



U. S. Department of Justice

Civil Division

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

November 22, 2000

Mr. Paul V. Sheridan
22357 Columbia Street
Dearborn, Michigan 48124-3431

Dear Mr. Sheridan:

Thank you for your letter to the Attorney General, in which you request information about the role of the Department of Justice in an action brought under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and pose a series of questions seeking the Attorney General's opinion on various far-ranging legal and political issues. Your letter was forwarded to me for response. I apologize for the delay in responding to your letter.

Based on the information provided in your letter, it appears that you are a defendant in a pending lawsuit and, we presume, represented by counsel. As a consequence, we are concerned that the canons of ethics prohibit us from communicating directly with you on the matters raised in your letter, all of which may relate to the subject matter in which you are represented by counsel.

Additionally, I can advise you that except in unusual circumstances, none of which appears to be present in your lawsuit, the Attorney General cannot provide legal opinions on matters in private litigation. Consequently, it would not be appropriate for the Attorney General to respond to the questions you have asked.

Thank you for your inquiry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. W. Ogden", written in a cursive style.

David W. Ogden
Assistant Attorney General

cc: Hon. Bob Barr
Hon. James A. Traficant, Jr.