Crime Toleration Laid to Louisiana

'Concerned' People Have Not Read Federal Committee Report

By CLARENCE DOUCET

Louisiana has a very high tolerance level when it comes to corruption, says Ralph Salerno, recognized authority on organized crime.

"I have read in one form or another, at least 27 times, that the illegal gambling operations that were run by Frank Costello in Louisiana were set up at the invitation of a public figure.

"Huey Long was named as the man who invited them in. . . . (So) there is some kind of an understanding, some kind of a detente down here.

"Either that's true or it's not true. If it's not true, I'm sure someone would have exposed it as a lie long before now.

"If it is true, I think it's telling you a story that kind of spells out what you're willing to tolerate here. You have a very high tolerance level, a tolerance level which, I think, is much higher than the public would allow if they realistically faced up to what it means."

Salerno was the only police officer to serve as consultant on organized crime to President Johnson's Crime Commission.

After 20 years with the New York City Police Department, he retired as supervisor of detectives in the intelligence unit.

While serving in this unit, he was assigned to work with the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Investigations in the area of organized crime.

Is the public interested in organized crime?

Salerno points out that the President's Crime Commission had a Task Force on organized crime, and that the Task Force published its report in book form.

"The government printing office tells me that they issued about 28,000 copies of it--mostly to professionals in the criminal justice system. It was