

The president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission today blasted State Sen. Adrian G. Duplantier's performance as chairman of the Legislative Anti-Mafia Committee, charging that Duplantier has "hamstrung and obstructed" witnesses who sought to present information on alleged corruption to the committee.

C. Alvin Bertel, addressing a meeting at the New Orleans Public Library, said of Duplantier's performance during committee hearings in Baton Rouge: "I watched him perform for two days and I know where he stands."

Bertel said Sen. Duplantier prevented MCC Managing Director Aaron Kohn and Life Magazine reporter David Chandler from giving hearsay evidence, "although hearsay should be allowed in a legislative hearing," the MCC president said.

BERTEL SAID that Sen. Duplantier and committee member Victor Bussie were tougher on Kohn and Chandler

than they were on Jefferson Parish rackets boss Carlos Marcello when Marcello appeared before the committee several months ago.

The MCC president specifically charged that Duplantier would not allow Kohn to read aloud the name of a union leader who wrote a letter which Kohn said praised Marcello and described business dealings between the rackets boss and the union official. Bertel said Duplantier did permit the alleged letter to be entered into the committee's records.

"Unfortunately, the media has not seen fit to dig up the name of that union leader although the document has become part of the committee's official public records," Bertel said.

BERTEL SAID he is convinced that organized crime exists in Louisiana and that it can operate only with the cooperation and tolerance of public officials and an apathetic public.

He said that Louisiana tolerates a

pinball industry that operates illegally and grosses \$10 million a year in New Orleans alone. Bertel said citizens here also tolerate, and often support, restaurants and tour guide services that are known to be affiliated with organized crime.

"The one thing you can say for sure is that Mafia restaurants always have good food," said Bertel.

THE MEETING addressed by Bertel is one in a series presented by the New Orleans Library titled, "Crescent City Kaleidoscope."

In his talk, Bertel said that racketeers "have a big edge on the honest citizen. The racketeers don't pay taxes, they burn out their bankruptcies and use legitimate facilities like motels for illegal activities like bookmaking and call girls."

Bertel said he feels that MCC director Kohn made a major contribution to the Mafia committee in nearly eight hours of testimony despite the alleged harassment from Duplantier.