

Joan Kennedy on the Campaign

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INDIANAPOLIS, Oct. 3 —

Leaving a trail of damp hankies and wolf whistles behind her, Joan Kennedy campaigned across Indiana yesterday for a man to whom she owes an unpayable debt.

He was Senator Birch Bayh, who crashed in a light plane four years ago with Mrs. Kennedy's husband. Although badly injured, he pulled Senator Edward M. Kennedy from the wreckage, probably saving his friend's life while risking his own.

Mrs. Kennedy told the tale at every one of five stops in the state the natives call "Hoosierland." She reduced some listeners in her audience to snuffles and all of them to fascinated silence.

The enthusiastic whistles came from teen-aged boys at Fort Wayne and elsewhere, for 32-year-old Mrs. Kennedy is a true knockout—the only beauty in the Kennedy family to rival her sister-in-law, Jacqueline.

With her blonde lion's mane, dazzling blue-green eyes, clunky pilgrim shoes and mustard tights to match a shift that stopped four inches above her kneecaps, she looked as exotic as a butterfly beside the ladies in blue permanents and sparkly harlequin glasses. She bears a striking resemblance to the movie actress Julie Christie.

"She's gorgeous—what a doll!" gasped one woman at the Gary airport after she had grabbed Mrs. Kennedy's hand. Another, in Hammond, said: "I didn't realize she had such a mop of hair." Then she added, a touch cattily, "And it's a little dark at the roots, too."

Mrs. Kennedy has probably campaigned more on her own



Mrs. Edward M. Kennedy shows nervousness during campaign speech by fiddling with ring.

than any other woman in the clan. In 1964, she spoke all alone in her husband's race for the Senate while he lay hospitalized for months after the plane crash with a broken back.

Last spring she campaigned alone across Indiana in the primary won by Senator Robert F. Kennedy. And last month, she stumped in Massachusetts to help another friend, Representative Edward P. Boland.

Yet she is hardly a polished performer. Yesterday, she nervously studied her speech cards while waiting on the platform. At the podium, she is a wedding-band

twiddler and hand-clencher, and the voice is a bit trembly as she begins.

"She kind of stammered and stuttered and looked at her speech cards too much," said Mary Woodke, a student at St. Mary's College in South Bend. But Kim Heland thought "she looked like a great friend—I mean someone you'd really like to know."

And Ginger Birskovich, another St. Mary's Girl, said: "She was just so natural, giggling and all."

Mrs. Kennedy made her Catholic audience at St. Mary's giggle, too.

"You know," she confided,

"when I was in school, the sisters made us go to hear outside speakers. I used to sneak out."

She forgot to introduce the Rev. John Cavanaugh, the former president of Notre Dame and close friend of the Kennedy family, sat down, then clapped a hand over her mouth and ran back to the rostrum.

She then confided that Father Cavanaugh "was the first one to know our secret" in 1958 that she and Ted were engaged.

"Ted and I wanted him to marry us, but then Cardinal Spellman said that he should be the one to do it. And so . . . anyway, that was that," Mrs. Kennedy said, to more girlish laughter. The two were married in Bronxville, N. Y., her home town, that November.

Mrs. Kennedy is a natural and unaffected woman on stage and off. In the plane, while munching some "finger-lickin' good" fried chicken, and at one speaking stop where she could wiggle her toes behind the podium, she kicked off her buckled patent-leather shoes.

She was introduced at all five stops by Marvella Bayh, the Senator's wife and a socko speaker by any standards. The Bayhs met at a national extemporaneous speech contest in Chicago in 1951. She placed first; he was the runner-up. They were married eight months later.

Mrs. Bayh quoted Toynbee, H. G. Wells and Adlai Stevenson in her eloquent pitches for her husband. Mrs. Kennedy quoted Teddy.

"My Ted and Birch," she would say.

She put the weight of the Kennedy name again and

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Trail: Tears and Wolf Whistles

again behind Mr. Bayh. She spoke of how highly President Kennedy and Senator Robert Kennedy thought of him, and "now my husband Teddy."

Mrs. Kennedy was able to speak of the dead President with apparent equanimity. But on several occasions, she brought out the name of Robert Kennedy, assassinated only four months ago, with obvious difficulty.

"It must be terribly hard for her to come out of deep mourning and campaign like that," commented a nun at Central Catholic High School, where Mrs. Kennedy was greeted with thunderous applause and a storm of whistles. "Most of us would have sat back and forgotten the world."

Mrs. Kennedy began her 14-hour day with an apology. It came in Hammond at what she called her "first official press conference."

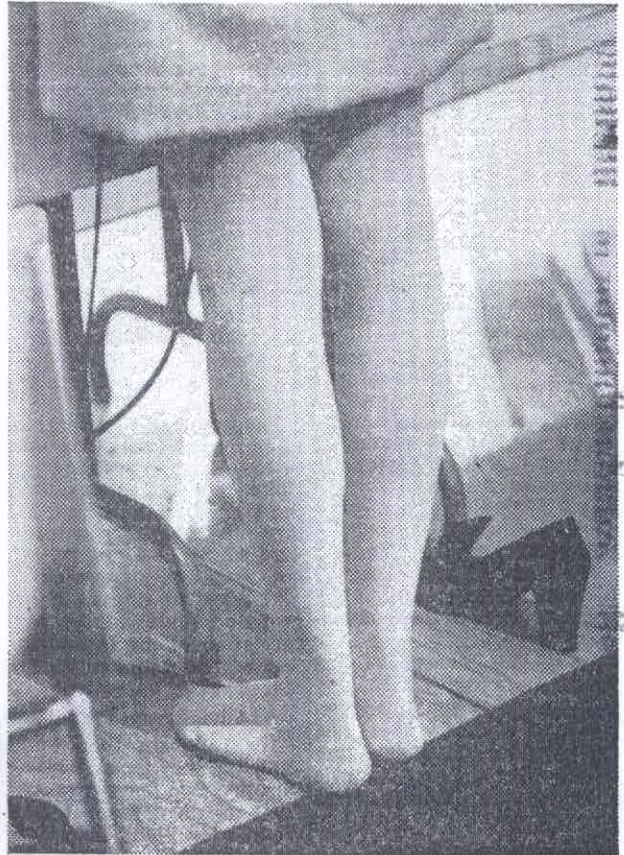
"You'll have to bear with me," she said. "I'm a bit heart's in the right place."

The news conference, in which she had to face a thicket of microphones and hot television lights, proved to be the hardest event of her day.

"I'm used to girly chats over coffee with a couple of reporters," she confessed.

Throughout the day, microphones proved a problem, too. She either had to bend over to speak into them or wait until someone adjusted them for her. Five-feet 7-inches tall, with coltish legs, she mentioned her height just once. That was at Fort Wayne, after someone had fiddled with the microphone.

"I don't guess there are many of you out there who are 12 years old," she remarked, "but I was this tall when I was 12, and it wasn't fun then, either." nervous, but I think my



Mrs. Kennedy kicks off her clunky pilgrim shoes when she's not in front of an audience—such as on the plane with Mrs. Birch Bayh flying from one Indiana city to another, and when she's behind the podium.

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