

PRESIDENT URGES 'GENUINE REFORM' OF COURT SYSTEM

Tells Judiciary Conference
'Daring' Action Is Needed
to Streamline Justice

BACKS BURGER'S EFFORT

Wants Other Agencies to
Handle Minor Crimes—
Favors 'Parajudge' Plan

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Excerpts from Nixon speech
are printed on Page 18.

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WILLIAMSBURG, Va., March 11—The accelerating campaign to reform the nation's creeping system of justice picked up momentum today as President Nixon told a national conference on the judiciary that "imagination and daring" were needed to improve the courts.

Mr. Nixon's appearance here gave a symbolic encouragement to the efforts of Chief Justice Warren E. Burger and other judicial leaders who have been urging strong measures to make justice faster and more efficient.

The President warned that it was not enough to "limit ourselves to calling for more judges, more police, more lawyers operating in the same system." Rather, he urged "genuine reform — the kind of change that requires imagination and daring, that demands a focus on ultimate goals."

Backs Reform Proposals

Mr. Nixon made no proposals for Federal programs, but he endorsed the following proposals for judicial reform:

Minor traffic offenses, loitering, drunkenness and other "victimless" crimes should be taken out of the courts and handled by other agencies.

Many of the routine tasks done by judges could be taken

over by nonlawyer "parajudges," giving the judges more time to judge. He compared this to the newly created Federal magistrates, who are trying petty cases that the Federal judges used to have to hear. All Federal magistrates are lawyers, however.

Judges and lawyers should make more use of computers to store and retrieve information.

The states should create a judicial center, similar to the one created by the Federal Government four years ago, to develop new techniques for streamlining justice. Mr. Nixon pledged "our cooperation," which was taken by observers here to mean financial help.

There was only a trace today of the astringent appeals for law and order that marked many of Mr. Nixon's statements about justice during his 1968 election campaign. He mentioned liberal court decisions only indirectly, saying that a system of criminal justice "that can guarantee neither a speedy trial nor a safe community can-

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not excuse its failure by pointing to an elaborate system of safeguards for the accused." He added, "Justice dictates not only that the innocent man go free, but that the guilty be punished for his crimes."

Mr. Nixon got one of his strongest bursts of applause with this statement and with his later words of praise for judges "who will not be bullied or stampeded" by rowdies in court. He was apparently referring to Judge Julius J. Hoffman of Federal District Court in Chicago, who was invited to the White House after he gave stiff contempt sentences to bumptious attorneys and defendants in the 1969 conspiracy trials.

Publicity Peril

The President also won a round of applause from his audience of several hundred lawyers and judges when he warned against "exploitation" by the media of sensational trials and declared that "the filming of judicial proceedings, or the introduction of live television to the courtroom, would be a mistake."

Mr. Nixon, who was accused last year of prejudicing the murder trial of Charles M. Manson in Los Angeles by saying that Manson was guilty, also warned today that "all too often, the right of the accused to a fair trial is eroded by prejudicial publicity."

The President spoke at the opening session of a four-day meeting that is being billed as the first National Conference on the Judiciary, which is being held at the Williamsburg Conference Center. The meeting was initially planned as an opportunity for about 200 judges and lawyers from other states to discuss the judicial reforms that a study commission has proposed for adoption by the Virginia legislature.

However, as other distinguished speakers and finally Mr. Nixon agreed to speak, the conference attracted the joint sponsorship of the American Bar Association, the American Judicature Society, the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the Institute on Judicial Administration. Six hundred judges and lawyers—including the Chief Justices of about 40 states—are attending the conference, at an estimated expense to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of \$139,000.

Few Demonstrators

The President flew here by helicopter from the White House, delivered his speech and returned immediately to Washington. The only demonstrators in evidence were about a dozen persons who carried placards denouncing busing in school desegregation.

While Mr. Nixon was speak-

ing, about 2,500 students at William and Mary College were holding a rival "Counter Conference on Peace and Justice" at an amphitheater on the campus early. They heard Renie C. Davis, an antiwar spokesman and a defendant in the Chicago Seven trial; Allen Ginsberg, the poet, and a rock band.

A pro-Nixon student group called Students for Peace With Freedom held its own conference on the campus this afternoon in support of the President. Forty-six students heard speech by a Foreign Service official.