



Department of Justice

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Hamilton, Bermuda -- Attorney General John N. Mitchell said today that Congress "is stalling the Administration's efforts to implement a national anticrime campaign."

The Administration, Mr. Mitchell said, has put forward "a carefully-planned, well-financed and aggressive action program to combat crime --- now."

We have "supported or proposed to Congress more than 20 bills," he said, which attack crime on a broad front.

They include legislation for a model District of Columbia program; to combat organized crime; to help state and local communities fight street crime; to ban indecent publications from the mails, and to stop illegal narcotics traffic.

"The difficulty," he said, "is that the Congress has not passed a single solitary bill of the more than 20 bills which this Administration has requested as part of this comprehensive anticrime program. Nor has the Congress approved a single dollar of our appropriation request -- not even the requests made for fiscal 1970 which, as you know, started July 1, 1969."

Speaking at the Annual United Press International Editors & Publishers Conference, Mr. Mitchell said that "as

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editors and working newspaper men, I think you ought to be concerned with a Congress that moves so slowly on one of our most critical domestic issues."

He added:

"Every day that Congress delays passing anticrime legislation and appropriations only means that it will take longer to implement our anticrime program; and this delay, in turn, means that more innocent citizens will lose their lives and their property to street criminals, narcotics traffickers and organized gangsters.

"When the public elected this Administration, it wanted action against crime. We have done a great deal by executive action. But the monetary purse and the legislative sword are controlled by the Congress."

He said that "effective anticrime programs are a moral, legal and economic necessity. This Administration wants it and our citizens want it. But Congress is stalling the Administration's efforts to implement a national anticrime campaign."