

The \$23,500 salary now paid associate judges of the Court of General Sessions is not adequate compensation to attract such people to the judiciary in an area where the cost of living is already one of the highest in the nation and is rapidly increasing. They must often be willing to relinquish lucrative law practices or important government positions. In a time when a June graduate from law school can earn \$15,000 a year in leading Washington and New York law firms, when judges on the District Court bench here receive \$30,000 a year, and government employees at the GS-18 level will receive \$30,239 as of July 1, 1968, a salary of \$27,500 for the associate judges of the D.C. Court of General Sessions and \$28,500 for associate judges of the D.C. Court of Appeals is imminently reasonable.

Our specific recommendations in this direction have been endorsed by the Judicial Council of the District of Columbia Circuit, the Attorney General, the District of Columbia government, the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade, the Washington, D.C., Clearing House Association, the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the Washington Bar Association, Inc., the Women's Bar Association, and the Judicial Conference of the District of Columbia Circuit in a resolution adopted May 25, 1967. In addition, higher salaries for judges in our nation's urban courts were urged by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, and salary increases for judges on the D.C. courts were urged by the D.C. Crime Commission.

For these reasons we urge this Subcommittee to give favorable consideration to the legislation presently before it, and also to the need of the Court of General Sessions for additional judicial manpower to handle its growing workload.

Approximately 52,000 prosecutions other than traffic cases are brought in the Court of General Sessions annually, and demands for jury trials in criminal cases are about 500 per month. The backlog of criminal jury cases is over 1400, and there is an average delay of 52 days. The Court of General Sessions has recently witnessed a sharp increase in the ratio of trials to summary dispositions. During 1965 approximately 15% of the serious misdemeanor cases went to trial; that percentage has since doubled. Because trials are obviously more time consuming than summary dispositions, this has resulted in pressure on the court calendar which was already overburdened with the rising crime rate. In addition, the recent riots have added an additional 7300 cases to the court's docket and substantially increased the delays.

Prosecution witnesses often become reluctant to testify as the time between arrest and ultimate disposition lengthens, thereby forcing dismissals for want of prosecution or dismissals of some of the charges in return for a plea of guilty to others. While this device may clear the backlog, it does not always serve the best interests of the community since it leads to no sentence or, at best, a sentence bearing an unrealistic relationship to the offenses actually committed. Unless enough judges are added to the court to enable it to cope realistically with its flow of criminal cases, many other crime fighting measures are likely to be made ineffective. If delays cause charges to be so stale that they are dismissed or reduced as a result of a bargain, the deterrent value of the criminal process is largely dissipated.

On the civil side, the time from joinder of issue to disposition of a civil jury case has risen from 17 months as of January 1, 1967, to a present delay of 23 months, and the delay from pretrial to trial has increased during this same time period from 5 to 7 months. In the past year, in spite of the fact that the court disposed of 442 more civil jury cases than it had during the previous year, the civil jury backlog increased from 4736 to 5279, as the court assigned more of its judicial manpower to handle the growing criminal docket. Many of the civil matters coming before this court require immediate attention, and unless more judges are assigned to the Civil Division, justice will be so long delayed as to be practically denied for many litigants.

Chief Judge Greene, in an elaborate statistical analysis, has demonstrated that the Court of General Sessions is in need of 26 judges, given its present workload. Six judges would be required for the expeditious operation of the criminal trial calendar; eight judges for the civil calendar in order to handle the present demands and reduce the extensive backlog by approximately 80 cases per month; at least one judge for each of the following operations: District of Columbia Branch, Traffic Branch, Criminal Assignment Branch, the combined Civil and Criminal Motions Branches, and the combined Landlord-Tenant and Small Claims Branches—for a total of five; three judges for the Domestic Relations Branch (required by statute); and at least one additional judge if the court is to institute permanent night operations. Since at any given