

RELEASED BY SUPREME COURT

Kohn Due Jan. 15 Hearing

The Louisiana Supreme Court has set a Jan. 15 hearing on the contempt case of Metropolitan Crime Commission Director Aaron M. Kohn, whom the court had earlier released from Parish Prison.

Kohn was released yesterday afternoon after sharing a cell with what he identified as three mice. He was jailed Thursday night after being held in contempt of court by Criminal District Judge Matthew S. Braniff for refusing to reveal the name of an informant.

FIVE ASSOCIATE justices of the Supreme Court ordered Judge Braniff to answer the two following questions:

1. Were the district attorney and the trial judge lawfully entitled to compel Kohn to testify in view of the fact that the Supreme Court's order of Dec. 11 in the same controversy had not become final?

2. Are the claims of Kohn that he is protected by the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and pertinent provisions of the state Constitution without merit?

Judge Braniff had jailed Kohn after he had refused to disclose the identity of an informant. Kohn termed his refusal "a matter of trust and integrity."

Kohn was told by Judge Braniff that he would remain in his cell until he agreed to give the Orleans Parish Grand Jury the information it wanted.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY Jim Garrison and Kohn have been

battling since the private anti-crime commission reported that there is organized crime in New Orleans.

Garrison called the commission report false and opened an investigation of the commission which resulted in demands for confidential data.

Kohn said while 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 said that three mice kept him company in jail, occasionally trotting across his mattress.

THE CRIME commission director said he thought Gov. John J. McKeithen "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 reelected. He may feel differently now."

Kohn said releasing confidential information would ruin the crime commission's effectiveness. He added that the district attorney "puts on a show" instead of doing a good job.

The Supreme Court's action marked the second time it stepped into the case. The court had earlier ruled that a subpoena ordering the commission to produce all confidential records Monday, was too broad.

Kohn spent 10 days in jail in 1955 for refusing to name commission informants.