

# No Comment by Senators

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Senate colleagues are being unusually tight-lipped about the political consequences of Edward Kennedy's weekend accident which took the life of a woman riding in his car.

With the exception of Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield, who has said the whole affair could have happened to anyone, usually loquacious senators generally have refused to discuss the matter, even on a relatively secure off-the-record basis.

Even Republicans, who see

Kennedy as a potential opponent for the presidency, have been reluctant to talk about the matter privately, much less publicly.

Those few senators willing to discuss the incident anonymously generally seem to agree that Kennedy's political future is in his own hands and indicate they are withholding judgment until he explains the affair more fully.

What they want to know involves Kennedy's failure to report the accident to police until nine hours after his car plunged off a bridge on a

Massachusetts island, carrying Mary Jo Kopechne to her death.

Miss Kopechne, a former assistant to Kennedy's late brother Robert, had attended a party with Edward Kennedy and several other persons just before the accident.

The senators who would talk say if there is any semblance of a cover-up, either by Massachusetts officials or Kennedy himself, of his movements during the nine hours, public reaction could be politically disastrous.