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Kennedy's Successor ^{9/13/68}

Charles Ellsworth Goodell has always been a comer—and often a pusher. A Phi Beta Kappa at Williams College ('48), a Yale law grad and a onetime semipro baseball star, he became a trial lawyer back home in Jamestown, N.Y., and was voted to Congress as a Republican Representative in a 1959 special election.

Determined to "shake the foundations a little bit," he mounted a drive to revitalize the stodgy G.O.P. leadership. He helped toss out Charles Hoeven as chairman of the House Republican caucus in 1963 and joined the move to upset Charles Halleck as minority leader in 1965. Both were replaced by Michigan's Gerald Ford. When Ford wanted to give Goodell his reward, Republican veterans gave Goodell his comeuppance. Overriding Ford, they refused to make the ambitious, somewhat abrasive Goodell either the Republican whip or head of the Policy Committee.

But Goodell's savvy in urban affairs, strong pro-civil rights stand and proven vote-getting appeal attracted Governor Nelson Rockefeller's eye. When Robert Kennedy was assassinated, Goodell figured immediately as a top candidate to fill the unexpired two years of Kennedy's Senate term. Rocky offered the job first to John Gardner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, who declined because he feels committed to continue as chief of the Urban Coalition. New York City Mayor John Lindsay could have had the Senate appointment for the asking, but refused to go hat in hand to Rockefeller.

That left Goodell, and a couple of others. Former Senator Kenneth Keating apparently lost out because of his age, 68. Congressman Ogden Reid, a liberal from suburban Westchester, was eliminated because he seemed too much like the state's other Republican Senator, Jacob Javits. Goodell, a moderate conservative from upstate, would provide a sounder balance to Javits. And, at 42, he appears to have a long and bright political future.

Rockefeller planned this week to make the formal announcement of Goodell's appointment. That will increase the Republicans' share of the Senate to 37 seats, against the Democrats' 63.