

RFK All But Admits He's In

By United Press International and The Associated Press

Sen. Robert Kennedy will announce tomorrow morning that he will seek the Democratic presidential nomination, several sources said today.

Keenedy, himself all but said the same thing at a gathering of Democratic women in Kings Point, N. Y. He told the women he would make an announcement tomorrow and left no doubt what he would say when he told them "you can help me in the effort I am going to undertake."

Later, reports that Kennedy is definitely a candidate—and will make it official tomorrow at 10 a.m., in Washington—came from United Press International, the Washington Evening Star and Senator Vance Hartke, (em-Ind.).

The Washington Star quoted "the highest authority," presumably Kennedy himself, United Press International cited "informed sources"

and, in the most public of leaks, Senator Hartke was talking to newsmen in Indianapolis when a phone call from Senator Edward Kennedy, the candidate-elect's brother, interrupted him. Hartke said later the younger Kennedy said his brother was in the race.

Word that Kennedy would make his announcement so soon—it was expected Monday at the earliest—came first at the meeting of the Democratic ladies on Long Island.

There, what started out to be just another rpolitical coffee klatch developed into a crucial exchange of questions and answers.

PERSONALITIES

He said that whenever he had spoken out on the war in Vietnam it was interpreted as part of a personality struggle between himself and the President and as having nothing to do with issues.

"Maybe it is personal animosity because he (Johnson) feels that I think John Kennedy should still be the President of the United States," he said. "That is what President Johnson has been saying."

Kennedy left little doubt about his presidential aspirations with his quietly spoken words asking for "help in the effort which I am going to undertake."

COMPETITION

And the usually reliable Washington Evening Star, reporting that Kennedy would run, said final decisions on which primaries he will enter have not been made but added that he is expected to run

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at least in Indiana on May 7, Oregon May 28, and California on June 4.

Sen. Eugene McCarthy also plans to compete in the Oregon, Indiana and California primaries.

Kennedy came to his decision, the Star said it could report on the highest authority, within the last two weeks. But it said he did not make his final decision until the last two days — in other words, after McCarthy's surprising showing on an anti-war platform.

In casting his hat into the ring for the Democratic presidential nomination, Kennedy knowingly would take the biggest risk of his political life at a time when his popularity has sunk to a new low.

He has until March 22 — the date of the Oregon primary — to make up his mind but chose instead to make the announcement as quickly as possible, less than a week after the New Hampshire primary.

McCarthy, the anti-war candidate for the Democratic nomination, made such a

good showing in New Hampshire against Johnson, who was a write-in candidate, but nonetheless had a well-financed, organized campaign, that Kennedy decided to reassess his own position, which had been to support Johnson lukewarmly and stay out of the race.

OPPORTUNISM

Kennedy's interest in this latest proof of the size of the anti-war element in the Democratic Party was labeled immediately as opportunism.

The McCarthy forces, many of whom had turned to the Minnesotan after Kennedy himself did not present himself as a candidate, were especially bitter.

"Last fall we hoped that you would challenge Johnson," said a petition sent to Kennedy by 300 of Connecticut College's 1400 students. "McCarthy ended our sense of helplessness by doing what

you refused to do."

Youth, who have made Kennedy one of their cult heroes, may have found a substitute in McCarthy, but more seasoned anti-Johnson observers feared that a struggle between two "peace" candidates would insure Johnson's re-nomination.

McCarthy stated yesterday that he would prefer to continue his campaign and "then work out some kind of settlement at the convention itself."

SECOND PLACE?

To some, this sounded like McCarthy was willing to settle for second place on a Kennedy ticket. Others said there would never be a Kennedy ticket because political parties are not in the habit of dumping a man in the White House.

A group of liberal legislators were reported to have told Kennedy as much in Washington yesterday.

'Can't Back LBJ,' RFK Tells Paper

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Sen. Robert F. Kennedy says he cannot support President Johnson for renomination, the New York Times reported today.

A principal adviser to the New York senator said it is likely Kennedy will enter the Oregon and California primaries, according to the story by Tom Wicker, The Times' Washington bureau chief.

"Obviously, I can't support

the President," Wicker quoted Kennedy as saying.

The Times account continued:

"The conversation with Kennedy left no doubt he had made a personal decision to enter in some fashion the intra-party struggle over the war in Vietnam and other issues.

"This was the context in which he said, 'Obviously, I can't support the President.'"



KENNEDYS IN A WALKY-TALKY
Bobby and Ted stroll and discuss political situation