

Pls return

SCENE

Threat Diplomatic

Reuter

Violence or threats of violence against foreign diplomats in the United States has risen by more than 40 percent in recent months, the State Department said today.

The department said stronger laws were required to protect the diplomats.

There were 122 attacks or threatened attacks on foreign diplomats and their families in the past nine months, compared with 112 in the preceding 12-month period, the department said, an increase of more than 40 percent.

Nixon Administration officials will go before Congress tomorrow to express their concern at the magnitude of the problem and ask for new legislation against murder, kidnapping, harassment or assault of diplomats.

At present, nearly all

crimes against diplomats and their families are local offenses, meaning that detection and punishment of the criminals are a local matter, with standards varying from state to state.

The Nixon Administration proposed last August that crimes against foreign officials, embassies and other properties of foreign governments be made federal offenses, but Congress has not held hearings on the proposal.

State Department spokesman Charles Gray, reporting the latest increase in violence and threats of violence against foreign officials, said that without doubt the most serious incident in recent months was gunfire through the window of a Soviet building in New York. Children inside narrowly escaped injury.