

THE NEW YORK TIMES

N.B.C. Newsman Loses Plea on 'Plot'

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Special to The New York Times

NEW ORLEANS, July 27 — Criminal District Judge Bernard J. Bagert today ordered a newsman for the National Broadcasting Company to testify before the New Orleans grand jury investigating the assassination of President Kennedy.

Judge Bagert ruled that a prospective witness before a grand jury had no legal standing to attack the make-up of the grand jury or the motives of the district attorney.

The newsman, Walter J. Sheridan of Washington, helped prepare an N.B.C. television program that was critical of District Attorney Jim Garrison's activities in the investigation of the assassination. Mr. Sheridan accused the District Attorney of having political, financial and personal interests in the outcome of the investigation.

Mr. Sheridan also said he might be forced to give testimony against himself before the grand jury. He has been charged by Mr. Garrison with offering a bribe to Perry Raymond Russo, a witness against Clay L. Shaw, a retired New Orleans businessman who was indicted by the grand jury on a charge of conspiring to kill Mr. Kennedy.

The District Attorney charged Mr. Sheridan and

Richard Townley, a New Orleans television newsman, with offering bribes to Mr. Russo while N.B.C. was preparing its program on the assassination investigation.

Milton E. Brener, attorney for Mr. Sheridan, told Judge Bagert that he "feared" Mr. Garrison was trying to get the newsman before the grand jury in an effort to have him indicted for perjury.

Mr. Brener said the District Attorney was "furious" with Mr. Sheridan and had ordered state investigators to "beat" the newsman when he was arrested. Mr. Brener said the state investigators refused to do this.

The judge turned down an offer by Mr. Sheridan to prove that Mr. Garrison was making money through the investigation by collecting funds from private citizens and by selling information to magazines and newspapers, and ordered Mr. Sheridan to go before the grand jury.

However, he stayed the order until noon tomorrow to give Mr. Sheridan's attorneys a chance to ask the Louisiana Supreme Court to enter the case.

Mr. Garrison did not appear at the hearing. James L.

Alcock, an Assistant District Attorney, told the judge that Mr. Sheridan would be advised of his rights and given full protection of the law while before the grand jury.

Members of the grand jury were in the courtroom in answer to a subpoena from Mr. Sheridan, but the judge did not allow testimony from any witness.