

Rby

Ruby lawyers

Feb. 15, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Tom Howard said tonight he will make a motion Monday (the day Ruby's trial opens) to withdraw as a defense attorney in the murder trial of Jack Ruby.

Howard was the first lawyer employed by Ruby's family after the night club operator was charged with the slaying of Lew Harvey Oswald... and had directed much of the early preparations for Ruby's defense.

Melvin Belli became Ruby's chief defense attorney in mid-December and added Joe Tonahill of Jasper, Texas., and Sam Brody of Los Angeles to the defense legal staff.

(Tonahill quoted as saying Howard's daughter ill. Howard denied it, saying he had not been able to consult with Ruby family. Tonahill also said Brody ill with a virus. Find no record of Brody hereafter in the case).

March 19, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Belli fired as chief defense counsel by Ruby family.

March 21, 1964, SF Chronicle, Dallas -- Belli, resigning from ABA, called Dallas "the murder capital of the world.

...Belli said that although he would accede to the request of the Ruby family ~~that~~ to withdraw as chief defense counsel, he stood ready to be of assistance on the appeal from the death verdict if he is asked.

He described PERCY FOREMAN, of Houston, who was hired by Ruby's family to replace him, as an "adept counsel."

June 3, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Jack Ruby's third chief defense counsel, legal-medical expert Dr. Hubert Winston Smith, has resigned to return to teaching at the University of Texas Law School.

Another defense lawyer, Phil Burleson, announced the action and said he and Joe Tonahill will carry on the legal battle for Ruby

...Burleson said Smith felt he should return to teaching "to sustain himself and his family." He had accepted the case without a fee. University regents ruled Smith must take a leave of absence without pay while working on the Ruby case.

....His (Belli's) replacement, Percy Foreman of Houston, quite after four days over what he called a disagreement with Ruby's family. Smith was then hired....

June 9, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Relatives engaged Clayton Fowler, head of the Dallas criminal bar association, as chief defense counsel today for condemned slayer Jack Ruby.

...Fowler, 43, was engaged by Earl Ruby, a brother of the condemned man.

He accepted the case with the understanding that he would conduct further litigation without interference from the family and other lawyers, Fowler said. (added he was not sure about pressing for a sanity hearing).

1964

March 20, NYT, Houston, March 19 -- Percy Foreman agree today to replace Melvin Belli as Jack Ruby's chief defense counsel.

....Mr. Foreman said he signed a contract today with Mrs. Willean Kaminsky, a sister of Ruby, and with three of Ruby's brothers, Hyman Rubenstein of Chicago, Earl Ruby of Southfield, Mich., and Sam Ruby, Dallas.

"We wanted Foreman in the first place," said Mrs. Kaminsky. "We preferred him to Belli. But Foreman was contacted by another man and there was some misunderstanding about what part Foreman would take in the case, so we went with Belli.

March 23, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Famed defender Percy Foreman withdrew today as chief counsel for Jack Ruby, blaming interference by the condemned killer's family for his decision.

(in a letter to Ruby, Foreman said:)

"Your sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, insisted on retaining and exercising

the general power of attorney from you.

"Attorney (Stanley) Kaufman ..thinks criminal cases should be tried as he tries civil cases. I do not agree with his opinion."

March 24, 1964, AP Dallas -- Relatives of convicted slayer Jack Ruby announced tonight they have hired Dr. Hubert Winston Smith of the University of Texas as defense counsel.

April 17, 1964, AP, Dallas -- ...The newest member of the defense team visited Rub last night. He is Charles Bellows of Chicago. Burleson confirmed that Bellows was entering the case and said he would serve in an advisory capacity and other ways....

June 11, AP, Dallas -- Jack Ruby's new chief counsel says he plans to withdraw a request for a sanity hearing in order to concentrate on appeals for a new trial.

Clayton Fowler, who tok over as Ruby's fifth head lawyer this week, said yesterday he decided on the change in strategy because a sanity hear now would be premature.

July 14, AP, Dallas -- The chief defense attorney for Jack Ruby says strategy will not change despite Ruby's attempt to injure another member of his legal staff.

Clayton Fowler made the statement after he conferred briefly with SOL DANN, a Detroit lawyer, and Earl Ruby, a brother of the condemned slayer.

...Dann was described as a legal adviser for the Ruby family.

July 14, AP, Dallas -- Another lawyer joined the staff of condemend killer Jack Ruby today.

Clayton Fowler, who heads the staff, said Emmett Colvin Jr., has been added to the legal team trying to save Ruby from the electric chair.

He said Colvin will concentrate on preparing an appeal.... Colvin resigned from Dist Atty Henry Wade's staff Oct 1 and entered private practice

July 16, AP, Dallas -- Clayton Fowler filed today for Sam Ruby an application with Dallas Coutny probate judge W.F. Bartlett Jr. asking appointment of a guardian for Jack Ruby.

Bartlett set Aug. 6 as tentative hearing date.

The application said there is reason to believe that outside persons will try to exploit the condemned man for their own personal gain.

July 19, AP, Dallas -- story on Ruby's lie detector test.

. .Tonahill also told of an argument which developed yesterday between Sol Dann, a Detroit lawyer who claimed to be Ruby's adviser, and Ruby's Texas lawyers.

Tonahill said Dann tried to get the polygraph test stopped and after failing "tried to fire Fowler and me."

"But Fowler, who is the top lawyer here, fired Dann instead," Tonahill said.

July 22, AP, Dallas -- Earl Ruby announces Clayton Fowler and Joe Tonahill being removed from the case. Sol Dann to take over as chief defense counsel.

Tonahill said Fowler still chief defense counsel, having been hired by Jack Ruby.

July 23, Dallas Morning News, Carl Freund -- Says Dann fired Fowler by telegram, whereafter Fowler went to see Jack Ruby and got a note from him continuing him as chief defense counsel. Fowler indicated he would have nothing more to do with the guardianship petition.

July 23, AP, Dallas -- Fowler said the four Texas lawyers -- himself, Tonahill, Burleson and Colvin -- will continue as the "sole participants" in Ruby's case, concentrating on preparing briefs for the appeal which getting near deadline.

July 24, 1964, Dallas Morning News -- Eva Grant...has asked Sheriff Bill Decker not to allow defense attorney Joe Tonahill to see her brother.

July 28, 1964, AP, Dallas -- Dann, in letter to Dallas Morning Times Herald, threatens legal action against other lawyers after appeal launched, hints (conflict of interests and failure on the part of certain lawyers to fully and properly represent Jack Ruby.)

Denies he opposed lie detector test, but did oppose the way it was administered.

July 29, AP, Dallas -- Two of Jack Ruby's lawyers threatened today to sue a Detroit Lawyer if he does not halt what they called "harassment" of the defense effort.

The threat was in a sharply worded letter to Michigan lawyer Sol Dann signed by Joe H. Tonahill of Jasper. Chief Ruby defense lawyer Clayton Fowler concurred with Tonahill's letter...

July 31, AP, Dallas -- Judge Bartlett gave Fowler permission to withdraw from the guardianship application and postponed hearing indefinitely. Dann said he needed more time to arrange another lawyer to handle the case. (Bartlett explained Dann needs a Texas lawyer to handle because he not licensed in the state).