

Chandler Fights Panel Subpoena

Life magazine reporter David L. Chandler's attorney today asked a federal court for a restraining order preventing the legislative committee probing organized crime from forcing his client to testify on July 14.

Cicero C. Sessions, representing Chandler and Time Inc., filed the motion in federal district court here in an attempt to block enforcement of committee subpoenas.

The attorney said Chandler's suit for a permanent injunction against the subpoena cannot possibly come to trial before the July 14 date set by the investigating committee. Unless a temporary restraining order is granted, Sessions contends, the author of the Life article alleging Mafia influence in Louisiana will be denied due process.

A three-judge panel as-

signed to the case will meet with Sessions Monday. It includes Judge John Minor Wisdom of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and District Judges Fred J. Cassibry and Lansing L. Mitchell.

Chandler's original suit produced a 10-day "armistice" between him and the legislative committee, during which he appeared informally before the probers but was not required to give sworn testimony.

Writer Refused to Answer, Mob Investigators Report

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE — The Mafia investigating committee yesterday charged in its interim report that a Life magazine writer refused to answer questions. The panel denied they intended to ferret out sources of information.

The interim report was released yesterday by the seven members of the legislative group on the committee which is investigating allegations of organized crime influence on state and local government.

David L. Chandler, author of the Life article, and his attorney took the position after an abortive meeting with the committee that the committee was interested primarily in finding out the sources of information.

"MR. CHANDLER and his attorney have been repeatedly advised that the committee is interested in developing information and not, as alleged by Chandler, in learning the identity of the source, where the source is considered by Chandler to be confidential," the report said.

"The committee," the report continued, "has repeatedly announced that the only instance in which it would seek a court order to compel disclosure of a confidential source is where there is an

allegation of serious crime and the confidential source is the only means of developing proof thereof."

Chandler has been subpoenaed to testify under oath at a public hearing July 14, the committee said.

A federal court suit filed by Life magazine attacking the constitutionality of the committee is pending.

AN APPENDIX attached to the interim report said Chandler, on advice of counsel, "specifically and categorically refused to answer any questions touching upon information contained in the article published in Life magazine."

It noted that the attorney gave as his reasons a libel suit pending against the magazine and Chandler.

"That article makes substantial and serious charges of influence by organized crime upon Louisiana's government, which charges the committee, seeks to investigate," the report said.

"The committee concluded, in view of Mr. Chandler's declared position and his refusal to answer questions on the charges made by him, that its investigation would not be furthered by additional similar conferences between it and Mr. Chandler."

THE NEW Orleans-based writer turned over a number of documents to the committee at that meeting. Some of the documents, his attorney said, contained "explosive" material.

The report also recounted proceedings at public hearings staged by it since being formed under a legislative resolution. The committee also includes a seven-member citizens advisory committee.

The committee said testimony from four police officials who testified at its first public hearing "indicated that while organized crime does exist in certain areas of the state, it does not flourish."

It also noted that Sheriff Alwynn J. Cronvich of Jefferson Parish testified that some of the allegations in the Life article relating to Jefferson Parish were erroneous.

In a list of its achievements, since being organized, the committee concluded it has made substantial progress. It noted it has held three hearings, defended a suit against it, held regular weekly committee meetings, organized a staff, begun research and investigative work on anticrime legislation, established contact with local and federal law officials and begun "a thorough investigation" of the Life charges and other leads.