Hoffman sees reaction, satirizes judge and trial

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Julius Hoffman (no relation to Abbie) received especially heavy criticism as the attorneys went into detail about selection of jurors (Hoffman asked one question: "Can you be fair?"). He successfully defended his colleagues' positions, and the practice of allowing the prosecution to read the jury documents not introduced as evidence but denying that same privilege to the defense. Further, Weinglass asserted that the law under which the defendants are being tried (a rider to the Civil Rights Act of 1968) is unconstitutional, since it makes it a crime "to cross state lines with the intent of inciting riots." Thus, said Weinglass, "they are prosecuting a state of mind."

Weinglass ended with a plea for support during the remaining months before the trial's start. He then thanked Hoffman for his no-fail defense of the defendants and for the support he has shown the legal profession. Then Hoffman, who had been sitting in the wings, leaped to his feet.

"I feel it is a definite responsibility to moralize about the political future of these areas of the country, to the way the country is treated by the court, in the Chicago courtroom," Hoffman said. "The nation is going through a series of events, the Chicago situation. We've had the city, the state, the nation and the world watching this.

"I'm not going to stand by and watch our Constitutional rights be trampled. We're fighting for our rights and our freedoms, and we're going to win."

Hoffman said that "the results of this trial will be watched worldwide, and we're going to make them aware of the rights we're fighting for." He concluded by thanking the audience for their support and asking for their continued support.

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