

M'KEITHEN 'CONVINCED' MOB
CRIME FLOURISHES IN STATE

Suspends Police Captain

Gov. John J. McKeithen said today he is now convinced there is organized crime in Louisiana and promised a crack-down on local officials who don't do their job.

He said Capt. Roland Coppola of the state police in Lafayette "is going to be placed on suspension immediately." Coppola was prominently mentioned in an article by Life magazine on organized crime in Louisiana.

The governor said this at New Orleans International Airport today as he returned from a trip to New York after a meeting with Life magazine editors.

M'KEITHEN SAID THE MEETING convinced him "as I had not been convinced before," there is "hard evidence" of organized crime in the state.

The governor said he contacted Life officials as soon as he was informed of the article and they offered to make their information available.

"We met with them for three hours. We talked to everybody in Life who was anybody from the publisher on down.

"I learned they had been conducting an investigation in Louisiana for almost two years," the governor said.

McKeithen added that after the meeting, "I said, 'Gentlemen, I want to apologize for saying you tried to smear the state of Louisiana.'"

The governor said he was highly impressed by the evidence Life presented to him, particularly that relating to Aubrey Young, his former aide.

HE SAID HE WAS "BOWLED over" by the revelation that the phone calls were made to his office (to Young) by Carlos Marcello, Jefferson Parish rackets figure.

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"If Marcello was making calls to my aide for a year, I am sure Young was not talking to Mr. Marcello for fun.

"If there was some bribery going on, we are going to indict them (Young and Marcello) and put them on trial."

The governor said the days of local officials having "complete control" over criminal investigations are over.

Speaking of local officials, he said, "we're going to expect them to do their job, and if they don't we're going to step in immediately."

M'KEITHEN refused to comment on whether he thinks District Attorney Jim Garrison of Orleans Parish and DA Frank H. Langridge of Jefferson have been doing their jobs. Both were prominently mentioned in the Life articles.

"We're going to assume they will do their duty. If they don't, and they don't do it soon, we're going to step in with the state police," the governor said.

He added that "if we want prosecution and we're not getting it from the local officials we're going to do it ourselves. We are going to clean up this state and we are going to move immediately. You just sit tight the next few days and watch how fast we move."

McKeithen said he did not feel there was any evidence of contacts between Garrison and organized crime. He said, however, "I feel like Mr. Garrison is making a mistake in attacking the Metropolitan Crime Commission and I think the commission is making a mistake by attacking Garrison."

He said he would attempt to get the DA and the MCC to work together.

M'KEITHEN said he will center his attack on crime on Marcello. He said he will call a meeting late today of Camille Gravel, attorney for the Baton Rouge Labor Rackets Commission, the state police and the Baton Rouge district attorney.

He said the only evidence offered by Life of corruption within the state administra-

tion was that concerning Young.

McKeithen said he didn't know whether the Life charges would affect his gubernatorial campaign. "I'm more worried about the people of Louisiana than about my campaign."

HE SAID LIFE'S evidence gave an indication that organized crime had some influence on current labor-management problems in the state.

The extent of mob involvement in labor is not yet clear, he said, but "there are some things that take us back and forth between labor and crime."

E. C. Upton, MCC president who accompanied McKeithen to the New York meeting, said, "I am extremely pleased with the outcome. This is the best thing that's happened to Louisiana in years."

After the press conference, McKeithen turned to a photographer, patted him on the back and said:

"You want to be a bodyguard? I think I'm going to need one."

Yesterday in New York, McKeithen had refused to elaborate on his conversations with Life.

"Just say that I am most appreciative for the information that Life magazine has given us this afternoon," he said.

"It has given us information about our state and the people in it. We leave here with information we did not have."

The meeting came after a series of Life articles on organized crime charged that the Cosa Nostra is flourishing in Louisiana under the noses of McKeithen and Garrison.

In New Orleans today, the Orleans Parish Grand Jury was scheduled to get a look at the records of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, which reportedly furnished Life with much of its material.

THE SUBPENA for the MCC records was issued after Garrison asked the grand jury to investigate allegations of organized crime in New Orleans. The DA said he would resign if the Life allegations proved true.

McKeithen was quoted in Life as saying he, too, would resign if it can be shown that the mob has wielded influence in his administration.

"The people of this state

will have my resignation so fast it will make their heads swim," the article quoted the governor as saying.

Yesterday, however, McKeithen denied he had offered to resign.

"I did not say that I would resign if racketeering is found in the state. I said I wasn't aware of racketeering in the state.

"I BELIEVE the people of the state have confidence in my integrity. As a matter of fact, Life has not questioned my integrity.

"It hasn't questioned my integrity at all. Not at all; not at all. It has questioned the integrity of one of my former aides, but it hasn't questioned my integrity at all."

Before going into the meeting yesterday, McKeithen told reporters the Life articles had been "awful publicity" for Louisiana and had come as a "surprise."

"WE ARE determined to keep that kind of publicity away from Louisiana," he added.

Representing the magazine at the parlay were Sandy Smith, author of the series; Jerome S. Hardy, publisher, and George P. Hunt, managing editor. They all declined to comment after the meeting.

McKeithen took with him to New York E. C. Upton, president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, who was subpoenaed for this afternoon's grand jury session.

Also subpoenaed were three other MCC officers, James W. Mills Jr., treasurer; P. L. Frank Sr., secretary, and Aaron Kohn, managing director.

The commission records subpoenaed included those on membership, contributors and the amount of contributions.

PERSONAL subpoenas were also issued to David Chandler, a Life correspondent, and William Dalzell, a petroleum engineering consultant who has previously been questioned in connection with the DA's Kennedy assassination probe.



—States-Item photo by Phillip Guarisco.

GOV. JOHN J. M'KEITHEN TALKS to newsmen at New Orleans International Airport on his return from New York with E. C. UPTON, right, president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission.



CAPT. ROLAND COPPOLA
State police officer.



AUBREY YOUNG
Ex-aide to governor



CARLOS MARCELLO
Figures in probe.