

B.R. DA, State Compete

CONFUSION IN DUAL PROBE OF MARCELLO LINKS BARED

By Bill Lynch
(States-Item Bureau)

Baton Rouge - The East Baton Rouge Parish district attorney's office was unaware at the time that investigators for the state Labor-Management Commission were conducting a simultaneous investigation of an alleged link between the underworld and the governor's office, the States-Item has learned.

Gov. John J. McKeithen last September publicly assigned the investigation of a connection between Carlos Marcello and Aubrey Young, his former aide, to district attorney Sargent Pitcher.

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Pitcher was called in after McKeithen returned from New York where he received information on the phone link from Life magazine. Last week the governor said that the whole investigation had been turned over to Pitcher, after the States-Item revealed the probe was dropped by the special investigators.

NO REPORT ON THE FINDINGS of the special investigators, whose own probe was canceled when it began pointing in other directions, was made to the district attorney.

In fact, there was such friction between the labor-management investigators and the district attorney that a scheduled lie detector test for Young in Shreveport blew up when the district attorney's men slipped out of the city at midnight with Young.

At least two investigators, an aide and the chief counsel of the Labor-Management Commission, were involved in the allegations made by Life magazine that Young was the recipient of 50 to 60 phone calls from Marcello's telephone in a Jefferson Parish motel.

The States-Item has learned that the Baton Rouge phone number 343-6106 could at that time only be answered

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in the office of the speaker of the House, where it was placed for the convenience of C. H. "Sammy" Downs.

Who actually received the calls is unknown. Neither the special investigators or the district attorney have been able to determine that.

Young, who admits having two telephone conversations with Marcello on other phones, denies having received any on 343-6106. The secretary who had charge of the phone, Mrs. Marilyn Regan, said she received no calls for Young at that number. Downs denies having received any calls from Marcello in his name or in the name of Young. Investigators for the Labor-Management Commission were in the process of questioning secretaries in both the governor's office and the office of the speaker when they were called off the case.

THEY ALREADY HAD VISITED the telephone company searching for records that might shed light on the phone, which once could be answered in the governor's suite when Downs was employed as an administrative assistant.

None of the information developed by the special investigators was turned over to the district attorney.

It was with some difficulty that the district attorney's office was able to obtain a layout of the phone setup in the governor's office, which was then on the first floor of the Capitol. Friction over the lie detector test occurred when Young was flown to Shreveport on a Friday to take the examination.

With Young were members of the labor-management staff, and the district attorney's office. The test was to have been administered by A. Harry Roberts, chief investigator for the commission, but who had not taken a prior role in the investigation of the telephone.

Roberts advised the district attorney's men that he could not turn over copies of the polygraph test to them without approval from Camille Gravel, then chief counsel for the commission.

A long-distance telephone tug-of-war developed between Gravel, Pitcher, his men and Gov. McKeithen, with the latter still promising full cooperation.

However, it was learned that Pitcher had his men slip out of Shreveport with Young about midnight and return to Baton Rouge. From Baton Rouge, they went to Chicago to take a lie detector test there—cutting out the Labor-Management Commission altogether.