Remap Plan Is Approved
In Bitter Senate Dispute

(Continued From Page 1)

reapportionment committee before the session.

Swing Votes

The two swing votes on the conference committee—Reps. Carl Bauer of Franklin and Lloyd Himel of Convent—were members of the reapportionment committee who were angered at Orleans' repeated attempts to stall redistricting.

It was not until after the session started and a flood of unfavorable publicity that the Orleans Senate and House delegation acknowledged that reapportionment should be attempted in the 1971 session.

At issue was one Senate district which a House amendment had divided almost equally in population between Jefferson and Orleans parishes.

Wanting to dominate the district so it could return seven senators to the 1972 session, Orleans lawmakers centered their battle on efforts to junk the House amendment in favor of a lopsided division.

Orleans now has eight senators, but according to 1970 census figures is now entitled to six and one-third Senate seats. Jefferson Parish, on the other hand, has two senators, but is entitled to three and two-thirds.

As approved by the Senate earlier in the session, the reapportionment plan would have given Orleans seven senators and Jefferson Parish three.

Amends Plan

The House, however, amended the Senate plan in accordance with the original recommendation of the Legislative Reapportionment Committee, giving Orleans six senators, Jefferson Parish three and creating a one-man district to be almost evenly divided in population between the two parishes.

The Senate rejected the House amendments, but a conference committee refused to remove them, sparking the day-long battle by Orleans lawmakers.

Revives Bill

The Orleans delegation succeeded in reviving another bill and sent it to the conference committee in the hope of winning a reversal. The move, however, failed.

Lt. Gov. C.C. Aycock and House Speaker John Garrett appointed an identical conference committee on the revived bill and the vote was the same, 4-2 in favor of sustaining the House amendments.

Conference committee members voting to uphold the House changes in favor of Jefferson Parish were Sens. Charles Brown of Tallulah, and Jules Mollere of Metairie and Reps. Himel and Bauer, chairman for the Legislative Reapportionment Committee.


The conference committee vote flew in the face of an Orleans-engineered senate resolution to urge and request Senate members on the committee to restore the bill to the form it was in when it left the upper chamber of the House.

With Orleans lawmakers storming at the defeat, the last day of the fiscal session came close to matching the end of the 1970 session when the senate was the focal point in a feud over a pork barrel bond issue.

"It's foreign to me how four men on a conference committee can bend and change the will of a majority of the senate," fumed Sen. Nat Kiefer of New Orleans. "We have not been defeated by the Senate of Louisiana but by four members of a six-member conference committee."

Time Out

The Senate took time out from the squabble over its own reapportionment plan to give unanimous approval to House amendments to the House redistricting plan.

Despite the weeks of deliberation by the Legislative Reapportionment Committee and the 30-day debate by the legislature, few gave any chance of court approval of the final redistricting product.