

Belli Visits Ruby in Jail

DALLAS—(UPI)—San Francisco "King of Torts" Melvin Belli, fired as Jack Ruby's chief defense lawyer nearly five months ago, paid a visit to the condemned killer in his jail cell Friday night.

Belli would not discuss the meeting but informed sources said it was informal and legal strategy was discussed.

It was Belli's first trip to Dallas since he left March 16, the day after Ruby was sentenced to death for killing accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

AT THAT TIME, Belli denounced the city, calling it "an evil, festering place—a vicious city trying to cleanse itself."

Belli walked briskly into the jail, accompanied by Emmet Colvin and Phil Burleson, the two appeals specialists in the Ruby defense.

The flashy Belli brushed aside newsmen's questions, saying "I don't think it's right to talk." When asked if he was back on the case, Belli replied, "I am out of the case... definitely."

Belli had met with Ruby's lawyers earlier in the day in a motel room in nearby Fort Worth. Also attending that meeting was the current chief Ruby defender, Clayton Fowler of Dallas.

BELLI WAS the second lawyer to head the Ruby defense and conducted it through the trial. He was replaced by Houston criminal lawyer Percy Foreman who quit in a dispute with the Ruby family.