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## Jim Garrison's Costly Mistake

For Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's failure to keep track of bail bond forfeitures, his office and the city treasury may have been belted for more than \$317,000 in the case of the Maryland National Insurance Co., in liquidation.

It is figured that the bail bond firm owed \$651,325 in forfeitures but the judgment signed in Criminal District Court yesterday was for \$333,912.50. The difference is \$317,412.50.

The settlement is to go in the district attorney's fines and fees account, and at year's end whatever's left is divided between the Garrison office and the city. Since the judgment is \$317,412.50 short of what the forfeitures assertedly should be, chalk it up as a loss to the prosecutor's office and the badly under-financed city.

That Mr. Garrison's strange prepossession with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy should be at such a high cost in forfeitures alone is hard to swallow—even with his admission of fault.

"As an elected official charged with running this office," he said

last Aug. 5, "I must take full responsibility and admit my error."

And he characterized as "the one serious mistake" of his administration his failure to move against Maryland National in 1967 or 1968.

But he compounded his mistake, it could be added, with the statement that the money owed would eventually be collected. On this he was wrong by up to \$317,412.50.

The first time he became aware of the indebtedness of Maryland National, said Mr. Garrison, was in December, 1968. Yet some of the forfeitures went back as far as 1966, which prompts questions of where he was in 1966, 1967 and 1968 prior to December.

We believe it boils down to the fact that Dist. Atty. Garrison can't indulge in wild goose chases and at the same time discharge his responsibilities as a law enforcement official. The proof? The heavy loss to the district attorney's office and the city treasury.

Asking that a district attorney stay in touch with his office isn't too much, after all.