



DISTRICT ATTORNEY

PARISH OF ORLEANS
STATE OF LOUISIANA
2700 TULANE AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS 70119



JIM GARRISON
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

June 4, 1968

TO: Members of the Staff engaged in the investigation
of the assassination of President Kennedy

RE: State of Louisiana versus Clay Shaw

As you know, the United States District Court now has prevented us from going to trial as scheduled in the case against Clay Shaw. At the same time, subpoenas have been issued through the same court authorizing Mr. Shaw's lawyers to question members of this staff by deposition. This unprecedented action by the federal court has the effect of converting the trial of a defendant in a Louisiana court into an investigation of the District Attorney's staff by defense lawyers.

This is to inform you that the action of the United States District Court in blocking the Shaw trial and converting it into a fishing expedition for the defense lawyers is absolutely illegal and is not supported either by law or custom. The action by this federal court continues the obstruction and interference which we have received in this case from the outset, beginning with the unprecedented announcement of the Attorney General of the United States that the defendant had been "cleared" and proceeding through a series of federal actions too numerous to describe here.

I am sure that each of you knows as well as I do the cause of this program of obstruction by the United States government. In the course of doing our duty in Orleans Parish we came across evidence that the investigation by the United States government of the assassination of President Kennedy was neither complete nor honest. In time we learned that individuals connected with the Central Intelligence Agency were involved in the assassination of the President. We

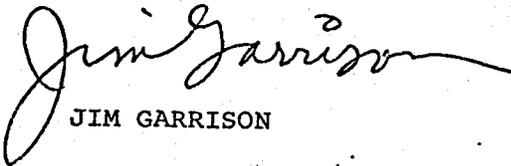
learned, further, that a number of high officials of the United States government were, in effect, acting as accessories after the fact in trying to conceal the truth about the President's murder. It became clear that the United States government was doing everything in its power to prevent the facts from becoming known by the citizens of the United States.

The recent order by the United States District Court blocking our trial of Mr. Shaw is, in my judgment, simply an extension of the program of interference we have met with from the United States government. It is an unauthorized and indefensible invasion of the legal processes of the State of Louisiana by the federal government. The position of this office is that we will not accept nor acknowledge such lawless use of power, despite the color of law given it by the pretense that there is some "question" for the federal judiciary to examine, nor will we cooperate with illegal fishing expeditions by the defense counsel even though authorized by the same United States District Court. We have no concern about answering any relevant questions the defense lawyers may be able to think of, but these will be answered in the Court of the State of Louisiana where actual jurisdiction exists and not in a federal court which has seized the case without any legal right to do so.

This is to instruct you that you are to refuse to recognize in any way this illegal and unauthorized invasion of the operation of our office by the federal government. For those of you who are served with a subpoena to appear at depositions and answer questions by defense attorneys, give them your name, your office rank and your social security number -- and nothing more. You are not to lend substance to this power play by the United States government by taking any action which would constitute recognition of the illegal federal seizure from our hands of a case which we were about to bring to trial in the State Criminal District where it belongs.

The position of this office can be summed up very briefly: We were ready for trial in this matter, we continue to be

ready for trial and we strongly oppose this outrageous federal intrusion into the processes of justice of a Louisiana Court. The United States District Court's action in cancelling our scheduled trial date is plainly illegal and no member of this staff is to compromise or cooperate in any way with this totalitarian display of power by the federal government.


JIM GARRISON

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