs and shackles just like I was. He’s still claiming that he’s not guilty. He isn’t sorry about anything.

I’m 19 now and can not go to college or go in the service because of my record. I’m still waiting for my record to be expunged so that I can get on with my life. I haven’t even been able to find a minimum wage job in this economy because I have no experience and a record. No one except those that have lived it can understand the enormity of the effect this one person has had on so many lives.

I’m praying that you throw the book at Ciavarella and give him the maximum. He was all about zero tolerance so he deserves the same zero tolerance.

Sincerely,
David James Cressman

2/23/2011

United States District Court
Middle District of Pennsylvania
William J. Nealon Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse

235 North Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 856
Scranton, Pa. 18501-0856
Chambers of Judge Edwin M. Kosik

Dear Judge Kosik:

As a very concerned citizen of the ongoing corruption Luzerne County, I was distraught over the statements made by Al Flora & Ciavarella on Friday when found guilty of 12 felony counts. They brazenly alleged that they won the case and there was never any “kids for cash”. I am the parent of one of those “kids” and he was so upset over those remarks and the fact that he got to walk out of the courtroom to go home with family while he was shackled & handcuffed and never even got to say goodbye.

Please, please sentence this arrogant, egotistical, sorry excuse for judge to the **maximum** sentence. He has shown no remorse, compassion or accountability. Only you can make him accountable and restore some sense of justice to the citizens of Luzerne County — especially the children.

Respectfully,
Rosemarie Cressman
Shickshinny, Pa.

(handwritten)

P.S. You have no idea just how much emotional healing would be done for these kids just to see him taken out of court in handcuffs at sentencing.

EXCERPTS FROM OTHER LETTERS:

18. Robert and Susan Morgans, whose daughter was sent to Camp Adams and Pa. Child Care at 16 for what they considered a minor violation:

“As Mr. Ciavarell’s trial unfolded on the news, our anger reached the boiling point. It was ironic that he wanted and got a fair trial while denying our family the same. He was allowed to testify on his own behalf along with his family and also denied our daughter the same right. He had asked if she had anything to say, and when she responded yes, proceeded to yell at her saying ‘IF you say one word, I’ll sentence you to 90 more days!’ she did not speak out of sheer fear. He yelled to have her removed from the courtroom as if she had committed murder. We can still visualize her horrified face. Every time we hear his name or see his face, it sickens us, and angers us.”

“Mr. Ciavarella became morally, ethically and professionally bankrupt while sitting on the bench. He hurt children, families, this community, his peers and smirked through it all. We have thought long and hard about what his sentence should be. He deserves no less than the max under the law. We want justice. No more, no less. Hopefully TRUST can be restored.”

“It could have turned out very different for us. We thank God everyday that our daughter is still with us. Some were not as fortunate. He should be made to face every victim, even if it takes years and hear from them how he harmed them. Maybe then he will ‘Get it’ and maybe then he’ll take the smirk from his face.”

22. Sandra Coyle (of Hanover Township), whose son, Francis, was sent to Pa. Child Care at 17 for an unspecified offense and later sent to Camp Adams for violating his probation by drinking underage:

8/4/11: “Now he wants everyone to see him as a ‘pauper,’ painting & doing odd jobs — well excuse me, but now see what it’s like to live paycheck to paycheck. He needs to pay for what he’s done & get what he deserves. I have a strong feeling that he thinks he will get off easy — but PLEASE — DO NOT LET THAT HAPPEN!!!!!!!!!!”

24.

2/20/09

Robert T. Wojack
37 Winter Street
Yatesville, Pennsylvania 18640
570-654-4901

William J. Nealon Federal Building
United States District Court
235 N Washington Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18501

Honorable Judge Edwin M. Kosik

Your honor, I am one small voice that you represent, yet mine is as important as the many thousand others. You have a huge challenge before you, but you have the opportunity to restore the public trust in our courts. The case you have before you and the sentencing of two Luzerne County judges is of paramount importance to the people you serve and the trust they must have in our system. This is why I am writing this letter of appeal, to ask you to search the deepest veins of your soul and find reason not to let these two judges off lightly.

Judges Ciavarella and Conahan have committed the most serious crime against the people, they turned their courtrooms and their power into a business for profit at the expense of children. They have disgraced the office they held and they have disgraced the robes you all wear. To the very day of their hearing before you, they displayed a lack of respect for me and you. Judge Conahan was able to withdraw pension money from his account in January which would have been forfeited under the law if a guilty plea was in place. Judge Ciavarella filed a lawsuit against Luzerne County to protect the jobs of his friends and relatives, costing more misuse of taxpayer dollars.

I firmly believe that elected officials should be held to a higher standard and the punishment for crimes that they commit against the people using the public trust as their weapon should also be of a higher standard. This is why I appeal to you to hold these two men to a higher standard and a higher sentence. Seven and a third years and some forfeiture of wealth is not severe enough punishment to begin the healing of the public trust.

Sincerely,
Robert Wojack

Kosik's response:

February 20, 2009

Robert Wojack
37 Winter Street
Yatesville PA 18640

Dear Mr. Wojack,

Thank you for your letter and expressed concerns over the corruption which has come to light in Luzerne County, and most seriously with the courts.

My personal opinions are in complete sympathy with those you express. The only difference is that my personal beliefs cannot guide my responsibility and judgments.

As you know, the government has entered into an agreement with the defense with regard to the sentence which is binding if neither side rejects it. According to the government, this resulted because of the legally questionable Count I of the indictment. To proceed, it would result in litigation and appeals which could extend any finality in the case for at least one year. I need to determine if the government's reasoning is correct, and I must do so as detached as possible.

I am not sure we have seen the end of many transgressions in your county.

Sincerely,
Edwin M. Kosik
United States District Judge

Kosik response to Feb. 26, 2009 letter from retired Attorney George A. Spohrer of Dallas, Pa., who said he became "physically ill" when he heard about the plea agreement and urged a stiffer punishment:

March 2, 2009

George A. Spohrer, Esq.
116 Orchard East
Dallas, PA 18612-1819

Dear George,

Thank you for your letter and frank expressions. If personal opinions were our only guide, we are on the same page.

In 1949, when I first applied to law school, the Luzerne County Bench was first among county courts in Pennsylvania. *What a fall!* Francis Bacon, in his essay on "Judicature" in writing about judges wrote that above all things, integrity is their lot and proper virtue; the landmark, and he that removes it corrupts the fountain.

The prosecution stated the plea bargain was reached because of some legal uncertainties in a law which prohibits corrupting public service. To litigate the uncertainties before finality would result in extending the presumption of innocence for at least a year. Accordingly, they claim to have been guided by the need of closure.

George, you have always had my respect since the day of that pro bono murder case.

Very truly yours,
Edwin M. Kosik