

Probe Asked Of Marcello, Sapir 'Contact'

The Metropolitan Crime Commission today submitted written request for a City Council hearing on alleged connections between Councilman Eddie L. Sapir and Jefferson Parish rackets figure Carlos Marcello.

Whether the request complies with council requirements for such a hearing remained to be decided.

THE WRITTEN call for a hearing came in a letter to City Council President John J. Petre. Aaron M. Kohn, MCC managing director, suggested such a hearing at Thursday's city council meeting after accusing Sapir of maintaining "continuous contact" with Marcello.

Sapir denied the claim and later announced he has arranged a Wednesday meeting

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with District Attorney Jim Garrison.

The councilman yesterday said he hopes to go before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury Thursday to discuss what he calls attempts by Kohn to intimidate public officials "through irresponsible and vile charges."

KOHN SAID a hearing is needed to determine if Sapir, in his deliberations on a proposed ordinance to legalize charitable bingo, "is primarily interested in the public interest or in the interest of . . . persons who have in the past benefitted in organized crime in the operation of bingo games."

"I refer specifically to Carlos Marcello, Joseph Marcello, Sammy Marcello and Vincent Marcello."

The letter to Petre is dated Oct. 4 and signed by Kohn and

Dr. J. D. Grey, MCC president. It reads:

"**YESTERDAY CITY** Council Vice-President Eddie Sapir was asked a question by Mr. Aaron Kohn about his contact with members of the Marcello family. Mr. Sapir replied, 'You couldn't, never, prove anything like that.'

"Subsequently, when questioned by reporters, Mr. Sapir did admit such associations, but denied them to be involved in his official or business interests.

"We are certain you will agree that questionable involvements of any public officials are an appropriate subject for questioning by, and clarification for, the citizens of this community.

"**IN VIEW OF** the continuing public interest in these admitted associations of Mr. Sapir's, and because Councilman Maurice Landrieu has today suggested a City Council hearing as an appropriate forum, we are requesting that such a hearing be held.

"We would hope that Mr. Sapir would wish a full, public opportunity to put into accurate perspective the nature of his relationship with the Marcellos and to respond fully to any questions, thus clearing the air.

"For our part, we are prepared to present, in such a hearing before the Council, the press and public, the information which motivated the question put to Mr. Sapir."

COPIES OF the letter were sent to all councilmen. However, the letter was not an affidavit, which may be required for a public hearing.

Petre was asked yesterday if a public hearing would be held as Kohn had Thursday suggested.

He replied: "The procedure set up in the Council's code of ethics, is for a written complaint in the form of an affidavit, there's no formal complaint before the City Council. If we don't have a formal complaint, there's no reason to call a public hearing."

Meanwhile, State Sen. Charles G. Mithner today denied that he voted for House Bill 1178 which authorized local-option bingo. Sapir had said that every member of the Orleans legislative delegation had voted for the measure.