

A States-Item **FIRST**

Prober Charges Indictment Taunt Hurled by Partin

By **BILL LYNCH**

(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE — An investigator for the state Labor-Management Commission claims a Teamster Union chief warned him he would be indicted by a federal grand jury "for obstructing justice," the States-Item learned today.

Joseph Oster, an investigator for the commission, said Edward G. Partin, boss of Teamster Local No. 5, threatened him with federal action after he arrested the union man Tuesday.

A **FEDERAL** grand jury in New Orleans has been investigating allegations on a bribery attempt to get Partin to change his testimony that helped send International Teamster President James Hoffa to prison.

The States-Item revealed yesterday that the U.S. Justice Department, which has cloaked Partin with immunity from pending federal

charges, has been investigating the state commission.

The Justice Department confirmed the action in a statement issued in Washington.

OSTER ARRESTED Partin Tuesday, charging him with aggravated assault based on testimony taken from a New Orleans television cameraman, Erby Aucoin, during commission hearings in April.

Oster said Partin told him, "You'll get yours. Next week you are going to be indicted by the federal grand jury in New Orleans for obstructing justice."

Oster said he asked Partin if that was a threat "and he said, 'Yes, it's a threat.'"

OSTER SAID that a number of people, including several Ascension Parish deputy sheriffs who participated in the arrest, heard Partin make the declaration.

He said that Partin told him the same thing again while riding in a car to the sheriff's office.

"When we got to the jail

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Says Partin Made Indictment Threat

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and booked him, he said that Hoffa paid me \$50,000 and the federal government was going to indict me," Oster said. "I just laughed at him."

AN AGENT FOR the FBI called Oster yesterday and inquired into the circumstances of the arrest.

Partin has complained frequently to the Justice Department that the Labor-Management Commission investigation is an effort to get him.

The labor leader said yesterday that he had tape recordings that would back up his story and would play them on the witness stand if given a chance. He is scheduled to testify Monday at another hearing of the commission.

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT also is scheduled to appear in federal court tomorrow to explain why it wants to drop 26 charges of embezzlement and falsification of records against Partin. The government has not prosecuted the charges since Partin became an informant against Hoffa in 1962.

State officials consider the Justice Department action a further effort to harass the commission, which is investigating labor racketeering in the Baton Rouge industrial area.

Chief counsel Tom McFerrin declared that the Labor-Management Commission is not backing away from its probe because of the Justice Department.

OSTER SAID that Partin told him he had conferred with Justice Department attorneys in Washington "and they were waiting for me to arrest him."

He said that Partin also said he had conferred at length with Walter Sheridan, the former Justice Department agent who worked with him against Hoffa. Sheridan, who has not been officially connected with the Justice Department for some time, has attempted to influence Gov. John J. McKeithen and Teamster Local No. 5.

Meanwhile, a third Teamster union man was arrested yesterday. Jerry Sylvester was charged the same as Partin in the Aucoin incident, in which the photographer testified he was threatened and

forced to give up film he had shot at a race track south of Baton Rouge.