

Storm of Crime Probes

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE — Assassinations, organized crime, bribery, labor racketeering and bombings have stirred a maelstrom of investigations in Louisiana that has no end in sight.

Three grand juries, a new state investigative agency, the state police and a private anti-crime group are expanding the circles of inquiry in all directions.

The scope and number of people caught up in the various probes is beginning to approach the astronomical.

It takes a jigsaw puzzle expert to put the pieces together and a score card to figure out who all is involved in this five-ring drama.

Somehow all of the events and many of the people are interconnected.

The overlapping investigations may be broken down into five categories:

1. The Kennedy assassination probe.
2. Organized crime in Louisiana.
3. The Partin-Hoffa attempted bribery scheme.
4. Labor-management racketeering in Baton Rouge.
5. Unsolved bombings in Baton Rouge.

In the most widely publicized investigation, New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison claims President Kennedy was the victim of a plot that had its origins among certain Cuban elements in New Orleans.

Life Magazine claimed that organized crime flourishes in Louisiana in a series of articles on national vice operations by the Cosa Nostra, and Gov. John McKeithen now agrees the charge is true.

Baton Rouge Teamster boss Edward Grady Partin, whose testimony sent International Teamster President James Hoffa to a federal prison, claimed

Sweeps Across Louisiana

he was offered a million dollars to alter his testimony.

CLAIMS OF shootings, shakedowns and sweetheart contracts culminated in a two-month shutdown of industrial construction in the Baton Rouge area and a labor-management crisis that threatened the state's industrial development program.

A series of unsolved bombings with labor and racial overtones was capped by the attempted dynamiting of the home of State AFL-CIO President Victor Bussie in July.

All of these investigations are intertwined in some degree.

The investigators are:

—The Orleans Parish grand jury, which is investigating the Kennedy assassination plot and organized crime.

The East Baton Rouge grand jury, which is looking into organized crime, a portion of the Par-

tin-Hoffa bribery affair, and the unsolved bombings.

—A federal grand jury, which is examining the Partin-Hoffa bribery charge.

—The labor-management board of inquiry, created at a special session of the Legislature to deal with a mounting labor crisis. The commission was armed with a \$250,000 appropriation and an elite investigative staff that also doubles as an intelligence unit for the state police. They are involved in both the labor problems and the bombing case.

—The Metropolitan Crime Commission, the private agency whose information led to part of the Life Magazine series. The MCC also is at odds with Garrison over his methods in the Kennedy probe and over his attitude on organized crime.

Thus far the investigations have resulted in:

1. The indictment of Clay Shaw, New Orleans

businessman, on a charge of conspiracy in the assassination.

2. The conviction of Dean Andrews Jr., Jefferson attorney, on perjury in the assassination case.

3. The indictment of D'Alton Smith, former New Orleans electrical contractor, on public bribery for allegedly offering \$25,000 to ex-governor's aide Aubrey Young to arrange a meeting in the Partin-Hoffa affair.

4. The initiation of removal proceedings against New Orleans Criminal Court Judge Malcolm O'Hara in the Partin-Hoffa case. The MCC, the New Orleans Bar Association, and Gov. McKeithen brought the proceedings following testimony by O'Hara at a hearing for Hoffa that he was the companion and friend of a convicted felon.

5. The arrest of Jules Kimble, self-described former Ku Klux Klan official, who blamed the Bussie bombing on the KKK. Kimble, who says the plot was hatched in his home, is awaiting an appearance before the Baton Rouge grand jury.

6. The suspension of Capt. Roland Coppola by the state police pending an investigation into his relationship with underworld figures.

Although the Kennedy probe has received the most national attention, Gov. McKeithen has been more alarmed over the organized crime and labor racketeering charges. The state's and his image were badly battered by disclosures of gambling and prostitution in Life.

Worse, the industrial development program was threatened by the possibility of industry looking for a more favorable climate elsewhere.

Closed-door hearings are planned later this month on the labor-management situation by the board of inquiry. Open sessions may begin in November.

