

Merry-Go-Round

The Sex Habits Of Public Figures



Drew Pearson

Today's column is by Drew Pearson's associate Jack Anderson

THE CHAPPAQUIDDICK incident has unloosed a spate of titillating rumors, which the Republicans are discreetly filing away for future reference. If Senator Edward Kennedy should ever emerge again as a presidential prospect, they will surely snoop into his whispered flirtations.

For the sex habits of public figures has always aroused intense partisan curiosity in Washington.

The Republicans tried valiantly, for example, to find out where then Senator John F. Kennedy spent his late evenings. The best they could come up with was a blurred picture of someone who resembled Mr. Kennedy emerging in the night from a doorway. If this was John Kennedy slipping out of the Georgetown abode of a pretty secretary, as the Republicans suspected, the picture was no proof.

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THE REPUBLICANS also tried to implicate President Johnson in the girlie parties that Bobby Baker staged when he was riding high on Capitol Hill. There was no denying that Mr. Johnson had an eye for a pretty face and figure. He caused tongues to wag once when he disappeared from a dance with singer Roberta Peters and took her on a midnight tour of the White House. No evidence of hanky-panky, however, was ever uncovered against Mr. Johnson.

One of the principals in the Bobby Baker investigation, the late Edward Bostick, tried to use sex against the investigating Senators. Through a private detective, Bostick arranged with a lady of the night,

who had a clandestine acquaintance on Capitol Hill, to wire her boudoir for sound. She allegedly lured into her web a few romantic Senators, and the recording equipment picked up some senatorial conversations the like of which have never been heard on "Meet the Press."

Doubts were raised about the authenticity of the lurid, two-hour recording, however, when the FBI broke down the call girl's story. She tried to brazen it out until agents asked whether then Senator Carl Hayden, (Dem.-Ariz.), had been one of her customers. She blithely added him to her list, boasting of some unlikely high jinks with the then 86-year-old Senate dean.

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THE FBI has stumbled into more than one Washington boudoir. During the Bobby Baker investigation, for instance, the FBI bugged lobbyist Fred Black's hotel suite and picked up some unexpected tidbits.

On April 15, 1963, for example, J. Edgar Hoover's boys turned in this confidential, deadpan report, "an individual who was believed to be Robert G. Baker and an unidentified female utilized Black's rooms for approximately one hour during the morning ... during most of the time the male and female utilized the bedroom."

The role of sex in politics — together with the prying and peeping that goes on in Washington — perhaps should be brought out of the shadows into the open.

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