

Martha Mitchell Is Suing John

Martha Mitchell will file a separate maintenance suit today against her husband, former Attorney General John Mitchell, San Francisco attorney Melvin Belli told the Chronicle yesterday.

Mrs. Mitchell has hired Belli to handle the action and related matters in New York.

Separate maintenance, ac-

ording to Belli, is a step short of divorce. "It means you're still married," the lawyer said, "but you don't have conjugal rights. In other words, he (Mitchell) just can't walk in, hang his hat and sit down for dinner."

As to why Mrs. Mitchell chose this course of action, Belli said, "I don't know. This is the way she wants it.

I assume the woman's got her reasons."

The lawyer said Mrs. Mitchell, though "cooling her heels," waited until her husband's trial was resolved before instituting her suit so "she wouldn't prejudice him."

Mitchell was cleared Sunday of charges in connection with a \$200,000 cash contri-

bution to President Nixon's re-election campaign.

In addition to temporary separate maintenance support of \$2500 a week, Belli said Mrs. Mitchell will ask for custody of the couple's 13-year-old daughter, Marty.

Asked whether a reconciliation might be possible, Bel-

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