

Garrison Appeal Is Rejected

Prosecution Try of TV Reporters Involved

The United States Supreme Court Monday refused to consider the appeal by District Attorney Jim Garrison in his attempted prosecution of television reporters Walter Sheridan and Richard Townley.

A district court hearing, on the reporters' assertion that Garrison acted vindictively and without foundation when he charged them with bribing parties involved in Garrison's investigation of an alleged conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy, will now be scheduled.

Sheridan, a reporter for the National Broadcasting Co., and Townley, of WDSU-TV here, assembled a one-hour documentary which was sharply critical of Garrison's investigation of the alleged plot.

Their show was broadcast June 19, 1967.

On July 7, 1967, Garrison filed a bill of information charging Sheridan with bribing Perry R. Russo, a witness who later

appeared in the prosecution of Clay L. Shaw.

Four days later, Garrison charged Townley with bribing Russo and two other potential witnesses.

After some legal skirmishing and an attempt to bring Sheridan before a grand jury, Sheridan and Townley sought a Federal District Court injunction to quash the charges. They asserted that the prosecution of them by Garrison was an attempt to prevent factual reporting of the assassination probe.

The two reporters contended Garrison had shown "personal animosity and rancor" against them and other reporters and in one affidavit they asserted that Garrison had ordered that they be physically beaten upon arrest.

Another affidavit charged Garrison with selective enforcement of Louisiana's antibribery laws and members of his staff with attempting to buy false testimony against Shaw.

The district court issued an injunction prohibiting Garrison from harassing Sheridan and

Townley in the future, but would not order a hearing on the section of the reporters' complaint which asked dismissal of the criminal charges.

The U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, in a lengthy review of the circumstances of the case, ruled last summer that such a hearing should be held.

A brief filed for Garrison by Chief Assistant District Attorney James L. Alcock asserted that there was no adequate precedent for a hearing that could lead to federal quashing of a state criminal prosecution.

Chief Justice Warren Burger did not participate in Monday's ruling.

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