

Grand Jury Indicts Kohn

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to bribe another woman witness named Linda Hodges.

Kohn's indictment charged that he committed public intimidation upon Sapir by making a statement before the City Council on Oct. 3.

Kohn has requested that the council conduct a public inquiry into the possible effect of an alleged relationship between Sapir and rackets figure Carlos Marcello on Sapir's vote on a proposed charity bingo ordinance.

Sapir denied he had the type of association with the Marcello family alleged by Kohn. The council denied the request for the hearing.

STATEMENT GIST

The indictment said that Kohn committed the alleged crime by making the following statement:

"I know that we are interested in knowing and I believe the community would be interested in knowing whether Mr. Sapir in his deliberations on this matter, and I know there is a great popularity of it and I am sure the members of the council are seriously confronted with a decision as to what is best for the community and what the people of the community want.

"And you are supposed to reflect the public will, as well as the public interest. But we are concerned, Mr. Chairman, with whether Mr. Sapir, in his role as a member of this council, is primarily interested in the public interest or the interest of persons to whom he happens to be particularly close, and I am referring to persons who, in the past, have benefited in organized crime in the operation of bingo games.

"I refer specifically to Carlos Marcello, Vincent Marcello, Sammy Marcello and Joseph Marcello with whom Mr. Sapir know (sic) he is in rather continuous and close contact. And I believe it might be to the ad-

vantage of this community to know whether this particular member of the council is considering their interests or those of the community, in connection with both his questions and his deliberations."

KOHN 'ASTONISHED'

The indictment charged the statement was made to influence Sapir in his position as councilman.

Kohn called the indictment "an abuse of criminal justice" when told of the charge.

"All I can say is, I'm astonished, but not surprised that anyone associated with Marcello would use every possible means to divert attention," Kohn said.

"This has been one of the characteristics of those to whom power is delegated to use such power to shut up any who talk about the realities of organized crime," he added.

Kohn also cited a U.S. Supreme Court decision which favored DA Jim Garrison to support his position.

'HARASSMENT MOVE'

"It's a harassment move, solely a harassment move which the DA's office well knows in view of the decision concerning Garrison and the judges," Kohn said.

In the case several years ago Garrison was charged with defamation of character after alleging that Criminal District Court judges had connections with racketeers, Kohn said.

"The Supreme Court ruled that he (Garrison) was within his right under the First Amendment," Kohn said.

"Unfortunately this has to be accepted as a part of reality when you try to fight the octopus of organized crime," Kohn said of the indictment.

JOINT STATEMENT

In a joint statement Plotkin and Krasnoff, who are Sapir's law partners, said the indictment came as a "shock and surprise to us."

The attorneys denied any wrongdoing and said their indictment "represents an effort on the part of the DA's office to whitewash their errors in the Blanchard case."

Robert F. Blanchard was the ex-patrolman charged with manslaughter in the death of 19-year-old baby sitter Susan Goldman.

Krasnoff and Plotkin are accused of offering Linda Hodges an all-expense round-trip flight from New Orleans to Midland, Tex., or to any place of her choice on May 22.

The DA's office alleged that the offer was designed to prevent her from testifying before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury on May 23, the day Blanchard was indicted.

BOND REDUCED

Interestingly enough, the state alleged that the former chief witness, Betty Jones, was also offered a trip, but with Blanchard, in return for changing her testimony. Ward said her "deep affection" for Blanchard influenced the change.

The Jones woman was indicted on two charges of perjury, and was held in jail for a time on a \$100,000 bond, which was reduced by the Louisiana Supreme Court.

The rest of Krasnoff's and Plotkin's statement follows:

"The public knows that when we were successful in establishing the innocence of Mr. Blanchard efforts were made by the DA's office to publicly embarrass us by using the press, and threatening procedures before the bar association.

(The DA's office filed a complaint with the ethics committee of the Louisiana Bar Association protesting the fact that Krasnoff and Plotkin represented both Blanchard and the chief prosecution witness.)

"This indictment is just another effort to take the embarrass-

ment away from the DA's office and to place it on us.

"We are totally innocent of any of the charges.

"We knew nothing of the Grand Jury proceedings and were not invited to appear in the Grand Jury nor given any opportunity to be heard. We welcome the opportunity to publicly establish our innocence."

Kohn was offered a chance to appear before the jury, but declined.

Criminal District Court Judge Bernard J. Bagert authorized recognizance bonds for Krasnoff and Plotkin, the two said.

BOND AT \$1,000

Judge Haggerty had set bond at \$1,000, at the suggestion of the state.

Kohn's bond was also set at \$1,000.

Sapir was contacted about the indictment of his law partner, and said he knew nothing of it.

"I have no comment on it because I know nothing about it," he said.

Sapir testified before the jury for more than one hour Thursday afternoon. Before entering the jury room he told newsmen that Kohn's statements constituted "intimidation of my vote and defamation of my character."

ANOTHER INDICTMENT

In another case the jury indicted George Frank Nixon, Negro, 16, 2301 St. Philip, on a charge of aggravated rape of a 20-year-old white woman.

The crime allegedly occurred on Oct. 9 in the Esplanade ave. home of the victim.

The jury refused to accept a charge of aggravated rape brought against three other juveniles.