



—AP photo.

Pershing O. Gervais

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Gervais challenges DA's 'lies'

By ALLAN KATZ

Pershing O. Gervais charged today that District Atty. Jim Garrison and police Patrolman Lynn Loisel "are telling bald-faced lies" when they assert that Gervais was fired from the DA's office for taking a \$3,000 bribe.

Gervais made the comment when he was reached by telephone in Brookhaven, Miss., where he resides. The government undercover agent who gathered the tapes that led to Garrison's indictment, challenged the DA and Loisel to join with him in a lie detector test to determine who is telling the truth.

Gervais was angry because Loisel testified under oath yesterday in the pinball trial that he understood from Garrison that Gervais was fired because the DA had learned that Gervais took a \$3,000 bribe from attorney Burt Klein.

GARRISON LATER told newsmen he had asked Gervais to leave his office after he learned of the bribe but had not prosecuted his chief investigator because he "didn't want to destroy him."

Gervais said, "I challenge Jim Garrison to say on a lie detector that he knew of such a bribe. I guarantee you that the machine will short out. It may cause a power shortage in New Orleans.

"There was no bribe. To the best of my knowledge, there was no affidavit alleging a bribe. It was never shown to me. I left the DA's office voluntarily, as a favor to Garrison and because I was ready to leave."

Loisel testified yesterday that Klein had filed an affidavit against Gervais but that the case was not pressed because Klein didn't want to testify.

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Klein could not be reached for comment.

ALTHOUGH GERVAIS said he is angered by "smear" attempts by Garrison and Loisel, he added that he does not expect to be called by either the prosecution or the defense to testify in the trial. "I have no desire to testify," he said. "I'm willing to let the evidence speak for itself."

Gervais said Loisel, assigned to Garrison's office, testified under oath that he operated pinball machines while he was a policeman and paid off on the machines, although that was illegal under state law.

"I wonder if any action will be taken about that," said Gervais. "It seems to me my good friend (Police Supt.) Clarence Giarrusso ought to want to get any police officer who admits having engaged in illegal activities off the force. It will be interesting to see what, if anything, happens to Mr. Loisel."

About his challenge to lie detector tests Gervais suggested that some neutral party serve as a "sponsor" and arrange for the three to take the test at one time.

"Neither Garrison nor Loisel would agree to it, because they know they're lying," said Gervais. "The reason that I resigned — as Garrison also knows — is that in 1965 his enemies were using my presence in the DA's office as a battering ram against him.

"Because I was ready to leave the office anyway, and because I wanted at that time to do a favor for Garrison, I voluntarily offered to resign, and he publicly said at the time that I was the finest person that he knew.

"Isn't it remarkable that eight years later he should suddenly remember a bribe that he has never seen fit to mention before? I think it highly unlikely that Garrison would want to match his veracity against mine, at least on this particular issue."