



Letter: Justice Cordy: pleased book on judges popular abroad too

By: Mass. Lawyers Weekly Staff ◉ December 15, 2016

To the editor:

Recently on these pages, Robert Brink, director of the Social Law Library and vice president of the Flaschner Judicial Institute, wrote an article about a modest book written by the late Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Edward F. Hennessey, titled "Excellent Judges" (op-ed: "Excellent judges: a description and prescription," Nov. 28).

It is a Flaschner publication and may be one of the very best books ever written of what qualities make an "excellent judge." Although initially published in 1997, its advice to judges and those involved in the selection of judges is timeless — and without geographic limits.

I am a frequent user and promoter of the book and its principles in my many travels abroad. I have distributed it to more than a dozen countries, in both English and its Russian translation. It is just one of the many incredible resources that the Flaschner Judicial Institute can provide to judges both foreign and domestic.

In the article, my attention was particularly drawn to its reference to a recent request from Ukraine for permission to translate the book into Ukrainian and to distribute it to Ukrainian judges, lawyers, academics and government officials.

I called Robert Brink and learned that the request had come from a lawyer at a law firm in Kyiv whose founder is a leader in the country's efforts to reform the judiciary there. Not coincidentally, in September, I spoke at a judicial reform conference in Kyiv, sponsored by that law firm and had provided a copy of the Hennessey book to the very lawyer who had now requested to translate and publish it.

Mission accomplished, thanks to the Flaschner Institute and its extraordinary collection of learning materials.

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The writer recently retired from the Supreme Judicial Court bench. He practices in Boston.

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