

HAGGERTY WINS BET ON VERDICT

Jury's Short Time Out Is
No Surprise

By PAUL ATKINSON

Criminal District Court Judge Edward A. Haggerty said early Saturday morning he was not surprised at the short length of deliberation by the Clay L. Shaw trial jury.

The jury deliberated less than an hour in reaching an acquittal verdict.

Talking with newsmen as he left the Criminal Courts building at 1:20 a. m., Judge Haggerty said, "I even won a nickel bet they wouldn't be out more than an hour. I got in under the wire about a minute."

He said he based this contention on an occurrence Thursday night. "I was out at the motel with the jurors," said Judge Haggerty, "and I told them I might let them get some sleep Friday night and come back to deliberate Saturday morning. But about six of them said, 'No, give it to us Friday night.'"

Judge Haggerty said he was "glad that it is all over."

The judge said he didn't have any comment about how the verdict affected the Warren Commission, which District Attorney Jim Garrison stoutly attacked in the state's rebuttal of the defense's summation. "The Warren Commission wasn't actually on trial," said Judge Haggerty, "Mr. Shaw was."

Asked if he was surprised at the verdict, Judge Haggerty said, "No." But he refused to comment further on the verdict.

'HAD OPEN MIND'

Newsmen pressed Judge Haggerty for his opinion of the guilt or innocence of Shaw before the trial; but Judge Haggerty said, "I had an open mind about it. I just wanted to judge fairly and squarely."

He seemed much pleased that both sides, the defense and state, came to him in his chambers and complimented him on his handling of the case. "They both said I gave them a fair

shake of the dice," he said.

Haggerty admitted that he was worried at the outset of the trial for fear that he wouldn't know enough law to render the right decision all the time.

"You can't be right 99 times out of 100 in a criminal case," said Judge Haggerty. "You have to be right all the time, or there is basis for a reversible error. That is what makes it so tough on a criminal court judge."

Judge Haggerty said his immediate plans are to take off three days next week, then dive into the backlog of cases allotted to him. "You know the allotments have been going all this time," he reminded.

Haggerty made it a point to come to the front of the Criminal Courts Building for interviews on the steps after the verdict. He was accompanied by his wife. He carried under his arm two cartons of eggs which he said his wife asked him to bring home.

GIVES AUTOGRAPHS

While spectators and newsmen were waiting for the jury to reach the verdict, Haggerty discarded his judicial robes and visited among spectators and press. He gave a number of autographs.

Leaving the courtroom, the judge likened himself to a baseball umpire who called balls and strikes for 39 days — the length of the trial. He said he "called them like I saw them."

Judge Haggerty said he hopes this verdict vindicated New Orleans justice in the eyes of the world. "The defendant has been tried in a court and found not guilty," said Judge Haggerty. "He got the same fair trial, no matter what the charge."