

White House Future Fades For Kennedy

By Walter R. Mears

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Sen. Edward Kennedy's bid for a vote of confidence in Massachusetts is bound to succeed — but it will take far more to rebuild his standing as a potential candidate for the White House.

The very statement with which Kennedy sought to preserve his position as a senator and his influence as a leader of Senate Democrats will make the task more difficult should he one day seek the Presidency.

Some politicians said it is now beyond his reach.

Democrats closed ranks around Kennedy in the hours after his extraordinary public explanation of the auto accident which took the life of a young secretary.

Kennedy's televised account did not explain all the mystery surrounding the accident and the hours which elapsed before he reported it to police.

But a vast tide of phone calls and telegrams swelled in Massachusetts, and the plurality was with the 37 year old senator.

Heavy Odds

In telling the people of Massachusetts that he might resign, and asking their advice, Kennedy was taking a calculated risk with the odds overwhelmingly on his side.

If the Kennedy name has been one of magnetism in national politics, it has been one of magic in Massachusetts.

Kennedy's Senate colleagues spoke favorably of his explanation or were, for the moment, silent.

Sen. Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma, the Democratic national chairman, said Kennedy has his support — and expressed confidence he would get overwhelming support in Massachusetts.

"He has my full confidence

and support," said Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield, who Kennedy serves as deputy floor leader.

One Senate Democrat who spoke scornfully of Kennedy's behavior after the accident issued a statement of support after the speech.

No Comment

Republican leader Everett Dirksen would not comment, nor would Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.)

Kennedy's Senate term expires next year.

Before the accident, Republicans had talked only of fielding a candidate against Kennedy who would discuss the issues and try to make a race of it. The GOP nomination may now appear a bit more valuable, although Kennedy undoubtedly would still loom as an overwhelming favorite.

While that is the likely situation in Massachusetts, the Democratic presidential future remains clouded.

Kennedy's role in it for the immediate future may be signaled by national reaction to his televised speech.

Silence

It seems likely that Kennedy will return to the Senate and remain politically silent for the foreseeable future.

That would leave the early field for the 1972 presidential nomination to other Demo-

Nixon TV Defense Recalled

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Sen. Edward Kennedy, like Richard Nixon nearly 17 years ago, chose to go before the people on TV at a critical point in his political career.

On Sept. 24, 1952, Nixon, then a Republican senator from California told the nation in his "Checkers" speech he bore no blame for his use of a controversial \$18,235 trust fund donated by California supporters. He branded hints he had enriched himself as a political smear.

Outpouring

The result of the speech was a huge outpouring of support that resulted in his retention as the GOP's vice presidential nominee.

Nixon, saying the final choice of whether he remained as Dwight Eisenhower's running mate was up to the Republican Party, appealed to the voters to let the party know how they stood.

"Wire or write the Republican National Committee whether you think I should stay on the ticket or whether I should get off," Nixon asked. "And whatever their decision is, I will abide by it."

Four days later the GOP said an estimated two million persons had expressed themselves in telegrams, letters and phone calls and that the ratio was 350 to 1 in Nixon's favor.

crats — former Vice President Humphrey, who may be returning to the Senate next year; Sen. Edmund S. Muskie of Maine; Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota.

Kennedy admitted behavior he said was indefensible, the failure to report the accident at once. And he did not explain why two friends, told the accident shortly after it happened, also remained silent overnight.

He said his thoughts had been scrambled, irrational; his conduct inconsistent, inconclusive, inexplicable.

Career Saved

Soon thereafter the announcement was made. Nixon would remain on the ticket. His political career, which some had thought ended, was averted.

Nixon's plea outlined his reasons for the extra expense fund, denied he had enriched himself, produced an audit of his personal finances, mentioned his wife's "respectable Republican clothcoat," (rather than fur) and said there was one gift he intended to keep: A cocker spaniel named Checkers.

He said he did not believe he should resign from the ticket, because, he said, "I'm not a quitter."