

DA Returns Alford's Blast

Garrison Labels Charges 'Gust of Political Winds'

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Garrison Files Appeal In Shaw Case

Orleans Parish Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has filed an appeal in his perjury case against Clay L. Shaw.

The notice was filed yesterday with the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals here. He is appealing a decision by U. S. District Court Judge Herbert W. Christenberry, who has barred Garrison from further prosecution of Shaw on the perjury charge.

Both sides have 40 days to file briefs. After that, it could be as long as three months before the case is assigned.

The court may set a hearing or decide the case on the basis of briefs.

The perjury charge grew out of Shaw's 1969 trial on a charge of conspiring to kill President John F. Kennedy. He was acquitted.

District Attorney Jim Garrison has branded as political, charges of "fixes" within his office.

William Alford Jr. leveled the blast at Garrison in submitting his resignation yesterday after five years as an assistant district attorney.

Alford, who was executive assistant DA when he resigned, charged Garrison has allowed the office to "flounder and sink in politics and aimlessness."

"JUST A FEW months ago Mr. Alford was pressing me to run for governor," Garrison said. "Since I decided not to run myself but rather to support someone else, I expect that he has hitched his wagon to another star.

"In any event, it is rather apparent that this is an early gust of new political winds. The real meaning of this most recent buffet of wind probably will become more apparent with the passage of time.

"I believe most of the people in this city are well aware that I operate a thoroughly honest and competent office. Other than that I have no further comment to make."

ALFORD LIKENED the DA's office to "a house of ill-repute—business is good and everyone comes out smiling."

He charged there were four areas of criticism.

1. The rackets division is no longer effective; 2. Certain politicians now have 'carte blanche' and use the office to "help the criminals and themselves"; 3. Organized crime is flourishing in the form of gambling, prostitution and narcotics; and 4, some criminal court judges are releasing convicted felons without posting bonds and Garrison "has neither the interest nor the strength to attack this abuse."

Alford charged that during the first six months of 1971 the DA's office has not processed 690 cases and that 101 had been allowed to prescribe in one section of court.

"FORTY OF THESE cases were narcotics violations and at least 10 were vice cases," he said.

Asked if fixes were taking place, Alford said he believed they were, adding: "The corrupt person in the DA's office is the DA, and I'd say the corruption is emanating from the top."

Alford said he has been considering quitting for over a year, but three recent developments brought the action to a head.

1. His removal last week as advisor to the grand jury, which he said was prompted by his attempts last year to probe pinball gambling.

2. Garrison's attack on U.S.

District Court Judge Herbert W. Christenberry after the federal court ruled the district attorney could not continue with the prosecution of Clay L. Shaw.

3. Garrison's decision to support the release of a man from prison in a homicide case without consulting with Alford.

Alford was one of the prosecutors in the 1969 trial of Shaw, who was acquitted on charges of conspiring to kill President John F. Kennedy.

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New Orleans, La., Tuesday, June 22, 1971

No guts

We believe the continued refusal of the legal profession to speak out against Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison says much about the quality of leadership in this community and across the state.

The Louisiana State Bar Association, for example, shrugs its shoulders and says it is powerless to disbar or take other disciplinary action against men such as Mr. Garrison.

The state attorney general has the power to act. But the mere thought of Jack P. F. Gremillion produces laughter rather than hope.

The Legislature, of course, has authority, too. But legislators, for political reasons, don't like to take action against other elected officials.

By failing to act, however, those in positions of authority are lending their support to a man who has

shown he will not hesitate to persecute an innocent man, will not hesitate to attack the judiciary, indeed, will not hesitate to slander the Legislature.

It is a sad, sad commentary on our citizens and their leaders. Is Mr. Garrison really that admired? Or are we surrounded by cowards—men with no guts—who in the snug comfort of their own lives care not a whit about the world around them?

Another opportunity to act has presented itself. William R. Alford, executive assistant district attorney, resigned yesterday. In doing so, he leveled serious charges of wrongdoing against Mr. Garrison.

Is it too much to ask that the proper authorities investigate these charges? Or will those with the requisite authority once again default in their responsibility?