

# 'He Has Torn My Head Off': Manafort Judge Known for Being Tough During Trials

Senior U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III, presiding over the Paul Manafort trial, has a reputation of displaying a no-nonsense, sharp demeanor that sometimes stings the lawyers in his courtroom, reports *The Washington Post*.

"He has torn my head off in front of my wife multiple times," said Kevin Mikolashek, who recently left the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Reporter **Rachel Weiner** quotes defense lawyer John Zwerling, who says he warns lawyers who are new to the Alexandria, Va. court: "It's important for him that everyone in the courtroom knows he is the smartest person in that courtroom, and just be aware that he usually is. So you better be on your A game."

Weiner adds: "Ellis regularly interrupts trial testimony with his own questions and demands that certain lines of inquiry be cut short, clearing up ambiguity that defense attorneys hoped to create. More than one lawyer has tried to block him from doing so with pretrial motions or mid-case demands for a mistrial."

Those attempts have been struck down, however.

**Read the *Post* article.**