

Garrison Links Arrest to a Move To Hide Kennedy Death 'Truth'

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NEW ORLEANS, July 1—District Attorney Jim Garrison says that his arrest yesterday on Federal charges of accepting bribes to protect gamblers is part of the Government's effort to suppress "the truth" about the assassination of President Kennedy.

"When I went into this," he told reporters after his arrest, referring to his assassination investigation, "and found out that the Federal government itself—and I refer to the warfare sector—had killed John Kennedy in order to open the way into Vietnam, I decided then I would never quit pushing to bring out the truth, no matter whether they killed me or put me in prison. I knew sooner or later they would try one or the other."

Mr. Garrison, who attempted to prove a conspiracy in the 1963 assassination, has long contended that Mr. Kennedy was killed by the Central Intelligence Agency. He recently added the Pentagon and others in the Government's so-called "warfare sector" to his list of alleged conspirators.

9 Others Arrested

The 50-year-old District Attorney and nine other persons including two ranking policemen, were arrested yesterday and charged by the Justice Department with violating the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970. They are accused of illegal gambling, bribery to obstruct law enforcement, interstate transportation of pinball machines to be used for gambling and conspiracy to commit these acts.

Mr. Garrison was free on \$5,000 bond today. A Federal grand jury will decide whether to indict him and the nine others. A preliminary hearing has been scheduled for July 9.

United States Attorney Gerald Gallinghouse said after the arrests that the Government had tape recordings and marked bills proving that Mr. Garrison and the two policemen had been taking payoffs to protect illegal gambling on New Orleans pinball machines.

Mr. Gallinghouse said that Mr. Garrison was arrested after he accepted a \$1,000 payment in protection money Tuesday night. The Government said it had intercepted a cash payment from pinball operators and had substituted its own marked \$50 bills and sent them to the District Attorney through an intermediary who had secretly gone to work for the Government. The bills were

said to have been recovered yesterday in Mr. Garrison's home.

A Government source said today that the envelope containing the \$1,000 had been dusted with luminous powder and that the powder was found on Mr. Garrison's hands when he was arrested and fingerprinted.

The intermediary, Pershing Gervais, was once Mr. Garrison's chief investigator. Mr. Gervais worked for the New Orleans Police Department from the mid-nineteen-forties until the early nineteen fifties. He had admitted that he took payoffs as a policeman.

He resigned from Mr. Garrison's staff under fire in 1965 after having been accused of taking a \$600 bribe to fix a case. Mr. Gervais has since worked as a bail bondsman and a private investigator.

Public reaction since Mr. Garrison's arrest indicates that many New Orleanians support him. He was cheered by a small sidewalk crowd outside the Federal Courthouse yesterday.

And at noon yesterday, a little more than an hour after the announcement of his arrest, telephone callers on a radio talk show were 65 to 70 per cent in support of the District Attorney. Seven of nine telephone callers on an evening talk show supported him.

One woman said, "I'm behind him all the way. I think he's being framed by the Federal Government and its all just a conspiracy to keep people from finding out what the Government's been doing to people."

Others had a different reaction.

Removal Sought

The Metropolitan Crime Commission called on Gov. John J. McKeithen and Attorney General Jack Gremillion of Louisiana to remove Mr. Garrison from office.

The New Orleans States-Item has been trying editorially for months, without success, to persuade the state bar association to start an investigation of Mr. Garrison and disbar him.

The newspaper has been especially critical since Federal District Judge Herbert Christenberry ruled May 27 that Mr. Garrison had to stop prosecuting Clay L. Shaw, the New Orleans businessman whom Mr. Garrison had charged with conspiring to kill President Kennedy.