

SENATOR STENNIS

Condition Still Serious

Associated Press

Washington

Senator John C. Stennis (Dem-Mass.) was still in very serious condition yesterday but doing excellently in view of his extensive wounds and subsequent surgery.

Stennis, 71, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and a powerful member of Congress, was shot in the chest and thigh by two young men during a robbery outside his Washington home Tuesday night.

A spokesman at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where Stennis was taken, told an afternoon briefing that Stennis is "conscious, responsive and well oriented to his surroundings."

DANGER

Asked if the Senator's life is in danger, Major Frank Garland said, "Any person who is very seriously ill faces this danger. This is certainly true in the Senator's case."

Garland said Stennis was "doing excellently in view of his extensive wounds and the subsequent surgery." However, he said, Stennis' condition was "still very serious . . . and the prognosis is guarded."

He said Stennis was being

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given intravenous fluids and had multiple blood transfusions, but was no longer receiving blood. Also, he said, the Senator was receiving antibiotic therapy and was on a pulmonary respirator.

SIGNS

The hospital spokesman said Stennis' vital signs—heart beat, blood pressure and respiration—were stable.

Stennis' son, John Hampton Stennis, 37, a lawyer and member of the Mississippi State Legislature, told newsmen earlier: "We're very encouraged."

"At this time, doctors assure us there is no damage to the heart, brain, spine or nervous system. . . . His spirit is good. His determination to be back to his job as soon as he can is all it could be. Of course, we know that will be some days ahead," he said.

VISITORS

Among visitors to the hospital yesterday were Senators Birch Bayh (Dem-Ind.),

John Tunney (Dem-Calif.) and James Allen (Dem-Ala.), Sargent Shriver, the 1972 Democratic vice presidential candidate, and Lieutenant Governor William Winter of Mississippi.

Stennis was returning to his home in northwest Washington after attending a reception when the robbery occurred.

As he was stepping out of his car in front of his house, according to police accounts, he was approached by two youths in their late teens who took his wallet, which contained credit cards, a gold pocket watch, his Phi Beta Kappa key and a 25-cent piece.

Police said Stennis quoted the youths as saying: "Now we're going to shoot you anyway" or "We ought to shoot you anyway." Two shots were fired, Stennis fell to the ground, and the youths fled.

A 1971 law making it a federal crime to assault, kidnap or kill a member of Congress allowed the FBI to enter the case immediately.