

REBUTS MCC CHARGES

Probe Proves No Big N.O. Crime--DA Aide

First Asst. Dist. Atty. Charles Ray Ward said today the state police investigating gambling in New Orleans for the past two months have made only one minor arrest.

This proves there is no "big-time gambling" in the city, Ward said. He spoke at a breakfast meeting of the Key Men of the New Orleans Federation of Churches at Holsum Cafeteria.

WARD'S TALK was a follow-up of a recent appearance by representatives of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, a group which has been at odds with the DA's office on the issue of whether organized crime exists in New Orleans.

The state police probe is part of a statewide crime crackdown ordered by Gov. John J. McKeithen after Life magazine charged racketeering is flourishing in Louisiana.

Ward said the only arrest by the state police was in a card game on Apple st.

"If there is any gambling in New Orleans, tell us," he said, "and we'll stop it."

Ward said there is an increasing crime problem in the city, but termed it unorganized rather than organized.

"WE ARE confronted with increasing crime . . . but these crimes are such offenses as holdups, murders in bars, burglaries, muggings and so forth," he said.

The elements of organized crime, he said, are usually gambling, handbooks, pinball payoffs, prostitution, narcotics and some abortions.

Also involved, Ward said, are payoffs to police and corruption of other officials. "We have nothing like this in New Orleans," he said.

He cited figures showing prostitution convictions, and said there has not been a gangland murder here in 15 years, while there were 57 such slayings in Boston, 100 in Chicago and so many in New York "we have stopped counting."

Dr. J. D. Grey, pastor of the First Baptist Church and a member of the executive committee of the MCC, said he agreed with Ward that there is a great need to fight crime in the city.

He said there has been an improvement in the situation during the past year, and said the MCC has played a role in making things better.

Dr. Grey and Ward agreed that conditions in Parish Prison are deplorable and improvements are a must.

Pitcher to Give Probe Report To McKeithen

(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE—East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney Sargent Pitcher today said he would make a personal report of his office's investigation into organized crime's influence in Baton Rouge and on state government.

Pitcher said he would give a report to Gov. John J. McKeithen, who earlier had said he would demand one from the East Baton Rouge Parish Grand Jury on his probe.

M'KEITHEN SAID that, legal prohibitions to the contrary, he expected to receive a report from the grand jury because his office put up part of the funds for the investigation, and that since state government was involved, he had a right to know.

Pitcher said that McKeithen's office supplied about \$7,000 for the investigation when his office ran out of funds.

The probe was launched following claims by Life Magazine of organized criminal influence that reached into the governor's office through long-time aide Aubrey Young.

THERE HAS BEEN one indictment — that of D'Alton Smith of California, formerly of New Orleans, for allegedly offering a bribe to Young to arrange a meeting on a matter affecting convicted international Teamster boss James Hoffa.

There have been no indictments directly connected with organized crime. The Life stories said Young and rackets figure Carlos Marcello had conversed. This was later verified by Young.

Pitcher said the grand jury could report only to a judge, and that the law prohibited it from making any report to McKeithen. He said, however, that he would give a report on his investigation, which presumably parallels that of the grand jury.