

APRIL 8, 1966

Merriam Gambling Probe Goes On

THE end to the Merriam gambling probe is not in sight, Johnson County law enforcement officials agreed yesterday.

Hugh H. Kreamer, county attorney, said he intended to renew inquisition proceedings in the matter within the next few weeks.

Need to Know More

Sheriff Lynn Thomas added that more evidence is needed before the case—which has resulted in one charge being filed and in the resignations of three Merriam policemen—can be closed.

Under Kansas law, inquisition proceedings are secret. The county attorney, who has the authority to hold such proceedings, a district judge, a court reporter and the witness being questioned are the only persons allowed in the courtroom. Identities of the witnesses are also kept secret.

An earlier inquisition hearing in the current probe was held March 25 in the county probate courtroom. Judge Herbert W. Walton presided.

A known gambler—Albert Joseph Sorrentino, 47, was charged in a felony gambling count Wednesday by Kreamer. Sorrentino had not been arrested last night.

Expect More Changes

Kansas statutes provide for a prison sentence of from one to five years for a gambling conviction. Thomas said Sorrentino was a promotor of recent gambling activity in Merriam. Kreamer has indicated he probably would file other charges in connection with the case.

The three policemen who resigned were Chief Michael J. Donahue, Lt. Ed Bowers and Robert W. Stegner, a detective. Kreamer has declined to name any individuals connected with

the probe with the exception of Sorrentino.

Kreamer has said only that he expected to receive resignations from some Merriam officials.