

# Big Jim Garrison Runs Rich, Casual Campaign

## New Orleans District Attorney Leads in Nov. 8 Primary Race for His Third Term

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NEW ORLEANS — The place is Harry Harris' whitewashed, spic-and-span, flag-draped basement at 911 Poland Ave. on New Orleans' East Side. The occasion is a political rally.

The shirt-sleeved blue-collar crowd is hearing from several candidates who have been giving boring speeches. From the chatter among the middle-aged men — mechanics, meatcutters, clerks, machinists—and their wives it is easy to know whom they are waiting to hear.

While Harry's wife serves beer and sloppy joes, a man at a makeshift podium gives an awkward introductory speech:

"Folks, without further ado it is my pleasure. I give you big Jim Garrison."

The crowd in the basement bursts into applause and cheers.

"Tell it to 'em, Jim!" shouts a man in the back. "Tell us about Clay Shaw!" shouts another.

Garrison, 6-foot-7, fumbles with the microphone. "They always set these things up for midgets," he says.

### Risque Joke

The district attorney tells a mildly risqué joke. He thanks the crowd. He asks how many voted for him eight years ago? Four years ago? How many will vote to give him a third term at the Nov. 8 Democratic primary? Hands shoot up.

It is a festive occasion. The cold beer, the sandwiches, the crisp fall air



**RUNNING AGAIN**—New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison, prosecutor in the case which unsuccessfully charged Clay Shaw with conspiracy in John F. Kennedy murder, is seeking a third term in office.

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and the camaraderie of neighbors who have lived next to one another for 30 years and more make for a pleasant atmosphere.

Harry Harris' house is in the 9th Ward, the city's most populous. Harry and his wife and the rest of the people on Poland Ave. are supposed to be the bulk of Garrison's strength at the polls.

Despite the happy atmosphere, Garrison is ill at ease. He says he has been suffering from a headache.

He is not a mixer and he is a lackadaisical campaigner. His style is to wait until five or six days before election and then blitz the votes with expensive television cam-

paigning.

### Only One Gulp

He forgets to thank Harry and Harry's wife. He takes only one gulp of beer. He almost ignores a lady who wants to know why the FBI stopped him from finding out who killed the President.

He soon leaves the rally without mentioning Shaw or any of his three opponents in the race. A reporter reminds him he has another appearance to make. "Don't tell me; then I won't have to go," he says, and he doesn't.

Just before the rally on Poland Ave. Garrison had addressed 33 college students whom he enthralled with a speech about the military-indus-

trial complex and the CIA teaming up to assassinate President Kennedy because Mr. Kennedy had been trying to end the Vietnam war. "Termination and disposal," he called it, saying those were the CIA's words.

In the privacy of his police-chauffeured car, Garrison said he did not want to talk at Poland Ave. about the military-industrial complex or the Vietnam war or the establishment "because they wouldn't understand."

#### Silent Since Trial

It has been some time now since the world has heard from Garrison. Not, in fact, since March 1, when a jury deliberated only 53 minutes and then acquitted Clay Shaw of conspiracy charges.

Garrison plans to change all of that, he said in an interview. In his campaign he will revive his Kennedy death investigation, the matter of Shaw (against whom he has filed perjury charges), the whole mystique of an alleged assassination plot.

Garrison is a little heavy around the jowls these days. His hair is a little longer. His complexion is

sallow and he says he wears a brace for his back and is in constant pain.

Since he never has commented on the jury acquittal of Shaw, Garrison was asked about that. "If I had to do it all over, I wouldn't follow the legal procedure," he said. "You can't try espionage in a court of law." He said he did not know how he would go about it.

#### 'Right Man'

"We had the right man, as later trials will show," he said. "We did not make a mistake and the whole world will know that shortly. That's why there has been so much money in opposition to my reelection."

Garrison's principal opponent is Harry Connick, a thin, handsome man from a large Irish family. Connick, 43, is former

head of the criminal division of the local U.S. attorney's office. His supporters admit it is a tough battle against Garrison, and many observers here predict victory for Garrison in the primary. If one candidate gets a majority of the votes cast in the primary, he wins without a runoff.

Connick was virtually unknown when he entered the race, but now has the support of the two local

newspapers. He is a relentless campaigner. But many of his admirers say he is too polite to bring to Garrison the kind of battle the district attorney should have.

