

DA Asks Jury Probe Into Mob Influence Claim

Crime Panel Members to Be Called

District Attorney Jim Garrison said today he has asked the Orleans Parish Grand Jury to investigate charges contained in a national magazine that crime flourishes in Louisiana and that Garrison is an acquaintance of persons identified as part of the Cosa Nostra.

Garrison said he intends to subpoena members of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, which said it supplied information to Life Magazine for its article dealing with alleged Cosa Nostra influence in the New Orleans area and other sections of the state.

THE ARTICLE claimed that Garrison is an acquaintance of Mario Marino, who the magazine identified as a lieutenant for Jefferson Par-

ish rackets figure Carlos Marcello. It further alleged that Garrison's bill last March at the Sands, a Las Vegas hotel and gambling casino, was paid for by Marino and \$5,000 worth of credit at the cash-

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ier's cage was extended to Garrison.

Shortly after publication of the Life article, the Crime Commission met in Baton Rouge with Gov. John J. McKeithen, Managing director Aaron M. Kohn at that time admitted that information for the article was supplied to Life by the commission.

Garrison today denied the charges in the article and said every individual named in the article would be called before the grand jury.

His statement follows:

"The Metropolitan Crime Commission indicated once again that organized crime flourished in New Orleans. Now in a national magazine New Orleans is pictured as a crime city in the clutch of the mob. I have informed the grand jury foreman that the charges should be gone into intensely in spite of the fact that on every previous occasion when Mr. Kohn has made charges, they have turned out to be entirely untrue.

"Because of the seriousness of the portrayal for the nation of New Orleans as a crime city, I think there

should be a complete investigation by the grand jury. Every individual name in the Life article—which Mr. Kohn admits he initiated—will be called to the grand jury.

"I will ask the grand jury to hear members of my staff testify under oath. Mr. Sandy Smith, the author of the article, and other members of the Life staff will be invited to appear before the grand jury and give whatever evidence they may have.

"We are initiating the inquiry by calling Mr. Kohn and the executive staff of the MCC to testify."

Garrison issued subpoenas to Aaron M. Kohn, C. Alvin Bertel Jr., Philip L. Frank Sr., Robert D. Hess, M. Hepburn Many, William I. Monaghan, H. Eutis Reily, Eli W. Tullis, E. C. Upton Jr., James W. Mills Jr.; William C. Penick, C. Allen Favrot, Warren K. Watters, Joseph W. Simon Jr., C. C. Clifton Jr., and Everett M. Scranton.

Asked about the truth of the Life magazine article, Garrison replied, "I have never been a guest of the mobsters anywhere in my life. My record speaks for itself and it should be obvious that mobsters and organized crime have no friend in me."

Garrison said the charges "are really too ridiculous to answer," but he continued:

"I don't gamble. I've been to the Sands (a Las Vegas gambling casino and hotel)

three or four times in my entire life, usually in connection with a trip to a DA meeting either out or back. I don't understand how that connects me with the mob."

Asked specifically about the \$5,000 gambling credit which Life said he had been given at the Sands, Garrison said, "I've never used a dollar of gambling credit anywhere in the world in my life because I don't gamble."

He said that when he "obtained a credit card to cash checks there, it turns out I have credit to gamble, according to Life."

HE SAID, "I was informed by a Life reporter I had \$5,000 gambling credit. It might as well have been \$50,000 since I don't use it."

"I wouldn't know Carlos Marcello if he walked in the door," he said.

"Guilty by association," he said on his stay at the Sands.