

5-1 5-3-68

DA Office Drops Grey Call; 'Questions Answered Publicly'

The district attorney's office today withdrew its subpoena for Dr. J. D. Grey, president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, saying Dr. Grey has publicly answered the questions DA's aides wanted to ask him.

A federal court yesterday issued a temporary restraining order against enforcement of the subpoena on Dr. Grey, pastor of First Baptist Church. The minister said he would seek a permanent injunction, but Assistant DA Charles Ray Ward today said the subpoena is being withdrawn.

"IT IS no longer necessary for him to answer questions under oath because he has been forced to admit publicly what we knew he would have to admit under oath—that in spite of his denials he had visited three justices of the (Louisiana) Supreme Court while a case in which he was vitally interested was pending before that court," Ward said.

The office of District Attorney Jim Garrison had

charged that Dr. Grey contacted the high court justices while they were considering a contempt citation against Aaron M. Kohn, managing director of the MCC. The court subsequently cleared Kohn of the contempt charges.

After Federal District Judge Herbert W. Christenberry stayed the subpoena yesterday, Dr. Grey at a news conference explained that he talked with some of the judges on matters unrelated to the Kohn case.

"We have never said that Rev. Grey crudely asked any associate justice for a favorable verdict. He is much too clever and sophisticated for that—and he would have been tossed out on his ear," Ward said.

"WE HAVE said — and say again — that Rev. Grey secretly contacted on several occasions a justice of the . . . court while the case of the MCC was pending in that court."

The very fact of his visit

was objectionable, Ward added, "and becomes even more objectionable when it is revealed that he is the pastor of an associate of that court."

The visit, Ward contended, was to "subtly remind the justice of his (Grey's) position as pastor."

Ward continued:

"IT IS strange that on that very same day—at the Supreme Court building — Dr. Grey sought out two other associate justices—and on some other pretext had occasion to drop into their office.

"The question should properly be asked — How would any fair-minded citizen feel if his opponent in a lawsuit casually visited three out of seven judges of the Supreme Court before the case was decided?"

"Rev. Grey did attempt to improperly influence the Supreme Court—even if it was only by a casual social visit. You are not supposed to socialize with judges who are considering your case in court."