

S STATES-ITEM

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'CONTRIVED LEGAL ADVICE'

DA Blocked Crime Probe, MCC's Grey Says

Legal advice to the Orleans Parish Grand Jury from the district attorney "was contrived to prevent" an investigation of organized crime, Dr. J. D. Grey, president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans Inc., said today.

Grey replied to a statement made by two members of the outgoing Orleans Parish Grand Jury the day after completion of their term of office.

The statement, "extraordinary and unofficial," Grey said, "was largely devoted to denial that organized crime exists in New Orleans and to criticism of our citizens' crime commission for demanding official action against organized crime.

"WE CONSIDER ourselves obligated to make public response."

Grey said Aaron Kohn, managing director of the crime commission, "acting on our behalf, made repeated attempts to provide the outgoing grand jury with many details concerning several local problems in

organized crime . . ." Kohn was subjected to repeated attacks and accusations by members of the district attorney's staff, undeterred by the grand jury, Grey said.

It was made very clear, said Grey, that the crime commission, and not organized crime, was the target of the investigation.

The two members of the outgoing grand jury cited by Grey were Mrs. Delores V. Mason-Smith and Walter O. Eckert Sr. They said at a news conference in the Grand Jury room that Kohn failed to produce proof of organized crime when called before the panel.

THEY SAID the retiring jury was accused of being "pawns of the district attorney."

They said organized crime does not exist in New Orleans, and that for such crime to flourish an area must be saturated with corrupt officials.

Mrs. Mason-Smith and Eckert said allegations of organized crime have been fathered by the crime commission and pub-

lished with the commission's approval in Life magazine.

"This is how the second grand jury used by District Attorney Jim Garrison and his staff to support his claim that New Orleans is free of organized crime," said Grey. "In neither case was the grand jury guided by the district attorney and his assistants into investigation of organized crime."

HE ADDED, "Our own efforts

to cooperate provided us with first-hand knowledge that legal advice to the grand jury from the district attorney was contrived to prevent any such exhaustive investigation."

Grey's statement concluded with a reiteration of "our firm belief that so few robbers, burglars and thieves are arrested and prosecuted in New Orleans (is) because our law enforcement machinery refuses to acknowledge and deal with the organized crime structure which fosters and aids them."