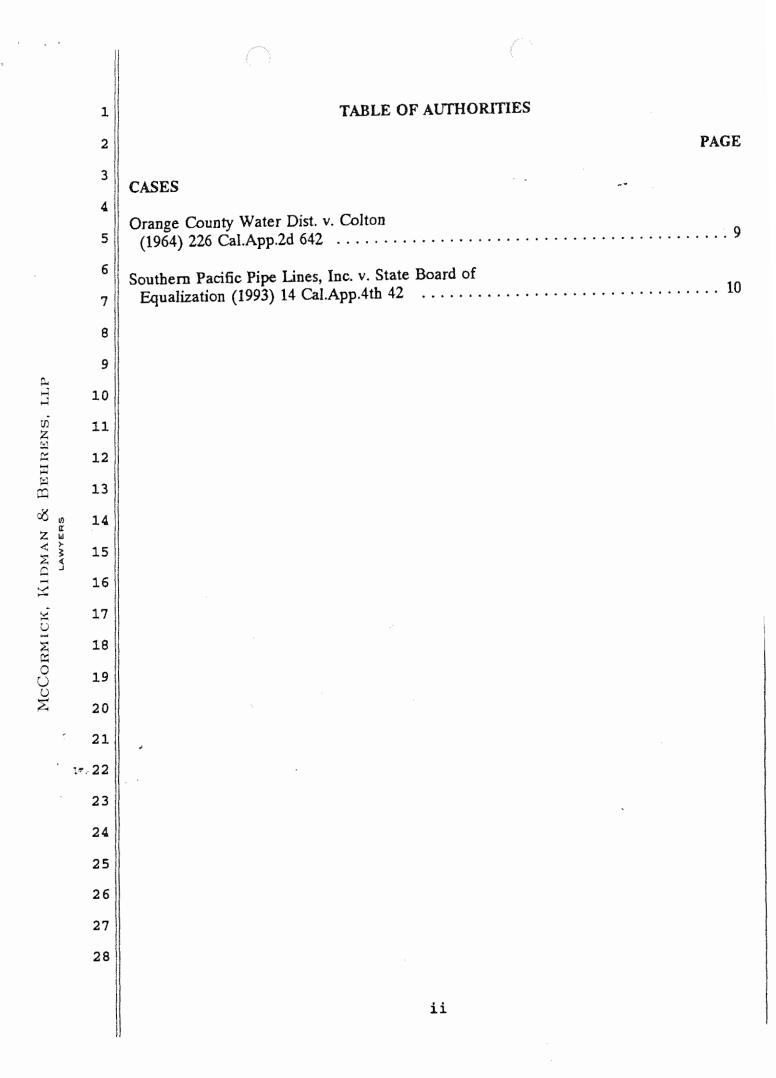
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, LLP	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	MCCORMICK, KIDMAN & BEHRENS, I ARTHUR G. KIDMAN, Bar No. 61719 DAVID D. BOYER, Bar No. 144697 695 Town Center Drive, Suite 1400 Costa Mesa, California 92626-1924 (714) 755-3100 Attorneys for Defendants MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT	LLP RECEIVED APR 2 1 1997 WATERMASTER SERVICES
	8	SUPERIOR COURT OF T	HE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
	9	FOR THE COUNTY	OF SAN BERNARDINO
	10		
RENS	11	CHINO BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER)	CASE NO. RCV 51010
Behrens	12 13	DISTRICT,	MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT'S RESPONSE TO COURT'S ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE RE: APPOINTMENT OF ANN SCHNEIDER AS REFEREE AND ADOPTION OF COURT'S TENTATIVE RULING DATE: April 29, 1997 TIME: 1:30 p.m. DEPT: H
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KIDMAN S Lawyers	15	v.) CITY OF CHINO, et al.,) Defendants.)	
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МсСокміс	18 19		SPECIALLY ASSIGNED TO THE
McC	20		HONORABLE JUDGE J. MICHAEL GUNN
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INTRODUCTION

The groundwater producers in the Chino Basin have an obvious, direct and undeniable pecuniary interest in decisions of the Watermaster, which are mandated under the Judgment. As a result of this direct pecuniary interest, these producers should not sit on a Watermaster board, much less constitute a voting majority of that board, as is contemplated by the underlying motion of the Advisory Committee. The interests of the public in the Basin are too great to allow even the possibility that decisions by the Watermaster will be perverted by the pecuniary interests of the producers. (See Declarations of Senator Ruben Ayala [filed March 4, 1997] and P. Joseph Grindstaff, attached to Opposition to Chino Basin Watermaster's Motion, filed March 5, 1997.)

MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT supports the court's appointment of Ann Schneider as referee to investigate and provide recommendations upon the respective roles to be played by the Watermaster and the Advisory Committee, as well as upon water quality and quantity issues in the Basin. To allow Ms. Schneider a complete opportunity to fully investigate and report upon these issues, it is imperative that neither the court nor any party take any action that will change the status quo. Otherwise the court risks tieing Ms. Schneider's hands. Consequently, MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT also supports the continuation of Chino Basin Municipal Water District as interim Watermaster.

For this reason, MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT also requests that the court not rule upon the motion of the Advisory Committee seeking to disallow the expenses of the independent audit. The court's ruling upon this motion will depend upon whether the retention of an independent accounting firm by the Watermaster requires Advisory Committee approval under the Judgment. Clearly this issue overlaps with Ms. Schneider's recommendations concerning the respective powers and roles of the Watermaster and the Advisory Committee.

For this same reason, MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT requests that the court remove from its order any statement to the effect that the Advisory Committee is the "policy

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making body in the Basin." This statement is contrary to the Judgment which specifically 1 provides that the Watermaster is to develop an optimum basin management program for the 2 Basin. (Judgment, ¶ 41, p. 23.) Furthermore, as this statement by the court relates to the 3 respective roles of the Watermaster and the Advisory Committee, the court should not 4 render any opinion on this issue until Anne Schneider has submitted her recommendations. 5

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GOOD CAUSE EXISTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A REFEREE RESIDING OUTSIDE OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

This litigation and the resulting Judgment occurred because of a serious overproduction of water in the Chino Basin since the 1950s, causing significant water quantity and quality problems for the Basin. The overdraft not only increased the cost and threatened the supply of water producers, but it put at risk the very health and safety of every member of the public. Moreover, the overdraft may have constituted an unreasonable method of use of water in violation of Article X, Section 2 of the California Constitution.

The Judgment created a Watermaster. The Watermaster, among other things, 15 collects assessments from each producer of the Basin based upon that producer's amount 16 of production. That assessment is used to replenish water supplies, as well as to implement 17 measures to protect, maintain and improve water quality. The Watermaster is vested with 18 both the duty and the power to develop an optimum basin management program, with advice from the Advisory and Pool Committees. (Judgment, ¶ 41, p. 23.) Obviously, water management programs create costs for the producers, which in turn creates conflicting interests as to program choices and cost apportionment.

Most of the water quality issues for the Chino Basin involve problems with nitrate 23 contamination, which is manifested, but may not be caused in the southern end of the Basin. 24 The northern water producers, on the other hand, use the largest share of water and have 25 the least incentive to strictly account for water losses and to be responsible for water 26 degradation. (See Declaration of P. Joseph Grindstaff.) 27

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Given that the water quality and quantity in the northern end of the Basin is not

significantly lowered by the current overdraft, producers on the northern end of the Basin 1 have little financial incentive to involve themselves in water quantity or quality improvement 2 of the Basin, and have a significant financial incentive to oppose apportionment of the costs 3 among all producers for an effective all basin management program. (Decl. of P. Joseph 4 Grindstaff.) These northern producers have great incentive to maximize pumping from the 5 Basin, as they can pump from an area where the water is clean and plentiful. In that they pump the most water from the Basin, they stand to pay the highest assessments under the Judgment and have the greatest number of votes in the Advisory Committee. Thus the same producers who have a financial incentive to oppose increased cost of basin management plans to benefit the entire Basin, also have the ability to block any activity within the Advisory Committee directed toward Basin cleanup or replenishment.

