

**IN RE: FINDINGS OF THE GRIEVANCE & ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR  
MONTSERRADO COUNTY IN THE COMPLAINT OF MR. JOSEPH M. JEAPO  
AGAINST ATTORNEYS GEORGE A.D. WADE AND IGNATIUS N. WEAH.**

1. In the absence of an appeal from the findings and recommendations of the Grievance and Ethics Committee, and because the Committee does not have the authority to enforce said findings and recommendations, the Committee is mandated to send the matter to the Chief Justice for enforcement by the Full Bench.

The respondents, attorneys-at-law of the Supreme Court, were accused by the complainant of having extracted various sums of money from the complainant without rendering the legal services for which they were retained. The complaints, addressed to the Chief Justice, were forwarded to the Grievance and Ethic Committee of the Liberian National Bar Association for an investigation. The Committee found the Attorneys to be incompetent and unable to handle the cases for which they were retained, and recommended to the Supreme Court that the Attorneys be required to refund the money received from the client and be suspended from the practice of law for specified periods of time. No exceptions were noted to the findings and recommendations of the Committee and no appeal was announced therefrom. The Court, finding that there was no controversy presented as to the findings and recommendations, affirmed the same, with the modification that the amounts owed the complainant be refunded within one month, that both Attorneys be suspended for an equal period of six months, and that they should remain suspended until the amounts are refunded.

MR. JUSTICE YANGBE, delivered the opinion of the Court.

Mr. Joseph M. Jeapo addressed two letters to His Honour Emmanuel N. Gbalazeh, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia, dated October 9 and 13, 1980, respectively, in which he accused Attorneys George A. D. Wade and Ignatius N. Weah of the perpetration of unethical conduct in an action of ejectment. In his letters, Mr. Jeapo alleged that he paid the sum of \$300.00 to Attorney Weah, but that Attorney Weah had refunded only \$10.00, leaving a balance of \$290.00; and that he had also paid \$115.00 to Attorney Wade. The two letters were referred to the Grievance and Ethics Committee of the Liberian National Bar Association. After an investigation, the Grievance and Ethics Committee entered findings and conclusions against the two lawyers. Thereafter, the Committee addressed a letter to the Chief Justice forwarding its findings and recommendations. No appeal was taken from the Committee's findings and recommendations.

Under our law and practice, in the absence of announcement of an appeal from the findings and recommendations of the Committee, and the Committee not having authority to enforce its findings and recommendations, it is mandated to send same to the Chief Justice

for enforcement thereof by the Bench en banc. This is what the Committee did in the instant situation.

The two attorneys who were investigated, did not except to the findings and recommendations of the Committee, or announce an appeal therefrom. There is therefore no controversial issue presented for our consideration, save to order enforcement of the recommendations of the Committee.

The Committee recommended, as follows:

1. That both attorneys must refund the amounts received from the complainant immediately, or be suspended from the practice of law until they produce receipts showing their compliance with our recommendations. That is to say, Attorney Weah should pay to Mr. Jeapo immediately the amount of \$290.00 and Attorney Wade the amount of \$100.00;
2. That for their unprofessional and unethical acts, both of them showing their inability and incompetence to represent the client in the ejectment suit and Attorney Weah showing a lack of competence in representing his client in a case involving the crime of "reckless burning and exploding", we recommend that Attorney Wade be suspended from the practice for six (6) months and Attorney Weah for one year.
3. That the two suspensions referred to herein be independent, but complimentary.

It is our holding that the three recommendations be ordered enforced with the following modifications: that as to count one of the recommendations, Attorney Ignatius N. Weah should refund to complainant Joseph M. Jeapo the sum of \$290.00 and Attorney George A. D. Wade should also refund the sum of \$100.00 to the said complainant; that these amounts must be paid within one month from the 8 th of July, 1983; that as to recommendations numbers two and three, we hold that both Attorneys George A. D. Wade and Ignatius N. Weah be suspended from the practice of law, directly and indirectly, for a period of six months beginning from the 8 th of July 1983; and that they should remain suspended until these amounts aforesaid are refunded to the complainant.

In view of the above, the Clerk of this Court is instructed to send a mandate to the Chairmen of the Grievance and Ethics Committee in all the counties and to the judges of all the subordinate courts within the Republic of Liberia ordering them to give effect to this opinion. Costs are disallowed. And it is hereby so ordered.