

Way Being Paved For Bremer Trial

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When Maryland's U.S. Attorney George Beall said Monday that Arthur Bremer might use an insanity defense when he stands trial on charges of shooting Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace, Beall added that he learned this in a private meeting May 23 with Bremer's attorney and a federal judge.

This meeting, a common occurrence for judges and attorneys prior to criminal trials, is one of several private pretrial conferences held to map out the complex legal procedures in the Bremer case by both U.S. District Judge Edward Northrop in Baltimore and Prince George's County Circuit Judge Ralph W. Powers.

Beall said the conferences are used to "unravel such things as scheduling." They are held in open court or in the privacy of a judge's chambers at the discretion of the judge.

Both the judges are the chief judges of their respective courts. They have taken pains to follow proper procedure in treating the Bremer case like any other case, according to Beall and Prince George's State's Attorney Arthur A. Marshall.

Both judges have refused to make any official comment on the case to the press.

In Prince George's County, Marshall said, Judge Powers has held three conferences, all of them involving procedural questions, and not "anything about the merits of the case."

• After Bremer was indicted on 24 charges, including attempted murder, Marshall said he advised the judge of the indictment, learned that Powers would handle the case himself, and discussed who would defend Bremer.

• When Bremer was arraigned in Prince George's, Marshall said he, Powers and Benjamin Lipsitz, who is Bremer's court-appointed attorney in the federal case against him, discussed who would be Bremer's attorney in the state case. (Lipsitz subsequently took on the job.)

• On June 6, Marshall said, he met with Lipsitz and Powers again. "We worked out when motions would be filed, when responded to, the trial date (and whether there would be a jury trial," he said.

The federal case against Bremer, a 21-year-old former Milwaukee resident now being held in the Baltimore County Jail, charges him with violating the civil rights of a presidential candidate, assaulting a federal officer, and illegally using and carrying a gun in interstate commerce.

The federal trial has been set for July 17 and the state trial in Prince George's county seat of Upper Marlboro for July 12, but it is not yet clear which will in fact be held first.

Wallace is paralyzed from the waist down by a bullet fired into his spine May 15 at a campaign rally in Laurel.