

Garrison Attacking Gervais Credibility



—Photo by The Times-Picayune.
DIST. ATTY. JIM GARRISON
 Lawyer and client leave court.

DA Seeks a Motive for Government Role

By **JOHN McMILLAN**
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Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison began building his defense Thursday by attacking the credibility of Pershing Gervais and attempting to establish a motive for Gervais' working for the government in its case against him.

Gervais, who worked in an undercover capacity for federal agents, was described in testimony as a shakedown artist, a gambler and a briber.

When the district attorney's office began investigating these alleged activities, Gervais said "if you want to play games, we'll play games," Louis Ivon, Garrison's chief investigator testified.

Also testifying about Gervais in the trial of Garrison, Robert E. Nims, the owner of REN Enterprises, and John Aruns Calery, a former partner in New Orleans Novelty Co., on charges of bribery and conspiracy, were Lynn Loisel, another investigator in the DA's office, and Ross Scaccia, a former assistant DA who is currently a candidate for

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ferred him bribes when he was an assistant DA.

He said he didn't take them but neither did he choose to prosecute Gervais. "It was a head to head situation. Those kind of cases are very hard to prosecute. I told him to hit the road. I didn't take any money and I wasn't going to take any money," said Scaccia.

Also called by Garrison as witnesses were Criminal District Court Judges Alvin Oser, Frank Shea, Israel Augustine, Oliver Schulingkamp and Matthew Braniff.

All testified that Garrison's office vigorously prosecuted pinball gambling cases."

However, under cross-examination by U.S. Atty. Gerald J. Gallinghouse, each judge said he had no knowledge of Garrison prosecuting the owners of pinball machines.

Garrison is accused of taking bribes from the owners of pinball machines.

Loisel testified that his investigation of Gervais revealed that Gervais was "running a card game at 1201 Frenchman St.," shaking down a card game for \$100 a night at the Manhattan Bar at Carrollton and Cleveland Avenues and shaking down a handbook operation "located on Carrollton one block past Canal going toward City Park."

He also said he has seen Gervais with numerous diamonds. "He used to deal with burglars. I still think he's got safety deposit boxes filled with diamonds that he can't get to."

MESSAGE MONEY

Loisel said Gervais took money from the operators of massage parlors, ran a lottery and dice games.

When asked by Assistant U.S. Atty. Michael Ellis to relate what he knew about the criminal activities of Gervais in "all fields," Louis LaCour, Nims attorney objected.

"Your honor," LaCour said to U.S. Dist. Judge Herbert W. Christenberry, "we could be here for weeks."

Loisel said that he turned the information from his investigation over to the vice squad and after that he wasn't concerned with it.

He also testified that Gervais owed Garrison \$5,000 or \$6,000.

Loisel said that he had been working on the current case for Garrison.

When Ivon took the stand, he testified that Garrison had fired Gervais within 24 hours after learning that Gervais had attempted to shakedown an attorney. Gervais was Garrison's chief investigator at one time. Ivon was assigned the position after Gervais was fired.

OUT OF BUSINESS

Ivon said that for years Gervais would call and complain to

him that Garrison wasn't "doing anything for him. He complained about you (Garrison) putting him out of business in the bonding company."

Ivon admitted that he knew Gervais, in fact he testified he recently administered lie detector tests for Gervais, who is running a pizza parlor in Brookhaven, Miss., because Gervais thought his employees were stealing from him.

"I knew him," Ivon said. "But he's not the kind of fellow I would have in my home."

Ivon said that after he had gathered information concerning Gervais' alleged illegal activities, Garrison told him to conduct an investigation. He said that two or three weeks after the investigation began, Gervais called him and asked, "What are you trying to do to me?"

Ivon said, "I told him."

'PLAY GAMES'

"He said if you want to play games like that we'll play games," Ivon said.

Ivon said that Gervais often said many city officials were accepting money illegally. "This is a Gervais technique. He said everybody was a thief. He even talked about the Pope. He said the Pope was a thief and a goof."

"I assume he even talked about me?" Garrison asked.

"Oh, you were a big goof," Ivon replied.

Ivon also related an incident in which he said Gervais once approached him with a deal in which the DA would receive \$3,000 a week from pinball operators.

APEAL REVERSAL

Ivon said the deal concerned some type of plan whereby Garrison would vigorously prosecute pinball gambling and hopefully obtain a conviction. Then on appeal there would be a reversal.

When Ivon related the story to Garrison he said the DA "told me to tell them to go to hell."

He also testified that Gervais owed Garrison money.

Asked by the judge why he dealt with Gervais, Ivon replied, "He's a source of information, judge. Even when he's in Brookhaven, Miss., he's got a knack of knowing what is

