

# Kennedy, Who Considered Drive to Block Jackson, Drops Idea

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 2.—Two months ago, Senator Edward M. Kennedy was seriously considering active intervention in the 1972 Democratic National Convention, but now he says he has dropped the idea.

In a private conversation last October, Senator Kennedy expressed serious reservations over the candidacy of Senator Henry M. Jackson and indicated that he would move to block the Washington Democrat in the convention if it proved necessary.

Senator Kennedy now says that Senator Jackson's views on the war in Vietnam "would make it exceedingly difficult for me to support him," but that he cannot foresee abandoning his own impartiality to enter the field against any of the Democratic contenders.

"If Jackson were leading going into the convention, it would not influence me to reconsider my position," the

Massachusetts Senator said in a telephone interview from Sun Valley, where he was on vacation. "I would not be a candidate to head off Jackson. That wouldn't bring me into it."

**Draft Is Possible**  
Mr. Kennedy's decision reinforces the widespread belief among Democratic leaders that he will not seek the nomination, but it does not eliminate the possibility that he could be drafted in the event of a convention deadlock next July.

Senator Kennedy has expressed surprise to friends that Senator Edward S. Muskie of Maine has not already wrapped up the Presidential nomination.

Senator Kennedy believes, as a consequence, that some of the other Democratic competitors are likely to make stronger bids in the coming months than he had expected.

In Mr. Kennedy's current view, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota has been seriously underestimated as a Presidential contender and should be regarded as an un-

derdog with steadily increasing strength, while Senator George McGovern of South Dakota is moving into a more competitive position with respect to Senator Muskie.

Senator Kennedy's earlier opposition to Senator Jackson was expressed in an October interview that will appear in Esquire magazine next week. The Senator asked at the time that his views not be published until the magazine article was ready to appear.

**'I Don't See That'**  
At that time, he refused to rule out the possibility that, because of his concern over Senator Jackson, he might enter the 1972 primary competition, but he said: "I don't see that. I don't foresee that."

Asked if any effort to keep Senator Jackson from winning that nomination would thus have to take place at the Miami Beach convention, Mr. Kennedy replied: "Yes."

After two more months in which to assess the views and prospects of the candidates, Senator Kennedy concluded that he would not work against any of the Democratic contenders in the convention and would support any of the likely winners during the campaign.

He would back Senator Jackson, whose support for the Vietnam war "is so completely contradictory" to his own views, "with very little enthusiasm," compared to what he would show toward other possible Democratic nominees.

Mr. Kennedy said that the resumption of bombing in Vietnam had rekindled the war as a political issue for 1982. If President Nixon does not end the war, he declared, "I am going to work as intensely, as actively and as persuasively as I can to insure that alternative."

Asked if his feelings about Vietnam would limit the enthusiasm with which he could support Senator Humphrey,

Mr. Kennedy replied that "I wouldn't say it would be nearly as troublesome" as in the case of Senator Jackson.

There have been other signs that Mr. Kennedy is retreating from 1972 political activity, including the endorsement of Senator Muskie by Senator John V. Tunney of California, one of Mr. Kennedy's closest friends and political allies, and K. Dun Gifford, his former administrative assistant.