

Kennedy Is Pushing Hard To Aid McGovern's Drive

**Predicts a Victory Like Truman's—
He Shuns Talk of Role in 1976 but
Some Democrats See a Bid Then**

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

JERSEY CITY—No one will ever be able to accuse Ted Kennedy of dragging his feet in George McGovern's Presidential campaign.

He introduced the South Dakota Senator at the Democratic National Convention. He helped to stage a unity breakfast that aided Mr. McGovern in Massachusetts. He signed a fund-raising letter. He campaigned with Mr. McGovern through the big industrial state during the last week in September.

And now, in the final hours of the campaign, Edward M. Kennedy is on the road full-time for his fellow Senator, telling Democrats, "Just as Harry Truman came from behind to win in 1948, just as John Kennedy came from behind to win in 1960, so George McGovern can come from behind in 1972."

In a typical 48-hour period earlier this week, Mr. Kennedy swept energetically, despite his chronically painful back, through Wisconsin, Ohio and New Jersey. Everywhere, he worked to rebuild morale.

Keeps Focus on 1972

Thus, in Green Bay, he likened the current status of the McGovern campaign to "the hours before a tidal wave, when the water recede from the shore as the ocean gathers up its force." At the General Tire and Rubber plant in Akron, he told each person for whom he signed an autograph that he or she should "be sure to help Senator McGovern."

It was not easy for him to keep the focus of his entourage—himself, an aide, Secret Service agents and a few reporters in a pair of leased Lear jets—squarely on 1972. But he managed to do so, turning aside questions about his own candidacy in 1976 with the remark that he expected to be campaigning then for the re-election of Mr. McGovern.

Mr. Kennedy is careful not to predict flatly that the Democratic nominee will win, although he introduced him here in Jersey City and elsewhere as "the next President of the United States." In response to questions, he talks vaguely about progress in California and Michigan and Wisconsin—all states where McGovern seems to be gaining—and says nothing about the areas that appear hopeless.

Even in private conversations aboard his plane, Mr.

Kennedy is unwilling to be drawn into specific conversation about 1976. All he will acknowledge, in a very general way, is that he hopes to take some leadership role in the Democratic party in the four years between now and 1976.

He believes, for example, that the reforms in the selection of convention delegates will have to be re-reformed so as to guarantee that not only women, young people and blacks but also ethnic groups and older persons are adequately represented. He also hopes the party will develop better roots in individual communities so that it "doesn't get so out of touch."

Sources close to Mr. Kennedy report that he intends to resist any attempt by the party regulars to take over the Democratic National Committee. A move to oust Jean Westwood, the national chairman, is expected on Dec. 9 if Mr. McGovern is beaten.

Senator Kennedy vehemently denied that he had so far taken any role in the building intraparty struggle.

Audience Looks Ahead

But his silence on this subject is not enough to make people stop thinking about the next campaign. As the Senator left the tire plant in Akron, Victor Bamonte, a rubber worker, called out, "You're a sure thing in four years." And at the next stop, a rally for McGovern volunteers, they chanted "Kennedy in '78" as he moved through the audience.

Like Richard Nixon in 1964, Mr. Kennedy can only help himself by campaigning this year. Not only Mr. McGovern and the McGovern wing of the party are put in his debt, but also the Congressional candidates for whom he speaks—from Garry Studds in Massachusetts to Roger Hilsman in Connecticut to Thomas L. Ashley in Ohio to Teno Roncalio in Wyoming.

Whether Mr. Kennedy will feel psychologically prepared for a Presidential campaign in 1976 is another question. Although he seemed to enjoy his chats with voters and even some of his own jokes, he said that the fun had gone out of it since the assassination of his brother Robert in 1968.

"When you've been a part of something really good," he said, looking out of the plane window, "and that goes away, it's never really the same."

Senate Term to Expire

Mr. Kennedy would also face the possible loss of his Senate seat, which will be up in 1976, unless, like Lyndon B. Johnson in 1960, he can persuade the state legislature to change the law to let him run for two offices at once.

But to the politicians who see him, such considerations pale beside his obvious skills. He displayed them again this week—rousing crowds to laughter and cheers, ad-libbing letterperfect television commercials the first time through, throwing his arm around a maintenance man and convincing him, in two minutes' conversation, that Mr. McGovern's plans to cut defense spending were not dangerous.

"He can do it all," said a labor leader who watched. It was obvious that he, too, was already thinking about 1976.