

Clark, Justice Official Clash

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DALLAS, Aug. 12—Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark said today his Justice Department successors were offering a "cheap, easy way" to fight crime with their "preventive detention" proposal for arrested persons in the District of Columbia.

He charged that proposed bail restrictions would "lead us down the road to self-destruction" by inflicting punishment on persons not yet tried and still presumed innocent. Assistant Attorney General

Will Wilson replied that the administration's bail bill was a carefully limited, constitutional method of coping with dangerous suspects who might commit "other crimes" if set free while awaiting trial.

Clark and Wilson, Texans with sharply different views on crime, clashed at a meeting of the American Bar Association's section on individual rights and responsibilities. The debate was part of the ABA's 92d annual convention.

The legislation would permit judges to jail for 60 days a

defendant considered likely to commit a violent crime because of the nature of the charge against him or a prior conviction for a crime of violence. It also would authorize denial of bail to persons found obstructing justice by threatening witnesses or jurors.

Wilson, a former Texas Supreme Court justice and state attorney general, denied that

on District Bail Proposal

'Cheap, Easy Way' to Fight Crime, Former Attorney General Claims

the presumption of innocence was a barrier to the bill.

"The presumption of innocence is a procedural rule of evidence that operates only at trial, placing the burden of proof on the prosecution," Wilson said.

Clark, a prime target last year for his stand on crime, said Wilson's view "is contrary to my basic understanding of the way we look at people.

By the presumption of innocence, Clark said, "I think we mean the importance of the individual American—that we believe in him, that we trust him, and in his relationship to the state, that until he is proven guilty he is worthy."

Another panelist, John Bodner of Washington, said Wilson was "a little cavalier" in dismissing constitutional

objections to the bill. He said the bill was based on "amateurish" and inaccurate data.

Bodner said he was "moved" by Clark's defense of the right to bail but added that Clark, like Wilson, overlooked some of the serious problems involved.

Justice Department attorney Donald Santorelli said the bill was based on "common sense." He said it was not the administration's only crime solution but rather was a "part of a mosaic" of crime-fighting ideas.

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