For fifteen years these controlling producers have steadily undermined the 12 Watermaster and usurped Watermaster authority to the Advisory Committee in the 13 implementation of basin management activities, by asserting that an 80 percent vote from 14 the Advisory Committee on any subject was mandate to the Watermaster. To comment the 15 take-over of Watermaster, the Advisory Committee hired the law firm of Nossaman, 16 Guthner, Knox & Elliott, LLP, and thereafter sought to replace the Watermaster with the 17 Advisory Committee itself and later with a nine-member board of producers. 18

In bringing its second nine-member board motion before the court, as well as the 19 motion to disallow audit expenses, the Advisory Committee also challenges whether the 20 Watermaster has any role in Basin management. The Advisory Committee argues that, with 21 the assistance of the newly emancipated watermaster services staff, it is the policy-making 17/22 body for the Basin. In order to confuse this court, the Advisory Committee has raised spurious concerns regarding watermaster services staff, an entity not identified in the Judgment.¹ Now, the Advisory Committee is using these same arguments to support an improper motion to appoint an interim Watermaster.

> It is interesting to note that these concerns were never raised in the initial motion or in any of the preceding motions by the Advisory Committee seeking to replace the current Watermaster.

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1 Good cause also exists for the appointment of a referee residing outside of San Bernardino County. The parties opposing an apportionment of whole Basin management 2 costs are economically large and politically powerful, and stand to benefit with the 3 appointment of a board of water producers as Watermaster. As their current actions reveal, 4 they will stop at little to prevent an effective basin management plan from being 5 implemented. 6

To ask any attorney practicing in San Bernardino County to act as referee and not to be influenced or biased by these parties is asking the improbable. Furthermore, as the parties in this matter are motivated greatly by their geographical location (i.e., northern vs. southern end of the Basin), similar biases may exist with a referee residing within the basin area. Certainly, the appearance of bias would exist.

The concerns are lessened greatly by the appointment of a referee residing outside of the Basin area. This clearly constitutes "good cause" for such an appointment.

III

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE COURT MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO UNTIL ANNE SCHNEIDER HAS SUBMITTED HER RECOMMENDATIONS

The court's tentative ruling suggests that Anne Schneider conduct "a thorough review of the checks and balances contained in the 1978 judgment, an interpretation of the phrase 'discretionary determinations' used in paragraph 38, subdivision (b) of the judgment, and a delineation of the functions of the Watermaster and the Advisory Committee." (Tentative Ruling, p.13) The tentative ruling also notes the importance of ensuring that the referee is impartial. (Id.)

If the court issues any edict or allows a party to take any action involving the above 23 described issues before the referee submits her recommendations, the referee cannot help but be influenced. All decisions regarding the above issues should be left in abeyance until the referee has submitted her recommendations to ensure her complete objectivity.

Consequently, the court should submit to the referee for investigation and 27 recommendation the motion to disallow auditor expenses and the motion to appoint an 28

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1	interim Watermaster. Additionally, the court should refrain from placing in its order				
2	appointing a referee any statement concerning the relationship between the Watermaster				
3	and the Advisory Committee or indicating which of those entities is the policy maker for the				
4	Basin.				
5	IV				
6	THE COURT SHOULD DELETE THE STATEMENTS IN THE INTENDED				
7	DECISION THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS THE				
8	POLICY-MAKING BODY FOR THE BASIN				
9	A. The Watermaster is the Policy-Making Body Under the Judgment.				
10	The Judgment clearly states that:				
11	We want the string of the Advisory and Bool Committees is				
12	Watermaster, with the advice of the Advisory and Pool Committees, is granted discretionary powers in order to develop an optimum basin manage-				
13	ment program for Chino Basin, including both water quantity and quality considerations. (Judgment, \P 41, p. 23)				
14	There is no question from this paragraph that Watermaster is to take the lead in the				
15	development of an optimum basin management program.				
16	The preceding paragraph of the Judgment notes:				
17					
18	It is essential that this Physical Solution provide maximum flexibility and adaptability in order that Watermaster and the Court may be free to use				
19	existing and future technological, social, institutional and economic options,				
20	in order to maximize beneficial use of the waters of Chino Basin $($ Judgment, ¶ 40, p. 23 $)$				
21	There is no mention of the Advisory Committee in the above paragraph. In fact				
* 22	when one reviews the first three paragraphs of the Physical Solution portion of the				
23	Judgment (Article IV), there should be no doubt that the Watermaster is intended to be the				
24	policy maker for the Basins.				
25	B. <u>Statements in Judge Turner's 1989 Ruling Have Been Misconstrued</u> .				
26	The Advisory Committee is suggesting that Judge Turner interpreted the Judgment				
27	as providing for the Advisory Committee to act as the "policy making group for the Basin"				
28	in his 1989 ruling. When one reads that ruling in its entirety, however, it becomes clear that				
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Judge Turner intended nothing of the sort by his ruling. 1

