

T-P 10/30/69

SECTION TWO—PAGE EIG

END SHAW CASE, SAY CANDIDATES

Connick Favors Further Study of Merits

Two of three district attorney candidates appearing on a television panel program Tuesday night said that they would dismiss all cases still pending that developed from the Clay Shaw investigation.

The third, Harry Connick, said that he was "inclined to say there is no merit to them," but that he would have to evaluate each, as he would all others, before taking any action.

Both Ross T. Scaccia and Charles R. Ward said they considered none of the cases that grew out of the Shaw investigation worthy of prosecution. These include a perjury charge against Clay Shaw and a conspiracy to commit murder charge against Edgar Eugene Bradley.

DA Jim Garrison did not appear on the WYES-TV program. A letter read by the program moderator, and said to be from Garrison, declined the invitation to appear because Garrison was denied "equal time" on the station following a program after the Shaw trial where three writers criticized the Shaw case.

Ward leveled criticism at both the prosecution and defense in the Shaw case for commenting on it before it was tried, as well as news media coverage of the case. He said that he would not comment on a case before it went to trial.

Asked what corrective measures he would take concerning Orleans Parish Prison, Connick said that as DA he would release on their own recognizance young offenders when feasible and he would prosecute those prisoners in jail who commit serious offenses, such as sexual violations.

Scaccia claimed that the

ball bond issue has been blown out of proportion. However, he blamed the number of bond jumping cases on the condition of Parish Prison, the fact that the DA's office takes cases it has no intention of prosecuting and the failure of the DA's office to charge bond jumpers.

GARRISON LETTER

As the candidates were introduced at the program's outset, the camera focused on an empty seat where the moderator said that Garrison was supposed to have sat, then read Garrison's letter. It said:

"Reference is made to your planned telecast this evening of a debate featuring the candidates for the office of district attorney.

"If you will recall, Channel 8 sponsored a program after the Shaw trial in which a panel consisting of Hugh Aynesworth of Newsweek Magazine, James Phelan of the Saturday Evening Post and a free-lance writer by the name of James Kirkwood, who just completed a book criticizing my investigation, engaged in a one-sided diatribe of our investigation and my office.

"Because your station was flooded with calls protesting the unfairness of the show, I responded by applying to your station for equal time to answer these charges. Needless to say, I was disappointed when I was refused equal time. Because of the above set of facts, I decline to appear on your station."

The WYES management replied with this statement:

"The Channel 8 management wishes to state that the program mentioned in Mr. Garrison's statement was a national press analysis of the Clay Shaw trial. Viewer response to the program was generally favorable. In response to Mr. Garrison's request, WYES-TV offered him a personnel appearance in a 30-minute press interview program in the week following the program under discussion. Mr. Garrison did not respond to the invitation."