

BEFORE THE ARKANSAS JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE AND  
DISABILITY COMMISSION

In the matter of:

Honorable Stephen Morley	)	No. 94-163 and 96-107
Municipal Court, Traffic Division	)	
North Little Rock, Arkansas	)	FORMAL STATEMENT OF CHARGES

*Pursuant to authority granted in Amendment 66 to the Arkansas Constitution, ACA 16-10-401 thru 411 and the Rules of Procedure of the Arkansas Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission promulgated by the Arkansas Supreme Court on May 8, 1989, as amended, and at the direction of the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission (hereinafter referred to as Commission), this Formal Statement of Charges is filed. These charges allege the willful violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct, the commission of conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation and the commission of conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice and the habitual intemperance in the use of alcohol or other drugs by the Honorable Stephen Morley (hereinafter referred to as respondent). The background and facts of the Formal Statement of Charges are set forth in the following paragraphs.*

Background

1. *Respondent is now and at all times hereinafter mentioned a judge of the Municipal Court of North Little Rock, Arkansas, Traffic Division.*
2. *Respondent was first notified of complaint # 94-163 by letter dated September 1, 1994. Respondent was first notified of complaint # 96-107 by letter dated January 22, 1996. After appropriate notice, preliminary investigative hearings concerning the complaints were held. A statement of allegations was served on the respondent on November 1, 1996. An amended Statement of Allegations prepared on April 16, 1997 and served on respondent on April 22, 1997. A probable cause hearing was conducted on May 16, 1997. Respondent attended the probable cause hearing.*
3. *At the probable cause hearing on May 16, 1997, the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission by unanimous vote found there was probable cause to believe that respondents' conduct was of a nature requiring proceeding to a formal disciplinary hearing.*

Supporting Facts and Charges

CHARGES

1. *On July 11, 1994 at 2120 Lloyd Court in Little Rock, Judge Stephen Morley, of the North Little Rock Municipal Court, Traffic Division, threatened to kill a professional process server, Stephen Wilson. During that service, Morley spoke to the process server using numerous obscenities, including specifically saying to him "your dead. I will find you and I will kill you, you mother-fucker, your ass is mine". After the service, Morley stated "I am gonna get you, you sorry mother-fucker. I'll find you, I'll hunt you down and get your ass." When asked to elaborate as to what he meant, Morley replied, "yea, I'll elaborate all over your ass, you sorry cock sucker. I will get your ass, you piece of shit." Later, as the process server walked away, Morley stated, "Goodbye, you sorry mother-fucker, and remember, I'll get you! I'll catch you somewhere." Morley returned to his car, stuck his tongue out at the process server and then called him a "Mother-fucker". At this time Judge Morley was carrying a handgun in his car.*
2. *During the time he was married to his first wife, Bonne Morley Lewis, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted his wife and mentally abused her. While she was pregnant with their son, Kirk, he punched her in the face with his fists while she was trying to cover her stomach. On another occasion while she was pregnant, he punched her in the stomach. This was observed by their son, Miles. He yelled at her, called her names, and swung a fist at her. His fist hit the wall right next to her head.*
3. *During the time he was dating and later married to his second wife, Kathy Morley Sparr, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted her and mentally abused her.*
  - (a) *On approximately five occasions, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted Kathy. On one occasion while she was pregnant with Ethan, and they were living at Eagle Creek, he punched her in her stomach and tried to push her down the stairs.*
  - (b) *On an occasion while traveling, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted his wife Kathy in a Vicksburg, Mississippi motel in front of her children.*
  - (c) *On an occasion while traveling, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted his wife Kathy in the lobby of a hotel in St. Louis, Missouri. This was witnessed by her children.*
  - (d) *On November 10, 1994, at a lake in the Lakewood section of North Little*

