

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA
(Before a Referee)

THE FLORIDA BAR,

Complainant,

v.

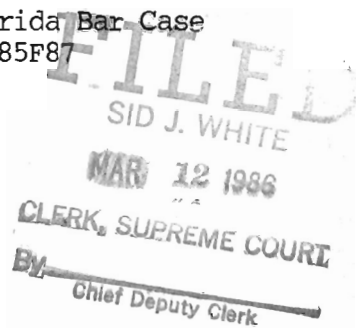
KEITH M. KRASNOVE,

Respondent.

CONFIDENTIAL

Case No. 68,324

The Florida Bar Case
No. 17A85F87



REPORT OF REFEREE

I. Summary of Proceedings: The undersigned has been duly appointed as referee to conduct disciplinary proceedings in this cause in accordance with Florida Bar Integration Rule, article XI.

The Respondent has submitted a Conditional Guilty Plea. The Designated Reviewer of The Florida Bar has approved the Respondent's Guilty Plea. I approve the Guilty Plea.

The following attorneys appeared as counsel for the parties:

For The Florida Bar - Jacquelyn Plasner Needelman

For the Respondent - Robert F. Jordan

II. Findings of Fact as to Each Item of Misconduct of which the Respondent is charged: After considering all the pleadings and evidence before me, pertinent portions of which are commented upon below, I find:

1. Keith M. Krasnove, Respondent, is, and at all times hereinafter mentioned was, a member of The Florida Bar, subject to the jurisdiction and disciplinary rules of the Supreme Court of Florida.

2. Respondent represented a husband in a bitter dissolution of marriage action in or about November, 1984. At one point in the proceedings, before Respondent became his counsel, the husband felt threatened by the wife's counsel in the presence of the husband's former counsel.

3. In this matter, it appeared to the wife's attorney that Respondent was threatening criminal charges solely to obtain an advantage in the civil matter.

4. The wife's attorney interpreted Respondent's actions as attempting to obtain a coerced settlement by threatening that his client would take steps to ensure that the spouse would not receive property acquired during the marriage and threatening to implicate his clients' wife, her parent and her attorney in the husband's alleged criminal activity.

5. Respondent offered the payment of generous fees to opposing counsel if the proffered settlement was accepted. Ultimately, the wife's counsel received a \$15,000 fee, which was agreed upon in the property settlement agreement.

6. Respondent had admitted his guilt in this matter and acknowledges that his conduct in this matter violated Disciplinary Rule 7-105 and Florida Bar Integration Rule, article XI, Rule 11.02(3)(a).

7. Respondent has advised that he realizes that he became too aggressive in his handling of this cause, but that he was frustrated by the lack of progress of the matter and was concerned about protecting his client's interests.

III. Recommendations as to whether or not the Respondent should be found guilty: As to the complaint, I make the following recommendations as to guilt or innocence:

I recommend that Keith M. Krasnove be found guilty and specifically that he be found guilty of violating the following Florida Bar Integration Rules and/or Disciplinary Rules of the Code of Professional Responsibility, to wit: Disciplinary Rule 7-105 and Florida Bar Integration Rule, article XI, Rule 11.02(3)(a).

IV. Recommendation as to disciplinary measures to be applied: I recommend that the Respondent receive a public reprimand to be administered by publication in the Southern Reporter and by his personal appearance before the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar.

V. Personal history and past disciplinary record:


Age: 36

Date admitted to The Florida Bar: 1974

Prior disciplinary convictions and disciplinary measures imposed therein: On May 17, 1983, the Respondent received a private reprimand in The Florida Bar Case No. 17D82F33 for neglect of a legal matter.

VI. Statement of costs and manner in which costs should be taxed: I find the following costs were reasonably incurred by The Florida Bar: \$328.50 for administrative costs, copying costs, appearance of court reporter at grievance committee hearing and witness subpoena costs.

DATED this 10 day of March, 1986.


JAMES C. HENDERSON
Referee

Copies furnished to:
Jacquelyn Plasner Needelman, Bar Counsel
Robert F. Jordan, Esquire
John T. Berry, Staff Counsel