

GAMBLERS TELL WHY THEY QUIT PEORIA RACKETS

City Clamps Lid On, Grand Jury Told

BY FRANK STURDY

(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Peoria, Oct. 19—Four former gamblers and a business man who teamed with the Shelton gang to round out his income explained today to the Peoria county grand jury their reasons for retiring from the lucrative field of dice, cards, and slot machines.

The gambling business became a poor risk for investments, it was reported they told the jury, when Mayor Triebel took the city out of partnership three years ago, and the policy of Triebel was supported in the county by State's Atty. Roy P. Hull and Sheriff Earl E. Spainhower.

After quitting gambling when the odds grew short, the gamblers took up such prosaic pursuits as sewer cleaning, pin ball and juke box distribution, one retired on his savings, and the business man found work for some of his capital in financing a baby clothing store.

Regular "Fines" Dropped

Hard times hit the poker and dice games, and sent slot machines to storage, the witnesses are reported to have testified, when the mayor announced the city treasury would no longer accept regular "fines."

Randolph Waugh, who ran a dice game in a city night club, said he paid \$500 a month to the city, it was reported. His payments went to Ferdie McGrane, unofficial collector for the city treasury who made regular rounds of the gaming places. Waugh said he had receipts showing his money was paid into the treasury. Now in the juke box business, Waugh's purchase of 27 music machines from the estate of the late Bernie Shelton was approved recently in Probate court. Shelton's murder nearly three months ago started the Peoria grand jury inquiries.

The city protected its stake in the games by assigning policemen to keep order in the casinos, according to Clyde Garrison, venerable Peorian identified for decades with gaming.

The town of Chillicothe, near Peoria, was the exclusive gambling preserve of Merel Davis.

Some light was cast on the Shelton gang's authority among the operators by Harry Tyrrell, wealthy automobile dealer who has interests in other businesses.

Buys 100 Juke Boxes

Tyrrell, it was reported, said he bought 100 juke boxes when, in 1942, war time restrictions curtailed his appliance business.

He found difficulty in persuading tavern owners and storekeepers to permit him to install juke boxes, Tyrrell said. When he in-

quired about his bad luck, he was told the late Carl Shelton, then head of the gang, might be able to help.

Shelton agreed to lend his prestige to Tyrrell's industry in re-

turn for payments that ranged from \$100 to \$200 a month.

Mayor Testifies

Springfield, Ill., Oct. 19 (Special)—Mayor Harry A. Etelson of Springfield and three Sangamon county deputy sheriffs testified

today before the county grand jury which is investigating charges of widespread vice and gambling in the county.

The deputies were James DeBates, Paul Terrell, and Clifford Gouley. A St. Louis newspaperman, Roy Harris, who wrote a number of stories on gambling conditions in the capital city, also was summoned. Twenty-two witnesses have testified before the grand jury since it began its investigation yesterday.