

Jury Selection Nearly Complete in Shaw Trial

Process Hastened as Challenges Run Out, Judge Forbids Queries on Warren Report

BY JERRY COHEN
Times Staff Writer

NEW ORLEANS—Only two seats remain empty in the jury box for the Clay L. Shaw conspiracy trial, and prospects are good that both of these will be filled today. Two alternates still will have to be chosen, but there is reason to believe that these can be qualified by Thursday.

However, since inconsistency still is the enduring mark of Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's two-year-old investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, no prognosis can be considered a certainty.

The ninth and tenth jurors were accepted by both prosecution and defense Tuesday in Criminal Dist. Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr.'s courtroom, where Shaw, 55-year-old New Orleans civic leader, is on trial for allegedly conspiring to murder Mr. Kennedy.

7 Whites, 3 Negroes

They are a 24-year-old credit manager and a 52-year-old postal worker, the former white, the latter a Negro. Jurors now include seven whites and three Negroes.

Optimism that jury selection is nearing completion is based on two developments:

—The dwindling number of peremptory (without cause) challenges left to both sides, particularly the prosecution.

—Judge Haggerty's order forbidding both defense and prosecution questioning of prospective jurors about their opinions of the Warren Commission Report, which held Lee Harvey Oswald to be the sole assassin.

Tuesday was the first full day both sides were required to abide by the judge's ruling. Until then

each was permitted to explore not only the prospective juror's attitude toward the report's findings, but whether he himself felt Mr. Kennedy had been the victim of a conspiracy. The prosecution exer-

cised its ninth peremptory challenge late Tuesday. Only three such challenges remain to the state, four to the defense.

Asst. Dist. Atty. James Alcock, Garrison's top aide and the man carrying the burden of the jury selection chore for his office, declined to say why he exercised the challenge.

The day's events indicated clearly that the judge's reason for banning questions on the Warren Report was in order to hasten the pace of the jury selection.

Alcock, an articulate, penetrating examiner, did clear up one matter: the question of whether Garrison would deliver the crucial opening statement for the prosecution.

In all "probability," said Alcock, Garrison will.

Judge Haggerty's decision to rule out further questions about the Warren Report appear based on solid legal grounds: he and Alcock both have made clear that under Louisiana law the state does not have to prove the alleged conspiracy ever reached fruition in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

However, it was indicated Tuesday that Garrison intends to introduce evidence concerning the events in Dallas. He subpoenaed former Gov. John B. Connally of Texas, who was wounded when Mr. Kennedy was shot, and Mrs. Connally to appear as prosecution witnesses in the Shaw trial.