

AIRMAIL

Mr. Ed Demar
3610 Sheridan Road
Zion, Illinois 60089

Dear Mr. Demar:

I did receive your January 19 letter as well as the current one on March 6th. Your first letter arrived the day after my departure for a week of conferences in New York and Washington. Unfortunately I'm still trying to catch up with the backlog of correspondence from January while trying to maintain some degree of control over each day's input and output. Some of this includes our own current local battles against corruption and the foot-dragging by our State Ethics Board.

I find tremendously challenging and valuable the material you sent relating to your proposed Public Integrity Commission and the support you are getting from Illinois Senator Karl E. Benson. Although I wish I had the time for careful analysis of each proposed ingredient for organization, authority and financing of the PIC, it does appear to recognize, and attempt to offset, the major corrupting pressures on governmental operations.

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals was able to find only three comprehensive state ethics codes, including ours in Louisiana. And I can tell you that the Louisiana Code, despite its large number of printed pages, is not only fraught with loopholes but is almost worthless in the hands of our legislators. We have forced it into action on some occasions, as you would expect, under such pressures they have resorted to the loopholes in the law.

Hal
FYI
EDD

With my apologies for the delay, I am returning your copy of the very informative letter to Harvey Johnson.

For its limited value, I am also sending a copy of my preliminary remarks as a discussion leader at the National Conference on Criminal Justice, during which I covered the subject of "Integrity in Government" as part of the report of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. My latest information is that their report will not be available from the Government Printing Office until about May or perhaps earlier.

Please keep me informed of progress on PIC. The recent conviction of former Governor Kerner should have created an extraordinary atmosphere favorable to something as politically earthshaking as the PIC concept.

Congratulations on having both the perception and belief necessary for this undertaking. You may recall that in my 1952 report in Chicago I did recommend a far less ambitious and complex procedure for pre-screening candidates for office.

With my very best wishes.

Cordially yours,


Aaron M. Kohn
Managing Director

AMK:cbg

Enclosure