Two More Lawyers Ask to Quit Ruby

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DALLAS (AP) — Jack Ruby's chief defense counsel and an appeals expert asked District Judge Joe B. Brown Wednesday to let them step out of the case.

Clayton Fowler, head of Ruby's defense team since last June, and Emmett Colvin jr., filed motions to withdraw from the case.

The motion suggested that the judge appoint new lawyers to carry out legal appeals for Ruby, under the death sentence for killing accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

In requesting their release, the two lawyers noted that Ruby's sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, last week asked the court that all lawyers on the case, except Phil Burleson, be removed.

The Dallas Times Herald said Judge Brown told a newsman he will permit the withdrawal of Fowler and Colvin, but probably will not appoint additional lawyers.

The judge pointed out that Joe Tonahill of Jasper, who has represented Ruby virtually throughout the case, and Burleson are still on the Ruby staff. Tonahill and Burleson said they intended to continue in the case.

The exit sought by Fowler and Colvin is the latest in a continuing turnover of Ruby lawyers.

At least eight other attorneys have represented Ruby at one time or another since he gunned down Oswald last November 24.

Fowler was the fourth man to head the defense team. Colvin entered the case in July to prepare an appeal of Ruby's death penalty.

The Fowler and Colvin motions indicated friction between them and Burleson. Both motions said Mrs. Grant's letter requesting removal of the lawyers was prepared in Burleson's office.

Fowler stated that the letter was written "evidently with his (Burleson's) knowledge and acquiescence."

Burleson, contacted later, said:

"Each of them (Fowler and Colvin) contributed to the case, but it's not up to me to say who comes and goes."

Tonahill said:

"I'm obligated and bound to the defense of Jack Ruby all the way to the United States Supreme court, if necessary. But I deeply regret that Clayton and Emmett have withdrawn — they are great lawyers and we need them."