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Ruby Found Guilty, A-1 Sentenced to Death

Defense Assails 'Dallas Justice,' Plans Appeal

By Gene Blake
The Los Angeles Times

DALLAS, March 14—Jack Ruby today was convicted of murder with malice and sentenced to death in the electric chair for the slaying of accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

The jury reached its verdict in only 2 hours and 19 minutes of deliberations, touching off a wild tirade by chief defense counsel Melvin Belli of California.

"This is a little bit of Russia in the United States," he shouted to newsmen who crowded around him. It lasted

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 Judge charges 1964
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 Ruby trial. Page A11.
 Belli vents anger at ver-
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for about 10 minutes, until District Judge Joe B. Brown ordered the courtroom cleared.

Ruby himself took the verdict calmly, with no apparent change in the blank expression he has worn throughout most of the four-week trial.

Defense to Appeal

Belli started his tirade while the jury, judge and defendant were still in their places and television cameras were trained on the scene.

"May I thank this jury for a victory," Belli boomed, rising to his feet. "I assure you I will appeal this verdict to a court where there is justice and due process of law."

Plainclothes sheriff's deputies closed in around Ruby and hustled him quickly past the counsel table and out of the courtroom.

"Don't worry, Jack, we'll appeal this and take it out of Dallas," Belli assured the 32-year-old strip tease impresario as he was escorted out.

"May the record show it is now 12:20," Belli addressed the court reporter. "The jury started to deliberate this morning at 9 and reached the verdict at 11:30."

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 The Washington Post and Times Herald
 The Washington Daily News
 The Evening Star
 New York Herald Tribune
 New York Journal-American
 New York Mirror
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 The Worker
 The New Leader
 The Wall Street Journal
 The National Observer
 People's World
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Wade Thanks Jurors

District Attorney Henry Wade was brief and restrained in his comments.

"I just thanked them (the jurors) for what I thought was a fair and impartial verdict," the silver-haired prosecutor drawled.

The case was turned over to the jurors at 1:05 a.m. today after nearly five hours of closing arguments, but they retired to bed in their quarters at the courthouse immediately.

After a walk to breakfast at a nearby restaurant—during which they passed the slain man's mother, Marguerite Oswald, with no sign of recognition from either side—the jurors returned to begin deliberations at 9:10 a.m.

Belli charged in his tirade to newsmen that one of the jurors had told his employer before the trial that if he got on the jury he would vote the death penalty.

Asked about this later, Judge Brown said he had heard about it.

"I didn't do anything about it," he said. "It was hearsay."

Belli, dressed for the occasion all in black, including a tieless black sport shirt, was completely unrestrained in his bitter reaction to the verdict.

"Do you believe now that there is justice in Dallas" he began, before the converging television cameramen could get in position.

"You fellows who have been here five weeks have seen a little bit of Russia in the United States. You have a pretty good impression of one of the sore spots.

"Judge Brown went down the line for every motion the District Attorney made. It led to 30 reversible errors that any law student would recognize."

Associate defense counsel Joe H. Tonahill, 6-foot, 4-inch, 250-pound lawyer from Jasper, Tex., added a cryptic comment.

"It was a violent miscarriage of justice," he said.

Belli said he was going to visit Ruby, then start work on the appeal "forthwith — today."

At that point Judge Brown, who was in an anteroom but couldn't miss the hubbub, ordered it halted and Sheriff Bill Decker cleared the courtroom.

Ruby will remain in the county jail here pending an appeal. Defense attorneys indicated that the first step will be taken next week with a motion for a new trial.

If that motion is denied, an appeal of Ruby's conviction would have to start in the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

Should the appeals court rule against Ruby, the appeal route in State courts would be exhausted and his attorneys would then have to turn to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. From there, they could appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

After visiting Ruby in the jail, Belli reported:

"He is surprisingly calm. He is surprised that some of the police officers he thought were his friends turned against him on the witness stand."

It was at 11:35 a.m. that a rap came on the jury deliberation door.

Bailiff Bo Mabra unlocked the door. Max E. Causey, 33, the first juror chosen and locked up more than three weeks ago, was standing there in his role as foreman.

"We have a verdict," Causey said.

It took nearly 45 minutes to round up everyone, with Belli first on the scene. Wade and his assistants, Jim Bowie, William Alexander and Frank Watts, were next, followed by Tonahill and defense attorney Phil Burleson.

With the latter came Ruby's brother Earl, his sister, Eileen Kaminsky, and his roommate, George Senator. Another sister, Eva Grant, did not appear.

Judge Brown took the bench at 12:19 p.m. and Ruby was brought in under the eyes of television and newsreel cameras.

"I am about to receive a verdict in the case styled State of Texas vs. Jack Ruby," the Judge announced.

"I want no sort of demonstration, no sounds, no gesture of any kind. Bring the jury in."

"When I finish everyone will remain seated until I officially discharge the jury."

Solemn-faced, the jurors filed in at 12:22 and took their seats.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have reached a verdict?" Judge Brown asked.

"We have," they nodded in assent, and Foreman Causey handed the form to Bailiff Mabra. The bailiff handed it to Judge Brown.

"We, the jury," the Judge read, "find the defendant guilty of murder with malice, as charged in the indictment, and assess his punishment at death. Signed, Max E. Causey, Foreman."

"So say you all?" the Judge asked the jurors. "Will you raise your right hands if this is your verdict?"

All did, and the Judge discharged the jurors, each to be taken home with an escort to avoid questioners — at their own request. But they did not quite escape the beginning of Belli's tirade.

Thus did the Jack Ruby case end in the glare of television and the spotlight of the world, just as it began two days after the assassination of President Kennedy when the accused assassin was gunned down in the basement of City Hall.

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United Press International

Jack Ruby leaves Dallas courtroom after hearing death-penalty verdict of the jury.

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