Connick has used the Shaw trial and alleged Garrison abuse of power as part of his campaign, but now says less and less about it. Instead he talks about the 1,700 criminals Garrison's office has permitted to jump bail bonds, the uncollected \$1 million

in bail bonds, the organized crime in New Orleans and the use of narcotics.

#### Former Aides

Two other candidates are Charles Ward and Ross T. Scaccia, both former Garrison aides. They are far behind in the race.

A September poll in the city by Louis, Bowles & Grace, a Dallas research firm, gave Garrison 40% of the vote, Connick 18% and no preference 31%.

The poll showed that one

of Garrison's most solid blocks of voting strength was in the 66,000 Negro registered voters out of a total Democrat registration of 217,500. The poll noted that "apart from voters who approve of Garrison's performance, only among Negro voters does Garrison command a majority (51%) support from those interviewed."

The poll stated that only two voters in 10 criticized Garrison for his handling

of the Shaw trial, but six out of 10 could think of no criticism at all. And the most frequently mentioned reason for liking Garrison's performance was that Garrison was courageous and honest.

#### Weakness Shown

The fact that Garrison does not have much strength among the upper classes in New Orleans was demonstrated by two recent polls among attorneys, one of which gave Connick 400 votes and Garrison 83.

In this city it often seems that Shaw's acquittal has been all but forgotten, and that what remains in many voters' minds is that Garrison tackled the federal government and the local establishment and that perhaps the FBI and the CIA really did stymie his investigation.

Garrison says he has difficulty getting campaign funds, but actually his campaign is a deceptively well-oiled machine financed by the same small group of New Orleans millionaires who bankrolled his investigation.

Bob Jolet, one of his campaign coordinators said he knew of at least one \$20,000 contribution. Jolet said he had given Garrison \$3,000 and a month of his time. And he

said he knew of two other men who probably would end up giving a total of \$40,000 and that he personally had organized a group of wealthy contributors.

No one seems to know where all these funds have gone but much of them will be used for his last-minute television blitz.

Garrison has no campaign headquarters. Just three days ago his aides opened a campaign office "for college kids" on the 11th floor of the American Bank building here. There is no furniture, only two telephones, and the office has been locked half the time.

The men paying for Garrison's campaign are

the former contributors to Truth and Consequences, the group that paid for the district attorney's assassination probe. They are Joseph M. Rault Jr., an oil producer; Willard Robertson, a wholesale Volkswagen dealer, and Cecil M. Shilstone, owner of a chain of research testing laboratories.

An examination of Garrison's campaign came up with only two men who work full-time for him and do not also work in his office. Garrison has the use of the district attorney's office in his campaign. His assistants are

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## Garrison Maintaining Edge in Primary Race

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not under Civil Service regulations and will lose their jobs if Connick wins. All of them are paid from tax money.

Even some police officers on Garrison's staff who are under Civil Service regulations forbidding campaigning are hard at work in the campaign. Two police chauffeurs drive Garrison to political rallies. He rarely shows up at his office. A city detective, Fred Williams, was at his campaign office last week one day and handed out campaign literature. Another unidentified city detective also was there.

Garrison has made only infrequent political appearances, and he has sent his first assistant, James L. Alcock, to represent him at political rallies.

Alcock is the small, feisty attorney who prepared and argued most of

the Shaw case for Garrison in the courtroom.

"I'm not running for any office," he snapped when asked about Garrison's campaign. "I'm simply representing the district attorney's office."

But in his appearances for Garrison Alcock answers political charges and he makes them.

Lewis Ivon, the 30-year-old chief police investigator on Garrison's staff, distributes and handles Garrison campaign signs. He admitted this in an interview.

"I'm working as hard as I can for Jim" he said. He also pointed out that Garrison has a "large and loyal staff."

Much of the opposition to Garrison in New Orleans is silent.

"I've got to make a living and Garrison has a long arm," one attorney said. Then he added: "He's a dangerous man."

Edward Wegman, Shaw's attorney, says Garrison has done "an inestimable amount of damage to New Orleans' reputation."

One of Garrison's most implacable foes is Aaron M. Kohn, head of the Metropolitan Crime Commission.

In describing the uphill battle Connick is fighting, Kohn said:

"There is an inferiority complex in New Orleans about losing, a sweeping kind of inferiority one finds in the Deep South. Yet even though there has been a sophistication in the economy and in the politics to a certain extent, there is still the fear of identifying with a loser.

"Thus there is a tendency to put men back into office even if they are corrupted with power, for example, because they are winners.

"Corruption doesn't upset people around here so long as the men in power are entertaining and clever."