

Crime Bill for Washington Agreed On by Conferees

By PAUL DELANEY JUL 14 1970

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 13—A Senate-House conference committee reported out today a tough anticrime bill for the District of Columbia that contains provisions permitting the preventive detention of certain suspected criminals and "no-knock" entry by the police.

The proposal, drawn up by the Administration as a model for the nation, represented a major victory for President Nixon, who had pressed for its passage. The bill had been in conference for three months.

The proposal now goes back to both houses of Congress. It is expected to pass the House, where most of the controversial sections were added. But Senate liberals have promised to fight the bill.

The bill would provide for a major reorganization of the district's court system, including additional judges, increased tenure, salaries and retirement benefits, and new court management. The original Senate version restricted itself to these provisions, to the "no-knock"

provisions, and to a limited wiretapping provision.

The House added the preventive detention clause. It would allow judges to jail defendants considered to be a danger to society for up to 60 days before trial. The House also added mandatory sentencing requirements, including an automatic life sentence for persons convicted of a third serious felony, and several more provisions in the 439-page document.

In its report, the conference committee deleted a list of offenses under which juveniles would be tried as adults, but let stand a House-passed provision lowering the juvenile age from 18 to 16, and a provision that would have citizens pay the attorneys of policemen accused of false arrest, regardless of whether the policeman won or lost the case in court.

The controversial "no-knock" provision of the bill would permit the police to obtain search warrants under which they

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could enter premises without announcing themselves if notice was likely to result in evidence being destroyed, to endanger the life of a policeman or to permit a person to escape.

Opposed by Negroes

The bill has been strongly opposed by many black organizations, which charge that it is aimed specifically at Negroes. Answering the critics, Senator Joseph D. Tydings, Democrat of Maryland, who is chairman of the Senate District Committee and a staunch supporter of the measure said today:

"To those who say this bill is antiblack, I say crime in this 70 per cent black city is antiblack."

A staunch critic of the bill, Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, and several liberal Senators announced today that they in-

tended to introduce a court reform and criminal law package as an alternative to the compromise crime proposal.

Joining Senator Ervin were Senators Charles E. Goodell, Republican of New York; Charles McC. Mathias Jr., Republican of Maryland; Birch Bayh, Democrat of Indiana; Philip A. Hart, Democrat of Michigan; Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts; Marlow W. Cook, Republican of Kentucky, and Edmund S. Muskie, Democrat of Maine.

Senator Tydings, a member of the conference committee, criticized the announcement by Senator Ervin.

"Our task has been complicated by the effort of some Senators to subvert this conference bill by seeking enactment of parts of it as an amendment to other legislation, he said, adding:

"The crime crisis we are facing is too real, the need for sound and effective action long overdue, and the present law enforcement system all too in-

adequate for us to fail to meet our responsibility to massively improve the criminal justice system in our national capital."

Senator Tydings criticized the Nixon Administration for what he described as the "clumsy performance" concerning the crime legislation.

"Both nationally and locally," he said, "the Administration has frightened, divided and discouraged too many Americans to be able to avoid a backlash against parts of its crime program."