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The Long View

A Summing Up By Chief Justice

Sacramento

Chief Justice Earl Warren, who headed the commission which investigated the assassination of President Kennedy, said in an interview here yesterday:

"I haven't heard or read of one single fact that has been developed contrary to the findings of the commission up to this date."

He said he has no objection to legitimate dissent and criticism of the Warren Commission's findings — which were that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, murdered President Kennedy — but he said some attempts to discredit the findings were "unjustified."

CONJURE

He added, "People say, 'This could have happened, that could have happened, maybe this happened and why didn't they talk about this?' Of course, you can conjure up questions to anything you desire."

The 77-year-old Chief Justice, retiring after 15 years on the Supreme Court, spoke on a wide variety of subjects in the interview.

"I wouldn't want to take the Supreme Court out of controversy or away from criticism because I think it strengthens our system," he said. "Of course, we have had some very outlandish criticism that goes beyond the reasonable. But just the idea of dissent is a good thing in this country. I have no feeling against it at all."

BIRCH

He shrugged off as of no concern to him the efforts led by the John Birch Society to impeach him.

"After many years in politics, I learned to accept criticism as well as praise in what we do, and I really think criticism is a good thing for all our agencies of government."

He noted that "there are a great many people that are of the opinion that if the Supreme Court doesn't like something that is going on in the country, it just reaches out and takes the issue and brings it to the Supreme Court."

"Well, that's the furthest thing from the truth. Every case that we have starts in a trial court or the State courts. The case progresses through until eventually it comes to us. When it does come to us, it's usually of a very controversial nature and our decision therefore becomes controversial because . . . somebody has to win and somebody has to lose."

ADVICE

The Chief Justice was asked what counsel he would give to a young man entering public life.

"In the first place, I would be very happy that a young man is entering government, because I believe government has arrived at the stage where it needs the very best intellects and the greatest dedication that is ever required. All I could advise is that he find a facet of interest for himself and stick to it."

And he was asked how he would like to have the Supreme Court judged during his tenure as Chief Justice.

"The only thing I could say is I'd like to have it recorded as an honest effort to meet the problems of our day as they come to the judiciary."

Our Correspondent