

NYT-7-16-67

THE NEW YORK TIMES

GARRISON SEEKS TO REBUT MEDIA

Hopes to Prove He Showed Responsibility in Inquiry

Special to The New York Times

NEW ORLEANS, July 15— District Attorney Jim Garrison taped a television yesterday and said he hoped it would dispel any notion that he had acted "irresponsibly" in his investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy.

An associate of the 6-foot 6-inch prosecutor said that Mr. Garrison believed the national news media had tried to present his investigation as the work of a "madman."

Through a reasonable presentation on television, Mr. Garrison was said to expect that he could combat suggestions by the National Broadcasting Company and other news outlets that he had used unreliable evidence in getting a grand jury indictment against Clay L. Shaw, a retired New Orleans business man.

Shaw is Charged

Mr. Shaw has been charged with conspiring with Lee Harvey Oswald and others to assassinate the President. The Warren Commission found that Oswald, acting alone, killed Mr. Kennedy.

The 30-minute television show was scheduled for prime time tonight by N.B.C. Mr. Garrison had demanded equal time to "answer" a program of June 19 that had criticized the methods he used in his eighth-month investigation of the assassination.

Two newsmen who helped put together the June 19 program for N.B.C. have been charged by Mr. Garrison with attempting to bribe or to intimidate witnesses in the investigation.

Richard Townley of television station WDSU, the N.B.C. affiliate in New Orleans, and Walter J. Sheridan, an investigator for N.B.C., were accused in warrants sworn out by the district attorney with offering "bribes" to Perry Raymond Russo.

Mr. Russo is a Baton Rouge

insurance salesman who testified at a preliminary hearing in March that he had heard Mr. Shaw, Oswald and David W. Ferrie, a former airline pilot, plotting to murder President Kennedy.

Mr. Townley was arrested on Tuesday and released on \$7,500 bond. A spokesman for N.B.C. said that Mr. Sheridan probably would surrender himself in New Orleans "in a few days."

A burglar, John Cancler, known in New Orleans as John the Baptist, was sentenced to six months in jail and fined \$500 on Wednesday after refusing to tell a New Orleans grand jury about statements he had made on the N.B.C. show June 19.

Cancler had said on the program that two investigators from Mr. Garrison's office had asked him to break into Mr. Shaw's home and plant evidence.

When the grand jury foreman asked Cancler if this was true, he said:

"I refuse to answer on the grounds that my answer might incriminate me."

Cancler in Contempt

Criminal District Judge Bernard J. Bagert found Cancler in contempt of court when he refused to answer the same question in open court.

Mr. Shaw's attorneys tried to block tonight's program. F. Irvin Dymond, an attorney for Mr. Shaw, said the show "will make it impossible for Clay L. Shaw to obtain a fair trial in the continental United States and the city of New Orleans."

However, Criminal District Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., who had been assigned to preside at the Shaw trial, refused to order Mr. Garrison not to appear on the program.

"There are basic legal and constitutional safeguards concerning a citizen's right to free speech," Judge Haggerty said.

He noted that he had already ordered newsmen, witnesses, lawyers and others to refrain from commenting on the evidence in the Shaw trial.

"Persons, including lawyers, have acted at their peril," the judge said.

Judge Haggerty said several weeks ago that he would cite some persons for contempt of court after the trial because of statements they had made.

The trial is expected to begin in September.

FO OPERATIONS