

**CHAPTER 41—EXTORTION AND THREATS**

- Sec.  
871. Threats against President and successors to the Presidency.  
872. Extortion by officers or employees of the United States.  
873. Blackmail.  
874. Kickbacks from public works employees.  
875. Interstate communications.  
876. Mailing threatening communications.  
877. Mailing threatening communications from foreign country.  
878. Threats and extortion against foreign officials, official guests, or internationally protected persons.  
879. Threats against former Presidents and certain other persons.  
880. Receiving the proceeds of extortion.

**AMENDMENTS**

2000—Pub. L. 106-544, §2(b)(2), Dec. 19, 2000, 114 Stat. 2715, struck out “protected by the Secret Service” after “other persons” in item 879.

1994—Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXII, §320601(a)(2), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2115, added item 880.

1982—Pub. L. 97-297, §1(b), Oct. 12, 1982, 96 Stat. 1317, added item 879.

1976—Pub. L. 94-467, §9, Oct. 8, 1976, 90 Stat. 2001, added item 878.

1962—Pub. L. 87-829, §2, Oct. 15, 1962, 76 Stat. 956, substituted “and successors to the Presidency” for “, President-elect, and Vice President” in item 871.

1955—Act June 1, 1955, ch. 115, §2, 69 Stat. 80, inserted “President-elect, and Vice President” in item 871.

**§ 871. Threats against President and successors to the Presidency**

(a) Whoever knowingly and willfully deposits for conveyance in the mail or for a delivery from any post office or by any letter carrier any letter, paper, writing, print, missive, or document containing any threat to take the life of, to kidnap, or to inflict bodily harm upon the President of the United States, the President-elect, the Vice President or other officer next in the order of succession to the office of President of the United States, or the Vice President-elect, or knowingly and willfully otherwise makes any such threat against the President, President-elect, Vice President or other officer next in the order of succession to the office of President, or Vice President-elect, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(b) The terms “President-elect” and “Vice President-elect” as used in this section shall mean such persons as are the apparent successful candidates for the offices of President and Vice President, respectively, as ascertained from the results of the general elections held to determine the electors of President and Vice President in accordance with title 3, United States Code, sections 1 and 2. The phrase “other officer next in the order of succession to the office of President” as used in this section shall mean the person next in the order of succession to act as President in accordance with title 3, United States Code, sections 19 and 20.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 740; June 1, 1955, ch. 115, §1, 69 Stat. 80; Pub. L. 87-829, §1, Oct. 15, 1962, 76 Stat. 956; Pub. L. 97-297, §2, Oct. 12, 1982, 96 Stat. 1318; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(H), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

**HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES**

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §89 (Feb. 14, 1917, ch. 64, 39 Stat. 919).

Reference to persons causing or procuring was omitted as unnecessary in view of definition of “principal” in section 2 of this title.

Minor changes were made in phraseology.

**AMENDMENTS**

1994—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$1,000”.

1982—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 97-297 inserted “, to kidnap,” after “containing any threat to take the life of”.

1962—Pub. L. 87-829 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a), extended the provisions of such subsection to include any other officer next on the order of succession to the office of President and the Vice-President-elect, added subsec. (b), and substituted “and successors to the Presidency” for “, President-elect, and Vice President” in section catchline.

1955—Act June 1, 1955, included in section catchline and in text, provision for penalties for threats against the President-elect and the Vice President.

**SHORT TITLE OF 2000 AMENDMENT**

Pub. L. 106-544, §1, Dec. 19, 2000, 114 Stat. 2715, provided that: “This Act [amending sections 879, 3056 and 3486 of this title, repealing section 3486A of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under section 3056 of this title, section 551 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees, and section 566 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure] may be cited as the ‘Presidential Threat Protection Act of 2000.’”

**§ 872. Extortion by officers or employees of the United States**

Whoever, being an officer, or employee of the United States or any department or agency thereof, or representing himself to be or assuming to act as such, under color or pretense of office or employment commits or attempts an act of extortion, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both; but if the amount so extorted or demanded does not exceed \$1,000, he shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 740; Oct. 31, 1951, ch. 655, §24(b), 65 Stat. 720; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(G), (K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147; Pub. L. 104-294, title VI, §606(a), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3511.)

**HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES**

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §171 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, §85, 35 Stat. 1104).

Words “or any department or agency” were inserted to eliminate any possible ambiguity as to scope of section. (See definitive section 6 of this title.)

The punishment provided by section 171 of title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., of fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment of not more than 1 year, or both, was increased for offenses involving more than \$100 to conform to Congressional policy reflected in later Acts. See section 4047(e)(1) of title 26, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Internal Revenue Code, and the punishment provision following paragraph (10) of said subsection.

**AMENDMENTS**

1996—Pub. L. 104-294 substituted “\$1,000” for “\$100”.

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$5,000” after “extortion, shall be” and for “fined not more than \$500” after “he shall be”.

1951—Act Oct. 31, 1951, changed punctuation to make section applicable not only to persons falsely rep-

resenting themselves as Federal officers or employees at the time of extortion or the attempt thereof, but also to Federal officers and employees who attempt or commit extortion under color of office or employment.

### § 873. Blackmail

Whoever, under a threat of informing, or as a consideration for not informing, against any violation of any law of the United States, demands or receives any money or other valuable thing, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 740; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(I), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based upon title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 250 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 145, 35 Stat. 1114).

Only minor changes were made in phraseology.

#### AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$2,000”.

### § 874. Kickbacks from public works employees

Whoever, by force, intimidation, or threat of procuring dismissal from employment, or by any other manner whatsoever induces any person employed in the construction, prosecution, completion or repair of any public building, public work, or building or work financed in whole or in part by loans or grants from the United States, to give up any part of the compensation to which he is entitled under his contract of employment, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 740; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on section 276b of title 40, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Public Buildings, Property, and Works (June 13, 1934, ch. 482, § 1, 48 Stat. 948).

Slight changes of phraseology were made.

#### AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$5,000”.

### § 875. Interstate communications

(a) Whoever transmits in interstate or foreign commerce any communication containing any demand or request for a ransom or reward for the release of any kidnapped person, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(b) Whoever, with intent to extort from any person, firm, association, or corporation, any money or other thing of value, transmits in interstate or foreign commerce any communication containing any threat to kidnap any person or any threat to injure the person of another, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(c) Whoever transmits in interstate or foreign commerce any communication containing any threat to kidnap any person or any threat to injure the person of another, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(d) Whoever, with intent to extort from any person, firm, association, or corporation, any money or other thing of value, transmits in interstate or foreign commerce any communication containing any threat to injure the property or reputation of the addressee or of another or the reputation of a deceased person or any threat to accuse the addressee or any other person of a crime, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 741; Pub. L. 99-646, § 63, Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3614; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(G), (H), (K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 408d (May 18, 1934, ch. 300, 48 Stat. 781; May 15, 1939, ch. 133, § 2, 53 Stat. 743).

Provisions as to district of trial were omitted as covered by sections 3237 and 3239 of this title.

Definition of “interstate commerce” was omitted in conformity with definitive section 10 of this title.

Changes were made in phraseology and arrangement.

#### AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsecs. (a), (b). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330016(1)(K), substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$5,000”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330016(1)(H), substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$1,000”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330016(1)(G), substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$500”.

1986—Pub. L. 99-646 inserted “or foreign” after “interstate” wherever appearing.

### § 876. Mailing threatening communications

(a) Whoever knowingly deposits in any post office or authorized depository for mail matter, to be sent or delivered by the Postal Service or knowingly causes to be delivered by the Postal Service according to the direction thereon, any communication, with or without a name or designating mark subscribed thereto, addressed to any other person, and containing any demand or request for ransom or reward for the release of any kidnapped person, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(b) Whoever, with intent to extort from any person any money or other thing of value, so deposits, or causes to be delivered, as aforesaid, any communication containing any threat to kidnap any person or any threat to injure the person of the addressee or of another, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(c) Whoever knowingly so deposits or causes to be delivered as aforesaid, any communication with or without a name or designating mark subscribed thereto, addressed to any other person and containing any threat to kidnap any person or any threat to injure the person of the addressee or of another, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. If such a communication is addressed to a United States judge, a Federal law enforcement officer, or an official who is covered by section 1114, the individual shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.