

# Kennedy Tells Why He Will NOT Run in '72

By Jim Morse

Special to The Examiner

WASHINGTON — Sen. Edward Kennedy cited "personal and family reasons" yesterday for his stoutly-maintained decision not to become a Democratic presidential candidate in 1972.

Although the surprising results of the New Hampshire and Florida primaries have increased Democratic pressures on Kennedy to step as the party's standard

Asked if he was referring to the tragic assassinations of his two brothers, the Senator said: "I'd prefer to put it in my own way. And that is my feeling of responsibility to my family."

But what if there is no clear-cut leader after the primaries and the Democratic convention becomes deadlocked?

"I cannot foresee any circumstances that would cause me to change my mind," Kennedy said.

The senior Senator from Massachusetts said he believes the Democratic presidential candidate "will come from the primaries."

"The first two primaries were not typical of the country," he said.

Although Sen. Edmund Muskie of Maine, who had been considered the Democratic frontrunner, won the New Hampshire primary with less than 50 percent of the vote and finished a poor fourth in the Florida voting, Kennedy said he feels Muskie still has "the strongest national political base" of any of the Democratic candidates.

"Sen. George McGovern (who finished a close second to Muskie in New Hampshire) established himself as a vote getter in the first primary," Kennedy added. "It gave him a great boost."

As for the Florida primary, which was convincingly won by Alabama's Gov. George Wallace, Kennedy said he considers the vote there as "an obvious victory" for the second place Sen. Hubert Humphrey.

"The vote for Sen. Henry Jackson was also impressive, and it was another setback for Muskie."

He went on to say that the total result in all the primaries will determine Muskie's chances — not just the returns from the early tests.

"He still has to show

strong voter appeal and strength," Kennedy said, "but Muskie has the strongest base of any candidate."

What about Wallace, the big winner in Florida?

"His showing there was impressive," Kennedy said, "whatever you attribute it to. Not all of those who voted for Wallace in Florida supported him for his racial views. You can make a mistake in judging his vote."

"People are disturbed about what is happening in this country today. The Democratic party should be for tax reform and welfare reform and law and order and some of the other things

Wallace talks about. And I am confident candidates will find a way to make it clear that's the case."

While acknowledging that Wallace has appeal, Kennedy said he believes that the extent of that appeal is limited.

What if Wallace goes on from Florida to score victories in other Democratic primaries? Could that change Kennedy's mind about becoming a candidate?

"The answer is no," he said.

Kennedy said he would not endorse any presidential candidate until the Democratic convention in July. Meanwhile, the pressure builds.



SENATOR KENNEDY  
Still NOT running

bearer, he said in an exclusive interview:

"My position is unchanged. I am not a candidate."

### Slain Brothers

Kennedy explained:

"If my decision not to seek the presidency this year had been based on political reasons, the impact of the New Hampshire and Florida primaries might have been more important to me personally. However, it was not based on political reasons. It was based on personal and family obligations."