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By BILL CRIDE  
Associated Press Writer

NEW ORLEANS AP - Flanked by his four lawyers, 55-year-old Clay Shaw chain smoked impassively through the preliminaries of his trial today on a charge of conspiring to murder President John F. Kennedy.

The long delayed trial is the court room showdown on Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's claim that the president was killed by a band of conspirators in Dallas November 22, 1963—not by a lone sniper.

Garrison was not in the courtroom.

Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr. checked through the list of state and defense witnesses before settling down to the process of presiding over the selection of the jury.

Ironically, the first prospective juror called was named John Kennedy.

The judge had summoned 169 citizens for examination as prospective jurors with still others readily available. There was no indication how long it would take.

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oby BILL CRIDER

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NEW ORLEANS AP - Selection of the Clay Shaw trial jury starts today in a courtroom showdown on Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's claim that President John F. Kennedy was killed by a band of conspirators—not by a lone sniper.

The CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURTROOM WAS UNDER EXTRAORDINARY GUARD. Deputies were under orders to search all spectators.

Opening of the trial was preceded by an unusual legal flip-flop by the prosecution.

Asst. Dist. Atty. James L. Alcock, named by Garrison to handle the case, asked Friday that the trial be delayed indefinitely. Then he withdrew the motion when it came before Judge Haggerty in a hearing Monday.

At the hearing, Alcock accused U.S. Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark of deliberately interfering by releasing a report on the Kennedy autopsy "on the eve of the picking of the jury for the Shaw trial."

Clark's announcement Thursday was that a panel of experts had examined the secret record and upheld the autopsy report that the bullets which killed the President were fired from above and behind.

Garrison says the autopsy material would back his contention that the President was hit by bullets fired from both front and rear.

"It was not the first time that Atty. Gen. Clark tried to interfere in this case with public statements," said Alcock in contending that Clark's statement could influence prospective jurors.

He added, however, that the state "will trust the good judgment, common sense and spirit which the state feels prevails among the people of New Orleans."

Garrison's efforts to subpoena the 45 autopsy photographs, 24 X-rays and other material have failed.

A general sessions court judge in Washington ruled Friday that Garrison would have to show that the material was necessary to the case and that he wasn't simply fishing around for something interesting.

The autopsy material in the national archives was sealed until 1971 at the request of the Kennedy family.

Garrison has often cited the various secret reports in the national archives in accusing the federal government of trying to block any investigation which contradicts the Warren report.

The Warren Commission, in naming Oswald as the lone gunman, said his reasons for the assassination must remain forever unknown, since "OSWALD WAS SLAIN BY Dallas sniper Jack Ruby in a Dallas police station."

Ruby—named by Garrison as a conspirator—died of cancer after his conviction and imprisonment on a murder charge.

Judge Haggerty imposed a five-page set of guidelines on courtroom security and news coverage.

Garrison's list of witnesses include Perry R. Russo of New Orleans, who told a preliminary hearing that he sat in while Shaw, Lee Harvey Oswald and others plotted to kill Kennedy.

Russo testified he was a little vague on the session until a trip through a "time tunnel," conducted by a hypnotist, enabled him to relive the episode and refresh his memory. The only other major witness unveiled by Garrison at the 1967 preliminary hearing was a narcotic addict who testified he saw Shaw conferring with Oswald on a Lake Pontchartrain seawall in 1963.

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