

M'Keithen Aide Denies Partin Move

Gremillion Insists Cash Cut

By GENE BOURG
Atty. Gen. Jack P. F. Gremillion today reinforced his claim that Gov. John J. McKeithen has not provided adequate funds for state attempts to prosecute Baton Rouge labor figure Edward Grady Partin, despite a denial from the governor's office.

Gremillion said the governor's office last December withdrew funds from the attorney general's office amounting to about \$4,000 monthly, used in assisting the State Labor Management Commission in its investigatory work.

Partin was indicted by a federal grand jury yesterday on five counts charging conspiracy and extortion. The Labor-Management Commission had been investigating Partin's labor activities in the Baton Rouge area.

"WE DID OUR best until we got the rug pulled out from under us. The governor is responsible. He took my

money away," said Gremillion.

The governor's chief assistant, W. W. McDougall, countered that McKeithen "hasn't pulled the rug out from under anybody."

McDougall said that no money was taken from Gremillion's budget and added the governor "has exerted every possible effort on everybody concerned to see that any case of violation of the law is prosecuted as vigorously as possible."

THE CUT IN funds, said Gremillion, came when Assistant Atty. Gen. Thomas McFerrin was fired as chief counsel for the Labor-Management Commission.

McFerrin was given leave from his duties in the attorney general's office to work with the commission, Gremillion said. He added the governor had "assured me that ample funds would be provided for this purpose."

"I don't know what made the governor change his

mind," the attorney general said.

THE MONTHLY fund provided for salaries and expenses of investigating attorneys and special assistant Ken Scullin, said Gremillion. Bills were provided the commission by Gremillion's office, he added, and were kept by the Division of Administration.

"Four or five convictions were secured as a result of our work," said Gremillion. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling making the federal constitutional right to a jury trial in criminal cases binding on the states "slowed down" labor racketeering prosecutions, he said.

One of the principal factors in McFerrin's dismissal was said to be the Labor-Management Commission's reorganization in line with a Civil

Service Commission ruling setting up a new investigative section at a much lower pay rate than the original staff was receiving.

McFERRIN WAS replaced by Edward J. Roussel, who has since announced his intention of leaving. Roussel, who previously had been on the commission staff, was shifted to the state police before being given the post as commission counsel.

In its action yesterday, the Federal Grand Jury indicted Ted F. Dunham Jr. on the same charges filed against Partin. Three Baton Rouge concrete products firms which Dunham controls also were indicted.

Partin, business manager of Teamster Local No. 5 in Baton Rouge, has been a figure in state and federal

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racketeering probes since a 1962 federal indictment on falsifying union records and embezzlement.

YESTERDAY'S indictment charged that since early 1966 the defendants forced industrial purchasers of concrete products to deal only with the Dunham firms. The companies named are Dunham Concrete Products Inc.; Louisiana Ready-Mix Co. Inc., and Anderson-Dunham Inc.

"The charges against me and my company are totally incorrect," Dunham said. "I have known for some time that such complaints have been made, and I think they



JACK P. F. GREMLION



TED F. DUNHAM

are the outgrowth of a civil suit against me and others

He referred to a \$3.15 million antitrust suit filed by William Heck in March, 1967. Heck, an official of the competing Altex Ready Mixed Concrete Co., alleged that a conspiracy existed to put him out of business. The suit has not come to trial.

The federal indictment said the coercions were made through strikes, work stoppages and property damage at construction sites.

The charges concerned alleged violations of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the Hobbs Act, the federal labor anti-racketeering statute.

Beginning in 1962, Partin was the federal government's No. 1 informer against International Teamster boss James Hoffa. His testimony was the key to Hoffa's 1964 conviction for jury tampering, for which Hoffa drew a seven-year jail term.

LOUISIANA POLITICS

Indictment Hardest Blow to Partin

By BILL LYNCH

(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE — The indictment of Edward Grady Partin, boss of Teamster Local No. 5 in Baton Rouge, by a federal grand jury is the first real blow against the iron tight grip he has held on industrial construction in this area.

Although an indictment is a long way from a conviction, as evidenced by those outstanding against him already, it appears that this time at least one segment of the Justice Department is ready to act.

Partin has managed to survive this long in the jungle of construction and contract bargaining because — as Attorney General Jack P. F. Gremillion described it — he has enjoyed influence with a wide variety of public officials.

His basic source of protection from federal prosecution, of course, has been the Jus-

tice Department, where one group has shielded him because he was the key witness against James Hoffa in a jury-tampering conviction. Hoffa is the International Teamster president now in prison.

After the Justice Department comes a peculiar protection at the local and state levels.

District attorneys in the area long have appeared reluctant to act against Partin directly or his Teamster members. * * *

INDICTMENTS and charges have gone unprosecuted and investigations into allegations of labor racketeering, bombings and such have been virtually nil.

Partin seems to have enjoyed a special relationship with the Baton Rouge district attorney, Sargent Pitcher, and a city judge named William Hawk Daniels.

Pitcher has been one of those public officials who, for reasons best known to himself, sided with Partin and bitterly fought the Labor-Management Commission when it was first created with a goal of nailing Partin.

Daniels has long been a

close friend and staunch supporter of the Teamster business agent. He readily defends him.

It was Daniels who was the first link between the Justice Department and Partin back in 1962.

Information brought out by the Labor-Management Commission when it still had an adequate staff and before it became an ineffectual agency has never been acted on by the Baton Rouge district attorney's office.

In fact, much of the information supplied to law enforcement officials throughout the Baton Rouge area was simply consigned to dust bins.

Although a shooting incident in Plaquemine was cited in the federal indictment, there has been little effort by the Iberville Parish district attorney to push prosecution of those charged. * * *

WHEN THE incident occurred in January 1968, the governor promised swift prosecution of those who took part and those who "directed it from a distance," but virtually nothing has been done.

The chief prosecutor of the case, the attorney general,

was called off and the governor's special assistant, W.W. McDougall, had the chief counsel of the commission fired. McDougall says it was for reasons of failing to move swiftly enough that the counsel was fired.

It has not been too long ago that a spokesman for industry soundly rapped area law enforcement authorities for failing to prosecute and act on information developed during the early days of the Labor-Management Commission.

Since then the commission itself has come in for sharp criticisms and has now virtually been taken over by the Baton Rouge District Attorney's office.

The process of the indictment against Partin undoubtedly will be watched closely. In Baton Rouge last year, the Justice Department stated that the interests of justice would best be served if a 26-count indictment brought in 1962 was dismissed. A federal judge refused and the matter is still pending.

Thus it is evident the whole spectrum of political life from the city through the state and national governments have been deeply involved in the Partin affair and how it turns out will be an interesting event to observe.



LYNCH