

6 FEB 1964
650 P/CS

BELLI (220)

HOUSTON, TEX. FEB. 6 (AP)--ATTORNEY MELVIN BELLI SAID TODAY HE WOULD BE "TICKLED TO DEATH" TO HAVE THE JACK RUBY TRIAL MOVED TO HOUSTON.

"I'VE LECTURED IN YOUR CITY," THE SAN FRANCISCO ATTORNEY SAID. "I THINK YOU ARE TOLERANT. I THINK YOU ARE A TERRIFIC TEXAS CITY. I THINK YOU ARE GREAT.

"IF WE ARE SENT TO HOUSTON, I'D BE TICKLED TO DEATH."

BELLI, IN NEW YORK, WAS ASKED BY THE HOUSTON POST BY TELEPHONE ABOUT A REPORT THAT HE HAD PREDICTED THE TRIAL WOULD BE HELD IN HOUSTON NEXT SUMMER OR FALL.

"I DON'T THINK I SAID HOUSTON," HE REPLIED. "I DID SAY I DON'T THINK THE CASE CAN BE TRIED IN DALLAS. I'D BE HAPPY TO GO ANY PLACE THEY SEND ME."

A HEARING WILL OPEN MONDAY IN DALLAS ON A DEFENSE MOTION TO MOVE THE RUBY TRIAL OUT OF DALLAS. THE DEFENSE CONTENDS RUBY COULD NOT GET A FAIR TRIAL THERE IN THE SLAYING OF LEE HARVEY OSWALD, ACCUSED ASSASIN OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY.

JOE TONAHILL OF JASPER, ANOTHER OF RUBY'S ATTORNEYS, ALSO SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY WITH HOUSTON.

"I HAVE A GREAT RESPECT FOR THE JURORS--AND THE JUDGES OF HARRIS COUNTY," TONAHILL SAID. "MY EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT THEY ARE VERY FAIR-MINDED PEOPLE AND DO THEIR BEST TO REACH A JUST VERDICT."

"IF JUDGE (JOE B.) BROWN MOVED THE CASE TO HOUSTON, I WILL NOT UTTER ONE SCINTILLA OF PROTEST."

RUBY NOW IS SCHEDULED TO GO ON TRIAL IN JUDGE BROWN'S COURT IN DALLAS FEB. 17.

BELLI SAID THE DEFENSE WOULD NOT ASK FOR A DELAY ON THE TRIAL IF A CHANGE OF VENUE IS NOT GRANTED.

"IF THEY GO AHEAD IN DALLAS, WE'LL GO," HE SAID. "BUT THEY WON'T HAVE A CASE IN ANY COURT THAT WILL STAND UP ON APPEAL."

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