

'HONEST . . . DEDICATED'

Dallas Agrees With Warren Probers

By KENT BIFFLE

County Democratic Chairman William Clark III lauded the Warren Commission Sunday for its bipartisan approach to the investigation of President Kennedy's assassination and he predicted the report will have no real political impact.

He said he felt the results of the commission's study could be used for no politically partisan purpose. "This was something akin to a tough foreign policy problem and politics were rightly avoided."

BOTH DIST. ATTY. HENRY Wade and lawyer Joe Tonahill said Sunday they agreed with the commission's observation that a fair trial for Lee Harvey Oswald, the President's assassin, would have been difficult to obtain.

Tonahill, who represents Jack Ruby, the killer of Oswald, said, "The local law enforcement people went on television and told the world that they had enough evidence to send Oswald to the electric chair. I don't see how he could have gotten a fair trial after that."

Wade said it would have been better if no one had commented on evidence regarding Oswald. "All the evidence should have come from the witness stand," said Wade.

"I SAY IT SHOULD have been done that way. But when the President has been killed, you have some real problems.

The press was yelling and screaming for information about the suspect, and there was some talk that maybe the police were beating him up."

Tonahill of Jasper said statements by officials that there was sufficient evidence to send Oswald to the chair spurred on Ruby, now in county jail, convicted of murder and assessed the death penalty.

H. L. HUNT, DALLAS oil multi-millionaire, called the commission's report "a ver-



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honest finding." He said, "President Kennedy was a friend of mine and I supported the Kennedy-Johnson ticket."

Earle Cabell, mayor of Dallas at the time of the slaying, said, "I certainly wouldn't take it on myself to criticize the findings of the commission, which findings were arrived at by a dedicated and capable group of men after an intensive investigation.

"I cannot refrain, however, from calling attention to the fact that Monday morning quarterbacking is always easier than calling the signals in the game on Saturday.

"OUR POLICE department was confronted with a situation such as has never been duplicated in world history and one which we hope will never repeat itself."

In regard to the commission's criticism of police for giving the press access to the arrested Oswald, Cabell said, "It's my opinion that the Warren Commission members, knowing their philosophy and high character, would have been even more critical of Chief of Police Jesse Curry had he in any way attempted to enforce a blackout of news to the world public."

THE REPORT POINTED out that Oswald was not denied counsel. H. Louis Nichols, president of the Dallas County Bar Association at the time of the assassination, said Sunday that Oswald was, in fact, given spe-

cial services by the association.

Nichols recalled his trip to the city jail on Nov. 23, 1963, the day following the assassination, to determine whether Oswald was represented by a lawyer.

Nichols said he'd worried about whether the question might arise later as to whether Oswald was properly represented by counsel. Nichols said Police Chief Curry expressed worry over the same thing. The chief invited Nichols to speak to Oswald in his cell.

"THIS WAS THE only time during the year I served as president of the bar that this kind of thing was done for a prisoner," said Nichols. He went to Oswald's cell and asked him if he wanted the bar association to provide him with a lawyer.

Oswald, according to Nichols, said he wanted to retain a New York lawyer named John Abt, who had represented clients charged with Communist activities. Oswald also asked for a lawyer affiliated with the American Civil Liberties Union. Nichols said.

Nichols said he told the prisoner that he knew no ACLU attorneys. He said Oswald declined his offer to provide an attorney through the bar association. He said Oswald told him, "Check with me next week and I'll let you know if I want you to do anything."

THE FORMER head of the Dallas bar said during his



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"2-to-3-minute" conversation with the prisoner, Oswald at no time complained of any mistreatment; neither did he contend that any of his rights were being violated.

The Rev. William A. Holmes, pastor of Northaven Methodist.

Church, who reported that some school children cheered in their classrooms when they heard the news that President Kennedy had been slain, said Sunday he has noted signs of moderation in Dallas.

The Rev. Mr. Holmes said he thoroughly agreed with the commission's conclusions that right-wing sentiment in Dallas had nothing to do with Oswald's motivation.

"ANY CONCLUSIONS other than that would be, I think, highly speculative. I see signs of moderation in the city; whether permanent or far-reaching, it is too soon to know."

Dallas Mayor Erik Jonsson said, "What the world failed to understand was that when the President came to Dallas that day there was what has been aptly described as a tumultuous welcome.

"When President Kennedy was killed our feeling of shock was without regard to political party; we'd lost our President. The world didn't understand that, I think."

HE SAID THAT while the report did criticize the Dallas police for Oswald's death, it also pointed out the swift detection

and apprehension of Oswald. The Warren Commission has done an exhaustive job, bringing out nothing very new but establishing details that I hadn't seen before. I think this is good because people around the world should have these facts available. I hope that in time this will be The Book about the events and that its exoneration of Dallas will not be overlooked."

U.S. ATTY. BAREFOOT Sanders said, as a citizen of Dallas, he viewed it as a fine thing that the commission had cleared the city of charges of a "hate atmosphere."

He said, "I think the commission deserves the thanks and the commendation of the American people for the manner in which it conducted the investigation."

ROBERT B. CULLUM, president of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, called the Warren investigation "a very objective job." He said the report bears out the things "that we believed to be true here in Dallas. It's a fine thing," he said, "to have all these doubts laid to rest by this exhaustive investigation."

County Judge Lew Sterrett said the report, while containing no surprises, was "an extensive, exhausting undertaking that seems to have found the right answers."

He said he thought the report was worthwhile because "the people are entitled to all the facts and Dallas is entitled to have the record cleared."



—Dallas News Staff Photos.

H. Louis Nichols . . . Offered to provide counsel for Oswald.