

B2 FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 1999

CRIME & JUSTICE

THE DISTRICT LAST

Canada Drops Kidnapping Charges

Canada has dropped kidnapping charges against Tyrone Merritt, 41, of the District, who was accused in 1999 of illegally bringing his son, then 4, to Washington from the home of the boy's mother in Montreal.

Canada's decision came soon after the boy's mother let him visit his father in Washington this past Christmas. Last month, the U.S. government agreed to end extradition proceedings against Merritt, said Barry Boss, one of his attorneys. Merritt had maintained that the boy's mother made up the kidnapping story.

Merritt has a civil lawsuit pending against the District, accusing the Department of Child and Family Services of sending the boy back to Canada in August 1999 without taking the matter before a judge to sort out the conflicting claims. The Christmas visit is the only time Merritt has seen the boy since. He then sent Tyrone II, 6, back to his mother, Valerie Elzy-Robert, Merritt's estranged wife.

Compiled from reports by staff writers Jamie Stockwell, Tom Jackman, Manuel Roig-Franzia, Katherine Shaver and David Montgomery.

Boy Abducted in Canada Found in NW

A 4-year-old boy allegedly abducted by his father in Canada on July 31 was found safe in Northwest Washington yesterday and taken into protective custody, officials said.

Tyrone Merritt Jr. was reported missing from his mother's home in Ottawa, and the Interpol international police agency enlisted the help of the U.S. Department of Justice and police agencies in eight states where the father had known connections.

Capt. Mark Beach said officers from the D.C. police department's Youth and Preventive Services Division, the Summer Mobile Force and U.S. marshal's office, obtained information that Tyrone Merritt, 40, was staying in the 800 block of Allison Street NW.

"They did an extensive surveillance of the area and that address and, armed with a search warrant, responded directly to the address when they saw him there," Beach said. "The child was taken into protective care, and he appears to be in good health."

The father was charged as a fugitive from justice pending kidnapping charges in Canada, officials said.

MARYLAND

FIRST