

16 MONTHS LATER

The Shaw Trial: Key Men Fade Into Oblivion

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NEW ORLEANS—Just a few paces from the Evening in Paris Cafe in the French Quarter, a tall gray-haired man steps out from behind a steel grille door each morning to pick up his mail from a postal box.

No one pays any attention to him in the rundown neighborhood, predominantly black.

The man chats with a teen-ager and reenters through the grille door. It is the beginning of another day for Clay L. Shaw, 58.

More than one year after his acquittal of charges that he conspired with Lee Harvey Oswald to assassinate President John F. Kennedy, Shaw still lives under the shadow of Jim Garrison, the Orleans Parish (county) district attorney.

After the acquittal on March 1, 1969, Garrison charged Shaw with perjury. And so the case lingers on, although the investigation is dead.

Motion to Be Heard

Today Shaw's motion to quash the perjury charge is scheduled to be heard.

Shaw has filed a \$5 million suit against Garrison alleging that the district attorney violated his civil rights. A hearing is scheduled in September.

But a visitor to New Orleans today seldom hears about Clay Shaw or Jim Garrison. Taxi drivers don't talk about it. It rarely comes up in cocktail conversation.

The myriad of witnesses, defendants, plaintiffs, the piles of legal briefs, the rumors and gossip, the grand jury hearings, the dozen or more lawyers—all have been practically forgotten.

So vast was the scenario, so many the players, that it is almost impossible to recall them all. Still, there are reverberations from the episode. A judge recently postponed the trial of William Gurvich, charged by Garrison with stealing \$19 worth of parish property. Gurvich, once a top

Garrison aide, later broke with the district attorney and went over to Shaw's side.

Once a Central Figure

Dean A. Andrews Jr., a pudgy colorful lawyer who had met Oswald and who was once a central figure in Garrison's investigation into the Kennedy assassination, was last seen playing in a jazz band.

Shaw's principal defense lawyer, E. Irvin Dymond, today is campaign chairman for interim Judge Alvin Oser, a prosecutor of Shaw who is now running for a full term on the criminal court.

Relatively few people see Garrison since he won reelection last fall. He is seldom in his office. He has had several back operations. He told a friend recently he can sit up for only 20 minutes.

Edward A. Haggerty, Jr., the judge who presided over the Shaw trial, has been accused of heavy drinking, absenteeism, gambling and consorting with underworld figures by the Louisiana Judiciary Commission. A recommendation for his removal from the bench has been referred to the State Supreme Court. Haggerty was arrested in a December vice raid at a motel and acquitted earlier this year.

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On one side, Shaw's side, there are a few restored houses. The other side consists mainly of decrepit buildings, including the Evening in Paris Cafe.

Although Shaw's apartment is a two-story unit and comfortable, it is a far cry from the spacious and swank carriage house he once owned at 1313 Dauphine St., also in the quarter. Shaw says most of his retirement money was taken by legal fees, including the carriage house which he sold about a year ago.

Today he is looking for a job. Some persons say that Shaw really isn't as bad off financially as he claims.

"I can get by but it all depends on what you mean by getting by," he said. Shaw's apartment, neat with pictures and books and flowers, runs between \$225 and \$250 a month.

"I would like a job if anyone has one. The Los Angeles area would be splendid," he said.

Shaw was graduated from high school in New Orleans when he was 15.

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And Shaw?

His typical day is spent restoring some French Quarter property he owns, containing a house, two cottages and a parking area. He says he has acquired "an enormous mortgage."

He generally arrives at his apartment several blocks away from the property he is renovating for a light lunch and often in the afternoon works on a play that he started before he was arrested on March 1, 1967. In the evening he comes home to a meal prepared by his maid. He visits with friends occasionally.

Listens to News

"Most of the time I listen to the 10 o'clock news and then I retire," he said.

He describes the street, Burgundy, where he lives as a cross between "Sutton Place and Catfish Row."

He is self-educated and spent practically all his life in the city. Would he want to leave it, and the Quarter where he has been responsible for so much of the historical restoration?

"After what I have been through here in the last few years I have a certain ambivalence about New Orleans," he said, adding a smile.

Shaw has lost some of his fondness for the Quarter which he says has been declining for some time because of commercialization.

Still he lives there, where he has lived for the past two decades.

The income he receives from the property he is restoring barely keeps him going, he said.

He is hoping to be employed as a consultant in international trade. For 20 years he headed the International Trade Mart in

New Orleans.

Shaw has been giving occasional lectures to supplement his income, but also to tell his story,—in such places as San Diego, Laramie, Memphis and Rochester—for the past year.

"I've talked about the case, about the way justice can miscarry," he said. "I described what happened to me. I explained this could happen to anyone, not just me," he said.

Shaw says he still finds a "number of people who think the Warren Commission report is wrong, without have a very clear idea of what it is about.

"They distrust it. They have not read it. Or they

have just read a brief synopsis.

"I think I have something important to say, not just as an individual but as someone who can tell what can happen in American society," he said.

Shaw claims that during the entire Garrison episode "I never had an unpleasant experience" with people.

"I know of no dear friend I lost," he said. "People I didn't even know before became my friends."

On a table in Shaw's apartment is Franz Kafka's book, "The Trial."

Shaw picks it up and reads the first sentence:

"Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K, for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning."

Shaw said: "I'll never forget that sentence. When I first saw it, I said to myself 'Well, here I am!'"