

## Kennedy Faces Leadership Test in House Race

By JOHN H. FENTON  
Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, July 29—Senator Edward M. Kennedy faces an early test of his ability to maintain leadership in Massachusetts politics in a special primary in the Sixth Congressional District next month.

Before the events at Chappaquiddick Island 10 days ago, Mr. Kennedy gave his implied endorsement to State Representative Michael J. Harrington of Salem for the Democratic nomination through a statement issued in the name of State Representative David Harrison of Gloucester, the party's state chairman.

The primary Aug. 26 will be followed by a special election Sept. 30 to fill a vacancy caused by the death of Representative William H. Bates, a Republican. Mr. Bates died of cancer June 22 at the age of 52.

In four special elections in the nation to fill vacancies since last November, Democrats have taken two Republican seats. One was that of Melvin R. Laird of Wisconsin, who resigned to become Secretary of Defense. In the two other special elections, party alignments did not change.

### 3 Democrats in Field

A private poll conducted by Mr. Harrington's supporters indicated that he might be the strongest of three Democrats in the primary. The others are Mayor Irving E. Kane of Lynn and Daniel J. Burke of Lynn-

### A Massachusetts Candidate Has His Implied Support in a Special Primary

field, an Essex County commissioner.

The poll indicated that State Senator William L. Saltonstall of Manchester, son of former Senator Leverett Saltonstall, was the strongest candidate in the field. He is opposed for the Republican nomination by State Representative Francis W. Hatch Jr. of Beverly, whose campaign is being aided by former Bates men.

The sixth District seat is important to Mr. Kennedy as a foe of the antiballistic missile system. Mr. Bates, an acknowledged hawk, was the ranking Republican on the House Armed Services Committee.

Moreover, a Democratic victory would increase the party's strength in the Massachusetts delegation from seven to eight out of 12.

### No Communication

But since Mr. Kennedy became involved in an automobile accident that took the life of Mary Jo Kopechne, a Washington secretary, July 19, there has been no official communication between his office and Mr. Harrington.

The flow of letters and telegrams to Hyannis Port from throughout the nation has indicated that Mr. Kennedy has aroused the sympathy of Massachusetts voters.

The Boston Globe, in a professional telephone poll published today, said 84 per cent of those interviewed approved of Mr. Kennedy's handling of his job.

In the matter of his request for advice and opinion on resigning, 78 per cent said he should remain.

On the question of his possible selection as the Democratic nominee for President, the favorable percentage was 52.

### G.O.P. Plans Challenge

Mr. Kennedy faces the problem of running for a second six-year term next year. While he appears to have the solid support of a majority of the electorate, the Republicans intend to field a creditable candidate.

Josiah A. Spaulding, the Republican state chairman, said today that the decision to make a serious challenge for the Kennedy seat had been reached some time ago.

"Senator Kennedy's situation is not a partisan matter," said Mr. Spaulding. "One can only feel great personal sympathy for him, but there are a great many questions involved, some of which may never be answered."

"Eventually, he is going to have to make speeches and to demonstrate his ability to lead," said Mr. Spaulding.

Republicans whose names have been discussed as possible Senate candidates include Representatives F. Bradford Morse of Lowell and Margaret M. Heckler of Wellesley and Mr. Spaulding.

### Man of Courage

To the Editor:

As non-Americans, we consider Senator Edward Kennedy a man of honor and courage. We hope he continues in public life for the betterment of mankind.

DOREEN and ALBERTO CALVO  
Washington, July 27, 1969

### Kennedy Rated

To the Editor:

Senator Edward Kennedy deserves a four-star rating for his television production explaining the circumstances of Mary Jo Kopechne's death. Having just completed a study of political imagery on television and the techniques used for optimum performance in this regard, one must applaud the Senator and his expert staff for a job well done.

However, this is not the time and these are not the circumstances for improving one's political image. What is called for now is the truth—plain and simple, without the Kennedy boldness and arrogance and without exhuming John Kennedy and "the curse on the Kennedy family."

TIMOTHY J. DEEGAN  
Fire Island, L. I., July 25, 1969



## Kennedy Goes Sailing and Fishing With His Family



Associated Press

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, with sunglasses, on the stern of the family yacht, Marlin, during a cruise off Hyannis Port, Mass., yesterday. His wife, Joan, is among the group. Robert Kennedy Jr., son of Robert F. Kennedy, guides the rubber craft alongside yacht.

HYANNIS PORT, Mass., July 29 (UPI)—Senator Edward M. Kennedy sailed today in Nantucket Sound with his family.

Western Union officials said several hundred more telegrams had been delivered to the Massachusetts Democrat's summer home on near-

by Squaw Island, raising the number to about 32,000 in four days.

Senator Kennedy, on national television Friday night, asked for "advice and opinion" on whether he should resign from the Senate after a car accident on Chappaquiddick Island that took the

life of Mary Jo Kopechne, 28 years old, a Washington secretary.

The Kennedys spent most of today on Nantucket Sound. They fished from the family yacht, the Marlin, at a breakwater near the Kennedy compound and later motored to a quiet cove to picnic.