Up-And-At-'Em Dewey

Now that Senator Estes Kefauver and his committee have departed from New York City, nothing more is heard of the indisposition which prevented Governor Tom Dewey from coming down to testify. Instead, the quondam gang-buster is fired anew with the desire to decimate the forces of crime and corruption.

There is, it has been brought to light, certain activity in Saratoga Springs which smacks of organized gambling on a major scale. And it has been testified that unsavory conditions exist because of an established policy which bars the state police from interfering.

As though this was news to him, Mr. Dewey had thrown down the gauntlet and set up a crime commission, with broad powers, to go into the situation at Saratoga and elsewhere, and take appropriate action. A special prosecutor will be named to conduct the inquiry, and who knows but that the benefits of television will be available to all?

The interesting thing about such sudden activity is the fact that there is nothing about the New York situation, particularly as it applies to Saratoga Springs, that hasn't been known ever since Mr. Dewey became governor. As a matter of fact, two governors in the past instituted investigations against the wide-open spa, with excellent results. One of them was the late Al Smith, under whose administration, it was indicated, no policy of non-interference existed.

Reaction in New York to the latest Dewey stand for righteousness is mild, to say the least. It is best represented by the semi-apologetic editorial comment of the Herald-Tribune: "After the Kefauver dramatization, no one can put up any reasonable argument against a full-fledged investigation. The public is at last aroused, and Governor Dewey has timed his move perfectly."

A more candid appraisal would have been that that man from Tennessee has put the New York governor and Republican presidential candidate on such a terrible spot that some effort must be made to remedy the situation. In dealing with an aroused public, it is better to appease it late than never.