*Rock, Judge Stephen Morley physically assaulted his wife, Kathy, by striking her in the head, face, eye, and choked her. A physical exam later that day, at the Jacksonville Rebsamen Regional Hospital emergency room, indicated Kathy had contusions on the central forehead, was sore in her left jaw, contusions lateral to the right eye, small marks on the upper left neck consistent with a finger-tip mark, and had several bruised areas over the right deltoid (shoulder).*

*(e) During the time they were married, on numerous occasions, Judge Stephen Morley cursed at her, called her "every name in the book", and was demeaning to her. These insults included calling her a "slit-licker", "cunt", "pussy", and accusing her of sleeping with her fourteen year old son. He would also punch Kathy in the head and threaten that her body would be found floating in the Arkansas River. Judge Stephen Morley also told Kathy that if he did not win reelection, he was going to kill her. Occasionally these actions occurred in the presence of Kathy's children.*

- 4. On November 10, 1994, at approximately 5:00 p.m., while Judge Stephen Morley was assaulting his wife Kathy at the lake in the Lakewood section of North Little Rock, Judge Stephen Morley also physically and verbally assaulted a youngster who was playing nearby.*
- 5. Many of the physical and mental assaults by Judge Stephen Morley occurred while he was under the influence of alcohol.*
- 6. While married to Bonne Morley Lewis, Judge Stephen Morley committed adultery with Kathy Sparr.*
- 7. In the spring of 1994, while married to Kathy Morley Sparr, Judge Stephen Morley committed adultery with Wanda Manees.*
- 8. On numerous occasions, Judge Stephen Morley would pay his child support to Bonne Morley Lewis late, or the check would be returned for insufficient funds. This was done in an attempt to harass his former wife and cause her to spend extra money. He did this to "press her buttons" and enjoy watching her become angry. Generally he would eventually pay all of the required child support.*
- 9. On at least one occasion, he attempted to obtain custody of his children by his first wife, Bonne. After Bonne had spent nearly \$10,000 to resist, Judge Stephen Morley withdrew and dismissed his request for custody. This action was taken to harass his former wife.*

10. *During the late 1980's, including the time he was serving as a municipal judge, Stephen Morley smoked marijuana and sniffed cocaine in the presence of his then wife, Bonne Morley Lewis, neighbors and friends.*
11. *On a number of occasions, while married to Kathy Morley, Judge Stephen Morley would purchase more cocaine than he could use. He would then sell the cocaine to some of his friends. These transactions were a give and take situation where those in his group of friends would sell cocaine to each other when they had more than they needed. This occurred both before and after Stephen Morley became a municipal court judge.*
12. *On one occasion Stephen Morley had a friend, "Red", break into the home of Burt and Bonne Morley Lewis. The house, located at 2120 Lloyd Court, Little Rock, was damaged and some personal items taken. The vehicle owned by the Lewis' was damaged by having acid thrown on the car, handles ripped off the doors, and the tires deflated. Stephen Morley made sure he was out of town with his family while these actions occurred.*
13. *On November 11, 1994, while driving a 1994 Honda Passport in North Little Rock, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley hit a parked 1994 Accura causing approximately \$6,500 damage. He had been drinking before the accident. Repairs to the Honda Passport cost approximately \$1,727. On December 18, 1995, Morley paid approximately \$1,500 restitution to the owner of the Accura and the insurance company. Morley did not report this accident to the police in the required time or to the owner of the car that he struck in violation of criminal law.*
14. *In an attempt to conceal and cover up his hit and run accident on November 11, 1994, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley filed a fraudulent claim with L & R Adjustment Company on behalf of his insurance company Equity Mutual. Morley claimed the cause of the loss (damage) to the 1994 Honda was that the car was struck while it was parked and left unattended at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock. In fact the loss (damage) to the 1994 Honda was caused by the hit and run accident on November 11, 1994 described in paragraph thirteen (13) above.*
15. *Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley lied to the police during the subsequent 1995 investigation of the November 11, 1994 hit and run accident. He stated to the police investigator that a friend of his was driving when he in fact was driving the car. Judge Morley refused to reveal the identity of the driver, but admitted to having been in the car at the time of the accident.*
16. *Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley purchased a 1993 Jeep on March 17, 1995.*

