

MANKIEWICZ AND BRADEN**Teddy's Ordeal Not Ended**

(Editor's Note: The syndicated column of Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden occasionally will substitute for Joseph Alsop who is on vacation.)

WASHINGTON — "At long last," Edward might have said, "I am able to say a few words of my own." What he said was deeply touching, like the speech which was its inevitable though unconscious model. Unlike that speech, however, this one will not end the speaker's ordeal.

It will not end it because—unlike Edward VIII — Sen. Edward Kennedy did not renounce his position for the ease of private life.

He raised a question, and he asked the voters of Massachusetts, to whom he is immediately responsible, to answer it. It is likely they will answer it in the way he "hoped" they would.

But the judgment of his constituents is far less important for this young man (by 1988 he will be younger than Richard Nixon is today) than the judgment in the United States Senate, and in the courthouses and club houses, city halls and state capitols, where much political power resides. It is in these places that a bright star seems destined — at least for a time — to fade.

The Senate of the U.S. is

peculiar in its loyalties and its tolerances. A Tom Dodd of Connecticut is not spurned because he has been censured for being careless with money. Dodd has the same prerogatives he always had, and his peers greet him daily with the same friendly nods. But he is no longer a man with a club to wield. He cannot rise to challenge a fellow senator or a political opponent, particularly on questions of honesty, morality, money — for fear that the challenge might turn upon him.

The comparison — of course — is far from exact. Dodd's downfall was money. Kennedy's was — in his words — shock, fear and a feeling of doom. Both admitted to unacceptable behavior, but Dodd's behavior was tawdry; Kennedy's was tragic.

The American people will see that tragedy — in their hearts — in the Sophoclean sense of seeming almost preordained.

But for a time they may see it as tragic, too, in the Shakespearean sense of a puzzlement of the will, of judgment suspended and flawed at a crucial moment.

Through close attention to the work of the Senate through an understanding and respect

for its traditions (in this respect unlike his brothers, who hardly disguised their impatience with its pace), Edward Kennedy has reached a high place. His position in the leadership is real and so are his accomplishments. Can he now retain that power and continue to lead and persuade by the force of his argument and his person in the debates of the ABM, surtax, the whole congeries of public issues that make our politics?

No one else is more sought after by candidates as a companion for television spots or a friendly photograph. All the way down to the precincts there is a loose but available "organization" — devoted and dedicated — ready to contribute its considerable skills to a Kennedy candidacy and the professionals know it.

Is he now the man these professionals will want for their dinners, their rallies, their candidate?

The armor — in any event — has been pierced; the Achilles has been wounded and will take time to recover. It is one thing for politicians to heed the leadership of a man who is certain — if he wishes — to be his party's candidate for president in 1972. It is another to follow only a senator from Massachusetts.

By the time of Sen. Kennedy's appearance on television, the formalities were over. He had admitted the charge of leaving the scene of an accident. But it was poignantly clear that in Scott Fitzgerald's "dark night of the soul, where it is always three o'clock in the morning" the scene will not leave him for years to come.