Judge Turner's ruling was the result of motions filed by the City of Chino, the City 2 of Norco, and the San Bernardino County Water Works. These motions sought review of 3 various Watermaster actions, including the adequacy of its data gathering, the optimum 4 basin management program, the validity of the exchange agreements, the method and timing 5 of the distribution of the Agricultural Pool transfer, and Ontario's storage of 10,000 acre б feet of water. 7

The Watermaster and the Advisory Committee acted together to oppose these 8 motions. No issue was before the court at that time concerning the proper relationship 9 between the Watermaster and the Advisory Committee, or concerning their respective roles 10 and duties. Thus, any statement made by the court concerning these issues are, at most, 11 dicta. 12

The court's ruling, which denied of the motions, was based solely upon the moving 13 parties' failure to properly bring these issues before their pool committee and the Advisory Committee and, thereafter, before the Watermaster. The ruling was analogous to a finding 15 of a failure to exhaust administrative remedies. The court, however, was clearly impressed 16 that substantive issues were raised concerning deteriorating water quality in the basin.

> The Court is convinced that there are some legitimate concerns in the way of long-range planning for improved quality of the water of the basin and for an equitable method of spreading the costs of improving the quality. The motion filed by the Moving Parties has served to point out these problems and bring them to the surface. (Statement of Decision and Order, etc., dated July 31, 1989, p. 15.)

The Declaration of J. Grindstaff shows these same issues remain today and have been 23 exacerbated. 24

In Context, Judge Turner's Ruling Identifies the Advisory Committee as the Policy-C. 25 Making Group vis-á-vis Pool Committees. 26

The court dedicated the first three pages of its ruling to a discussion of the 27 background of the Judgment and of the entities created by the Judgment. On page three 28

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of the ruling the court noted:

The Advisory Committee takes actions on all matters considered by the various pools and submits its recommendations to the Watermaster. The Advisory Committee is the policy making group for the Basin. Any action approved by 80 percent or more of the Advisory Committee constitutes a mandate for action by the Watermaster consistent therewith. (Statement of Decision and Order, etc., p. 3.)

Focusing on the second sentence of that paragraph, the Advisory Committee argues that it is the sole policy maker for the Chino Basin. This paragraph, however, is clearly dicta and not outcome determinative. Thus, it is not binding upon the parties.

More importantly, this paragraph does not establish that the Advisory Committee has any policy making role in its relationship to the Watermaster. Rather, the second sentence of that paragraph is referring to the sentence and the paragraph immediately preceding it.² In other words, it is stating that as between the various pool committees and the Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee is the central policy-making body.³

The last sentence of that paragraph simply paraphrases Paragraphs 38 and 41 of the Judgment. Those paragraphs of the Judgment state that with regard to discretionary decisions concerning the development of an optimum basin management program, an 80 vote by the Advisory Committee shall constitute a mandate to the Watermaster.

D. <u>The Advisory Committee's Reading of Judge Turner's Ruling Would Modify the</u> Judgment.

MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT's reading of Judge Turner's ruling is clearly consistent with the portion of the Judgment discussing the relationship between of the Pool Committees and the Advisory Committee:

This interpretation of Judge Turner's ruling is supported by Exhibit 4 to the Reply by the law firm of Nossaman, Guthner, Knox & Elliott, LLP. (Exhibit 4-Chino Basin Water Production Assessment Operations for 1974-75, p. 2, ¶ 4(a).)

