

A234

lbylzyyui v

Shaw BJT 310

By DON MCKEE

Associated Press Writer

NEW ORLEANS, La. AP - The verdict of a 12-man jury cleared Clay L. Shaw Saturday of plotting President John F. Kennedy's assassination and laid to rest Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's bizarre conspiracy case.

"We the jury find the defendant not guilty," was the unanimous verdict that repudiated Garrison's last emotional appeal for a "conviction" of the Warren Commission and "excessive government power."

The 6-foot-6 district attorney left the courtroom after his near-midnight finale, before the verdict on the 34th day of the trial.

Garrison, who told the jury the Warren Commission was fraudulent, had not comment on the outcome of his case charging Shaw conspired with Lee Harvey Oswald and David W. Ferrie, both now dead, to kill Kennedy.

Juror David I. Powe said after court adjourned:

"Garrison has a right to his opinion about the government and the Warren Commission. But I just don't feel his opinion is enough to convict a man."

Within hours, Garrison's resignation was demanded in a front-page editorial by the New Orleans States-Item. "He has shown himself unfit to hold the office," the newspaper said. "He has perverted the law rather than prosecuted it."

The States-Item said the "persecution" of Shaw was "a perversion of the legal process such as has not been often seen."

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Shaw Bjt NL Insert

NEW ORLEANS Shaw Bjt NL A234 insert after 8th graf to update: seen."

Meanwhile in Detroit the president of the American Bar Association, William T. Gossett, said the ABA would ask the Louisiana Bar Association to consider disciplinary action against Garrison. wgossett said Garrison's motives in bringing Shaw to trial must be investigated. He called the trial a charade.

Shaw 9th graf a234.  
zr526pes March 1

A277

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Shaw Bjt NL sub

NEW ORLEANS Shaw Bjt NL A234 to correct and attribute sub for 9th graf which was inserted as A251: seen."

Meanwhile in Detroit the president of the American Bar Association, William T. Gossett, was quoted by the Detroit News as saying the ABA would ask the Louisiana Bar Association to consider disciplinary action against Garrison.

Shaw 10th graf A234.  
PL736pes March 1

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SMHAW Insert

NEW ORLEANS-Shaw NL Bjt A 234 insert after 8th graf:said. "This is by no means the end of the matter," Shaw told a news conference later in the day. His lawyers, in response to a question, said a damage suit was under consideration.

"News is made when it is made and not by somebody talking about what they are going to do when," commented Shaw.

The 9th graf A234  
ICS15pcs march1



A055

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Shaw Sub

NEW ORLEANS—Shaw, sub for 9th graf: courtroom. Deliberation took about 50 minutes. Under Louisiana law, it took at least a nine-three vote for a decision. Shaw was cleared two years to the day from the date he was arrested.

The State, 10th graf  
PL645aes March 1

Shaw heard the verdict with tears of gratitude. "Great. Simply great," he said.

The white-haired 6-foot-4 Shaw, retired managing director of International Trade Mart, shook each juror's hand as his vindicators—themselves smiling broadly—filed out shortly after the 1:02 a.m. verdict.

The jury, which included three Negroes, was out only 54 minutes. When the verdict was read, screams and applause erupted in a wild demonstration. Several women cried: "No! No!"

Security had been greatly tightened. SHAW AND HIS LAWYERS WERE RINGED BY NINE DEPUTIES. After the jury left, Shaw was whisked off in the sheriff's car.

The verdict came exactly two years after Shaw's arrest on March 1, 1967, on the charge of criminal conspiracy that carries a penalty of 1-to-20 years.

MORE

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NEW ORLEANS Shaw BJT A234 add: years. 240

Garrison, leaning against a table, climaxed his case by urging the jurors to strike a blow against the government and the Warren Commission, a group headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren and appointed by former President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The commission in its massive investigation concluded Oswald was the lone assassin and there was no credible evidence of conspiracy.

"The government handling of the assassination," Garrison said, "was a fraud. Probably the greatest fraud perpetrated in the history of mankind."

The Warren Commission, he said, withheld evidence.

"You can cause justice to happen in this case for the first time in five years," he concluded.

His assistants, James L. Alcock and Alvin Oser, argued that they had proved Shaw guilty. Oser used arithmetic, angles and photographs to arrive at the conclusion that Kennedy was killed by three gunmen in three locations in Dallas, Tex., Nov. 22, 1963.

Defense attorney F. Irvin Dymond, sandwiched between five prosecution speeches, said Garrison's case was "an Alice-in-Wonderland story and the trial was nothing more than 'a forum for an attack on the Warren Commission.'"

Garrison's investigation began in October 1966, with the first "lead," apparently a private detective's story—in 1963—that he thought Ferrie, a former airline pilot, had something to do with the assassination.

Ferrie was arrested once. He denied any knowledge of a plot. In February 1967, he died of a brain hemorrhage. Garrison said it was suicide.

The next "lead" was Dean A. Andrews Jr., a lawyer who claimed he got a call from some one wanting a lawyer for Oswald soon after the assassination.

Who was the caller? "Clay Bertrand," said Andrews. The FBI checked his story and discounted it.

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NEW ORLEANS Shaw Bjt 2nd add A236: it.

Andrews said at the trial, however, that the name "Bertrand" was a figment of his imagination and that he had made it up to gain a reputation.

After Andrews turned up in the case, the state's star witness emerged from obscurity: Perry Raymond Russo, now 27, a dark-haired, talkative man who said he'd known Ferrie. After several hypnotic sessions, Russo, told more: he knew Oswald and Shaw, under different names—Leon Oswald and Clem Bertrand.

Russo told of a party at Ferrie's apartment in mid-September, 1963. He said Ferrie, Shaw and Oswald plotted Kennedy's death.

Russo was, as Alcock acknowledged, the state's case. His testimony and that of another hypnosis-involved witness, New York accountant Charles I. Spiesel, may have been the turning points for Shaw.

On cross-examination, Russo admitted he had told a police officer after Shaw's preliminary hearing in 1967 that he couldn't honestly say Shaw was at the "plot" party.

"If I had to say yes or no, I would have to say no," he told the officer, who confirmed it in his testimony.

Spiesel told the jury of dark conspiracies with his enemies hypnotizing him, robbing him of sexual powers and disguising themselves as relatives. He testified he was at a 1963 New Orleans party and Shaw with others talked about how Kennedy might be killed.

His testimony led jury, judge and lawyers on a French Quarter hunt for the site of the party. It was not found.

The state quickly shifted from Shaw, the defendant, to a "trial" of the Warren Commission. Huge exhibits were mounted, angles of fire discussed, numerous photos introduced. One supposedly showed "a man holding something" in Dallas' Dealey Plaza. And eyewitnesses from Dallas said they thought gunfire came from some direction other than the Texas School Book Depository, where Oswald fired from, according to the Warren Commission.

Garrison had no counterpart witness to the testimony of Col. Pierre A. Finck, the Swiss-born Army doctor who helped perform the Kennedy autopsy. Finck said positively Kennedy was shot twice from behind.

The state's major evidence, aside from Russo's testimony, was the home movie of the assassination taken by Abraham Zapruder. Because the film showed Kennedy's head jerk backward when the fatal shot struck, Garrison and his team said there was no doubt the bullet came from the front—regardless of scientific evidence that it didn't.

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