

1. 30-69



Little Courtroom Drama in Clay Shaw Trial Yet

Selection of Jurors Is Dull Procedure

By VINCENT RANDAZZO

From the standpoint of courtroom drama, the case of Clay Shaw has been thoroughly dull so far.

Action has centered around the selection of 14 jurors, and the great majority of those called have been excused.

Jim Garrison, the district attorney who claims Shaw participated in a conspiracy to kill President John F. Kennedy, has only been in court once — and that was a brief appearance.

The tall, 55-year-old, gray-haired Shaw sits next to his attorneys daily. Attentive and outwardly calm, he pays close attention to the questioning of prospective jurors.

At times, he smokes; other times, he pops candy mints into his mouth.

STRICT SECURITY

The court — on the second floor of the Criminal Courts Building at Tulane and Broad — has strict security measures. At least a half dozen deputies and court personnel are stationed throughout the room.

No one enters unless a previously arranged identification card, bearing his photograph, has been obtained from the office of Criminal Sheriff Louis A. Heyd Jr.

And then when you enter the courtroom, two deputies are on hand to search each person for weapons.

No one leaves the court unless Judge Edward A. Haggerty calls a recess. While he has

said he is not trying the case for the comfort of the press, Judge Haggerty calls recesses frequently enough to allow reporters to get to outside telephones to meet deadlines.

DULL PROCEDURE

Juror selection is usually dull, and Shaw's case is no different. Much time is spent asking prospective jurors if they have a preconceived opinion in the case, or if their families will suffer hardships in their absence.

Court attaches estimate the trial could last about two months.

Wednesday's courtroom was a typical one. The court moved as rapidly as possible in disposing of jurors not selected. It took 40 minutes to excuse one juror.

On the left side of the courtroom sat a press corps of two dozen reporters, including

members from newspapers, television, magazines and radio. This number undoubtedly will increase once the trial starts.

FEW SPECTATORS

On the right side of the court, the only spectators were four women and one man.

In the jury box on the left side of the courtroom were the 10 jurors already chosen. In the rightside jury box were the prospective jurors, each summoned to the witness stand in turn.

Directly in front of the judge were Shaw and two of his attorneys. Behind them and to the left were two assistant district attorneys.

As courtrooms go, the cham-

bers are cheerful. Four huge chandeliers hang from the high white ceiling. The walls are light green. Directly behind the witness stand is the American flag.

Hearing every word in the rear of the courtroom is not always possible, although the judge, witnesses and attorneys are using microphones.

A camera carrying closed circuit television into the nearby office of Sheriff Heyd is attached to the rear wall. Through it all, Sheriff Heyd keeps up to date on the courtroom happenings while still performing his regular duties.

By next week the courtroom should be charged with more excitement.