

# Chief Justice Urges Courts To Set Trial Time Limits

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By Robert C. Maynard  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, repeating his oft-stressed theme that the judicial process is taking too long in some serious cases, suggested yesterday specific time limits for trials and appeals.

"What is desperately needed," the chief justice said, "is to have a few of the serious cases brought on for trial in 60 days after indictment and the appeal disposed of in another 60 days."

He declared that such a time structure is possible "with complete and total fairness to both sides" in an address to the Second Circuit Judicial Conference, meeting yesterday at Manchester, Vt.

Burger told the appellate

judges that such a time limitation for trials and appeals "ought to be done and it is your responsibility and mine to see that it is done."

"We must re-examine some of the nonessential frills and luxuries of printed briefs and records that we appellate judges have become accustomed to and get on with the substance, which is fair and speedy justice," Burger said.

He added that today's copying devices make printed briefs less essential to the judicial process than they once were.

Burger, who said he is concerned that the public image of justice is being tarnished by lengthy delays, especially in the state courts, told the judicial conference:

"When riots develop in jails

as a protest against long delays in trials, or when a notorious case takes 2, 3, 5 or more years to complete, people make judgments. To them, "courts are courts," "jails are jails," "delay is delay."

"And we should not be critical of the news media because they do not emphasize the distinctions between state and federal cases," Burger said. "Even if they did, the readers would not care. They are paying the bills for both and they want results."

What the public thinks, the chief justice said, "becomes the measure of confidence in the courts, and that confidence is indispensable."

Burger said lengthy delays occur in only two per cent of the criminal cases handled in the federal system, but he said these are frequently the "notorious" or the "spectacular" cases because of the nature of the crime, the defendant, his counsel or a combination of those factors.

"The delays," Burger said, "must stop." And to help in stopping them, he said he has requested that the Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration's chairman "propose a method of identifying the cases in which delay must not be permitted."

Burger suggested three areas which he said were "ripe for consideration" in that regard. They are cases in which bail has been denied, those involving serious felonies, and those involving persons "whose release on bail may therefore present a larger risk to the community."