



State of Kansas

Office of Judicial Administration

Kansas Judicial Center
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JUDICIAL ETHICS ADVISORY PANEL

September 11, 1984

Judicial Ethics Opinion JE-7

Question: Is it proper for a Kansas district judge to receive an award from a special interest bar association, e.g., defense lawyers or plaintiffs' lawyers designating the judge as "State Trial Judge of the Year"?

Answer: We are not able to answer the question with specificity. The answer depends upon the specific factual background; i.e., the criteria of selection, the reason for the selection, the occasion for the selection, and other factors.

For example, if the award is given upon the judge's retirement in honor of the judge's years of service, knowledge of the law, and integrity on the bench, the award is entirely proper.

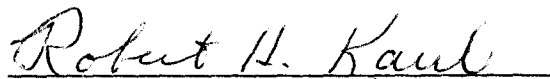
On the other hand, if the award is given by a special interest bar association group under circumstances which tend to create the impression that the judge is committed to a particular legal philosophy in accordance with that of the special interest group, then acceptance of the award is violative of Canon 2.

Canon 2A provides in pertinent part that a judge should conduct himself in a manner that assures public confidence in the impartiality of the judiciary. This is of overriding importance in the administration of justice.


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Under (d) of Rule 650, our advisory opinion speaks only to prospective conduct and does not address the ethical propriety of past conduct.


Robert H. Kaul, Chairman


John W. Brookens


Harry G. Miller