



JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION COMMISSION

212 Dickinson Street
Post Office Box 1629
Charleston, West Virginia 25326-1629
(304) 558-0169 FAX (304) 558-0831

December 11, 1997

Re: JIC Advisory Opinion 1997-32

Dear

Your request for an advisory opinion has been reviewed by the Judicial Investigation Commission. In your letter you stated that one of the organizers of a local group known as Concerned Citizens about Juvenile Crime has asked you to attend a meeting for the purpose of giving information regarding how juvenile cases are handled in magistrate court. You indicate in your letter that the organization is a study group and is trying to find out how the court system works.

To address your request the Commission reviewed the language set forth in Canon 4B of the Code of Judicial Conduct. This section of the Code states:

Canon 4. A judge shall so conduct the judge's extra-judicial activities as to minimize the risk of conflict with judicial obligations.

B. Avocational activities. - A judge may speak, write, lecture, teach, and participate in other extra-judicial activities concerning the law, the legal system, the administration of justice, and nonlegal subjects, subject to the requirements of this Code.

Based upon the language contained in this Canon, it is the opinion of the Commission that you could address the organization if it is a study group interested in learning how the court system works. You could address the group about the legal system and issues permitted by Canon 4B. If,

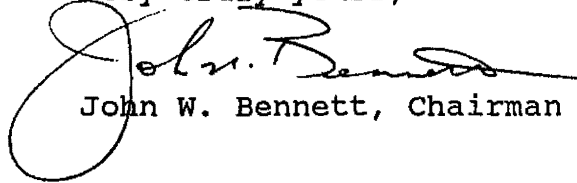
- 2 -

December 11, 1997

however, the organization is an advocacy group, you should not participate in its meeting.

If you have any further question regarding this matter, do not hesitate to contact the Commission.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John W. Bennett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping initial "J".

John W. Bennett, Chairman

JWB/bl