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McKeithen Launches Study

Aim at Crime Roots, New Panel Is Told

(Special to the States-Item)

BATON ROUGE (AP)—Gov. John J. McKeithen charged his new crime commission today to come up with proposals that would eliminate the causes of crime.

"I envision a several-pronged attack, not just on apprehension and prosecution," the governor told his 23-member commission on law enforcement and administration of criminal justice at its first meeting.

"We hope to get at the roots of what causes many of our citizens to violate the law in the first place," he said.

BUT THE COMMISSION will study apprehending of criminals, prosecution, efficient court procedures and rehabilitation, McKeithen said.

"So that you may feel confidence in your work, I pledge you now that I will do all within my power to put into effect the recommendations you make to me," he said.

McKeithen pledged "whatever money is required" to the commission's study.

THE GOVERNOR said it is possible that some legislation could be proposed at the 1968 session of the Legislature.

But the agency's main task will be to develop long-range proposals, he said.

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sters and hoodlums, then we can't hope to maintain any position of either leadership or strength in the world," McKeithen said.

HE SAID HE was "not referring to so-called organized crime but I am talking in broader terms of the overall problems of law enforcement, efficient court procedures, and sound programs of rehabilitation for those who have transgressed the law."

McKeithen said the state is making progress in these areas.

"But we need to do more—far more," he said.

Justice Joe W. Sanders of the Louisiana Supreme Court is chairman of the commission, which is composed of several state and local officials as well as private citizens.

"In my opinion," McKeithen told the group, "the growth of crime in this nation constitutes the gravest peril we face."

"**I BELIEVE** it ranks along with the war in Vietnam as a major issue in America and could even be of more long-range importance in determining the course of our history," he said.

McKeithen charged the group to get at the root causes of crime "to determine what are the most effective deterrents and to develop the kind of rehabilitation work that will return many law violators to society as law abiding citizens."

"**I CAN** hardly emphasize how strongly I feel that the freedoms we cherish in this country individually cannot be maintained if we do not curb and reduce the crime rate in this nation," the governor said.

"If we cannot protect this country against the internal disorders caused by the gangsters and hoodlums, then we can't hope to maintain any position of either leadership or strength in the world," he said.

The governor said the rapid increase in crime is of great concern to everyone in Washington. He added that Louisiana is out in front of other states in moving to meet the situation.

He said the federal government moved black power advocate H. Rap Brown to Louisiana because the state would not have demonstrations because of such things as a hunger strike.

THERE IS particular concern about crime in this state because it is growing so much faster than other states, the governor commented.

He also warned that programs to combat crime, such as the reform and building programs advocated by institutions director David Wade, will cost the state more money.

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