



**THE TENNESSEE  
COURT OF THE JUDICIARY**

511 Union Street  
Suite 600  
Nashville, TN 37243-067

JUDGES OF THE TENNESSEE  
COURT OF THE JUDICIARY

March 28, 2008

Michael W. Catalano, Clerk  
100 Supreme Court Building  
401 Seventh Avenue, North  
Nashville, TN 37219-1407  
615-253-1470

Don R. Ash  
Presiding Judge

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

J.S. (Steve) Daniel  
Disciplinary Counsel

The Honorable Dennis W. Humphrey  
Roane County Courthouse  
P.O. Box 73  
Kingston, TN 37763

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Bernie Weinman  
Thomas T. Woodall

In re: Complaint of Kismet and Pearson v. Judge Dennis W. Humphrey  
File No. 07-3222

Dear Judge Humphrey:

This shall serve as a public letter reprimand pursuant to your agreement with the Investigative Panel of this Court.

The reprimand relates to your actions in finding Darrell K. Pearson in contempt of court in Roane County General Sessions Court case 6485A. In this case you found Mr. Pearson in contempt of court when he had only been served by publication and not by personal service of process. You thereupon ordered his incarceration until he paid a \$5000 purge payment. You ordered him into custody where there was no statutory basis. As a result of your actions, Mr. Pearson was incarcerated for sixty-eight days before you learned of his continued incarceration, considered his case, and released him. As result of your failure to follow basic due process under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Tennessee Constitution as well as failure to follow the law of contempt, Mr. Pearson was deprived of his freedom.

The above-styled conduct violates Canons 2A, 3B(2) and 3B(2) and 3B(8) of the Code of Judicial Conduct and is a violation of Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 13 requiring advice of the right to counsel and appointment of counsel before incarceration of someone for contempt. This conduct brings the judiciary into public disrepute under Tennessee Code Annotated § 17-5-302(8).

Accordingly, this constitutes a public reprimand for your actions. In the future, you are to accord all persons appropriate service of process and follow the statutory mandates for any contempt actions that you consider.

This the 24 day of March, 2008.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don R. Ash", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Don R. Ash  
Presiding Judge  
Court of the Judiciary

DRA:cg

cc: Investigative Panel  
Disciplinary Counsel