

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Inquiry Concerning a Judge,
No. 14

To: Judge Leopoldo Sanchez

It appearing that from January 3, 1961 to December 31, 1965, you were a Judge of the Municipal Court of the Los Angeles Judicial District, and that since that date to the present you have been a Judge of the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Preliminary investigation having been made, during the course of which preliminary investigation you were afforded a reasonable opportunity to present such matters as you chose, and did so, and this Commission as a result of said preliminary investigation, having concluded that formal proceedings to inquire into the charges against you should be instituted.

NOW, THEREFORE, you are hereby charged with wilful misconduct in office and with conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice that brings the judicial office into disrepute.

The specifications of the charges and the alleged facts upon which such charges are based are as follows:

COUNT ONE

You are charged in Count One with wilful misconduct in office:

A. Between December 1, 1969 and October 15, 1972, you did furnish, on a regular and weekly basis, to Joey Barnum, a bail bondsman, a large number of form documents entitled "Order for the Release of Prisoner on Bail" which were blank in all respects except for your signature. The signing of said documents was extraneous to your assigned duties. You engaged in this practice despite it being in contravention of the procedure outlined in the present Rule 18 of the Los Angeles Superior Court and its predecessor rule. You were personally advised of the existence of Rule 18 in early 1970 by the then Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, Joseph Wapner, and in the Fall of 1970, by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Charles A. Loring. In addition, a "Notice to Attorneys" signed by Judge William B. Keene dated May 1, 1969, and a letter to "All Judges of the Superior Court" signed by Judge Joseph A. Wapner dated March 4, 1970, stated the appropriate procedure to be followed in signing said documents.

B. Between December 1, 1969 and October 15, 1972, Joey Barnum, enabled to do so by your aforesaid conduct, did personally, and did cause his employees David Cetron and Carlos Hinojoso, to fill-in and complete form documents entitled "Order for the Release of Prisoner on Bail."

Joey Barnum did fix bail on, and did cause his said employees to fix bail on, the blank and presigned documents, without judicial authority, and did use said documents to secure the release of prisoners who had been arrested for felonies and who were in the custody of law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County.

C. Between December 1, 1969 and October 15, 1972, Joey Barnum did personally, and did cause his employees, David Cetron and Carlos Hinojoso, to sell to independent bail bondsmen in Los Angeles County, documents entitled "Order for the Release of Prisoner on Bail" which had been pre-signed in blank by you. Joey Barnum and said employees filled in, completed, and fixed bail on said documents without judicial authority. The said documents were sold to independent bail bondsmen for the purpose of securing the release on bail of prisoners who were arrested for felonies and who were in the custody of law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County.

D. Prior to and on April 16, 1972, you did deliver to Joey Barnum two form documents entitled "Order for the Release of Prisoner on Bail" which were pre-signed in blank by you. Joey Barnum did cause his employee, David Cetron, to fill-in and complete said documents and to fix bail without judicial authority, and to deliver and present said documents to the Los Angeles Police Department for the purpose of securing the release on bail of Frank Linder and Harold Roy Welch who were felony arrestees.

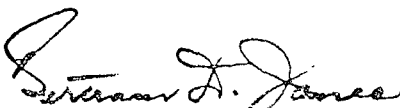
COUNT TWO

For a further and separate cause of action, you are also charged in Count Two with conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice that brings the judicial office into disrepute. In support of this cause of action, paragraphs A through D of Count One are hereby incorporated by this reference as if fully set out herein.

You have the right to file written answer to the charges against you within 15 days after service of this notice upon you with the Commission on Judicial Qualifications, Room 3041 State Building, 350 McAllister Street, San Francisco, California 94102. Such answer must be verified, must conform in style to subdivision (c) of Rule 15 of the Rules on Appeal, and must consist of an original and 11 legible copies.

By Order of the Commission on Judicial Qualifications.

Dated: December 29, 1972


BERTRAM D. JANES
Acting Chairman