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DALLAS IS SHAKEN BY DEATH PENALTY

Guilty Verdict No Surprise, but Sentence Shocks Many —Appeal is Discussed

By JACK LANGGUTH
Special to The New York Times

DALLAS, March 14—The people of Dallas did not want Jack L. Ruby back among them, boasting of his crime and acquittal. Neither did they want him sentenced to death.

"This verdict was almost as shocking to everyone as Ruby's own shooting had been," a Dallas newspaper editor said shortly after the jury returned with a verdict of guilty and directed sentence of death for the slayer of Lee H. Oswald, accused assassin of President Kennedy.

A. C. Greene, editor of The Dallas Times Herald editorial page, declared:

"The town's a little bit shaken."

Across the street from the courthouse, a large crowd gathered before noon when news spread that a verdict would soon be announced.

Crowd Awaits Verdict

The brisk winds and sunny skies made the waiting pleasant, but the mood of the crowd was somber. When the decision was announced, some drifted away without comment, others stood to watch District Attorney Henry M. Wade interviewed on the courthouse steps.

Upstairs, as sheriff's deputies held back reporters until the jury could leave by a side exit, one deputy turned to another and remarked:

"Too strong."

The other deputy raised an eyebrow.

"Prison would have been better," the deputy explained. "This won't stand up."

His view was widely shared around the courthouse this afternoon. Then, too, Judge ~~W. C.~~ E.

Brown's casual manner on the bench had been the despair of some of his colleagues during the trial.

The court of Criminal Appeals will review a capital punishment case more rigorously than would a case with a long-term prison sentence, some observers believe.

When he was arguing last month for a change of venue, Melvin M. Belli, Ruby's chief attorney, charged that the civic leaders of Dallas wanted to execute Ruby to show the law and order prevailed here.

Jail Term of 30 Years Desired

Mr. Belli, however, had apparently overstated the attitude among the businessmen who influenced this city. For the most part, these men wanted to see Ruby sentenced to a jail term of at least 30 years.

"This country is surfeited with death," one member of the Dallas Citizens Council, a business group, said two months ago. "Whether its official or unofficial, I don't want to see another killing here."

Of recurrent concern here has been the possibility that Mr. Belli would succeed in getting Ruby acquitted.

"I can picture the whole thing now," said one woman who belongs to a loose-knit group of Dallas leaders that Mr. Belli had apparently referred to in talking of the "oligarchy."

"Jack Ruby's out of jail," she declared, "and he's bought a new strip-tease joint and he's behind the bar bragging about how he killed Oswald. It gives me nightmares."

Mr. Belli's handling of the Ruby case had drawn criticism on several grounds.

He first alienated much of the state's legal profession last December when he arrived in Dallas and characterized members of the District Attorney's staff as "yokels."

"I almost forgot about Jack

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- DeLoach _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Evans _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

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Handwritten notes:
Wade
L. Wade
H. M. Wade

- The Washington Post and Times Herald _____
- The Washington Daily News _____
- The Evening Star _____
- New York Herald Tribune _____
- New York Journal-American _____
- New York Mirror _____
- New York Daily News _____
- New York Post _____
- The New York Times _____
- The Worker _____
- The New Leader _____
- The Wall Street Journal _____
- The National Observer _____
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Ruby, as I read about the case," one suburban Dallas matron said today. "And I got the feeling that Mr. Belli had forgotten, too."

The spectators who turned up early each day to watch the proceedings rarely expressed opinions about the case. But they were all plainly fascinated by Mr. Belli's dramatic appearance and urbane air.

After the first bail bond hearings, however, opinions among Dallas lawyers had begun to change.

"First I thought Belli would eat Henry Wade alive," one lawyer said after a visit to the courtroom. "But I'd forgotten that Henry's a pretty solid prosecutor."

Ruby's attorneys had based their case almost exclusively on the argument that the 52-year-old night-club owner was insane at the time he shot Oswald last Nov. 24.

Many Knew Ruby

Visitors to Dallas in the last month expressed surprise at the number of people Ruby knew here.

"He used to come in often," a waitress said last night at an all-night diner near the Carousel, Ruby's nightclub. "The defense asked me if I'd testify for him. I told them that I'd known him for 15 years and just didn't have anything good to say about him."

"I know Jack Ruby," taxi drivers, policemen and local businessmen often said, "and he's no more crazy than I am."

But for whatever ill will Ruby engendered in 15 years in Dallas, few persons were expressing satisfaction today.

"In the last few months, Ruby has become a household name in Dallas," one man said. "He's like a television performer whom you feel you know, just from hearing so much about him. You can't kill someone like that with a clear conscience."

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Associated Press Wirephoto

Jack L. Ruby leaves Dallas court after sentencing to death



United Press International Telephoto

Television view of Judge Joe B. Brown as he reads verdict

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