East Baton Rouge District Attorney Sargent Pitcher is playing his cards close on the probes being conducted by his grand jury. Without being specific, however, he does say many more persons are involved than have been named so far.

POSSIBILITY OF holding the Clay Shaw trial this year have dimmed considerably as attorneys for the defendant apply for a delay or change of venue.

Baton Rouge officials have a long way to go before bringing Smith to trial on the public bribery charge. He's still free on \$1,500 fugitive bond posted in Denton, Tex.

The Bussie bombing case may rest with whatever decision the grand jury in Baton Rouge makes. Kimble already has named names, dates and places to police officials, but they apparently will leave his credibility up to the grand jury.

The cast of characters in the arena of investigations is long and steadily growing longer. Here are a few of some of the other principals and lesser involved persons:

Carlos Marcello — who (according to Life) was assigned the task of getting Hoffa out of jail.

SEN. ROBERT F. Kennedy — a keen interest in the final outcome of the assassination probe and the man who pursued Hoffa with more than passing interest while he was U. S. attorney general.

Walter Sheridan — television network reporter who provided much of the anti-Garrison information, friend of RFK, and who became involved in the Partin-Hoffa case.

Gordon Novel — the elusive former New Orleans bartender who claims Garrison's investigation is a hoax and that he has information of a sensational nature of organized crime. He is wanted by Garrison in the murder plot and also is charged with conspiracy to commit burglary but has managed to avert extradition from Ohio.

Perry Russo — Garrison's star witness against Shaw. And, of course, there are Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby and David Ferrie. But they're dead.

2 Crime Quizzes Pressed

Life Magazine reporter David L. Chandler today won from the Louisiana Supreme Court a stay of his scheduled appearance before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury.

Jules Kimble, the professed former leader of the Ku Klux Klan in New Orleans, today went before the East Baton Rouge Parish Grand Jury.

The jury is probing both the bombing last May of the home of state labor leader Victor Bussie and also charges that organized crime is flourishing in Louisiana.

Kimble has said he can identify three

persons who plotted to bomb the Baton Rouge home of Bussie and the Port Allen home of a Negro teacher active in civil rights work.

IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS in the twin organized crime investigations in Orleans and East Baton Rouge parishes today:

—Governor's aide C. H. "Sammy" Downs was questioned by investigators about a state Capitol telephone which served as a link between rackets figure Carlos Marcello and Aubrey Young.

—Life magazine reporter David L.

judge originally gave them until 11 a. m. Friday, but the attorney said that was not possible because Chandler is under another subpoena to appear in Vidalia before the Concordia Parish Grand Jury at 9 a. m. Friday.

Judge Braniff then changed the time to 11 a. m. Monday.

Chandler's attorneys filed a new motion that he be allowed to have an attorney present when he goes before the grand jury. Arguments on this were continuing.

Sessions filed the three motion on behalf of Chandler.

The motions were:

1. The motion to recuse Garrison and his staff.

2. A motion to compel Garrison and the foreman of the grand jury to state in open court the crime under investigation and to quash Chandler's grand jury subpoena.

3. A motion for a writ of subpoena duces tecum, asking for a copy of questions and answers elicited from Chandler during questioning by assistant DA Charles Ray Ward last Jan. 26.

The motion to recuse said Life's stories on organized crime and others relating to Garrison's probe of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy have been publicly denied by the DA or members of his staff.

The motion said this showed "personal animosity" on the part of the DA "which is inconsistent with the impartial administration of justice."

It also charged that the DA had his office illegally misuse the grand jury's subpoena power by having Chandler subpoenaed to appear before the jury on Jan. 26 when he actually was not wanted by the jury.

Chandler, the motion said, was required to make a sworn statement to Ward "who castigated him for his investigation and threatened him with criminal prosecution."

The motion charged that Garrison wants to get Chandler before the grand jury to entrap him and then prosecute him.

Chandler lost a bid to avoid appearing before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury. It was Life that made the original rackets charges.

Kimble was taken to Baton Rouge from New Orleans, where he had been in Parish Prison under \$5,000 bond on a charge of impersonating a state police officer.