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² Interestingly, the Advisory Committee and the City of Ontario conveniently fail to include the first sentence when quoting this paragraph from Judge Turner's past ruling.

(a) <u>Pool Committee</u>. Each Pool Committee shall have the power and responsibility for developing policy recommendations for administration of its particular pool, as created under the Physical Solution. All actions and recommendations of any Pool Committee which require Watermaster implementation shall first be noticed to the other two pools. If no objection is received in writing within thirty (30) days, such action or recommendation shall be transmitted directly to Watermaster for action. If any such objection is received, such action or recommendation shall be reported to the Advisory Committee before being transmitted to Watermaster. (Judgment, ¶ 38(a).)

Any other interpretation of Judge Turner's ruling is inconsistent with the terms of the Judgment, especially Paragraph 41. The City of Ontario recognized this fact in its previously filed Response, when it suggested that Judge Turner modified the Judgment by his ruling.

MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT is confident that Judge Turner never intended by his ruling to modify any portion of the Judgement. Moreover, had he intended such a modification, it would be invalid and void, as issues concerning modification of the Judgment were not before the court at the time of his ruling and as no party was given notice that the court was considering modifying the Judgment. (See Orange County Water Dist. v. Colton (1964) 226 Cal.App.2d 642.)

There is no question that the Judgment vested the Watermaster with the powers of policy maker for the Chino Basin. When policy making involves the development of an optimum basin management program for the Basin, Paragraph 38 gives the Advisory Committee the power of mandate over the Watermaster if the Advisory Committee receives 80 votes or more of its members. Statements to the contrary in the intended decision should be deleted.

V

THE COURT SHOULD DELETE REFERENCES IN THE INTENDED DECISION CONCERNING THE ABILITY OF WATERMASTER TO CONDUCT AN INDEPENDENT AUDIT

Article V of the Judgment is titled "Watermaster" and describes some of the duties and powers of the Watermaster. These duties and powers include making and adopting

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rules and regulations (¶ 18), acquiring facilities (¶ 19), employing experts (¶ 20), installing
and maintaining measuring devices (¶ 21), levying and collecting assessments (¶ 22),
investing funds (¶ 23), borrowing funds (¶ 24), entering into contracts for the performance
of powers granted by the Judgment (¶ 25), cooperating with other agencies (¶ 26),
undertaking relevant studies of hydrologic conditions (¶ 27), entering into groundwater
storage agreements (¶ 28), accounting for stored water (¶ 29), and preparing an annual
administrative budget (¶ 30).

Of the enumerated powers and duties, some note Advisory Committee involvement, while others do not. Under the maxim of *expressio unius est exclusio alterius* ("the expression of one thing is the exclusion of another"), omission of Advisory Committee involvement when describing a Watermaster duty or power indicates that the Judgment did not intend Advisory Committee involvement in that enumerated duty or power. (See Southern Pacific <u>Pipe Lines, Inc. v. State Board of Equalization</u> (1993) 14 Cal.App.4th 42 [Maxim applied to the interpretation of a judgment].)

As the paragraph providing for the retention of experts by the Watermaster omits mention of the Advisory Committee, under this maxim the Advisory Committee has no control over the Watermaster's retention of experts. Thus, Watermaster's retention of an accounting firm to conduct an independent audit is an allowed expense.

It has been argued previously that Paragraph 38(b) of the Judgment provides for mandate power by the Advisory Committee over the Watermaster on all decisions. Paragraph 38(b), however, only gives the Advisory Committee mandate power over "discretionary determinations." Paragraph 41 of the Judgment defines discretionary powers of the Watermaster as involving the development of "an optimum basin management program for Chino Basin." Thus, "discretionary determinations" do not include the retention of an accounting firm to conduct an audit.

The Court's Tentative Ruling notes that Paragraph 54 of the Judgment provides for a division of Watermaster administrative expenses into either special project expenses or general administrative expenses. As the audit is not a general administrative expense and McCormick, Kidman & Behrens, llp Lawyers 3

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as the Watermaster did not comply with the provisions concerning special project expenses,
 the court concludes that the audit is not an allowable Watermaster expense.

