

Law Clerk Armed By Judge Halleck

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Superior Court Judge Charles W. Halleck said yesterday that security precautions in the court are so inadequate that he has ordered his law clerk to arm himself and stand guard in Halleck's courtroom.

In addition to disclosing the deputizing of his clerk, Halleck made these other observations to a reporter he had contacted for an interview:

- Judges sometimes find themselves riding in the same elevators with prisoners they have just sentenced to long terms.

- A single U.S. marshal may be called on to escort a handcuffed, convicted felon for distances of up to six blocks through downtown Washington.

- Courtrooms frequently are jammed with spectators and persons awaiting sentencing. Only one unarmed bailiff is on hand for security.

"The first guy who stands up in the back of a courtroom with a pistol," said Halleck, "owns the building. ... It's going to take a judge's getting killed before something's done."

Judge Halleck said he believes the situation invites an incident similar to that in San Rafael, Calif., in August, 1970, in which a judge and two convicts were killed in a gun battle at the Marin County Courthouse.

Five other Superior Court judges, including Chief Judge Harold Greene, agreed that there are security problems at the court, which is spread among six downtown buildings. None of the five agreed with Halleck's belief that individual jurists are in danger.

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"I don't at all like the idea of a man in handcuffs being walked several blocks within the city," said Judge Greene, who declined to comment on Halleck's concern over the safety of judges.

"We have a survey of the court's security," he said, "which will be presented to the judges within a month." He would not elaborate on the survey's scope or findings.

Anthony Papa, United States marshal for the District of Columbia, said he never has "enough manpower to do everything I'd like to do, but I'm not aware of a lack of security."

Papa said that yesterday he had 48 deputies on duty who supported 29 judges and responsible for 117 prisoners and 44 juveniles.

Papa complained of problems arising from the court's operation in six buildings. Everytime a judge requires a prisoner "forthwith," said Papa, "we have to get a vehicle, a driver and a guard, today we had seven forthwith procedures."

Judge Halleck said procedures in his courtroom often are delayed because he has to wait for a marshal to be located before a prisoner can be moved.

"I had a guy I sentenced to work release," said the judge. "There was no marshal present and he (the prisoner) just sat down where he was sup-

posed to. He finally went out to lunch on his own. He came back, to his eternal credit, and finally about 4 p.m. he wandered out in the hall and asked a marshal to take him back to jail so he wouldn't miss supper."

Judge Halleck said the court is "probably keeping up with the cases, simply because we've got more judges. But you reach a point of diminishing returns. You don't have enough marshals. You have more people coming in and no one to handle them. When you talk about expanding the court system people forget you're talking about expanding security needs in proportion."

Judge Halleck said he believes judges and courts are becoming the symbol of "the system" to those who would destroy the system. "A judge is ultimately responsible for sending somebody to jail who's radicalized and brutalized there. A judge makes a potential enemy in every case he decides."