

DA to Probe Bribe Charge Against Ward

Accusations that former Assistant District Attorney Charles R. Ward accepted bribes will be investigated by the Orleans Parish Grand Jury, an assistant DA said yesterday.

Ward resigned as DA Jim Garrison's first assistant yesterday to run against him.

James L. Alcock, appointed Chief Assistant DA by Garrison yesterday, did not comment on when the bribery allegations might reach the jury or what charges could result.

WARD'S RESIGNATION came after Garrison withdrew a recommendation that he be named to one of two Criminal District Court judgeships.

In a written statement, Garrison cited the bribery allegations as the reason he changed his mind about backing Ward. The DA said he did so after he learned "that employes of a bail bonding company had signed affidavits indicating money had been paid to Ward through an attorney for the company."

In the DA's office today, workmen were busy changing locks on all doors and filing cabinets. There was no official explanation for the action.

In his resignation statement yesterday, Ward said

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Garrison had told him he knew the bribery accusations were false.

Ward claimed his nomination was withdrawn "not because he (Garrison) believes the accusations but because he feels they are embarrassing to him in his campaign for reelection."

THE JUDGESHIP appointments announced yesterday by Gov. John J. McKeithen were those of Assistant DA Alvin V. Oser and Negro attorney Israel M. Augustine. Ward claimed Garrison substituted Augustine's name in place of his.

Ward said the bribery allegations were made in part by William Hardy Davis.

Affidavits charged bribe money was sent to an official of the bail company in the form of checks. The official would cash the checks and turn the money over to a local attorney, who allegedly delivered it to Ward, the affidavits stated.

IT WAS ALLEGED that the money was to influence Ward to hold back on the collection of bond forfeitures. One of the officials admitted in his affidavit the "desired results" were never obtained.

Garrison said he withdrew his recommendation of Ward Monday after he confirmed the affidavits existed. "Tuesday morning I called the governor once more to emphasize that under no circumstances was I recommending Ward for appointment to judge," he stated.

WARD SAID he and Garrison have disagreed violently on a number of issues. Among them, he said, was the prosecution of Clay L. Shaw, who was acquitted March 1 of charges that Shaw conspired in the murder of President John F. Kennedy.

He also claimed Garrison "has not been loyal to me or other members of his staff."