

BELLI SAYS RUBY IS IN PERIL IN JAIL

Others Advise Precautions,
Defense Lawyer Reports

By HOMER BIGART

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DALLAS, March 15—Melvin M. Belli, the chief defense counsel for Jack L. Ruby, said today he had been warned by local lawyers to guard against a jailhouse attempt on the life of Ruby.

Ruby, sentenced yesterday to death in the electric chair for the murder of Lee H. Oswald, the accused assassin of President Kennedy, is in the Dallas County Jail. He will remain there several months, pending appeal.

Mr. Belli said he had been cautioned by lawyers in Dallas and Fort Worth against a possible plot against Ruby.

Still bitter against this city, which he denounced as bigoted following the verdict by an all-white, all-Protestant jury, Mr. Belli voiced suspicion that the "Dallas oligarchy" might "shove someone in there to dispose of Ruby in a fight."

He said he would ask Sheriff Bill Decker to keep Ruby away from other prisoners. Ruby has his own cell and a small corridor for pacing.

"I'd be concerned if he were dumped into a pool with other prisoners," Mr. Belli said.

Calls City a 'Hate Town'

The San Francisco lawyer continued to lambaste Dallas as a "hate town." Standing knee-deep in a litter of torn newspapers in his hotel suite, Mr. Belli termed the city "anti-Semitic, anti-science, anti-American, anti-everything."

Dallas was anti-science, Mr. Belli said, because the jury had, in his opinion, ignored the testimony of physicians called by the defense to help prove the contention that Ruby was insane when he shot Oswald. Two women jurors had fallen asleep during medical testimony, he said.

But a spokesman for the Jewish community denied Mr. Belli's charge that the city was anti-Semitic.

"Dallas has its share of bigots, perhaps more than its share," said the spokesman, who asked that his name not be used. He continued:

"But Dallas as a whole has not been a bigoted city. The amount of anti-Semitism has been at a very low level compared to other places, and I've lived in Cleveland, Hartford and New York.

"The Jew in Dallas is accepted as a citizen on the same level as other groups."

Club Policies Cited

He said Jews were accepted in the Lakewood Country Club and the Dallas Athletic Club, which he described as "two of the most prominent of the old-established country clubs." But he said that Jews were still barred from the Dallas County Country Club.

There are only about 19,000 Jews in Dallas or about 2 per cent of the population, yet they play an important role in the civic and cultural life of the community.

He noted that Julius Schepps had headed the Committee of 14, a group of civil leaders that had developed a pattern of racial integration for Dallas on a voluntary level.

All hotels and almost all restaurants desegregated in response to appeals from the Committee of 14.

The spokesman said Dallas Jews had reacted to the death sentence for Ruby no different than Dallas Christians.

"There was no hysteria, no feeling that this was a Jewish issue," he said.

He said few Jews accepted the defense argument that Ruby was insane.

Before appealing to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin the defense must file a motion for a new trial. This should be done in 10 days, but the judge can grant an additional 30 days.

Mr. Belli said he intended to leave Dallas tomorrow and never return. The motion for a new trial will be filed by Philip Bureson, a local lawyer on the Ruby defense staff.

Rby

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