



JIM GARRISON

GARRISON SEEKS DA'S POST ANEW

9-6-73 P.21
Predicts U.S. Failure in Case Against Him T-P

New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison said Tuesday the Justice Department may succeed "for a period of two or three days" in making it appear he was part of a bribery conspiracy, but said the government's evidence against him in his current trial will ultimately fall "the test of truth."

Garrison made the comment in a prepared statement issued in connection with his candidacy for re-election. He formally qualified for the office Wednesday.

Garrison's statement also contained a history of his first three terms of office, during which he cracked down on illegal lottery, prostitution and rackets.

"The success of our office in prosecuting murder cases is well known," Garrison added. "... only one defendant in a murder case has walked out of the courtroom with an acquittal."

ROBBERY CASES

Garrison also cited the rising rate of convictions in armed robbery cases to more than 95 per cent. and credited this to his Armed Robbery Bureau.

Garrison then turned his attention to the federal government — specifically, the Justice Department, saying, "... the Justice Department in Washington systematically has engaged in the corrupt use of its power

against individuals who have been strong critics of the government..."

Garrison also reiterated his innocence of the federal charges currently against him.

"Since the day I was sworn in to the office as district attorney, I have never once allowed the DA's office to be used improperly. Nor have I accepted bribery..." he said.

U.S. EVIDENCE

On the government's evidence against him, Garrison said, "I cannot predict precisely what 'evidence' they intend to present nor precisely when they will attempt to do so. Nor shall I attempt to read the immediate future and try to forecast with any precision the federal government's schedule in its attempt to make me appear to have compromised my office."

"However, I can say with complete confidence that before this trial is completed it will be well demonstrated that there is no genuine or true evidence which connects me with the federal charges against me."

Garrison did, however, say he thought the tapes of conversations between him and Pershing Gervais, which the Justice Department has introduced as evidence, had been "doctored."

"Many statements of mine had been altered or cut short or, in some instances, totally eliminated — the result being to give a sinister cast to what originally had not been sinister," Garrison said.

He added that the transcripts of the tapes which the government published "constituted garbage rather than 'evidence.'"

GUSTE TO FORM RACKETS FORCE

Will Probe Giarrusso Bribery Charges

9-6-73 T-P
Louisiana Atty. Gen. William J. Guste Jr. Wednesday announced the formation of an Organized Crime and Racketeering Unit of his office.

He said that the unit will "follow up on charges" that former Police Supt. Joseph I. Giarrusso took at least \$30,000 in bribes from TAC Amusement Co.

In response to a question, Guste said, "This is the kind of thing that points up the need for the attorney general to have authority to investigate those kinds of crimes. You can't expect the local district attorney to do it when he is charged with the same kind of crime himself."

The allegations against Giarrusso came out during the trial of Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison (and others), who is also accused of accepting bribes from pinball dealers. Guste said if information regarding state legislators is developed during the trial, the new unit will also investigate it. And if the evidence warrants it, Garrison himself may be prosecuted, he said.

Guste announced William B. Faust III will supervise the new unit. Faust, who has been serving as assistant attorney general in the criminal division, is a former FBI agent.

Guste said the new unit will have a staff of 12 investigators who have special training in law, accounting, narcotics, vice, gambling and organized crime intelligence.

A special prosecutor will be assigned to work with the unit, Guste said. The unit, which Guste said is patterned after the U.S. Justice Department's Organized Crime Strike Forces, will be headquartered in New Orleans.

He said the unit will work with the State Police, district attorneys, police departments and sheriff's offices throughout the state to achieve a state-wide coordinated program in fighting organized crime and political corruption.

Guste said the new unit will investigate areas of crime which exceed the jurisdiction of local district attorneys, and also will prosecute crimes which the federal government comes into only on a related issue. For example, he said, the federal government may be able to prosecute only for mail fraud when actually the basic crime may be public bribery.