

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

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Jack Ruby's Stories Seen Ruin of Warren Commission

By ROBERT L. HASSETT

Atty. Melvin Belli charged here yesterday that publication of Jack Ruby's testimony before the Warren Commission in advance of an appeal of the death sentence by Lee Harvey Oswald's slayer has "destroyed the integrity" of the body formed to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy.

And he said that the statement of Chief Justice Earl Warren at the start of the probe that some facts surrounding the murder of the 35th President might not be divulged in our lifetime was "a most unfortunate remark."

WILD RUMORS

Belli, Ruby's trial lawyer, said that the statement gave rise to speculation abroad that there is a "secret, unseen government" in the U.S. and touched off fantastic rumors about the assassina-

tion, which have found their way since into the European press.

"I had hoped that the Warren Commission would issue a dignified report, one that would completely lay at rest for all time rumors and canards," Belli said.

"But the leak to a columnist of Ruby's testimony before the Chief Justice has detracted horribly from the Commission and detracted from the efficacy of its report."

The San Francisco attorney's comments were made during the taping of a television interview, and at a news conference afterward.

Ruby's answers to questions posed by Chief Justice Warren and Commission investigators were the basis of a copyrighted series of stories by Dorothy Kilgallen of The New York Journal-American and of accounts carried by the national wire services.

Belli, fired by Ruby after his conviction for murder with malice and sentencing to the electric chair last March 14, termed "ab-

that his chief defense counsel had prevented him from taking the witness stand.

"Ruby pleaded with me not to put him on the stand," Belli said, "he told me, 'If I go on they'll cut me to ribbons.'"

Belli attributed Ruby's contradictory version to an increasing deterioration of his mental faculties from the moment President Kennedy was slain last Nov. 22.

SHOWMAN'S FAILURE

Belli failed to convince a Dallas County jury that Ruby was suffering from psychomotor epilepsy and so was of unsound mind when he shot Oswald to death two days after the assassination.

Despite the swift return of a guilty verdict without a recommendation for mercy, Belli said that if he were to retry the Ruby case he would follow the original defense pattern.

"Psychiatric defense in Jack's case is the only defense, because it is based on the true state of his brief on an appeal to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Belli said, but his role in the Ruby case apparently will end there.

Asked what he would do if there is a new trial and Ruby asks him again to represent him, Belli pondered the question, then replied, "I'd have to say one to a customer, once in a lifetime."

Ruby's best course, Belli said, is to retain Dallas Attys. Phil Burleson and Clayton Fowler if

the Texas appellate court sets aside his conviction.

It is likely, Belli said, that the case will ultimately reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the event it does, Chief Justice Warren has disqualified himself from participating in its decision, Belli said.

"He (Warren) never should have gone there (to Ruby's cell in the Dallas County Jail) and taken testimony from him before the appeal," Belli asserted.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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