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Three Candidates for DA Again Attack Garrison ^{S-1} 9-1-69

Three candidates for district attorney again sharply criticized DA Jim Garrison's conduct of his office as the four appeared on a speaking program last night.

Harry Connick, Ross T. Scaccia and Charles R. Ward delivered last night a series of blasts against Garrison similar to those delivered by the three at a Metropolitan Crime Commission luncheon several days ago.

The four spoke before a "meet your candidate gathering of the Alliance for Good Government at the Construction and General Laborers Union Hall, 400 Soniat St.

CONNICK, THE first to speak, called recent controversies concerning the DA's office a "stinking mess." He claimed Garrison denies that organized crime exists in New Orleans, yet appoints members of his staff to investigate its possible existence.

Connick also noted the DA's prosecution of Clay Shaw on conspiracy charges concerning the John F. Kennedy assassination "one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in history."

Shaw was acquitted.

Garrison, next on the podium, told the group, "I don't think anyone is going to give you a better office."

HE SAID THE district attorney's office is one of his "greatest interests in life," and strongly denied accusations that he is hardly ever at his office.

If the crime rate is increasing, said Garrison, it does not mean that he or his staff has been negligent. "In cities where I'm not district attorney, it's spiraling," he quipped.

The next speaker, Scaccia, claimed Garrison had little evidence in the Kennedy conspiracy case.

HE ALSO asserted that assistants in Garrison's office have no authority to make a decision and "no communications with their leader." Scaccia is a former assistant DA.

If elected, said Scaccia, he will change the policy of allowing defendants to plead guilty to reduced charges. He said defendants would be tried on original charges and unless he believed the persons guilty of the charges he would not prosecute.

Ward, the last to speak, charged that in 1968 "every major category of crime has increased" and that "prospects for 1969 are worse."

HE SAID HE would advance programs of rehabilitation for both convicted criminals and narcotics addicts and improve correctional institutions.

Ward, in a question and answer period, implied that Garrison could have been involved in Louisiana Loan and Thrift dealings revealed last year.

Garrison emphatically denied this and said he never owned any LL&T stock. He said his only connection with anybody involved with the savings and loan firm was an invitation to come into the business at its beginning "for reasons that are still obscure."

Garrison said he flatly rejected the offer.

DA Not Guilty