

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Tough New Trial Boss Sits in Saddle

By **SID MOODY**  
AP Newsfeatures Writer

The trial of Jack Ruby finally got into the corral Tuesday with a tough new trail boss in the bench Tuesday morning as a substitute for ailing Judge Joe B. Brown that his word was going to be law.

He was 62-year-old Judge J. Frank Wilson, a gravel-voiced former congressman who made it plain the moment he took the bench Tuesday morning as a substitute for ailing Judge Joe B. Brown that his word was going to be law.

It was when he told lawyers to sit down, they sat. When he urged them to "get along," a favorite phrase of Judge Brown's, they got.

And so, after 14 days and 162 prospective jurors, they finally got a jury to try Ruby, the striptease impresario, for the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, President John F. Kennedy's accused assassin.

Wilson took over from Brown when the latter's doctor advised him to take to his bed because of a cold. For Wilson, it was homecoming day as he had loaned Judge Brown his own courtroom because it can seat more people. Judge Wilson said Brown would return as soon as he is able.

One of Wilson's first acts was to stem the sometimes interminable questioning and objecting of Melvin Belli, Ruby's defense counsel. Belli wanted the trial suspended until Brown's return.

"I get your point. There's no use belaboring the issue," Wilson said. Belli rolled on.

"That's enough. Take your seat," growled the judge.

"Could I ask . . ." Belli began but never finished.

"Take your seat. When the court says to take your seat, it means take your seat!" said Wilson ominously. Belli sat.

Judge Brown fined Belli's col-

league, Joe Bramm, \$25 for throwing a pencil to the floor in anger Monday.

"Judge Wilson would have made it \$100," said a deputy outside the courtroom. He's that kind of no-nonsense man.

He once declared a mistrial in a murder case because of radio and television coverage of the jury selection.

J. Frank Wilson almost didn't make it to Dallas. He had planned to return to his home town of Memphis, Texas, after graduation from Baylor Law School in 1923.

"I changed my mind on the train and decided to come to Dallas instead." His father staked him to \$300. "I decided I would sink or swim on the \$300. I bought a desk and three chairs, paid three months room rent at the YMCA and bought enough meal tickets to last three months. That left me about \$26. Business was not too good."

Wilson was about to pack up and head back for Memphis when his first client turned up. He's been here ever since.

He was unanimously elected president of the Dallas Bar Association in 1943 and was county Democratic chairman from 1942-44.

Wilson decided to run for Congress in 1946 and won after a primary victory over Judge Sarah T. Hughes, the woman who

swore in Lyndon Johnson as President after Kennedy's murder.

He served in Congress until 1955 when he voluntarily stepped down and was appointed to the criminal bench in Dallas. As a congressman, he was strongly conservative, opposing an anti-lynching law, federal aid to education and a Fair Employment Practices Commission.

He and his wife have a married daughter and several grandchildren. Their son, Frank Jr., was killed in a hunting accident on Christmas Day, 1941.

Wilson is 6-foot-2 and has a small gray moustache that people once said made him look like the late Clark Gable. But when his deep voice begins to rumble and the lines of his weathered, massive face grow taut, there's only one thing to recognize in Judge Wilson—determination.

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—Dallas News Staff Photo.

**Judge J. Frank Wilson . . . substitutes for  
ailing Judge Joe B. Brown.**

## **JUDGE BACK ON BENCH, BUT HE'S ONLY 'ACTING'**

Dist. Judge J. Frank Wilson found himself in familiar surroundings, but in an unusual legal situation, as he presided over the Jack Ruby murder trial Tuesday.

Judge Wilson, who normally presides over Criminal District Court, agreed three weeks ago to "loan" his larger courtroom to Judge Joe B. Brown of Criminal District Court No. 3 for the Ruby trial.

When Judge Brown became ill Tuesday, Judge Wilson agreed to substitute for him.

This put Judge Wilson back on his regular bench. But he was there as "acting judge of Criminal District Court No. 3" instead of judge of Criminal District Court.