

CHILDREN GATHER AT KENNEDY HOME

Virginia Estate Guarded as
Friends Rally to Family

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Special to The New York Times

M'LEAN, Va., June 5—Today was almost like any other day at Hickory Hill, the McLean home of Senator Robert F. Kennedy. Fourteen-year-old Bobby Jr. played with friends, and members of the Senator's staff rallied around the children at the six-acre compound.

There was, ironically, an air of pastoral peace around the tree-covered estate 10 miles from Washington. Dogs and horses loped slowly around the grounds and there were boisterous shouts from adults and children playing football in 80-degree sunshine.

Routines, seemed uninterrupted. Power mowers cut sloping lawns, housemen swept porch steps and yard men cleaned around the pool. Delivery trucks with food and household items arrived and left.

But there were differences. A battery of Fairfax County policemen, along with United States marshals and Secret Service men, blocked all entrances.

Gawkers Come to Stare

An unending stream of gawkers, in open convertibles, buses, trucks, motorcycles and on foot, slowed down and stared.

Friends and relatives came and went all day. Among them was Mrs. Robert S. McNamara, wife of the former Secretary of Defense.

Shortly after 2 P.M., the oldest of the 10 Kennedy children, 16-year-old Kathleen, and her brother, Joseph, 15, arrived from boarding schools, lugging suitcases up the front stairs. Kathleen attends the Putney School in Putney, Vt., and Joe is at Milton Academy in Milton, Mass.

Bobby Jr., shirttails out, was with them. He and 14-month-old Douglas were the only two children at home when Senator Kennedy was shot in California.

The children, at least the older ones, apparently knew that their father had been wounded. Earlier in the day, Bobby Jr. had walked silently

around the grounds with a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Richard McSorley, professor of theology at Georgetown University.

Await Other Children

Inside the home, with its airy, cheerful rooms friends and members of the household staff waited for the other children to arrive from Los Angeles on an Air Force jet provided by Vice President Humphrey.

An attempt was made to keep everything as normal as possible. During the football game, played in bathing suits, an unidentified friend of the family came down to the wall surrounding the estate, where photographers were taking pictures, and asked them to stop. He said that the photographers

were a constant reminder to the children of the tragedy.

Inside the home, Mrs. Rowland Evans, the wife of the columnist, who has been described as "like an aunt to the children," and Mrs. George Stevens Jr., the wife of the director of the American Film Institute who is a close friend of Mrs. Kennedy's, busied themselves with the baby and waited.

Parents Get News

HYANNIS PORT, Mass., June 5 (UPI)—A source close to the family said that Senator Kennedy's mother and father reacted to the shooting of their son "with remarkable courage."

Ailing Joseph P. Kennedy, who will be 80 in September, sobbed quietly. The mother, Mrs. Rose Kennedy, 78, concealed her sorrow lest she further upset her husband.

Mrs. Kennedy first learned of the news on television when she arose to attend the 7 A.M. mass, as customary, at St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church in Hyannis.