

Connick Levels New Charges At Garrison

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District Attorney candidate Harry Connick has charged that DA Jim Garrison's office has neither prosecuted nor collected the bail bond forfeiture of Leopoldo Cimino, 39, of the Bronx, N.Y., despite Cimino's arrest here on charges of possessing \$50,000 worth of heroin.

The charge is one of several made by Connick in which he said research has turned up instances of gross negligence by the Orleans Parish DA's office in prosecuting criminals and collecting bail bond forfeitures. Connick has maintained there is a correlation between the city's soaring crime rate and the alleged failure of the DA's office, under Garrison, to "effectively prosecute criminals."

Connick made the charge about Cimino at a luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club of Carrollton yesterday.

"WHERE IS Cimino now?" asked Connick. "The DA doesn't know because he (Cimino) skipped."

Connick said Cimino, whose police record dates back to 1951,



LEOPOLDO CIMINO

was arrested at a French Quarter apartment June 17 with an estimated \$50,000 worth of heroin.

Police charged Cimino made frequent trips to New Orleans to peddle narcotics and was a supplier for other drug peddlers in the New Orleans

area.

A \$10,000 bond was written by the Maryland National Insurance Company with Andrew J. Butler, 50, of New Orleans, as surety. Connick says Butler was arrested in 1959 and 1964 in connection with eight felonies.

"MARYLAND NATIONAL was on the bond for \$5,000 and Butler was on the bond for \$5,000," Connick said. "It defies imagination how a man with eight felonies got on the bond."

Cimino failed to appear for arraignment Aug. 15 and his bond was increased to \$25,000 at that time. It was scheduled to be forfeited Aug. 29 but the bond hearing was continued Aug. 28. "The record doesn't say why," Connick said.

CONNICK HELD the \$10,000 bond was a mistake in the first place and that the DA should have called the judge's attention to the fact Cimino was a multiple offender.

The DA candidate charged negligence by the DA's office has resulted in the loss of \$1 million in bail bond forfeitures and has allowed 1,000 criminals to flee jurisdictions "and go on committing other crimes."

First Assistant District Attorney Jim Alcock, speaking for Garrison who is hospitalized with a back ailment, said Connick's charges "prove nothing detrimental to this office and indicate nothing."

Alcock said Cimino's flight from New Orleans could not have been prevented by the DA's office in any lawful manner.

"CIMINO FLED because he feared prosecution," Alcock said.

Alcock said the bond forfeiture hearing was continued because a deputy criminal sheriff who was to testify was ill and the trial was delayed until the witness can appear.

"Finally, Mr. Connick now believes that a bail bond of \$10,000 is too low but we recall that when Mr. Connick was with Legal Aid, he believed any bail bond over \$500 was unconstitutional," Alcock said.