

Bell says TV lawyer attracted him to law

By Joy M. Tyler
Afro Staff Reporter **AH**

Judge Robert M. Bell, one of three new appointees to the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, says his interest in law and judicial proceedings began with a famous television trial lawyer.

"Perry Mason caught my attention. I wanted to learn the process and all I could about the legal system, including the way lawyers did things." **MAY 11 1991**

His arrest, while a junior at the Dunbar High School for protesting Blacks being barred from a segregated White restaurant, also left an indelible mark.

Though he and several classmates were convicted of trespassing, Bell was later exonerated of the charges after his case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ironically, it was then attorney Harry A. Cole, the man he replaces on the Court of Appeals, who represented the young activist.

Judge Cole retired in January after nearly 30 years on the bench. **AFRO-AMERICAN**

Bell entered Morgan State as a pre-law major in 1961. Following his graduation in 1966, he studied at the prestigious Harvard Law School, where he completed his studies in 1969.

After Harvard, he returned to Baltimore and was hired by the law firm of Piper and Marbury. **MAY 11 1991**

In 1980, Judge Bell was appointed to the Baltimore City Circuit Court and four years later was named to the Court of Special Appeals.

News of his appointment—which first was reported exclusively in the AFRO on Friday morning—came during an afternoon telephone call from Governor William



Judge Robert Bell says Perry Mason influenced him to study law.

Donald Schaefer. He immediately called his mother in New York and said she was "pleased and proud."

He will have to run for election in 1992 but maintains that it will not be as stressful as waiting for an appointment. **MAY 11 1991**

"I prefer to run for election because you only have to stand on your record. I don't get into the politics of it," he said. **AFRO-AMERICAN**

Judge Bell will be sworn in during ceremonies on May 16 at the State House in Annapolis.