



Some 100 Chicago area law students attend seminar in the U.S. Courthouse to learn about the new federal public defender's program. U.S. Marshal Joseph N. Tierney (right)

addresses the group. Many of the students devote a day a month to serve as assistants to lawyers in the handling of cases for indigent defendants. (Sun-Times Photo)

U.S. Defender Plan Also A Classroom

By Earl Moses

The federal court system here is embarking upon a pioneer program designed to better safeguard the rights of indigent defendants while giving birth to a new generation of trial lawyers.



RAYMOND K. BERG

Director of the federal defender program—the nation's first—is Raymond K. Berg, 34, an honor graduate at De Paul University Law School and a former assistant U.S. attorney with a 100 per cent conviction rate. According to Berg, "The new public defender program puts Illinois among the forefront in protecting the rights of those accused of crimes who are too poor to pay for legal counsel."

Warren Lauds Program

The program which was enacted by Congress last year, but became effective only last August, has been described by Earl Warren, chief justice of the United States, as the "most exciting, new development in the field of criminal law. Widely known as the Campbell Plan, after William J. Campbell, chief judge of the U. S. District Court here, the program works like this:

A panel of experienced Criminal Court trial attorneys engaged in private practice is appointed by the 10 District Court judges. When an indigent suspect is arrested by po-

the panel to immediately contact the accused, advise him of his legal rights and represent him in any court proceedings.

Some of the community's most high-priced legal talent has been named to the 35-member panel. For their efforts, they are paid \$15 for each hour they are in court and \$10 for each hour spent out of court working on the case, up to a maximum of \$300 for a misdemeanor case and \$500 for a felony case.

Before the program went into effect this summer federal court judges simply appointed lawyers of their own choosing to represent the indigents, the lawyers received no pay for their work.

Congress has appropriated \$3,000,000 for the program.

Public defenders under the direction of Gerald Getty have long represented indigent defendants in state courts.

60 Students Selected

Because the federal defender program sets up pay rates for the lawyers without outlining mechanics of the plan, Judge Campbell went into a huddle with Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark to

refine the workings of the system. Endorsing Campbell's suggestion that a panel of lawyers be picked to serve as defenders, Justice Clark added an element not in the original plan.

He suggested that volunteers be recruited from law schools to work under the direction of the public defenders, thus gaining invaluable insight into the business of protecting a man's rights.

As a result, 60 students from the six local law schools are being selected to work on cases. They will receive no pay; nor will they be permitted to examine witnesses or address the court.

"This legal internship program should be instrumental in catching the interest of law students and, ultimately, leading them into the criminal defense field—a field which is

sadly undermanned," said Berg.

The Illinois program is attracting nationwide attention. Berg is going to San Francisco in two weeks to explain the system to judges and lawyers there.