

Urge Council Crime Probe

The Metropolitan Crime Commission today called for a thorough investigation by the City Council into organized crime.

Managing Director Aaron M. Kohn held a news conference at International House and read a statement from the MCC's executive committee agreed upon last Friday.

Kohn said the MCC has been finding and reporting evidence of organized crime here for the past 15 years.



"THE TIME is certainly long overdue to stop quibbling about whether or not we have organized crime. There's only one responsible question to be asked and to be answered. What can be done to oppose and suppress organized crime?" Kohn said.

The MCC recommended a council investigation similar to the one conducted in April of 1953.

The MCC recommended a three-man committee to consist of one representative from the Bureau of Governmental Research, one from the MCC and another from the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI.

Kohn said the three-man committee should be authorized by the council to employ its own staff and should have the powers of subpoena.

He said the committee should be authorized to conduct private and public hearings and necessary funds should be appropriated for a thorough investigation.

KOHNSAID THE COMMITTEE SHOULD later make its report to the City Council, the mayor, the district attorney and the grand jury.

"We heartily endorse Mr. (Ivor) Trapolin's recommendation that a thorough investigation be conducted under authority of the city council to culminate in public hearings when such investigation is completed," Kohn said.

He said the Special Citizens' Investigating Committee of the New Orleans Commission Council, which completed its report in 1954, listed hundreds of locations and named hundreds of individuals actively engaged in various forms of organized crime within the city.

"It documented the manner in which organized crime had degraded and corrupted the police department," Kohn said.

"We believe an even more extensive investigation is now in order to provide the basis for aggressive action by the city council against the entire spectrum of organized crime as it exists in our community today.

"WE BELIEVE THE INVESTIGATION must be given the independence and legal authority which will inspire public confidence.

"Those who direct the staff and activity must be clearly disassociated from political office or partisan politics. . . it must be clear that the probe is serious, impartial and free of any 'whitewash' implications," Kohn said.