

Wade Says Belli Charge Of Bugging 'Foolishness'

"Foolishness," said Dist. Atty. Henry Wade Monday of Melvin Belli's complaint that his hotel rooms have been bugged and his telephone lines tapped.

Belli is chief defense counsel for Jack Ruby, now on trial for murder in the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald.

"It's just an effort on Mr. Belli's part to get more publicity," said Wade.

"If his room was bugged, maybe he bugged it himself. I can tell you that we didn't.

"I'm not even curious about what's going on in his hotel room," snapped the district attorney.

Both Belli and Joe Tonahill, another Ruby lawyer, insisted Monday that someone had eavesdropped while defense attorneys

mapped courtroom plans in their hotel rooms.

Belli said when Ruby lawyers became aware of an information leak they began purposely tossing around inaccuracies in their conversations.

"We planted stories and they came back to us in such a way that there was no other explanation," said Belli.

Neither Belli nor Tonahill would say that any wires, listening devices or recorders had been discovered.

"It happened at the Cabana and then at the Adolphus and later at the Statler Hilton," said Belli of the alleged bugging.

"We've stopped it now," he added. "We got an electronics expert to help us."

Belli wouldn't tell what method was used to thwart any future attempts at bugging conversations of defense lawyers.

A man familiar with electronics said a background noise of some kind—even a radio playing—can often defeat bugging efforts if voices are low.

Earlier, defense attorneys had complained that the briefcase of one of their witnesses was rifled during Ruby's bond hearing.

Belli said somebody broke into the briefcase of Dr. Roy Schafer, a Yale University psychologist, in a Dallas hotel room.

"If the bugging doesn't stop," said Belli, "Tonahill's going to bring in an old wigwag of his and we'll live in it."