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OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

The terror that is perpetrated against predominantly blacks and Latinos in the streets of New York by the police “force” should be checked at the steps of the courthouse, but it is not. We call it **Judicial Obstruction of Justice** because one should expect to find justice in the courtroom, but it is obstructed and further frustrated by judicial attitudes and actions.

From the fixing of bail to hearings to suppress often illegally obtained evidence, to the trial of a case, there is too often a presumption of proper conduct attributed to the police “force”. The accused may appear before a judge, obviously injured, yet many judges ignore the reality of police violence in New York City and often, by their decision, seem to blame the accused for causing the police to injure him/her.

The skills and passion necessary to expose these blatant forms of obstruction of justice is a project the New York City chapter will undertake. We will start by reaching out to our colleagues and supporters across the country — lawyers, law graduates, law students — to develop strategies for addressing this problem, which unfortunately is not limited to the courts in New York City. Additionally, we will highlight this issue through CLE programs and free forums, and through electronic technology, including webinars and videos.

The premise of any change in a system — be it criminal, educational, housing or other areas — is to get the people involved. Therefore, we will continue to sponsor annual Community Law Day, get the people informed, involved and motivated to help make a discernible difference. We will ask for volunteers to spend some time in selected courtrooms to make observations on how the accused and their advocates are treated.

We invite you to join us in developing strategies for change. Contact us to participate and support our crucial work for our basic rights.