

GARRISON WITNESSES GRILLED

JFK Case Probed

By RICK DuBROW

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) —NBC-TV Monday night offered an hour examination of the investigation by New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison into the assassination of President Kennedy.

And a question that must be asked is why the network, after conducting its own inquiry on such an important subject, saw fit to spring a very late announcement of the program — just last Friday — which meant many viewers were probably not even aware of it.

IT OBVIOUSLY missed numerous television broadcast listings, and there was

little opportunity to call attention to it.

One possible reason that comes to mind is that NBC-TV may have wanted to keep a tight lock on its uncovered facts until air time was near, for presumable protection and therefore advantage for its program.

This thought, however, is still not too convincing in view of the fact that there were three days remaining for a possible lapse between the announcement and the program.

IN ADDITION, CBS-TV has for some time planned a multi-part examination of the Warren Commission report

on the assassination, and has made no secret of it.

This last fact, of course, leads to another possible reason: That the well-publicized, four-part, four-hour series of CBS-TV broadcasts begins this coming Sunday, and that NBC-TV wanted to undercut it for competitive purposes. One doesn't like to think that such considerations enter into such an important national matter.

Whatever the cause, the late scheduling of Monday night's program, "The J.F.K. Conspiracy: The Case of Jim Garrison," did it a distinct disservice, for it was a wholly fascinating, exceptionally provocative look at the subject, with an incredibly bizarre cast of characters.

THE BROADCAST had promised to offer "considerable new material" and to present evidence that would "show discrepancies in the statements made by the two key witnesses in Garrison's case."

The Monday program, exploring Garrison's investiga-

tion of an alleged conspiracy in the assassination, focused on the testimony of key witnesses and methods allegedly used to obtain evidence. And the footage of the broadcast was, to put it mildly, hardly likely to aid the case being put together in New Orleans.

Witness disputed evidence which led to the indictment of New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw as a conspirator. Witnesses also told of inducements. And several experts, one from Yale and another from New York University, cast their doubts on certain material.

TO UNDERSTAND the total effect of the program, however, one had to sit through the conversations with several of the more bizarre persons interviewed. Incredible still seems a mild word for the atmosphere created, and of course the fact that all this distastefulness is somehow, in the public mind, now part of the story of the death of a President, is immeasurably depressing.

But the program should have been seen, and it is a pity that NBC-TV, regardless of its reasons, did not go out of its way to make this clear.