

# A Threatened Alabamian Bows Out

## Supporter of Sen. Ted Kennedy Says He's Harassed

By Carolyn Lewis

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MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Tom Radney, the young Alabama State Senator who last month announced he would place the name of Sen. Edward Kennedy in nomination for the Democratic Party's Presidential candidate, says he's withdrawing from politics because of threats against his family.

Radney changed his plans for the nomination in Chicago when Sen. Kennedy indicated he was against the move, but the 32-year-old Alabamian cast his vote for the Senator anyway.

Radney, who traces his Alabama ancestry back to the 17th century, and whose great-grandfather fought in the Civil War, thus became one of just two Southern state senators to support either Kennedy or Sen. Eugene McCarthy, liberal Democrat in the eyes of some Southern conservatives.

After Radney stated his case for Kennedy on news work television in Chicago, crude and threateninggrams began to flood in from Alabama. It was a foretaste of what was in store for him back home.

Radney and his wife, Madeline, have been harassed by persistent and malicious telephone calls at all hours of the day and night.

Angry, threatening letters and telegrams arrive at the door of their wood-and-stone contemporary house in Alexander City, 69 miles north of Montgomery.

The American flag they raised on their front lawn every morning was stolen. Their motor cabin on a lake was broken into and vandalized, and their boat had a top pushed through its hull.

"I'd pick up the phone at 3 a.m. and a voice would tell me when I cranked up my car that morning I'd be blown to bits," Radney said in an interview here.

"At night, I'd take out my gun, look under the bed, search the closets and then lock the bedroom door."

His 5-year-old daughter, Margaret, Ellen, who innocently picked up the phone and heard the threatening voices, was having nightmares.

"I saw what it was doing to Madoline and the children—what it was doing to us as a family living in fear all the time," Radney said.

"I decided the price was too high. I decided to bow out."

What Radney is relinquishing is a promising career as a moderate standard-bearer in Alabama state politics—a man, on whom some disaffected college students and liberals, and newly enfranchised Negro voters are pinning their hopes for a change in what is still called "Wallace land." Radney had intended to run for Lieutenant Governor next year. One day, his supporters hoped he would become Governor, as State Senator, since See RALPHNEY, E2, Col. 1



Associated Press

Radney, his wife Madoline at home with their three children.

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**RADNEY, From E1**

his election from the 16th District (Elmore-Macon-Tallapoosa Counties) in May, 1966, Radney has persistently challenged legislation put forward by the administration of the late Gov. Lurleen Wallace. He fought a bill that had already passed the State House, seeking to "keep Alabama out of the United Nations."

He helped to restore \$500,000 the Wallace administration sought to deny to the Tuskegee Institute.

He argued against legislation that would have made it mandatory for University of Alabama ball games to begin with the playing of "Dixie" and the raising of the Confederate flag, and the playing of "Alabama" and raising of the State flag—before the playing of the Star Spangled Banner and raising of the Stars and Stripes.

"I figured that was an invasion of academic free-

dom," Radney explained with a grin.

While Radney has refused to toe the Establishment line politically, he says he has never carried on a "personal vendetta" against George Wallace.

"I have much respect for George Wallace," he said. "He has an uncanny ability to judge the thinking of the people, not only in Alabama but around the country."

His wife, Madoline, a former first-grade school teacher from Montgomery, is less cautious in her opinions about the former Governor who is now third party candidate for President and still very much a power in Statewide politics.

"George Wallace has planted a seed of fear around here and it's frightening," she said. "My husband is being condemned simply because he disagrees with those in power here, because he refuses to be a rubber stamp."

Alabama-born, the daughter of an architectural engineer, Madoline Radney, like her husband, is determined to remain in Alabama in spite of what has happened.

"We love Alabama. The South to us is still the best place to live. We're not giving up," she said.

She says her husband's problem in Alabama is that "he's 10 years ahead of his time."

Radney believes that the threats against his family will subside, now that "I've removed myself from politics, and taken away the thing about me that bothered" his antagonists.

While he is not stumping for any candidate this year, neither is he allowing the threats to silence him totally.

"I'm speaking out more than ever to college groups and meetings. I have a freer voice now that I'm out of the political race."

He wants to bridge the gap between the people of Alabama and the Federal Government, and that's one of the subjects he talks about.

"The relationship between Alabama and the Federal Government couldn't be worse," he said.

Madoline Radney fiercely denies that what she and her husband have chosen to do will be interpreted as a retreat.

"Tom is an excellent lawyer. He can continue to teach at Alexander State Junior College. He may have given up a promising political future, but not a promising future," she said.