

U.S. Trial Of Bremer Postponed

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BALTIMORE, July 7—U.S. District Court Judge Edward S. Northrop today postponed indefinitely the federal trial of Arthur H. Bremer, accused of gunning down Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace on May 15.

Northrop's action apparently cleared the way for Maryland to proceed first with its prosecution of the suspect.

Bremer's state trial on charges of assault with intent to murder is scheduled to begin next Wednesday before Prince George's County Circuit Court Judge Ralph W. Powers Jr. in Upper Marlboro.

Bremer's attorney is also seeking to delay the state trial several weeks. But Northrop's postponement today clears up six weeks of legal uncertainty over who would be first to prosecute the blond, 21-year-old former Milwaukee janitor and busboy.

Bremer must stand trial twice—once on federal charges here and once on state charges in Upper Marlboro—because the two jurisdictions lodged separate though related charges against him.

"We're not playing tug of war with the state," Judge Northrop told Bremer's court-appointed attorney, Benjamin Lipsitz, in today's hearing.

Bremer was not present. He is undergoing a psychiatric examination for the state trial in the Clifton T. Perkins State Hostel in Jessup, Md. Bremer has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity in the state case and is expected to raise a similar defense in the federal trial.

Northrop said he was postponing the federal trial to give Lipsitz time to prepare for the state trial, saying, "I don't intend to keep you dangling on a string any further."

The judge set no date for a federal trial, saying he expected widespread publicity from the state trial to increase the difficulty of selecting un-

prejudiced jurors.

Bremer faces charges in Maryland that could put him in jail for 123 years for shooting Wallace and three others at the Laurel Shopping Center.

Federal authorities, who took custody of Bremer from Prince George's authorities the night of the shooting on orders that reportedly came from the White House, charged him with violating the civil rights of a presidential candidate, assaulting a federal officer, and illegally using and transporting a gun in interstate commerce.

"Considerations of both comity and courtesy require us to step aside, albeit reluctantly," said the U.S. attorney for Maryland, George Beall, the prosecutor in the federal case, after the Northrop decision.

Beall said that the government "is ready to go to trial today and we have been ready for some time."

Meanwhile, both Northrop and Prince George's Circuit Judge Powers dropped a veil of secrecy over several aspects of the Bremer case.

In Upper Marlboro, Powers signed an order preventing lawyers, State's Attorney Arthur A. Marshall Jr. and court officials from discussing any aspect of the case with the press. Powers himself was not available for comment.

And Northrop today signed an order to keep secret a written journal that Bremer kept during—and perhaps before—the months before the Wallace shooting. During that period, Bremer traveled widely in the Eastern United States and Canada, apparently following President Nixon and Democratic presidential candidates.

The journal was found in Bremer's car by the FBI after the shootings in Laurel.

In asking the court to keep the journal secret, Beall referred to the journal as "statements or confessions" that might be damaging to Bremer.

In other action today, Northrop said two psychiatrists whom he ordered to examine Bremer could testify in the state trial as well as the federal trial.

Defense lawyer Lipsitz had objected to this, saying that the psychiatrists might tell the state jury details relating to Bremer's guilt or innocence.

Bremer had agreed to the examination by the two psychiatrists—for the federal trial—after he was assured that they would say nothing relating to his guilt or innocence to the federal jury, but would only testify about his mental competence to stand trial.