

Bar Head Clarifies Role

Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, March 18 of the American Bar Association, said today that he was working with the Warren commission "to review their actions."

Mr. Craig, whom the commission designated Feb. 25 as an "independent lawyer" to work with it, but not for it, said he was not representing the interests of Lee H. Oswald, the alleged assassin of President Kennedy.

When he was named to the post, it was indicated that his job would be to protect the interests of Oswald. The commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, is investigating the assassination Nov. 22 in Dallas.

Mr. Craig was again today highly critical of Melvin M. Belli, the San Francisco lawyer who was chief defense counsel for Jack L. Ruby.

Mr. Craig called Mr. Belli's post-verdict statements "intemperate and abusive about the trial court and the entire Dallas community."

Addresses Bar Group

"The effect was to question the integrity of the court and the jury," he said.

Mr. Craig's remarks on the Warren commission were made at a press conference at the St. Francis Hotel before a luncheon speech to members of the San Francisco Bar Association. His comments on Mr. Belli were made in the speech.

At the press conference, he was pressed to define his assignment, which he said had been taken on the specific request of Chief Justice Warren.

Mr. Craig denied that he was representing Oswald. "We are representing the interest of the American people," he said.

He was asked why the Warren commission, which represented the same interest, needed the assistance of himself and his group.

"They wanted an independent agency to review their actions," he said. "We are that independent agency."

Mr. Craig said the review was designed to filter out any errors that might have cropped up in the commission's work.

When Mr. Craig was appointed, the Warren commission issued a statement saying he would have the job of "examining every facet of the case pointing toward the involvement of Lee H. Oswald, in his absence, and in fairness to his family advise the commission in that regard."

Mr. Craig said the A.B.A. had referred several complaints about Mr. Belli to its committee on grievances "for appropriate investigation and action." The most the committee could do, he said in answer to a question, would be to recommend that Mr. Belli be expelled from the Bar Association.

"May I thank this jury for a verdict that is a victory for bigotry."

See also this file 26 Feb 64