

Oliver

April 1, 1982

Henry R. Richmond
Executive Director
1000 Friends
400 Dekum Building
519 S.W. Third Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Early last month you forwarded extensive materials involving the sale of cattle to followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh by Rick Cantrell, county judge for Wasco County. Your request was that I direct the Attorney General to initiate an investigation to determine if grounds exist to convene a Grand Jury to find whether a bribe might have been offered, given or received in this transaction.

It is my understanding that this same matter was brought before the Oregon Ethics Commission in February, and that body as yet has taken no action against Judge Cantrell.

My staff has completed its review of the materials and applicable law, and has discussed the matter with Stan Long, the Deputy Attorney General.

I am reasonably certain a week has not gone by during the past three years when a citizen or group of citizens has not asked me to order the Attorney General to investigate actions of a public official which aggrieve the citizen. Most of these requests, as you can imagine, are frivolous.

We are dealing here with disputed actions of a county official with respect to a highly controversial group, whose presence has created a volatile situation in Central Oregon. Nevertheless, I have applied the same criteria in evaluating your request as I have used with respect to others. By no means am I suggesting your request is frivolous. However, the test I have used is this: Is the request accompanied by evidence which, on its face, demonstrates that the public official is following a course of action which jeopardizes the public peace, health or safety?

Henry R. Richmond
April 1, 1982
Page 2

Your request relates to a single alleged incident, not a pattern of activities.

Mr. Long concurs with my staff in the view that a gubernatorially directed investigation is not appropriate in this case, particularly since it remains within the jurisdiction of the Oregon Ethics Commission.

Sincerely,

Victor Atiyeh
Governor

VA/oc
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cc: Judge Rick Cantrell
James M. Habberstad, Esq.
Stan Long
Betty Reynolds

bcc: Denny Miles
Pat Amedeo