

# Judge Wilson Demands Respect for the Court

By HUGH AYNESWORTH

There will be no circus in the courtroom where J. Frank Wilson presides.

Judge Wilson took over Tuesday for ailing Judge Joe B. Brown to wind up jury selection for the Jack Ruby murder trial.

In past weeks, attorneys have argued at length, reporters have almost stampeded out of the courtroom, attorneys have held lengthy press conferences during breaks and spectators have talked incessantly.

The atmosphere changed Tuesday.

Judge Wilson let it be known in short order that he felt the dignity of the court should come first.

Judge Wilson said he would not tolerate unruly action in the courtroom. Another time he said, "I'm not asking the crowd to respect me, but the court is due respect and I represent the court and the State of Texas."

Judge Wilson sent a spectator

to jail in 1959 for cheering when a not-guilty verdict was handed down in a rape trial.

The spectator spent three days in jail and paid a \$100 fine.

"We're happy to have spectators in the court as long as they behave. If they are allowed to take over, we might as well close the courthouse and try the case under the nearest tree," Judge Wilson said.

"If we allowed all this," he said, "we'd soon have a 3-ring circus on our hands, and the courtroom would be nothing more than a joke."

About three years ago, Judge Wilson, speaking to a state judges' meeting in Galveston, said judges should be given the sentencing function instead of juries in Texas.

He is no soft touch for criminal lawyers either.

"Many times those lawyers who practice criminal law get the idea that the law should be

written, the court decisions be made with the main idea in mind that they make a good fee and win a case," Wilson said in 1960.

But when dealing with "sadistic, moronic criminals of the type we have today, the rights of society are of equal importance to the rights of an individual as regards a fair trial," he said.

"Bleeding hearts should keep that in mind when they demand—and obtain—repeated new trials on legal technicalities," he said.

Ruby's chief counsel, Melvin Belli, didn't like Wilson appearing on the scene.

"We may appeal if he (Judge Wilson) takes over," said Belli at noon Tuesday. Belli said he felt "more comfortable" in Brown's court, "because I consider myself a friend of Judge Brown and he understands the case."