

The Fords, the Agnews and the

By Maxine Cheshire

Unlike the family of Spiro T. Agnew, the wife and children of Vice President Gerald R. Ford do not thus far have personal Secret Service protection.

"There is no statute covering the family of a Vice President," a Secret Service spokesman explained last week. "Circumstances may dictate that we protect them from time to time, but only as they come and go within the secure perimeter around the Vice President himself."

The Fords' house in Alexandria is considered part of that "secure perimeter" around the Vice President and will be guarded 24 hours a day. But there are no agents accompanying Mrs. Ford and the children away from their home.

The Secret Service refuses to discuss the extent of protection provided for Judy Agnew and her youngest daughter, Kim, while she was a student at National Cathedral School. Neither will they explain why the Agnew family would require protection and the Ford would not.

"We have an iron-clad rule against revealing where

or when or why we protect someone, even if they are no longer in office," said agent William A. Hawthorne.

Mrs. Agnew frequently was accompanied by a Secret Service detail.

Two agents were with her on Oct. 9, when the Senate Wives Red Cross Unit gave a luncheon in her honor the day before her husband's resignation. Senate wives reported afterward that both agents had tears in their eyes during the party and came up afterward to express their own personal appreciation for the kindness shown to Mrs. Agnew.

Later that month, Mrs. Agnew showed up with agents who had protected her in the past at a retirement dinner for Secret Service director James J. Rowley. She got a standing ovation that night.

Betty Ford had no agents with her when she attended her first Senate Red Cross Wives meeting last Tuesday to take over the role of honorary president.

When some of the senators' wives commented on the absence of bodyguards, she said she doesn't really "want" them unless someone insists.

She will be driven by Richard Frazier, who was the

Secret Service

Ford family's chauffeur for nine years while the Vice President was the House minority leader.

Frazier has now been moved to the Senate payroll.

He will also be responsible for taking 16-year-old Susan Ford to and from Holton Arms, where she is a boarding student during the week, coming home on weekends.

"It's our understanding that the Secret Service drove Kim Agnew to Cathedral every day," said Mrs. James W. Howe, Mrs. Ford's press secretary, last week. "But no one has said anything to us about Susan, and Mrs. Ford is taking the position that the Secret Service knows more about protection than she does."

The Secret Service, according to an official of Cathedral School, also provided protection for Kim Agnew while she was in class.

The Fords' three sons also do not have agents. Jack Ford, 21, said at his father's swearing-in party that none of the children would be getting agents. The Agnew children, he said, were "a special situation."

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