

A Plot to Kidnap Kennedy Child

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Washington

The Secret Service protected some of the children of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy for one week this month as the result of threats made in the Boston area to kidnap one of them.

Treasury Department spokesmen said the protective details authorized by President Ford began September 13 for the three of Robert and Ethel Kennedy's 11 children and one nephew. All four are working or attending schools in the Boston area.

"It wasn't clear which of the kids was the target," said Treasury Undersecretary Edward C. Schmults. The temporary protection ended on September 20 and there are no plans for further action other than a continuing investigation of the threat, according to a Secret Service spokesman.

By law children of presidents and former presidents are protected until age 16. Except for presidential candidates and foreign visitors there is no provision for Se-

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cret Service protection of well-known Americans.

Reports circulated yesterday that the children of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.) were the targets of threats on Sunday, the day before he announced he would not seek the presidency in 1976 but both Schmults and a spokesman for the senator said there were no such threats on that day.

The Associated Press quoted an unnamed Boston source as saying that the FBI has identified a number of persons believed to have devised the kidnap plot.

Richard Drayne, Senator Kennedy's press spokesman, said Kennedy's office was notified September 12 "by the FBI of Boston that they had information there was a proposed conspiracy to kidnap one of the children in the Kennedy family."

Other sources said the threat was overheard by someone who then reported it to the FBI in Boston. The FBI refused to comment on any aspect of the case.

Drayne also flatly denied reports that the threats contributed to Senator Kennedy's decision to remove himself from the presidential race in 1976.

"The senator made that decision over Labor Day (September 2)," Drayne said, two weeks before the FBI learned of the threats. Schmults said the senator's three children were not among those guarded by the Secret Service.

Protection was extended to Robert F. Kennedy Jr., 20, and David Anthony Kennedy, 19, both students at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., and to Mary Courtney Kennedy, 18, a teaching intern at Park School near Boston.

The nephew protected "for a short time" according to a Treasury official was Christopher Lawford, son of actor Peter Lawford and the former Patricia Kennedy, who now are divorced.

Spokesmen for the schools confirmed that during the week the protection was in effect they were working with the Robert Kennedy family to make the security measures as unobtrusive as possible.

It was the first time the children of Robert and Ethel Kennedy have had Secret Service protection since Kennedy was assassinated in 1968, according to the Secret Service.

The only Kennedy child normally receiving Secret Service protection is John F. Kennedy Jr., son of the late president. His sister, Caroline, stopped receiving the coverage when she reached the age of 16.

Senator Kennedy has three children: Kara, 14, Edward M. Kennedy Jr., who was 13 yesterday, and Patrick Joseph, 7.

Senator Kennedy received Secret Service protection after George Wallace was gunned down in a Maryland shopping center during the 1972 presidential campaign, but has not had it since, the Secret Service said.

The 11 Robert Kennedy children, seven boys and four girls, range in age from five to 24 and are scattered among five schools and two jobs in five states.

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