



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Professional Responsibility

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Washington, D.C. 20530

FEB 13 2004

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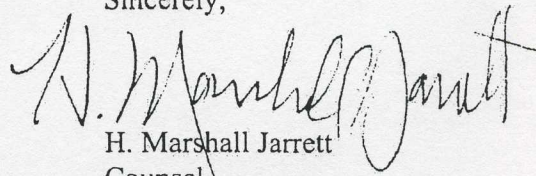
Dear Mr. Gillen:

By letter dated October 22, 2002, you requested an OPR investigation into the propriety of a press release issued on October 15, 2002 by Richard S. Thompson, then United States Attorney (USA) for the Southern District of Georgia. You claimed that the press release "unfairly besmirched" the reputations of then Governor Roy Barnes and then Special Prosecutor Peter Skandalakis by implying that there was collusion between the two in the dismissal of the state court indictment against your client, then state senator Van Streat. As you know, OPR initiated an investigation.

This Office has completed its investigation into this matter. For your information, based upon the results of our investigation, we concluded that former U. S. Attorney Thompson violated his duty under (1) 28 C.F.R. § 50.2 and USAM § 1-7.530, to refrain from making public comment on an ongoing investigation unless necessary to serve a legitimate law enforcement purpose; (2) 28 C.F.R. § 45.2, to refrain from participating in a matter that directly affected the interests of a personal friend and political ally; and (3) USAM § 1-4.410, to refrain from taking action that would interfere with or affect an election unless necessary to serve a legitimate law enforcement purpose. We further concluded that former U.S. Attorney Thompson abused his authority and violated the public trust by issuing the press release announcing the initiation of a criminal investigation for the purpose of benefitting a personal and political ally.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.

Sincerely,

  
H. Marshall Jarrett  
Counsel

cc: Richard S. Thompson, Esq.