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Suspect
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Official Assails 'Conviction' Of Oswald Without Trial

By JOE THORNTON

Americans were taken to task Sunday by the president of the Dallas Bar Association for "convicting, before he was ever tried," Lee Harvey Oswald, accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy.

"It is a bad commentary on the education of enlightened people when they convict someone on what they have read or heard," said H. Louis Nichols.

"The press, radio and television convicted Oswald before he ever reached a courtroom," he told a group of Southern Methodist University law students at Karcher Auditorium.

Asked after his talk if Oswald's killer, Dallas strip joint operator Jack Ruby, could get a fair trial, Nichols declined to comment.

Ruby gunned down Oswald be-

fore millions of television viewers as Oswald was being moved from city jail to county jail.

Nichols admonished the student members of Phi Delta Phi, international legal fraternity, that they must be prepared to accept cases which are unpopular in the public's mind as well as the more popular.

"The American judicial system can not long exist," he said, "if one standard exists for acceptable defendants and another is used for unacceptable defendants and cases."

The rich and the poor, he noted, each deserve the same "protection and opportunity for defense." But, he continued, this is not always the case because "many court-appointed lawyers do not do their best on behalf of their defendant."

The Constitution provides that a defendant may have an attorney even if he does not have the funds to provide legal counsel, he pointed out.

Throughout the history of jurisprudence, Nichols observed, lawyers have faced criticism, threats of violence and social and economic ostracism by the populace.

"But almost every lawyer—at one time or other during his career must accept a case that is unfavorable to most of the community," he said. "And he must do his utmost to protect a person tried and convicted by public opinion."

In a state-wide poll conducted several years ago, Nichols said, most people queried said they felt it wrong for a lawyer to defend a person who he believes guilty.

*Case of
lynching of
Oswald*

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