

Friday, February 16, 2007

Author of reversal of Chicago Seven conviction passes.

Thomas E. Fairchild penned the reversal of the Chicago Seven conviction, and ran against Joseph McCarthy. (Image from Wisconsin court system's website). Even though I was in the single digits at the time, the Sixties counterculture and many people influenced by it heavily influenced me to care deeply about justice, to question authority, and to advocate erring on the side of protecting people's right to do their own thing over creating a genteel society. The Chicago Seven arrest and trial exemplifies much of what the Sixties counterculture was all about and the tug-of-war between those for and against the established power structure, during a period where plenty of establishment people and organizations were vocally fed up with the Vietnam War, leading to plenty more establishment people being fed up with Nixon (but not enough to keep him out of office in the first place) and Watergate. The two most flamboyant defendants in the Chicago Seven trial (in addition to the eighth defendant, Bobby Seale) were the late Abbie Hoffman -- who remained a rabble rouser until his final days -- and the late Jerry Rubin, who by the 1980's stopped being a radical and embraced the business world wholeheartedly. Hoffman wrote and published *Steal This Book* in 1971. Eleven years later, I walked into a used bookstore in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and asked for *Steal This Book*. The man in the back room heard me, and said: "Funny you should request it, because it was in my hand at the time you asked for it. Here." I asked the price. He said, "Steal it." So I did. On February 12, 2007, another pivotal figure in the Chicago Seven trial passed. Former United States Court of Appeals (7th Cir.) Judge Thomas E. Fairchild died at 94. He penned the 1972 opinion reversing the Chicago Seven conviction. He ran, unsuccessfully, against horror and Senator Joseph McCarthy. President Johnson appointed Fairchild to the United States Court of Appeals in 1966. Who presided at the Chicago Seven trial? None other than Julius Hoffman, a former law partner of Chicago boss-mayor Richard Daley, whose city hosted the 1968 Democratic convention during which the Chicago Seven were arrested. Fascinating information on the Chicago Seven trial is [here](#). Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Criminal Defense at 02:00