

STATES-ITEM

MCC Urges Ban on Bingo; Police Funds

The Metropolitan Crime Commission today urged the City Council to "apply itself realistically and responsibly to the grim problem of crime now and its otherwise inevitable increase in the near future."

Councilmen were called upon to oppose any legislation which can encourage the criminal element or impose nonessential demands on police.

"Legalizing bingo would do both," said the letter to the councilmen, signed by James W. Mills Jr., acting president of the crime panel, and Aaron M. Kohn, managing director.

"POLICE SUPT. (Joseph I.) Giarrusso and the documented experiences elsewhere have given you full notice of the added problems of crime," said the letter, "and new burdens on the police which would result.

"It has been made clear that if bingo is legalized police manpower must be diverted to the tasks of enforcing the many new regulations involved," the letter continued.

"It will be unbelievably irresponsible to authorize 'little old ladies' to play bingo and, in the process, to make it even less possible for our police to protect the same 'little old ladies' from brutal assault on the streets and from rape in their homes."

THE LETTER said the commission joins with Supt. Giarrusso in "expressing amazement that our city's resources can be absorbed with bingo, rather than the protection of human life and property."

The panel urged further that: The council immediately appropriate funds requested by the Police Department for maximum operations with existing manpower, and to enable the fastest possible addition of competent and fully trained personnel.

Impose necessary taxes, with

potentially adequate estimated income, to finance the police budget for the balance of the year; commit the city to vigorously advocate and support needed legislation for tax equalization in the next session of the Legislature, and establish a citizens committee to look into the most desirable pay plan for police, specific areas for economy in government, and conditions which "obstruct maximum suppression of crime in New Orleans."