

Editorial Reaction to Ted's Talk

Newspapers had these editorial comments yesterday on Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's television appearance in which he gave his account of the events surrounding the death of Mary Jo Kopechne:

Hartford Conn., Courant — It seems to us the senator failed to level on exactly what happened that night. We cannot see why the girl's body should have been left in the car under the water, especially after he had dived several times to save her, and then brought two friends from the "cookout" to try to get to her . . . It would seem to us that so long as the senator, a lawyer, has not seen fit to explain this night's events, that further investigation might be necessary.

Columbus Ohio, Citizen-Journal — Sen. Kennedy's explanation has not, in our opinion, rolled away the clouds of doubt as to his qualities in hours of crisis. A man seriously considered for President is supposed to be at least a little bit different, especially considering he would, as President, have his finger on the nuclear trigger.

Richmond, Va. Times-Dispatch — Many Americans would view with great fear the prospect of the highest office in the land, with its awesome crises and responsibilities, being held by a man who reacted as Sen. Kennedy did to his automobile accident.

Detroit Free Press — We

cannot share the glee of Kennedy-haters who gloat over this misfortune . . . but the harsh realities of politics must cause the king-makers of both parties to take a new look at the future. The smart money — if there is such a thing three years in advance — has already gone to Senator Muskie.

Washington Post — Sen. Edward Kennedy did not answer all questions that have been asked about the traffic accident . . . so, inevitably, his performance had some quality of contrivance, some of the marks of a public man maneuvering to preserve his position in public life.

New York Post — There were moments when his

words seemed wholly convincing and others when they appeared contrived. But what shadowed the recital more than anything he said or failed to say was the sense that such a statement should have been issued many days ago. It may be argued that the impact of the tragedy had rendered him incapable of so extensive and public a declaration until now. Yet the failure of those in charge



of the inquiry to ask the most obvious questions and their acceptance of his fragmentary initial account as a satisfying story remains as inexcusable as it is injurious to the senator's position.

Chicago Daily News — His extraordinary report to the people surely earned him high marks for courage as well as stage presence . . . yet for all its drama and sincere humility . . . the state-

ment raised as many questions as it answered . . . the hours in which the fatal accident went unreported are still not wholly accounted for . . . No one who has not undergone such a painful experience can be certain, of course, what he would do . . . Our hope is that he can finish out his term in the Senate and leave it up to the voters of Massachusetts next year as to whether he should return.

Fall River, Mass., Herald News — Now the case is out

of the courts and in the political arena. Sen. Kennedy has asked the people of this Commonwealth to help him decide what to do. Many are doing just that today. There is every indication they will urge him to remain in the Senate. Then he can turn to the real court of public opinion — all the voters of Massachusetts — by standing for reelection in November, 1970.

Providence, R.I., Journal — The only way in which Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts can get from the voters

of his state the kind of verdict he seeks on his conduct last weekend on Martha's Vineyard is to resign his seat and seek reelection on a platform of simple vindication.

Buffalo, N.Y., Evening News — Time may produce other events which ease the strong doubts that persist about his judgment and conduct under heavy stress. For the moment, we would find it quite difficult to consider him seriously in the future as a potential candidate for President.