

Honorable John N. Brown
Senior Judge Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Several months ago in Houston I discussed with your Honor the fear that Mexican-Americans were losing their trust and faith in the federal judiciary. This was when we were meeting with you on the President Carters Commission to send him names of candidates for the vacancy in the 5th Circuit Court.

Today that fear has become a nightmare and a reality in view of the shocking sentencing of the three policemen by Judge Ross Sterling. I do not exaggerate when I state that there are very few if any Mexican-Americans who trust the Southern District Courts at all. This is a sad situation when the last institution has ended our dream of "justicia" under the judiciary.

That is why I am appealing to you, Judge Reynaldo Garza and Judge Singleton and the rest of you Honorable gentlemen to take action in convening any of your group and correct such an impression created by Judge Ross Sterling.

Individually and together with the American G.I. Forum of the U.S., we are requesting the convening of a judiciary conference for the purpose of investigating and censuring Judge Ross Sterling in view of his "LIGHT" sentencing of the three Houston policemen in the assassination of Joe Campos Torres."

We believe that Judge Sterling did not exercise an impartial and fair judicial judgement in his sentencing. Neither did he have the proper judicial temperament in explaining his reasons or views for such light sentence in view of such a grievous crime as the taking the life of a Mexican-American. Rather he made us believe that in his own personal prejudice he believes a Mexican-American life has very little worth.

After all it was the federal jury that determined "the guilty" verdict of both a felony and misdemeanor charges. For a Federal Judge to asses one year in a federal prison on a misdemeanor charge and a suspended 10 year on the felony court is a miscarriage of justice and shows the unfairness of the Judge, and the court that he represents.

Judge Sterling shows lack of judicial knowledge of police brutality against Mexican-Americans in Texas which is a tradition in Texas when he state "I have concluded that this was a situational offense which they will never encounter again."

Certainly such situational offenses as the killings of Mexican-Americans in Texas are of too great a frequency and of such sommon knowledge even to the layman that it is hard to believe that Judge Sterling did not know that fact. He also states "A long period of confinement will have little effect on the Houston police department where I think the real problem lies."

The effect of such a statement by a Federal Judge merely gives his blessing and approval to continue with police brutality and killings of Mexican-Americans in Texas.

We Mexican-Americans have lost our trust and faith in the federal judiciary! We lost our trust and faith in the state courts long ago. Today since we cannot trust our courts to render justice then what is left for us in our "Democracy"?

We are therefore, respectfully requesting that you or any other judge of the Southern District or Judge John N. Brown of the fifth circuit court of appeals call the judiciary conference or any other body to take action and censure one of your own who has brought discredit and distrust to your judicial body.

We are imploring you and directing to you our request for our constitutional rights for "Redress of Grievances" against Judge Sterling.----- ←-----
Dr. Hector P. Garcia-Founder American G.I. Forum-Former Member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

March 30, 1978
Mailogram send by Dr. Hector P. Garcia

Honorable Reynaldo Garza
Senior Judge U.S. Southern District of Texas
Federal Courthouse, Brownsville, TX 78520

Judge Garza, it is with sadness and with deep pain that we are sending you our petition. We feel that the judiciary cannot afford to alienate us from the Federal courts. But Judge Sterling's judgement has done this and more to the good and loyal citizens that we are. I know not who in the system must take action or what is the procedure so we are asking you, Judge John Singleton and Judge John N. Brown to restore our faith, and make Judge Sterling accountable for his actions.

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Dr. Hector P. Garcia, Founder American G.I. Forum - Former Member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

HONORABLE John Singleton
Senior Federal Judge U.S. Southern District
Federal Courthouse, Houston, Texas 77002

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