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Washington - The Federal Government's drive against organized crime ... had been getting by, /informed sources/ said, on the momentum it generated when President Kennedy was alive and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, then Attorney General, was its driving force. The decline, it was reported, started on the day of President Kennedy's death.

"The next day we stopped getting information from the F.B.I. on the Bobby Baker investigation," said a young Justice Department lawyer. "Within a month the F.B.I. men in the field wouldn't tell us anything. We started running out of gas."

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Could the momentum of the anti-crime effort have been maintained if President Kennedy had lived?

"Looking back, I think Robert Kennedy's drive on crime was a national reform movement and like local reform movements, it would tend to be a cyclical thing," said Ronald Goldfarb, a former lawyer in the Organized Crime Section who now writes books on legal subjects.

"But it would not have died. The Kennedys could have picked it up again," he said. "I don't think it can come back, as things are."