

18 September 1969

Dear Mr. Joesten,

I can only marvel at the imagination and ingenuity of the theories you and Peter Dawmay have set forth to explain the Chappaquiddak Tragedy. I hope that you will not consider me vain or naive if I offer what is perhaps an even more daring and startling hypothesis.

My theory is that Ted Kennedy is a self-indulgent, philandering, reckless and weak man who has little if any principle and who has been accustomed throughout his life to being rescued from the consequences of his various escapades by the wealth and power of his family. He has shown his utter contempt for truth and for justice, first by branding Lee Oswald falsely as a "lone assassin" and then, having denied elementary justice to an innocent murdered man, by trying to escape the consequences of his own guilty actions by circumventing due process.

It is my hypothesis that Ted Kennedy in a state of doubtful sobriety set out with a pretty young woman for some private pleasure on a deserted beach and that en route he accidentally drove his car off a bridge into shallow water. From that moment, his only concern was to extricate himself physically, legally, morally, and politically from the consequences of that disaster. In the next hours, he tried frantically and stupidly to construct some kind of fiction that would protect him.

The most self-betraying and clumsy step he took was to present himself at 2:30 a.m. to the hotel manager, to complain about noisy guests and ostentatiously to ask the time, claiming that he had forgotten his watch. This crude effort to establish an alibi is a measure of Ted Kennedy's contempt for the intelligence of ordinary people and in no way can it be reconciled, without extreme torture of logic or of sanity itself, with a theory of an attempt to murder Kennedy or the theory of an attempt to frame him for the murder of Miss Kopechne.

I realize that my hypothesis is very far-fetched, very unattractive to Kennedy-admirers, and very unpalatable to advocates of a ubiquitous, all-encompassing single conspiracy. I do not want to shock your readers, so please consider this exposition as part of our personal correspondence. Just file it under Occam's Razor, if you keep such a file.

Cordially,