

# Town Pays Little Heed to Convention

By  
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NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 16 — Except for a few "Welcome" signs in liquor stores, and inflated prices at hotel buffets, New Orleans scarcely seems to notice the presence of 4,000 or more postal workers and their families here at the American Postal Workers Union convention.

Part of the uninterest can be chalked up to the blase nature of the natives who must literally have seen it all. But mostly it is distraction caused by one of the most fascinating displays of politics and theater in America — a New Orleans-style election.

Nearing the home stretch (Saturday is the vote), a dozen or so hearty souls are seeking to gain or hang on to

top judicial or law enforcement jobs. They are doing this mostly by calling each other crooks, bums, loafers and idiots in such volume and with such zest as to put Julius Hobson and Bella Abzug to shame.

Local newspapers tell us that the campaign has indeed been "low keyed." To visiting television watchers, however, the sight of a stately robed judge kissing a rented child and then launching into a tirade against his lily-livered, criminal-coddling opponent, boggles the Northern mind. The opponent, using his air time, says the judge hands out stiff sentences in vice cases so that people will hire the judge's lawyer-brother to defend them, in hopes of getting mercy.

Another challenger begins his taped message by saying "If doing nothing were a crime" his opponent would be doing "99 years in Angola," a local prison. He asked the voters to dump a one-day-a-week lawman.

Although not running for

anything at the moment, popular Mayor Moon Landrau did a TV spot for one of the candidates, an old buddy, saying voters should back him because the alternative is a "wild man" who is always running for something. Landrau, with a devilish wink, asked the leaders of this postal union to reschedule 9 a.m. sessions for later in the day, so the delegates could howl and prowling late in the French Quarter.

One of the most interesting men in the campaign, District Attorney Jim Garrison, is running for a seat as associate justice of the state Supreme Court. Garrison vaulted to national prominence some years ago when he announced he had cracked a New Orleans-based conspiracy behind the murder of President John F. Kennedy.

Garrison later arrested a very prominent New Orleans businessman who, aside from his collection of whips, masks and knee-high black boots in his bachelor home, appeared to be just a run-of-the-mill

prominent New Orleans businessman.

Garrison was later indicted on federal charges of bribery and gambling. However, that has not seemed to be a major factor in his race for one of the state's top judicial posts.

Late Tuesday night, one local TV station flashed a paid political announcement for a candidate. Instead of showing the politician's picture, however, the TV screen was taken up by a publicity shot of the Mills Brothers. They are appearing in town, but not running for elective office.

Afterward, a watcher said, a sign-off prayer came on and when it was concluded, a deep announcer-type voice said, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," and the screen went black. Maybe that's why nobody here is paying much attention to the convention.

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