Judge Rankled **By** Witnesses For Defense

By Maurine Beasley Washington Post Staff Writer

A defense lawyer moved for a mistrial in Superior Court after Judge W. Byron Sorrell stated he had never seen a prosecution witness lie al-making him (the judge) sick, defendants who have not told to "abuse judges." the truth."

truth, because if I did I would judge)."

"But I have seen a number has taken the stand under oath and told an untruth and, by his own admission, when the presentence report comes in and it comes up for sentencing, he admits that he didn't tell the truth on the stand."

At this point Kane asked for a mistrial, even though a trial had not begun because his client was not present in the

At length Judge Sorrell, saying he did not intend to get "a persecution complex," agreed

though he had found "some and told Kana he was trying client, Steven M. Williams, in

"You have just seemed to According to a transcript of think there is a license to St. SE, either by accident or the Oct. 12 proceeding, the de- abuse judges and I don't in-intention, did not come forfense attorney, Gerald Kane, tend to get a persecution com- ward in the lockup when U.S. fense attorney, Geraid Kane, tend to get a persecution com-then asked the judge, "Is the plex as a judge but I will re-court stating only defendants tire to chambers, instead, so I and defense witnesses lie?" Judge Sorrell replied, "T say, I haven't yst seen a case where I was able to discern that the government's wit-the user is to be given another to the subsequently was

have reached a point, with charge before Judge Sylvia of cases where the defendant lawyers coming in court claim- Bacon, who acquitted him on ing that their client's rights technical grounds, are violated and they are not Asked to ampl receiving fair treatment from marks on the untruthfulness me, that I don't think I ought of defense witnesses, Judge to hear any more cases where Sorrell said Friday that he people come in and do that ... had discovered they were I am tired of this sort of lying "frequently enough for thing . . ."

tried cases before Sorrell be how often this had occurred. fore and "on every occasion" his client had received a fair a 21-year-old man to 30 days in courtroom. He indicated his trial. The issue, he said, was jail for contempt of court ground was belief the judge's the judge's statement about after he admitted to a probastatement showed prejudice the untruthfulness of defense, tion officer that he had lied on as compared to presecution, the witness stand. The judge witnesses.

The judge's outbursts on the credibility of witnesses came to let the case be sent to an as Judge Sorrell and Kane dis-other judge. and in land



W. BYRON SORBELL ... 'tired of this thing'

the court cellblock.

Williams, of 2004 Savannah

Williams subsequently was identified by a policeman and Previously he had said, "I tried on a petty larceny

Asked to amplify his reme to recall it." He said he Kane replied that he had could not remember exactly

> In 1970 the judge sentenced vacated the order after attorneys complained that probation officers would never hear