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FILE NO. S-1007

**OFFICERS:
Public Meetings**

Honorable Loren S. Golden
State's Attorney of Carroll County
County Courthouse
Mt. Carroll, Illinois 61053

Dear Mr. Golden:

This responds to your request for an opinion as to whether a county central committee of one of the major political parties is subject to "AN ACT in relation to meetings". Ill. Rev. Stat. 1973, ch. 102, pars. 41 et seq.

Under sections 1 and 2 of that Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1973, ch. 102, pars. 41 and 42), it is clear that only public bodies and agencies are subject to the Act. These two sections provide in part specifically as follows:

"§ 1. It is the public policy of this State that the public commissions, committees, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this State exist to aid in the conduct of the people's

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business. It is the intent of this Act that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.

§ 2. All meetings of any legislative, executive, administrative or advisory bodies of the State, counties, townships, cities, villages, incorporated towns, school districts and all other municipal corporations, boards, bureaus, committees or commissions of this State, and any subsidiary bodies of any of the foregoing including but not limited to committees and subcommittees which are supported in whole or in part by tax revenue, or which expend tax revenue, shall be public meetings except for * * *

The central committee of a political party does not fall within the category of bodies and agencies listed above. Furthermore, it is quite clear that neither a central committee nor a political party is a public body or agency, nor are committeemen public officers. This is so even though under the Election Code (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1973, ch. 46, pars. 1-1 through 30-3) county central committees are authorized to perform certain functions and required to do so in a particular manner. In Rouse v. Thompson, 228 Ill. 522, the Supreme Court considered the question of whether county central committees were public bodies and determined that they were not. It stated at pages 537 and 538 as follows:

* * * The several county central committees of the several political parties in this State, as such, are not created by any statute. They in no way represent the State or any political

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division thereof, and cannot be classified as belonging to either the legislative, executive or judicial departments of the State. They represent only a political party, and that party may only represent a vote equal to two per cent of the vote cast for president at the preceding presidential election. Such committees are not, therefore, officers of the State, but are the representatives of voluntary associations. * * * [B]ut the county central committees of political parties, where they exist, as they do in this State, as the representatives of purely voluntary organizations, cannot be said to be 'public agencies,' as they represent, not the State or any political division or department thereof, but a political party, which may be composed of only an inconsiderable portion of the people. * * * "

See also Telcser v. Holzman, 31 Ill. 2d 332; People v. Kramer, 328 Ill. 512; and The People v. Brady, 302 Ill. 576.

I, therefore, am of the opinion that a county central committee of a major political party is not subject to "AN ACT in relation to meetings".

Very truly yours,

A T T O R N E Y G E N E R A L