

Sirhan Said to Reject Offers by Two Defenders

**Lawyer Says Suspect Bars
Free Aid of Belli or Bailey
—Yorty Defends Stand**

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LOS ANGELES, June 11 — Senator Robert F. Kennedy's accused assassin, Sirhan B. Sirhan, has turned down offers of free legal defense from two of the nation's foremost criminal lawyers, a third lawyer said today.

The two are Melvin Belli of San Francisco, who defended Jack Ruby, the murderer of President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, and F. Lee Bailey of Boston, who defended Dr. Sam Sheppard, the Cleveland osteopath who was ultimately acquitted of murdering his wife.

The disclosure of their rejection came from A. L. Wirin, local counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union, who has been conferring almost daily with the defendant in his isolated, heavily guarded cell at the county Central Jail.

Mr. Wirin, who has been taking the initiative in arranging for the selection of private counsel for Sirhan, named the other lawyers in a jail-doorway interview and said that the defendant "doesn't desire their services."

Mr. Wirin did not elaborate on the reasoning of Sirhan, who is charged with first-degree murder, an offense punishable by the death penalty.

Two names that have cropped up often in professional discussions are those of Joseph Ball and Grant Cooper, leading local criminal lawyers. Mr. Ball, a partner of former Gov. Edmund G. Brown, was one of the top-ranking members of the Warren Commission,



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A. L. Wirin, counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union in Los Angeles, telling of his talk with Sirhan B. Sirhan.

which investigated President Kennedy's assassination.

Judge Donald R. Wright, presiding judge of Superior Court, said today that any private counsel for Sirhan should be designated "in open court with the defendant present, after proper notice."

The statement followed a 45-minute conference between Judge Wright, Superior Judge Arthur Alarcon—who presided at Sirhan's arraignment — and Mr. Wirin.

Sirhan, who demurred at entering a plea when arraigned last Friday, is currently undergoing psychiatric tests to provide guidance for his plea, scheduled for June 28. The plea could be not guilty coupled with a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity.

Meanwhile, Mayor Samuel Yorty, whose public statements about the defendant have drawn official criticism, called a news conference on short notice to defend himself, say-

ing: "I was not accorded due process."

Mayor Yorty was cautioned by Attorney General Ramsey Clark, State Attorney General Thomas Lynch, and others after he announced that Sirhan apparently had left-wing contacts and that a notebook found in his house contained a reference to killing Senator Kennedy by June 5, the date of the assassination.

Yesterday, Mayor Yorty was formally served with a copy of an order by Judge Alarcon warning public officials and all persons connected with the prosecution that indiscreet talk that might prejudice a fair trial would bring "swift" contempt-of-court action.

Mayor Yorty, a maverick Democrat who had long been at odds with Senator Kennedy, said today he had made his statements about Sirhan to "get the facts to the public and prevent rumors and violence."

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