

Kennedy Aides Mapped Trail

By Edmund J. Rooney

HYANNIS PORT — (CDN) — Members of the famed Kennedy brain trust were called here from as far away as France to map strategy in Sen. Edward Kennedy's political crisis.

Within hours after Mary Jo Kopechne, 28, was buried last Tuesday, members of the clan began gathering at the family compound here.

The tactics they suggested differed, but their goal was the same:

To salvage the political life of the sole surviving adult heir of the Kennedy political dynasty.

They had seen their Camelot destroyed when President John Kennedy was slain Nov. 22, 1963.

Their hopes were revived and then dashed again June 5, 1968, when another assassin fatally shot Sen. Robert Kennedy in the midst of his quest for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Since then, their hopes lay with Ted, the youngest of the four Kennedy brothers (the oldest brother, Joseph Jr., had been killed in World War II).

But on July 20, 1969, Ted Kennedy, accompanied by two friends, walked into the Edgartown police station and reported that he had been driving the car which went

off a wooden bridge, plunged into a pond and drowned his lone passenger, Miss Kopechne.

More than nine hours had elapsed between the time Kennedy said the accident happened and the time he reported it.

Shortly before reporting the accident, Kennedy said in his nationally-televised speech Friday, he "made an effort to call the family legal adviser, Burke Marshall."

Marshall, former head of the Justice Department's civil rights division under Attorney General Robert Kennedy and now a senior vice president of the IBM Corp., would play an important role in the discussions leading up to the

Kennedy speech.

Early contradictions illuminated the dissension within the Kennedy camp. Some aides favored silence, hoping the public eventually would forget the incident. Others, including Kennedy himself, were in favor of a carefully-worded explanation.

On Tuesday night the wheels went into motion. Kennedy discussed the matter at length with Marshall and David Burke, Kennedy's administrative aide.

They decided to call for reinforcements. Phone calls went out Tuesday night and

Wednesday morning to members of the "clan," who began arriving at Hyannis Port around midday Wednesday.

Robert F. McNamara, former secretary of defense under John Kennedy, came in from Washington where he now heads the World Bank.

Stephen Smith, husband of Kennedy's sister, Jean, and manager of the Kennedy fortune, arrived from New York.

Claude Hooten, an old Harvard classmate of Kennedy who now is European representative of IBM, flew in from Paris.

Richard N. Goodwin, speechwriter for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, came over from his vacation home at Truro, Mass.

Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a former aide to President Kennedy, had just arrived in New York from a conference in Romania. He quickly flew to Hyannis Port.*

Theodore Sorensen, another speechwriter for President Kennedy, flew here from New York, where he is a partner in the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Goldberg, Rifkin, Wharton and Garrison.

Many of the braintrusts were met at the airport by Joseph P. Kennedy III, 16-year old son of Robert Kennedy.

He drove them to the Ken-

edy compound past a barrier of local and private police which had been strengthened since the accident to keep away curiosity seekers.

"Nobody came who wasn't invited," said a Kennedy aide.

Aides set up a command post in the vacant summer home once used by President Kennedy and now known as "Jacqueline's home." It was occasionally used by John Kennedy's wife before she married Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis.

The 12-room house was stocked with typewriters, extra telephones and plenty of black coffee. Soon the basic lines of argument were formed.

In general, the lawyers, led by Burke Marshall, favored a continued Kennedy silence and a plea of innocent, followed by a court fight. They said they could make strong legal arguments against the charge and win an acquittal.

On Marshall's side were the Edgartown lawyer, Richard McCarron, and the two Brockton, Mass., criminal lawyers whom Kennedy had hired, Robert G. Clark Jr., and his son, Robert G. III.

The other side favored a guilty plea and a later statement by Kennedy. On this

side were McNamara, Sorensen, Schlesinger, and Smight.

McCarron and the two Clarks made numerous trips to Edgartown Wednesday and Thursday to discuss the case with special prosecutor Walter E. Steele.

Such talks are considered entirely proper in legal circles and the three attorneys did not discuss the matter with district Judge James A. Doyle, who eventually accepted Kennedy's plea.

Steele did, in effect, close one avenue to Kennedy, that

of a nolo contendere plea. He pointed out that Boyle rarely accepted such a plea, which allows a defendant to be sentenced without admitting guilt or contesting the case.

Kennedy's attorneys had two more meetings with Steele Thursday, in which Steele told them it was likely that Kennedy would receive a suspended sentence or probation if he were to plead guilty.

This was reported back to Hyannis Port, where the decision was made about 5:30 p.m. Thursday to withdraw the request for the pretrial hearing, proceed directly to trial Friday and enter a guilty plea.

The brain trust then turned their attention to writing Kennedy's speech, which

they had decided to air Friday night.

Much of the speech was the work of Sorensen, who had been largely responsible for writing John Kennedy's famous inaugural address in 1961.

The speech mentioned both John and Robert Kennedy and raised the question of "whether some awful curse actually did hang over the Kennedys."

Three of the paragraphs were taken almost verbatim from John Kennedy's book "Profiles in Courage."

"It has been written a man does what he must in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures. That is the basis of all human morality.

"And whatever may be the sacrifices he faces, if he follows his conscience — the loss of his friends, his contentment, even the esteem of his fellow man—each man must decide for himself the course he will follow.

"The stories of past courage cannot supply courage itself. For this each man must look into his own soul."

Sorensen, Kennedy and some of the others were up late Thursday night and early Friday morning working on the speech. Kennedy made revisions until 15 minutes before air time.

* NYTIMES 27 JUL
LAST PARAGRAPH