

Judicial Inquiry Commission

800 SOUTH MCDONOUGH STREET
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MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104

September 20, 1982

Circuit Judges:

The Judicial Inquiry Commission has considered your request for an opinion concerning the following questions:

“Would it violate the Canons of Judicial Ethics for circuit and district judges to allow their names to be used as judges in newspaper advertisements or in other media in support of a candidate for the Supreme Court of Alabama?”

“Would it violate the Canons of Judicial Ethics for circuit and district judges to allow their names to be used as judges in newspaper advertisements or in other media in support of candidates for any judicial office?”

It is the opinion of the Commission that any judge of this State may engage in campaign activities in connection with a candidate for judicial office by allowing the judge's name to be used as judge in newspaper advertisements or in other media in support of a candidate for the Alabama Supreme Court or in support of any other candidate for judicial office.

This opinion is based upon Canon 7A(I) of the Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics. That canon provides that:

“... It is desirable that a judge or a candidate for election to judicial office endeavor not to be involved in the internal workings of political organizations, engage in campaign activities in connection with a political candidate other than candidates for judicial offices and not be involved in political fund solicitation other than for himself ...” (Emphasis added.)

It is clear from this provision that the admonishments of Canon 7 do not discourage participation by a judge in campaign activities such as those in question here in connection with a candidate for judicial office. However, judges should be ever mindful of Canons 1 and 2 and refrain from any activity inappropriate to his/her judicial office.

Very truly yours,

JUDICIAL INQUIRY COMMISSION