



Department of Justice

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AG

Attorney General William B. Saxbe announced today that the Department of Justice will begin a new program tomorrow to improve the courtroom abilities of its new attorneys.

Mr. Saxbe said he had ordered development of the new program -- the Attorney General's Advocacy Institute -- as part of his overall efforts to improve the efficiency of the Department's legal staff in both criminal and civil trials.

One hundred attorneys will be enrolled in the Institute's initial two-week session. Instructors will include a number of the Department's leading prosecutors, officials of its legal divisions, 29 Federal judges, and attorneys from private practice.

Subjects will include grand jury proceedings, trial preparation, expert witnesses, electronic surveillance guidelines, opening and closing statements, cross examination, motions, appeal procedures, search and seizure, civil discovery, public corruption, and defense strategies.

Mr. Saxbe will speak at the opening session of the Institute at 9:15 a. m. in the Great Hall of the Department.

Those taking part in the Institute will include Deputy Attorney General Laurence H. Silberman, Assistant Attorney General Carla A. Hills of the Civil Division, and these United States Attorneys: George Beall, Baltimore; James R. Thompson, Chicago; Earl Silbert, Washington, D. C.; Ralph Guy, Detroit; and Jonathan Goldstein, Newark.

"Most of our new attorneys have limited courtroom experience and until now have had to acquire basic skills through what was, in effect, on-the-job training in actual trials," Mr. Saxbe said.

"When I became Attorney General, I said that one of my major goals was to find ways to enhance and improve the level of performance of the Department's attorneys," he said.

"The Advocacy Institute is an important part of this effort, and is designed to impart skills that otherwise might take many months to learn.

"If the initial session and others to follow on a pilot basis are successful, the Advocacy Institute will be made a permanent, institutionalized part of the Department's operations," Mr. Saxbe said.

"All of us in the legal profession owe our deep gratitude to Chief Justice Warren E. Burger for calling attention to the need for much higher standards of advocacy in the courtroom.

"His thoughtful comments and proposals were in large measure responsible for the new efforts we are beginning," Mr. Saxbe said.

The attorneys to be trained at the opening course include 70 from the staffs of United States Attorneys throughout the country and 30 from the Department's legal divisions in Washington, D. C.

Mr. Saxbe said that in addition to the classroom courses, there also will be three mock trials -- on bank robbery, narcotics, and civil tort claims. Portions of the courses will be videotaped for use in later training programs.

"We are particularly fortunate to have as instructors some of the Department's leading trial attorneys as well as outstanding lawyers from private practice," Mr. Saxbe said. "And we have a special appreciation for the efforts of the Federal judges who are taking time from their busy schedules to give us their invaluable assistance and insights."

The Institute's Executive Director is Philip H. Modlin, director of the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys. Mrs. Hills and Mr. Silbert are co-chairmen.

The classroom courses and mock trials will be held at Georgetown University Law School.

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