The use of the term "administrative" in Paragraph 54, however, is not intended to be interpreted as broadly as the court has done. Rather, Paragraph 54 refers to the expenses discussed in Paragraph 41 of the Judgment:

... Withdrawals and supplemental water replenishment of Basin Water, and the full utilization of the water resources of Chino Basin, must be subject to procedures established by and <u>administered</u> through Watermaster with the advice and assistance of the Advisory and Pool Committees composed of the affected producers. Both the quantity and quality of said water resources may thereby be preserved and the beneficial utilization of the Basin maximized. (Judgment, ¶ 41, p. 23.)

The audit conducted by the Watermaster is not an expense falling within Paragraph 54. Rather, it is an allowable expense under Paragraph 20. <u>Employment of Experts and Agents</u>.

Watermaster may employ or retain such administrative, engineering, geologic, accounting, legal or other specialized personnel and consultants as may be deemed appropriate in the carrying out of its powers and shall require appropriate bonds from all officers and employees handling Watermaster funds. Watermaster shall maintain records for purposes of allocation of costs of such services as well as of all other expenses of Watermaster administration as between the several pools established by the Physical Solution. (Judgment, \P 20, p. 13.)

Paragraph 54 was never intended to apply to every allowable expense incurred by the Watermaster. In fact, given that the Watermaster is a fiduciary, Watermaster had clear legal obligations to conduct an independent audit after an alleged attempt to embezzle its funds. Thus, the expense was legally mandated.

To rule otherwise would be to impose legal liability upon the Watermaster and allow another and often time adverse entity limit the Watermaster's ability to protect itself from that liability. This surely was never the intention of the Judgment.

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VI

CONCLUSION

Clearly, judicial economy is served by the appointment of a referee to investigate and report upon the proper relationship among the Watermaster, the Advisory Committee, the water production parties and the public interest. Good cause clearly exists for appointing a referee residing outside of San Bernardino County.

It is clear that none of the contested issues before the court is simple and they all are interrelated. A decision upon one of these issues, limits the referee's flexibility on another issue. For these reasons MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT respectfully requests that the court refrain from issuing any order at this time other than the appointment of Anne Schneider as referee, and, thereafter, allow Anne Schneider to investigate and report to the court concerning the matters currently at issue.

DATE: April 18, 1997

MCCORMICK, KIDMAN & BEHRENS, LLP ARTHUR G. KIDMAN DAVID D. BOYER

hidman By:

ARTHUR G. KIDMAN Attorneys for Defendants MONTE VISTA WATER DISTRICT

1		PROOF OF SERVICE		
2	STATE	STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ORANGE		
3 4	of 18 an Drive, S	I am employed in the County of Orange, State of California. Lam over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action; my business address is: 695 Town Center Drive, Suite 1400, Costa Mesa, California 92626-1924.		
6 7 8	RE: AP	On <u>April 18, 1997</u> , I served the foregoing document described as <u>MONTE</u> <u>WATER DISTRICT'S RESPONSE TO COURT'S ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE</u> <u>POINTMENT OF ANN SCHNEIDER AS REFEREE AND ADOPTION OF</u> <u>PS TENTATIVE RULING</u> on the interested parties in this action by placing a py thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed as follows:		
9		SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST		
10	/ <u>X</u> /	BY MAIL:		
11		As follows: I am "readily familiar" with the firm's practice of collection and		
12	/ <u>X</u> /	processing correspondence for mailing. Under that practice it would be		
13		deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on that same day with postage thereon fully prepaid at Costa Mesa, California in the ordinary course of business. I am		
14		aware that on motion of the party served, service is presumed invalid if postal cancellation date or postage meter date is more than one day after date of		
15		deposit for mailing in affidavit.		
16		Executed on April 18, 1997, at Costa Mesa, California.		
17		(CTT & TTT) I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I		
18	/ <u>X</u> /	(STATE) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct.		
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20		NORA M. BLAIR, PLS		
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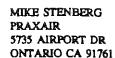
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