



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 20463

February 24, 1978

AO 1978-4

Mr. Dwight Patterson  
Mrs. Clara B. Emmett  
Co-Chairmen  
John J. Rhodes Commemorative Committee  
Post Office Box "C"  
Mesa, Arizona 85201

Dear Mr. Patterson and Mrs. Emmett:

This refers to your letter of January 10, 1978, asking whether the John Rhodes Commemorative Committee ("the Committee") is required to register, report, and otherwise conduct its activities as a "political committee" under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended ("the Act"), and Commission regulations.

Your letter explains that the Committee has been organized by a large group of people in Arizona to sponsor a banquet "honoring Congressman John Rhodes on his completion of 25 years as the Congressman from Congressional District One." Tickets will be sold in amounts "just enough to cover the expenses" of the event which you characterize as a "non-profit, non-partisan salute to our Congressman." The dinner is scheduled for March 3 in Mesa, Arizona. Your letter also states that neither Mr. Rhodes nor his campaign committee will "accrue any financial benefit" from the dinner, but you do anticipate that some type of silver memento will be given to Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes as a remembrance of this 25th anniversary of his congressional service.

The Commission concludes that ticket sales for the banquet and expenses incident thereto would not be contributions and expenditures under the Act and thus would not require the Committee to register and report as a "political committee." This conclusion is based on the representations in your letter that the event is designed and held only as a "nonprofit, non-partisan salute" to Mr. Rhodes and not for the purpose of influencing his nomination or election to Federal office. The Commission regards the event you describe as a bona fide testimonial event rather than a campaign event so long as (i) no political contributions are solicited, made, or received by any person in conjunction with the event and (ii) the event does not involve any communication addressed to the attendees as a group which expressly advocates Mr. Rhodes' nomination or election to Federal office or the defeat of any other Federal candidate.

This response constitutes an advisory opinion concerning application of a general rule of law stated in the Act or prescribed as a Commission regulation to the specific factual situation set forth in your request. See 2 U.S.C. 437f.

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

Joan D. Aikens  
Vice Chairman for the  
Federal Election Commission