

NIGHT LEAD BELLI

SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 18 (AP)-THE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION TODAY CONDEMNED DEFENSE ATTORNEY MELVIN BELLI'S "UNRESTRAINED COMMENTS" AFTER JACK RUBY'S MURDER TRIAL IN DALLAS AS "A DISCREDIT TO HIM AND TO HIS PROFESSION."

WALTER C. CRAIG OF PHOENIX, ARIZ., MADE THE CRITICISM IN BELLI'S HOMETOWN BEFORE A LUNCHEON OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAR ASSOCIATION. AT THE TIME BELLI WAS ON A TRAIN ENROUTE TO MEXICO CITY.

RUBY WAS FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER WITH MALICE AND CONDEMNED TO DEATH. SIMULTANEOUSLY, TEXAS GOV. JOHN CONNALLY SAID IN A DALLAS INTERVIEW THAT BELLI ULTIMATELY WILL BE THE LOSER FOR HIS "INTEMPERATE REMARKS."

BELLI EXPRESSED HIS OPINION THAT THE JURY RETURNED A "KANGAROO VERDICT" WHEN RUBY WAS CONDEMNED MARCH 14 FOR MURDERING LEE HARVEY OSWALD, ACCUSED ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY. "NOW WE SEE THE SHAME OF DALLAS IN ALL ITS GLORY," BELLI PROCLAIMED.

IN HIS TALK TODAY, CRAIG CRITICIZED BELLI FOR "INTEMPERATE AND ABUSIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE TRIAL COURT AND THE ENTIRE DALLAS COMMUNITY. THE EFFECT WAS TO QUESTION THE INTEGRITY OF THE COURT AND THE JURY."

"THE CANONS OF ETHICS PROVIDE THAT A LAWYER HAVING ANY JUSTIFIED GRIEVANCE AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE JUDICIARY SHOULD LODGE THAT GRIEVANCE WITH THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES, AND NOT INDULGE IN PUBLIC DEFAMATION. MR. BELLI SHOULD KNOW THIS."

"THAT HE SHOULD FLAGRANTLY DISREGARD THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND HIS OATH AS AN ATTORNEY IS A DISCREDIT TO HIM AND HIS PROFESSION," CRAIG CHARGED.

CRAIG SAID COMPLAINTS AGAINST BELLI'S STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO THE BAR ASSOCIATION'S COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL GRIEVANCES.

MH642PPS