*He failed to register this vehicle with the state licensing authorities (Department of Finance & Administration) within the required ten working days after purchase. Failure to register a vehicle within ten working days after purchase is a misdemeanor.*

- 17. Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley operated the 1993 Jeep with license plates which belonged to his father and were registered to be used on a 1994 Honda Passport.*
- 18. On May 7, 1995, after the one car accident involving the 1993 Jeep, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley lied to the police officer investigating the accident. He fraudulently stated the vehicle was registered in his father's name. This vehicle was owned by Stephen or Kathy Morley and was not registered. Judge Morley also told the police investigator that he bought the Jeep from his father. That was not true.*
- 19. During the police investigation of the one car accident involving the 1993 Jeep, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley attempted to use the prestige of his judicial office to influence the police investigation. During the initial investigation of the accident, he told the police investigator he was the North Little Rock Municipal Court Judge.*
- 20. Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley failed to pay \$1,190 state sales tax due on the purchase of the 1993 Jeep until fourteen weeks after he purchased the vehicle. This payment was made after the vehicle was destroyed in an accident on May 7, 1995, after repeated demands by insurance company representatives that he provide them with the title.*
- 21. Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley attempted to use the prestige of his judicial office to advance his private interest when dealing with the claims adjuster handling the 1993 Jeep accident for the Bexley Claims' Service in Fayetteville, Arkansas.*
- 22. Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley filed a certificate of non-use for the 1993 Jeep after wrecking the vehicle. This was done after more than 4000 miles were driven on the vehicle. It was also done in a fraudulent attempt to avoid paying a penalty for failure to register the vehicle in a timely manner.*
- 23. When transferring title to the destroyed 1993 Jeep to the Southern Guarantee Insurance Company in August 1995, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley forged his former wife's signature, Kathy Morley, on the vehicle's title document.*
- 24. During the years 1991 through 1995, on numerous occasions, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley used marijuana and sniffed cocaine. He used the cocaine*

*while in the presence of his former wife, Kathy, and other friends.*

25. *In 1995, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley bought a pickup truck for his son. He failed to assess the vehicle. He also failed to pay any personal property tax on the vehicle.*
26. *During 1995, Traffic Court Judge Stephen Morley possessed and later was involved in the sale of an undetermined amount of marijuana in Pulaski County.*

*Basis for Commission Action*

*On May 16, 1997 the Commission found that probable cause exists for believing that there has been misconduct of a nature requiring a formal disciplinary proceeding. Respondent is charged with willfully violating A.C.A. § 16-10-410 (b)(5), specifically Canons 1, 2A, 2B and 4A of the Code of Judicial Conduct and violating A.C.A. § 16-10-410 (b)(3) by the commission of conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, A.C.A. § 16-10-410 (b)(4) by the commission of conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice and A.C.A. § 16-10-410 (b)(6) habitual intemperance in the use of alcohol or other drugs.*

*WHEREFORE, Respondent is advised that an answer to this formal statement of charges should be filed by the Respondent with the Commission, located at 323 Center Street, Suite 1060, Little Rock, AR 72201 within twenty (20) days after service upon Respondent of this formal statement of charges; and that the Commission shall thereafter set a time and place of hearing of this formal statement of charges and shall give notice thereof to Respondent. Respondent is hereby advised of his right to counsel and to file an answer in his own behalf or through counsel, and that all of the proceedings in connection with the Formal Statement of Charges shall be in accordance with the said procedural rules of this Commission. The offenses and violations contained in the Formal Statement of Charges constitute willful violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct, the commission of conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation and the commission of conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice and the habitual intemperance in the use of alcohol or other drugs by the Honorable Stephen Morley.*

*This Formal Statement of Charges and respondent's answer are the only pleadings required.*

*Dated this 12th day of June, 1997.*

*BY ORDER OF THE  
ARKANSAS JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE & DISABILITY COMMISSION*

*BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
James A. Badami  
Executive Director*

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