

Gang Figure Free

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—A

state supreme court justice ordered reputed gangland leader Frank J. Valenti freed on bail pending an appeal. The order came three hours after Valenti began serving a one-year prison term for criminal contempt of court.

Justice Marshall E. Livingston in granting the request by Valenti's lawyers said the contempt case involved "questions of law to be passed on by the appellate division."

Valenti, identified by the U.S. Department of Justice as the leader of organized crime in the Rochester area, was sentenced Friday morning by Monroe County Judge David O. Boehm. Valenti was taken immediately into custody to begin serving the prison term.

After the sentencing, Valenti's attorneys drove 25 miles to Newark, N.Y., the site of Livingston's court, bypassing a number of other state supreme court justices along the way.

Livingston convened a special hearing and subsequently ordered Valenti freed in \$50,000 bail pending the outcome of his appeal.

Valenti was convicted July 5 by a Monroe County jury of refusing to testify before a 1970 grand jury investigating organized gambling.

From staff reports and news dispatches