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"Thou Shalt Take No Gift"

A WEEK before Christmas, 1959, Edward B. McConnell, Administrative Director of the Courts of New Jersey, issued the following notice:

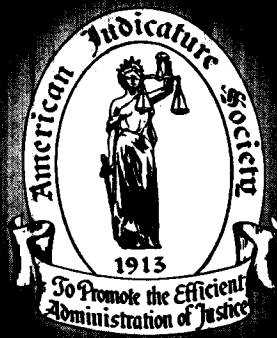
"The Supreme Court considers that it is improper for attorneys practicing in the courts to present gifts or gratuities to court clerks, attendants or other officers or employees. The cooperation of all members of the bar in this regard will be appreciated."

A similar announcement was made by the Appellate Division, First Department, in New York City. There it is in the form of a regular court rule, as follows:

"No attorney shall give any gratuity or gift to any employee of any court or other governmental agency, where such attorney has had or is likely to have any professional or official transaction with such court or governmental agency. Any attorney who violates this rule shall be deemed guilty of professional misconduct within the meaning of Subdivision 2 of Section 90 of the Judiciary Law."

The implications of this rule reach far beyond Christmas and far beyond lawyers and court house lawyers. Under the heading "Why Not Go All

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