

9-16-1970

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### Recommended Citation

Earl C. Behrens, *Confidence in the Courts -- A Warning* (1970).  
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# Confidence In the Courts

## --A Warning

SF Chronicle 16 Sept '70  
wed. By Earl C. Behrens  
Political Editor

### Beverly Hills

Chief Justice Don R. Wright of the State Supreme Court warned yesterday that public confidence in the courts has eroded and said immediate steps must be taken to restore it.

Wright said recent public opinion polls have shown that "the public does not approve of moonlighting by members of the judiciary."

He spoke before more than 400 delegates to the Conference of California Judges, meeting here in conjunction with the annual convention of the State Bar of California.

### RULES

Justice Wright urged that the California judiciary adopt rules aimed at reducing the possibility of conflict-of-interest charges being leveled against a judge.

"Our conduct must be controlled by ourselves and no one of us can take offense at reasonable regulations. We must insist that we retain the right to police our own activities," he said.

Justice Wright said the resignation of former U. S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Abe Fortas, the Senate battles over the Heynsworth and Carswell nominations and the controversy surrounding U. S. Justice William O. Douglas have contributed to the lessening of respect for the courts.

### ACTION

"We cannot properly engage in debate when we are unjustly charged," he said, "but we must take appropriate action to preordain that such charges be held to a minimum."

The conference next year will be asked to vote on a new code of ethics drafted at the current convention by a committee of judges.

The code would prohibit judges from non-judicial duties other than lecturing, teaching, writing or similar activities — so long as they are for reasonable compensation and do not interfere with courtroom duties.

The code would also forbid judges from participating in partisan political activities.