

DA Defies Order by U.S. Court

District Attorney Jim Garrison today ordered members of his staff to disobey the federal court order directing them to answer questions from attorneys for accused conspirator Clay L. Shaw.

In a letter to his staff members, Garrison instructed his assistants to tell Shaw's attorneys nothing other than their names, office ranks and Social Security numbers.

THE DA SAID the action of the federal courts blocking the scheduled trial of Shaw next Tuesday on a charge of conspiring to kill President Kennedy in 1963 is "plainly illegal and no member of this staff is to compromise or cooperate in any way with this totalitarian display of power by the federal government." In granting Shaw's attorneys a temporary restraining order postponing the trial, the court also authorized Shaw's lawyers to take depositions from members of Garrison's staff engaged in the investigation of the Kennedy assassination.

The depositions had been scheduled this morning in the law office of William Wegmann, 2106 American Bank building.

Complete text,
LA Free Press 14 Jun 68.

THREE OF Garrison's assistants, Louis Ivon, James L. Alcock and Numa Bertel, arrived shortly after 11 a. m., but refused to answer questions by newsmen. Present with Wegmann were three other Shaw attorneys, Edward Wegmann, Irvin F. Dymond and Sal Panzeca.

William Wegmann also declined to comment except to say, "We will make no comment as long as this case is in federal court."

In his letter to his staff, Garrison said:

"This is to inform you that the action of the United States District Court in blocking the Shaw trial and converting it into a fishing expedition for the defense lawyers is absolutely illegal and is not supported by law or custom.

"The action by this federal court continues the obstruction and interference which we have received in this case from the outset, beginning with the unprecedented announcement of the attorney general of the United States that the defendant had been 'cleared' and proceeding through a series of federal actions too numerous to describe here."

Garrison then reiterated the progress of his investigation and his belief that persons connected with the Central Intelligence Agency were involved in the assassination of Kennedy in Dallas.

He continued:

"The recent order by the

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'Stark Tragedy,' McKeithen Says

BATON ROUGE (AP)—Gov. John J. McKeithen said this morning that "stark tragedy has once again struck our nation" following the shooting of Sen. Robert Kennedy.

"Our hopes and prayers are that Senator Kennedy recovers from the wounds of his assailant, and our hearts and sympathies are with the senator's loved ones," McKeithen said in a prepared statement.

Probe

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United States District Court blocking out trial of Mr. Shaw is, in my judgment, simply an extension of the program of interference we have met with from the United States government. It is an unauthorized and indefensible invasion of the legal processes of the state of Louisiana by the federal government.

"We have no concern about answering any relevant questions the defense lawyers may be able to think of, but these will be answered in the court of the state of Louisiana, where actual jurisdiction exists and not in a federal court which has seized the case without any legal right to do so."

Directing his staff members to identify themselves only, Garrison concluded:

"The position of this office can be summed up very briefly: We are ready for trial in this matter, we continue to be ready for trial and we strongly oppose this outrageous federal intrusion into the processes of justice of a Louisiana court."