

# County Must Function As Ruby Trial Goes On

By DON MILLSAP

Despite the frenzy prevailing on the second floor of Dallas County's Criminal Courts Building last week, it was business as usual for most courts and offices in the downtown courthouse complex. And the same can be expected this week.

Most of the inconvenience to employes and visitors has come from the crowds of reporters and photographers filling the hallway outside the courtroom where defense attorneys and prosecutors are attempting to select a jury to hear the murder trial of Jack Ruby.

Records are filed, marriage licenses issued and other matters attended to in County Clerk Glenn Byrd's second-floor offices in the Records Building, adjacent to the courts building.

AUTO LICENSES are sold and voters registered for federal elections in Tax Assessor-Collector Ben Gentle's first-floor office. County Commissioners approve

purchases, hospital district reports, and hire personnel during their regular biweekly meetings on the fourth floor.

Probate Court Judge F. W. Bartlett Jr. occupies the commissioners' courtroom between the meetings.

Hearings were moved here Monday when his second-floor courtroom was taken over as a pressroom by the scores of newsmen who converged on the city to cover the Ruby trial.

INSTEAD OF the normal peace and dignity which prevails in Judge Bartlett's court, numerous telephones and wire machines add

rounding the trial. their noises to the confusion surrounding the trial. Judge J. Frank Wilson, displaced from his Criminal District Court to give Judge Brown more room to admit reporters and spectators, has taken a short breather from normal activity.

Prosecutors Walt Bondies and John Vance—who work in Judge Wilson's court—welcomed the interim to catch up on office work which has piled up during their courtroom appearances.

But they expect to move into Judge Brown's courtroom—in exchange for their own—next week, after visiting Judge R. C. Vaughn from Sherman completes a civil damage suit he is hearing there.

OTHER COURTS in the build-

ings—from the second to the fifth floors — are involved in other trials. Criminal courts are hearing cases involving robbery, rape and burglary. Civil courts have injunctions, damage suits and the like.

Justices of the Fifth Court of Civil Appeals read transcripts of cases appealed to them, discuss upholding or reversing the lower courts, and write their opinions to be handed down Fridays.

In their 6th floor courtroom, almost 100 prospective jurors while away the hours until they are called to be questioned under the hammering attack of Ruby's defense attorneys and prosecutors from the district attorney's office.

New cases for the courts are filed in the district attorney's office and in Dist. Clerk Bill Shaw's office on the ground floor.

WHILE EMPLOYES are performing their tasks in the usual manner, however, many keep a lookout for anyone who might have been at the Ruby trial.

"What's happening in there? Have they gotten any jurors yet?" they ask expectantly.

On their lunch and coffee breaks, many make it a point to go by the courtroom, hoping for additional news of the proceedings and perhaps a glimpse of Ruby, who remains under heavy guard both in the courtroom and en route from and to the jail.