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T-P
**Kohn Calls Night in Jail
Matter of Trust, Integrity**

Release Follows Order of
Supreme Court

Aaron M. Kohn termed his going to jail for refusing to name a Metropolitan Crime Commission informant "a matter of trust and integrity" as he stepped out of Parish Prison Friday afternoon.

"We believed it had to be done," Kohn said, as he stood outside a heavy iron door through which he had just passed.

He wore a suit and tie, a sharp change from the prison uniform he donned Thursday night after being sentenced indefinitely to Parish Prison for contempt of court.

Kohn incurred the contempt citation for refusing to answer a grand jury question about an informant before Judge Matthew S. Braniff.

Criminal Sheriff Louis A. Heyd Jr. was informed by the Louisiana Supreme Court about 1:30 p. m. that Kohn was to be released.

Five associate justices of the Supreme Court then ordered Judge Braniff to file a return to the application made by MCC attorneys for extraordinary writs by 11 a. m. Jan. 15.

"In the meantime, all proceedings in this matter are stayed and the sentence to prison of the said Aaron M. Kohn is also stayed and the said Aaron M. Kohn is released forth-with from confinement, all pending further orders of this court," said Associate Justices Frank W. Summers, E. Howard McCaleb, Frank W. Hawthorne, Walter B. Hamlin and Joe W. Sanders.

The state will have to present its thoughts on the issue of whether it jumped the gun by issuing another grand jury subpoena for Kohn and MCC records this week.

The supreme court ruled Mon-

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SUPREME COURT FREES KOHN

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day on a previous, similar subpoena, and the defense claimed it had 14 days in which to apply for another hearing.

Another matter is Kohn's contention that he is protected by the fifth amendment to the U.S. Constitution and pertinent provisions of the state constitution.

Kohn's very first statement upon leaving the prison referred to conditions in the prison:

"It would be a very useful thing to the future of crime prevention in the community if the mayor, members of the council, the Legislature, the governor—every citizen with a sense of responsibility—were to spend some time in here."

Some "very real problems" have been ignored, he added.

One effect of his imprisonment will be to convince MCC members that "we have more serious problems of crime that go beyond the criminal himself," Kohn said.

Kohn likened his contention of a "right to attack" organized crime to what he said was District Attorney Jim Garrison's contention of a right to attack judges on charges of corruption. If Garrison's contention were upheld, then so should his be, Kohn maintained.

MENTIONS GOVERNOR

In response to a question about his imprisonment and Gov. John J. McKeithen, Kohn said the governor should be involved "in the issue as a whole."

"I think the governor has stated in the past he doesn't want to cross swords with Mr. Garrison," said Kohn. "That was before he was re-elected. He may feel differently now."

He accused Garrison of "putting on a show" rather than doing a good job. "He has to be

looked at for more than the glittering that surrounds him," Kohn said.

E. C. Upton Jr., MCC president, said he was attempting to reach Gov. McKeithen in Kohn's behalf before the Louisiana high court acted.

Upton and members of the MCC executive committee were meeting in International House in preparation for a visit to Kohn's jail cell when the news of the court's decision reached them.

They then went to the Parish Prison in time to see Kohn make his exit.

Kohn summed up his version of his imprisonment by saying: "It was a trap . . . one of many set by the DA's staff."

One witness to Kohn's exit was John J. McDermott, prison personnel director, and the man who booked him with contempt 12 years ago when Kohn served 10 days and paid a \$100 fine under similar circumstances.

TO PROTECT INFORMERS

In an earlier interview, while still in his jail cell, Kohn said he will protect his informants in spite of being jailed.

"I have in effect been sentenced to the rest of my life in prison unless I expose an informant to a vicious prosecutor with a clear record of trying to hurt anyone who helps prove organized crime—which Garrison denies exists."

Kohn also criticized Garrison for the short length of time devoted to rackets figure Carlos Marcello when he testified before the grand jury.

"He spent only 10 minutes before the grand jury. It was clear that he could not possibly have been questioned about the great amount of data available about Marcello's racketeer his-

Dr. Grey Greet Kohn on Release at Prison



AARON M. KOHN, director of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, was met by Dr. J. D. Grey (left), pastor of First Baptist Church and MCC executive committee member, as Kohn was released from Parish Prison Friday on orders of the Louisiana

State Supreme Court. Other MCC members and committeemen were present to greet Kohn, who was jailed by Judge Matthew S. Braniff for contempt of court. Kohn spent the night and morning in Parish Prison.

—Photo by The Times-Picayune.

tory," he said.

He also referred to what he called Judge Braniff's "vehement attack from the bench after he sentenced me."

At one point Judge Braniff said, "If Mr. Kohn wants to play cops and robbers, he is going to have to come up with something in the way of proof, instead of making a sham of the judiciary."

At another point, he said: "It appears that the MCC is trying to make a joke out of the judicial system."

REASON ALLEGED

The whole reason for his imprisonment, Kohn said, was "our refusal to betray the people who have placed confidence in us."

"We are committed to pro-

tect them against revenge and recrimination. My very presence in Parish Prison indicates that such a threat is real and not imagined," he said.

He added that he believes "our system of justice, when it is fully tested, will not permit the powers vested in Garrison to be abused in a manner which encourages racketeers and hurts the ability of our laws to protect this community against its criminal marauders."

Kohn also said Garrison's staff members have been "the defenders rather than the aggressors against organized crime."

Asked if he still believes that organized crime exists, Kohn said:

"There is no doubt about it.

To accept Garrison's conclusions is to believe that the FBI, that the Internal Revenue Service, that the U.S. attorney's office and the Crime Commission have something to gain by manufacturing a serious problem when it really doesn't exist."

Referring to prison conditions, Kohn said that "every citizen who doesn't give a damn" should spend a night in the best facility the prison has to offer. He said three mice took up residence in his cell and occasionally trotted across his mattress.

Kohn said he had no doubts he would be jailed.

"The intention of the district attorney's office was made very clear and repeatedly reaffirmed every time I have been before the grand jury under the interrogation of the district attorney's staff . . ."

He said one purpose is to "manipulate me into a situation where I would have to shut up." He also claimed Garrison is trying to disband the crime commission.