

ALFORD QUILTS, BLASTS DA

Garrison Fixes Cases, Top Aide

Says

Assistant District Attorney William R. Alford today resigned his post, charging that Orleans Parish DA Jim Garrison permits crime to flourish and knowingly fixes cases in the Criminal District Courts.

Alford, who has been a member of Garrison's staff for five years and was serving as executive assistant DA, made the charges at a press conference he called at the Monteleone Hotel.

The assistant DA said that "certain politicians" and Criminal District Court judges are involved in wrongdoing. He said that "some state representatives" can get "anything they want from the DA's office."

ALFORD DID NOT name individuals other than Garrison who are involved in alleged wrongdoing. He said he "did not believe it would serve any purpose at this time." The assistant DA told newsmen that if they carefully researched the files of the Crimi-

nal District Court, they would find that certain sections routinely dismiss far more cases than others and that certain attorneys fare better than do others in treatment of their clients.

The assistant DA, asked why he waited five years to resign, said that his awareness of practices in the DA's office did not come at once but occurred over a period of years.

HE SAID A turning point occurred when he discovered he had been pulled off an Orleans Parish Grand Jury investigation of pinball gambling because he was "embarrassing the District Attorney's friends."

Alford said he is resigning from the DA's office and hopes to remain in the private practice of law in New Orleans. He said he will not seek public office.

SPECIFIC CHARGES made by Alford:

—He said the "once-good" office of the DA "no longer cares that the people of this city are daily being swindled through the practice of all types of racketeering." He said a rackets division established by Garrison no longer functions because "vigorous prosecution in this area often makes political waves."

—He said "certain politicians now have carte blanche" in the DA's office. Alford likened the DA's office to a

"house of ill-repute" where "business is good and everyone comes out smiling." He charged "these corrupters are not coming to the DA's office for the purpose of helping the victims of crime—they are there to help the criminal and themselves."

—He said "organized crime is presently flourishing in the parish and state." Alford added, "The DA says different but how would he know—he's never in the office." The assistant DA said Garrison has been in the office only five or six times since Jan. 1 to the best of Alford's knowledge.

ALFORD ADDED: "The organized crime in this city is not of the gangland variety. It is of the very subtle type. Many of its leaders are considered upstanding citizens. I have tried to do something about this but have been blocked in every direction."

"Gambling, prostitution and narcot-

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William Alford

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ics are rampant and I'm told not to 'rock the boat.'"

Alford said he was removed as a legal adviser to the Orleans Parish grand jury when a pinball gambling investigation began to embarrass Garrison's "friends."

HE ALSO CHARGED:

—Persons arrested for crimes and having previous felony convictions are being released from jail without posting bond by some Criminal District Court judges. He said the "DA's office is sitting idly by because the present DA has neither the interest nor the strength to attack this abuse."

—More than 690 cases have been dismissed by the DA's office this year and, in one section of Criminal District

Court, 101 cases have been allowed to proscribe. Of these, Alford said, 40 were narcotics violations and at least 10 involved vice charges.

ASKED ABOUT the Clay Shaw case in which he helped prosecute the New Orleans businessman who was eventually exonerated, Alford said he viewed the matter as an attorney representing one side in open court and was willing to accept the verdict of the jury and appeal courts.

Alford said he does not believe Garrison's physical problems with an infection of the spine have hindered the DA's ability to run his office.

"It didn't prevent him from meeting last week with politicians to discuss the governor's race. So why should it prevent him from running the DA's office?" Alford said.