Cecil Evans, an investigator for East Baton Rouge DA Sargent Pitcher, talked with Downs and his secretaries about the telephone used by Young when Young was an aide to Gov. McKeithen.

YOUNG HAS turned state's evidence in the grand jury probe.

The jury has indicted D'Alton Smith, a former New Orleans contractor, for public bribery in what authorities said was an offer of \$25,000 to Young in a scheme to buy freedom for imprisoned Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa.

Both grand juries returned to work today after a long weekend off from their probes of organized crime.

Downs office is in the suite that served as the governor's office at the time of the alleged phone calls between Young and Marcello. The governor since has moved his offices from the first to the fourth floors of the Capitol.

Young said he received two calls from Marcello, but Life claimed there may have been up to 60 calls on the phone in question.

Evans first went to the governor's office and consulted with William Redmann, legal counsel to the governor, and

Thomas Burbank, state police superintendent.

Meanwhile, Gov. McKeithen said his office has reclaimed a colonel's commission issued to Joseph Marcello, brother of Carlos. McKeithen said the commission was issued in error.

IN NEW ORLEANS, Criminal District Judge Matthew S. Braniff overruled the attempt by Chandler's attorneys to stay his jury appearance scheduled for this afternoon.

Chandler's attorneys filed immediate notice of appeal to the state Supreme Court and attempted to get a last-minute stay order from that body.

Asked by newsmen why he did not want Chandler to go before the jury, Time Inc. attorney Cicero Sessions said the reporter could "testify, and even though he's told the truth he could be charged with perjury."

Asked how this could happen, Sessions said, "You can explain the district attorney's actions better than I can."

Asked why District Attorney Jim Garrison would want to persecute Chandler, he said: "Why have there been so many other indictments?"

Sessions said that when anyone disagrees with Garrison, "he seems to take out after them."

Judge Braniff gave Chandler's attorneys until 11 a. m. Monday to file their appeal, but refused to stay the matter in the meantime.

CHANDLER had also asked that District Attorney Jim

Garrison and his staff be recused from matters pertaining to him on the grounds of "personal animosity." The judge denied this along with several other requests.

The grand jury met this morning but did not take up the crime probe before noon.

In a related matter, District Attorney Sargent Pitcher said in Baton Rouge he was unable to reach an attorney for Gordon Novel by telephone in Columbus, Ohio, to make final arrangements for Novel's testimony before the East Baton Rouge Parish grand jury.

PITCHER said Novel's attorney, Jerry Weiner, had told him he would call at 9:30 a.m. today to arrange for Novel to testify, but he never received the call.

The DA said when he tried to reach Weiner his office reported he was out.

Pitcher said earlier Novel, elusive former New Orleans lounge owner, had agreed to return and testify.

Chandler's motions were filed as court opened today. Judge Braniff handled them because Judge Malcolm V. O'Hara, who is handling the current grand jury, was reported busy on other matters.

A hearing was held on them immediately with Assistant DAs James L. Alcock and Richard V. Burnes representing the state. Chandler was present.

WHEN JUDGE Braniff overruled the motions, Chandler's attorneys immediately filed notice of appeal. The

cut him criminally for perjury.

IT ALSO alleges that Garrison is pursuing a scheme to prevent Chandler "from pursuing his privilege under the First Amendment to investigate crime" as a news reporter.

The third motion says Chandler "has been informed by others that the DA has stated he is going to arrest Chandler and prosecute him criminally."

It also says the subpoena violates Chandler's right to remain silent and not give evidence against himself.

Meanwhile in Jefferson Parish, Dist. Atty. Frank Langridge has announced that he will open an investigation into charges of organized crime, using investigators on his office staff.

Langridge said he may call the grand jury into the investigation, depending on evidence developed by his investigators. Several weeks ago Langridge said he was going before the jury with the Life magazine charges. However, he later said he would wait until he learned what evidence was developed by Gov. McKeithen.

"I'm sure there's no organized crime in the parish but I'm going ahead with the investigation anyway," he said yesterday.

ALTHOUGH he said he has not been apprised of the governor's evidence, Langridge said he is willing to cooperate with the governor and to assist state police in their investigation.