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District Court Is Held Busiest of All Federal Tribunals

Report Says Diligent Work Is Cutting Down Backlog on Calendars

The United States District Court for the District of Columbia is the busiest of all Federal Courts, but the calendars show continued improvement, the Judicial Conference of Senior Circuit Court Judges was told in the annual report of Henry P. Chandler, director of the administrative office of the United States, which was before the meeting at the Supreme Court today.

"The period between the time when both jury and non-jury civil cases were placed on the trial calendar following the filing of a notice for trial, and the time when they were reached for trial has been shortened during the fiscal year 1942 from 11 months to 8 months," the report continues.

"This has been accomplished by effective pre-trial procedure to which one judge devotes his entire time, by diligent work on the part of the court, in conjunction with an efficient calendar system, and by the help of 10 judges brought in from time to time from other circuits. Eight hundred and sixty-one contested jury cases, 1,058 contested non-jury cases, and 1,184 non-contested divorce cases were disposed of. There were 229 jury trials and 1,806 hearings in non-jury cases and non-contested divorce cases.

Preferred Criminal Case Attention.

"A somewhat larger number of criminal prosecutions were pending at the end of the fiscal year than was the case a year previous, but in general, the criminal docket is given preferred attention and at one period of the year four divisions of the court were trying criminal cases. The number of criminal cases which had been pending six months was 244 and in 174 of these the defendants were fugitives. This district continues to need help from visiting judges, but the record of the past year is encouraging."

"At District Court, it was explained that the figure on fugitives went back about 14 years and represented largely mental patients and prisoners confined elsewhere who could not be brought to trial here."

There are 12 justices assigned to District Court and a table in the director's report showed that 6,288 civil cases were started here in the past year, out of a total of 38,140 in the United States, territories and possessions. The nearest approach to this total was the 2,778 of the

southern district of New York. At the end of the year, pending cases were 3,494 as compared to 3,777 June 30, 1941.

There were 2,050 criminal actions commenced, and pending cases June 30 last numbered 622 as compared to 419 a year ago. The southern district of California, next in line, reported 1,226 commenced, and the southern district of New York, 1,150.

Urges Pre-trial Procedure.

"There is general recognition in the present period of war, when it is necessary to conserve every ounce of labor power, the fullest practical application of pre-trial procedure and the economy of time on the part of judges, jurors, lawyers and litigants that it brings, are especially desirable," Mr. Chandler stressed.

"The extension of the practice in all State courts, as well as the Federal courts, is being widely urged and with good reason."

Such conferences, the director asserted, are "definitely beneficial in simplifying the issues, shortening the time of trial in contested cases and facilitating settlements."

He also recommended "all practical extension of pre-sentence investigations" to aid a judge to determine what type of punishment, and the degree, should be given convicted criminals.

Mr. Chandler said that "new types of cases growing out of the war policies are appearing more and more frequently upon the calendars, and undoubtedly will increase in number as time passes."

Alleged violations of the Selective Service Act accounted for 3,356 cases during the fiscal year ending last June 30, he said, and there were 720 cases based on alleged violations of the Alien Registration Act. These two classes, he added, constituted almost one-seventh of all criminal cases in Federal district courts.

Ex-New Yorker to Manage Ship-Hotel Amphitrite

K. A. Smith, former manager of a number of residential properties here, will become the manager of the 75-room ship-hotel Amphitrite when the floating hotel opens for business at the Old Oceaquan Wharf on or before October 10. It has been announced by H. G. Bulkeley, president of the Amphitrite Corp., Mr. Smith, who came to Wash-

ington from New York, where he was connected with the Hampshire House, was once connected with the St. Regis in London, Mr. Bulkeley said.

Although little definite information concerning the operation of the Amphitrite is known at the present, Mr. Bulkeley said rates at the hotel probably would be from \$3.50 to \$6 per day. No apartments will be rented, he added, and no special weekly or monthly rates are anticipated.

The Amphitrite, operated for eight seasons as a resort hotel in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., was brought here recently to relieve the overcrowded transient conditions in the Nation's Capital.

OPA and Publishers To Discuss Prices

By the Associated Press.

The Office of Price Administration announced last night that a series of eight regional meetings would be held with members of the printing and publishing industry, beginning at Boston October 13, to discuss recent price orders for the industry.

The Washington meeting will be held October 20 at the Ambassador Hotel.

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