

RFK Had Important Enemies

WASHINGTON (UPI)—He was distinguished by his enemies as well as his friends.

"I would be less than frank if I did not say there were those who opposed him and disagreed with him."

These words by Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis., during a round of tributes to Robert F. Kennedy in the Senate, probably came as close as any to summing up how the members felt about their dead colleague.

Kennedy was respected and admired by most. His courage was something most politicians could envy. But in serving New York for 3½ years, Kennedy never was quite the inner circle's idea of what a newcomer member should be.

Kennedy was more a celebrity, a head-turning personality. He got more letters in one day than most senators received in a month. Many were from children who sometimes said they liked his dog or his family but always seemed to add something like: "I will vote for you for president when I am old enough."

Robert's senate buddies were few and often surprising. For example, he was always joshing with Sen. James O. Eastland, D-Miss., who is without peer as a razzler.

Kennedy would slip into a seat next to Eastland—or even sit on the senate carpet, his arms around his knees—and smother a laugh at some Eastland crack.

A minor society page item reporting Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., playing tennis at Hickory Hill with Kennedy hasn't helped Hollings' campaign back home.

Kennedy's candor embittered more than one senator.

Last year, Sen. Russell B. Long, D-La., was pushing a bill to finance presidential campaigns from public funds.

Citing his experience as campaign manager for John F. Kennedy, Robert attacked loopholes in the measure and said it just wasn't "clearly thought out." Most say his attack was the key to killing the bill.

Few in the senate would clash openly with Kennedy. One senior member once put it: "I treat him just like I do any other future president."