

SHERIDAN ASKS TO AVOID JURY

T-P 01/167

Suit Is Filed in Federal District Court

Walter Sheridan, National Broadcasting Company investigator, filed suit Thursday in federal district court seeking to enjoin District Attorney Jim Garrison and Albert Labiche, foreman of the Orleans Parish grand jury, from forcing him to testify before the jury.

Milton E. Brener, attorney for Sheridan, said Thursday night that the district attorney's office had agreed not to attempt to force Sheridan to appear before the Grand Jury pending results of the suit.

Brener said a hearing on the injunction has been tentatively set before Federal District Judge Alvin B. Rubin for 9:30 a. m. Aug. 21.

Earlier this week the NBC investigator who took a substantial part in the two programs on the National Broadcasting Television Network which were critical of the investigation being conducted by Garrison into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was ordered to appear before the grand jury after he filed a similar suit in state court.

ORDERED TO APPEAR

Wednesday, Judge Bernard J. Bagert in criminal district court ordered Sheridan to appear Tuesday to show cause why he should not be held in contempt of court for failing to appear before the grand jury.

In the federal court com-

plaint Sheridan and local TV newsman Richard Townley also ask that Garrison be enjoined from proceeding further with the prosecution of two criminal charges against them.

Sheridan has been charged with public bribery and Townley with bribery and intimidation of witnesses involved in the Garrison probe.

In the federal suit it is alleged that Garrison is using his office to deprive Sheridan and Townley of their constitutional rights, including freedom of speech and press and guarantees against compulsory self-incrimination.

Attorneys Brener and Edward M. Baldwin conferred with Judge Rubin before the hearing date was set.

It is alleged that Garrison has conspired with others and has sought to use the grand jury to accomplish illegal purposes "and to exploit his position as legal advisor thereto."

Sheridan and Townley charge that the district attorney has acted "through malice and personal animosity" and has sought to harass and intimidate them.

The suit claims that Garrison has made numerous and repeated public and private statements which show an intent to "get" Sheridan to prevent the investigation of both plaintiffs "into his practices and methods and to stifle criticism . . ."