

Garrison Hits IRS Probe: 'Obvious Harassment'

Cites JFK Investigation as Cause

District Attorney Jim Garrison said Thursday that an Internal Revenue Service investigation into his 1965-66 income tax returns is "obvious harassment" by the federal government because of his Kennedy assassination investigation.

Garrison said he is being investigated for the possibility of violations of federal criminal law.

He also charged that U.S. attorneys have tried to bring his name into affairs of Louisiana Loan and Thrift Corp., and that there may be an attempt to link him to alleged payoffs to gain the release of imprisoned Teamsters boss Jimmie Hoffa.

Garrison said that two IRS men "have been going all around town . . . for months" gathering information on him.

He said they even went to Security Homestead, where Garrison said, he bought his home. "I only owe \$50,000 on it," he said.

He said the pair visited him about three or four months ago. One, he said, was an "intel-

ligence" officer, signifying a criminal investigation.

The intelligence officer told him, "I have to inform you that you are under investigation for possible violations of criminal federal law," Garrison said.

The DA said that when he learned they wanted to look into his 1965 and 1966 tax returns, he was "kind of astonished," because he used the short form, without benefit of deductions.

He said he was too busy to use the long form, which could have saved him a lot of money.

"My reply was, 'My God, how can you investigate someone who uses the short form?'"

The investigators returned several days later, and asked to go through his papers, Garrison said.

Garrison said he denied the request, telling them, "I'm not going to make anything available to you. I'm not going to cooperate with the federal government."

He said the investigation was "obviously harassment because I have found out the federal government is hiding the facts about the assassination" of President John F. Kennedy.

Garrison claimed that the IRS investigation is apparently a follow up on an attempt to link him with LL&T.

He suggested that the Federal Securities and Exchange Commission had Ernest A. Bartlett Jr. to link his name to the company. Bartlett was chairman of the board of Arkansas Loan and Thrift and chief organizer of LL&T.

"Apparently when AL&T was going under the SEC seems to have gotten Mr. Bartlett to say I own \$23,000 worth of stock," Garrison said.

NOT ONE DOLLAR

Garrison said he does not own "one dollar" worth of LL&T stock. He previously has said he came close to buying some LL&T stock, but backed out before the deal was finalized.

Garrison had no harsh words for the IRS investigators themselves. They "are only doing their jobs," he said, but "the harassment is coming from Washington."

Last week, he said, one investigator asked him if he would sign a waiver because the statute of limitations was approaching.

He said the IRS wanted to be able to extend the investigation until after April 15.

Garrison said he did not sign the waiver, because he wants the affair to end before he is up for re-election again.

If he decides to run again, Garrison said, "They could wait until three weeks before my election and file charges."

The DA asserted that he could get an acquittal. "They owe me money," he charged.

"I'd like to be charged before

the 15th of April and have my trial over with. I'd like to have this behind me," he added.

He alleged that the federal government is willing to use the IRS just as it uses the military in foreign policy.

The DA also claimed that U. S. attorneys have tried to link him to LL&T during the current federal grand jury investigation of the defunct firm.

"In the federal grand jury investigation U. S. attorneys repeatedly asked questions to try to bring out my involvement in the organization — which was non-existent," he said.

Garrison also said there have been attempts to connect him with a current investigation by the grand jury at Nashville into alleged payoffs to obtain the release of Jimmie Hoffa.

"Last week Gordon Novel was called before the Nashville grand jury. I don't know what he told them, but I wouldn't be surprised if he isn't trying to do something like that," Garrison said.

FUGITIVE WITNESS

Novel is the famed "fugitive witness" in Garrison's Kennedy death probe. Novel, a former night club owner in New Orleans, fled to Ohio early last year shortly before a scheduled appearance before the Orleans Parish grand jury.

He has resisted all attempts to get him back to Orleans Parish.

Garrison suggested that the government is acting out of desperation:

"They have a serious problem. We have caught them faking an assassination. It isn't even close. They can't possibly



withstand the evidence we have."

"We have not asked for a continuance of one day," he continued.

"President Johnson has hidden evidence in the case, the Chief Justice of the U. S. and leaders in Congress have cooperated in perpetrating a fraud, and I've pointed it out.

"We've stumbled across the way John F. Kennedy was really killed."

"They're in desperate condition," Garrison said, continuing his remarks about the federal government.

"The federal government got caught in the biggest lie in history. It never occurred to them that a state would investigate the assassination.

"It doesn't matter what they do, what they try to do to me, or actually do to me. We know how he (Kennedy) was killed, and why he was killed, and we know the federal government covered it up."

Garrison said he would have no comment Thursday about the previous day's announcement that the DA's office will investigate the possibility that LL&T officials violated the law.

First Asst. DA Charles R. Ward made the announcement after a group of depositors in LL&T and their attorney, Sidney Bach, visited him and al-

leged that officers and directors of the firm accepted their deposits while knowing that LL&T was insolvent.