

A064

Garrison-NBC 500

WASHINGTON AP - An NBC reporter said Wednesday he will surrender to face bribery charges brought by New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison in connection with his probe of President Kennedy's assassination.

Reporter William Sheridan made the promise at a news conference here about the time a threatened legal block was cast aside in New Orleans, clearing the way for Garrison to outline on NBC-TV his controversial investigation of the assassination.

At the same time, a New Orleans judge held a man in contempt for refusing to answer grand jury questions about statements he made in an earlier NBC television show which was critical of the Garrison probe.

Sheridan said he had "no intention of avoiding meeting this issue which involves a basic principle of freedom of the press."

Garrison's major victory Wednesday was court refusal to bar him from appearing Saturday night on NBC television to answer criticism of his probe made in the network's program June 19.

An injunction to block the program, or at least black out the New Orleans area, was made by attorneys for Clay Shaw, 54-year-old wealthy New Orleans businessman charged in the Garrison probe with conspiring to murder Kennedy.

The Shaw attorneys argued that Garrison's scheduled 30-minute appearance on the NBC show would prejudice the case against Shaw.

They also argued that Garrison's appearance would violate criminal district court guidelines for the conduct of lawyers or involved witnesses.

Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., who will preside at the Shaw trial, said he already had given clear notice that persons violating his guidelines "acted at their peril."

He said the proposed injunction would have had the court take action against an anticipated violation of the guidelines.

"I cannot in advance anticipate or suspect that a violation will occur," he ruled.

John The Baptist Cancler was held in contempt of Criminal District Court in New Orleans for refusing to reply to a grand jury question about a statement he made on the June 19 NBC program.

On the program, Cancler had described himself as a professional burglar. When asked by the grand jury if that statement were true, the Negro witness said, "I refuse to answer on the grounds that it might incriminate me."

He was sentenced to six months in jail and fined \$500. The court also stipulated that Cancler would have to serve an additional six months if the fine were not paid.

At a news conference in Washington, Sheridan promised to go to New Orleans in the next few days to surrender on the bribe charge.

Richard Townley, a newsman for WESU-TV, NBC affiliate in New Orleans, surrendered Tuesday on the same charge and was freed in \$7,500 bond.

Sheridan said he hoped he, too, would be freed in the \$5,000-bond set for his appearance.

Sheridan and Fred Freed, producer of the June 19 show, said Garrison's bribe charges against the two men were attempts to intimidate the network.

"I, and NBC news, are not going to be intimidated," Sheridan vowed. "Neither are the rest of the news media."

In a statement read at the news conference in behalf of William McAndrew, president of NBC news, it was contended that the charges brought by Garrison against Sheridan "is an attempt by District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans to intimidate the news media who have commented adversely on Garrison's assassination investigation."

Garrison charged Sheridan with trying to bribe Perry Raymond Russo, 25, of Baton Rouge, La., a key witness in the probe.

Sheridan maintained that the charges against him are false and totally unfounded.

DB721ped July 12 ↓

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Garrison-NBC add

WASHINGTON Garrison NBC A064 add: unfounded.

Russo contends he was told by members of the NBC reporting team who gathered information for the June 19 program that both the network and the Central Intelligence Agency were "out to wreck the Garrison investigation."

The NBC program accused Garrison of using unreliable and underhanded methods in trying to build up a conspiracy case.

The network quoted an interviewer as saying that Russo, under hypnotism, volunteered no information about Shaw and the purported assassination plot until he was subjected to a "series of leading questions."

Garrison claims Sheridan told Russo that NBC would pay all his expenses if he wanted to move to California before Shaw's trial, and would guarantee him protection from being forced to return to New Orleans.

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