

Wife Says Ex-Cop 'Couldn't Have Done It'

TAOS (N.M.) — (UPI) — The wife of a former New Orleans policeman wanted for threatening the life of President Nixon said today her husband could not have made the threat because he was living with her at the time in a commune.

Judy Gaudet and a cousin, Stanley Gaudet of New Orleans, talked the Secret Service into ending its 24-hour search for the suspect. Then the two of them hiked into

the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to try and find Gaudet.

According to a federal warrant, Edwin M. Gaudet was overheard last week in New Orleans threatening Nixon's life.

"I know he couldn't have done it, because he was with me here," Judy Gaudet said at the Morning Star commune in northern New Mexico. "He supposedly made the threat Aug. 15, but we've been here since Aug. 2 or 3."

Gaudet had been traced by Secret Service officers to the commune, located on a high, brush-covered mesa on the west side of New Mexico's highest mountains.

But Gaudet escaped and later shot three times with a rifle at sheriff's officers, then disappeared into the pine trees and canyons.

Gaudet's wife, who said she and the suspect had been living at the commune

for about a year except for a brief trip in the early summer, said she thought she knew where he might be.

She said she wouldn't tell the agents, but would try to find him and bring him out of hiding.

Mrs. Gaudet also said she thought her husband was being framed so there would be more public sympathy for Nixon.

Gaudet, nicknamed "Punchy," was arrested three years ago in New Orleans for throwing a flaming American flag at Nixon's car during a parade.

The man who owns the commune, Mike Duncan, said he didn't think Gaudet could shoot anything. Duncan said Gaudet had been unable to shoot a deer last year even though it would have meant food for his family.