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Political corruption refers to impurity that occurs when an office holder or any other government employee acts in a manner aimed at enriching him/herself while in office. This has been a rampant case in New York with many allegations being leveled to different personalities within the state. One such case is that of Senator Malcolm Smith who was recently accused of plotting with officials at Rockland County and New York City to switch parties so that he could run for a Mayoral post. He, together with his counterparts, was to raise funds to facilitate this move and as such has been the case in New York since time immemorial. Nevertheless, one councilman, Larry B. Seabrook, has stood out as one of the most corrupt politician that New York ever had.

Larry Seabrook was the first African American to hold office in three different legislative levels. He was convicted of corruption on twelve different counts in 2010 and convicted in 2012 for five years and two years of supervised release afterwards. While serving in the city council, his main duties involved advocating for the rights and interests of his constituency, voting on legislative representation and the allocation of New York funds to nonprofit organizations. He was accused of embezzling funds that were meant for the projects in his community to his family and close friends. The investigations that were carried out showed that he redirected funds worth more than two million dollars that were meant for the nonprofit organizations that he had been put in charge of. It was later discovered that he also was part of a scam that diverted secret payments to his personal accounts . He mostly received this payments for influencing subcontracts. He had directed his funds to an organization that he ran to try and hide his illegal acts. This has been one of

the many cases of public officers abusing their powers. Despite the position of the legislations in New York on integrity of the people holding governments' office, the trend that was created years ago has not changed. Larry Seabrook first faced accounts of corruption in 2011 but was acquitted due to a mistrial. He was always keen on concealing his activities whereby he setup a number of NGOs on the pretext of helping the Bronx community (Weiser). These organizations, as it came to be realized, did very little in terms of developing the community. Furthermore, he installed Gloria Jones-Grant, his girlfriend, the C. E. O of most of these organizations forgetting that she did not have any proper training in handling such a position. The prosecution, during his case, pointed out that on a different occasion, Seabrook had accepted a payment of \$50, 000 to facilitate a local businessman get a contract to install boilers at the Yankee Stadium. On his defense however, he appeared cynical and even made fun of the prosecutor when he was accused of taking stray receipts at gas stations and asking for reimbursement (Weiser). He did this with full knowledge of the law where he used his power as a councilman to manipulate individuals. It is worthwhile noting that there are strict legislative guidelines that define a state officer's conduct in office. Being a custodian of the law, Seabrook became a symbol of mockery as he went against these principles that also governed him and saw himself as superior. He had risen quick into politics and fell as fast. Even with the final imprisonment of the Councilman, the plunders that he had spearheaded while at the helm became his legacy. The name Seabrook became a symbol of corruption as this became evident during one of his trials where his defense lawyer requested that he be not be addressed as “

Seabrook” since this was being used to demean him. Finally, after his evasive sentences, in July 2012, he was convicted on nine charges.

Nonetheless, this did not mark the end of political corruption in New York as police corruption and other forms of impunity have characterized the current New York political and social system.

In conclusion, most recently, and due to the increasing rate of corruption, there has been the idea of setting up a museum in Albany known as the museum of political corruption which is aimed at showcasing the history of political corruption. This goes a long way to show how intense the state of political corruption is in New York. There is definitely a dire need for change to be made within the government. Laws should also be implemented that will allow various state officials to intervene in situations where it is suspected that corruption is taking place and weed out the employees who are bringing havoc to the state and its residents. It is very clear and obvious that action is being taken from the Larry Seabrook case and all the officials should learn from this case of what can and will befall them even as they engage in corrupt activities in the government.

Works Cited

Weiser, B. Retrial in Corruption Case of Councilman Nears End. The New York Times, 2012. Retrieved on 8th December 2013, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/24/nyregion/seabrooks-retrial-on-corruption-charges-nears-end.html>