

leans businessman whom Garrison links to the assassination conspiracy—employs the alias Clay Bertrand. NBC, however, claimed it had uncovered the real Clay Bertrand and given his name to the Justice Department. The network also came up with yet another Garrison witness who claims the district attorney's office offered him a bribe to connect Shaw with the plot to kill Kennedy. Finally, NBC said it could produce evidence that two more witnesses had failed lie-detector tests just before testifying at a hearing against Shaw.

Violated Strictures? The program so enraged Garrison that he complained to the Federal Communications Commission, claiming that NBC was plotting with Shaw's defense lawyers to wreck his case. And a New Orleans criminal court judge said he would study whether any of the interviews had violated his strictures against talking with witnesses connected with the case. NBC, however, was prepared for the attack. "Ordinarily, we would not get involved at this point," said producer Fred Freed whose special investigators had been in New Orleans since February. "But this is not an ordinary case." On the plus side, the Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans was stirred enough by the NBC presentation to urge the Louisiana attorney general to begin an investigation of the whole Garrison affair.

If NBC bore into just one of the many conspiracy theories, CBS chewed over the entire Warren commission report in a four-night documentary beginning last Sunday. "What we tried to do was to go back to first principles," said CBS News head Richard S. Salant, whose staff of 25 spent six months and more than \$250,000 on the effort. "We could have let critics and defenders of the report have at each other again, but they'd chase each other around and around and nothing would happen."

Establishing the Time: The CBS documentary thoroughly probed into aspects of the assassination which, if examined more closely by the Warren commission, might have dispelled at least some of the doubt that Oswald was the lone assassin. One of these involved the question of whether Oswald could have accurately fired three shots in the time established by the Warren commission. Instead of duplicating the commission's firing test of Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano using a stationary target, CBS simulated the assassination scene and hired riflemen to shoot from a 60-foot tower at targets moving at the speed of Kennedy's motorcade through Dallas—11 miles an hour. "We beat the commission's time," said a network official. "If the commission had gone a little more deeply into the evidence they had, it could have strengthened its own case."

Although CBS concludes that the Warren commission was basically correct in its findings, the documentary faults the investigation at several points. It suggests, for instance, that the commission

too readily accepted the FBI's assurance that neither it nor the CIA had been in touch with Oswald during his stay in the Soviet Union—or after his return. Yet the network argues that failure of some persons to accept the bulk of the commission's voluminous report is due simply to human irrationality. "There's just something abroad in the land that won't let people believe such a big thing could have been caused by such an insignificant person," remarks producer Leslie Midgley. And in this, the documentary is not likely to score heavily with the conspiracy cultists. "The people who don't believe the report will continue to do so," says Salant, "and the people who do believe it will be reinforced."



Sighting in on the assassination

Two for the Seesaw

Too often television documentaries present stale facts in bright packages, displaying little hard-nosed reporting and even less point of view. But within six days of each other, NBC and CBS have forcefully reminded viewers that television reporters can make headlines as well as read them.

Last week, in a tough, hour-long analysis of the case built by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison around an alleged conspiracy to kill President Kennedy, NBC took its audience on a rare voyage through a nether world usually visited only by novelists and mystery writers. It presented vignettes of pimps, pornographers, homosexuals, sexual masochists, nymphomaniacs and narcotic addicts. It pored over complex codes and cryptographs and sifted through theories on hypnotic spells, truth serums and polygraphs. And it provided some exotic dialogue, especially that involving Dean Andrews, an ex-acquaintance of Oswald. "He's got the right Ha Ha but the wrong Ho Ho," said Andrews of a piece of Garrison evidence. "The people involved in this case," understated network correspondent Frank McCee, "are not, as Jim Garrison likes to point out, bank presidents or presidents of the Chamber of Commerce."

Although hastily edited and at times difficult to follow, the documentary did add to the growing body of evidence that Garrison's case is more show than substance. One of the foundations of that case is that Clay Shaw—a New Or-