

RFK Formally Enters Race

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Robert F. Kennedy charged into the contest today to wrest the Democratic presidential nomination from President Johnson, saying the country is on "a perilous course."

The New York senator's en-

try into the race at a crowded televised news conference pits him against a fellow Roman Catholic and Vietnam war critic, Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota.

Kennedy said his entry against Johnson, the man

chosen as vice-president by the New York senator's assassinated brother, was not in opposition to the individual but to the President's policies.

BUT HE ADDED the only way to change the "disastrous, divisive" policies of the Johnson administration is to oppose the man himself.

Asked how he would change U.S. policy in Vietnam, Kennedy said, "Basically I am in favor of de-escalating the struggle there" and letting the South Vietnamese take over more of the struggle.

He said the U.S. should make it clear to Saigon that corruption must end; 18- and 19-year-olds must be drafted; and National Liberation Front, political arm of the Viet Cong, should play a part in the future government of South Vietnam.

He said he should stop the bombing to bring about peace talks. If they fail, he said, the U.S. can always resume the bombing.

Kennedy said he will enter his name in the June 2 California primary, and also those in Oregon May 28 and Nebraska May 17 because the laws of those states require that his name go on the ballot.

Kennedy stated at the same time he intends to "both support and expand his (McCarthy's) valiant campaign." He called for the biggest possible majorities for McCarthy in primaries next month in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

KENNEDY SAID HE made clear to McCarthy that "my candidacy would not be in opposition to his, but in harmony."

"My desire is not to divide the strength of those forces

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seeking a change, but to increase," the New York senator said.

"I RUN BECAUSE I am convinced that this country is on a perilous course and because I have such strong feelings about what must be done that I am obliged to do all I can," Kennedy said.

"I do not lightly dismiss the dangers and difficulties of challenging an incumbent president," he added in his formal announcement before a national television audience from the old Senate Office Building Caucus Room.

"But these are not ordinary times and this is not an ordinary election," he said. "At stake is not simply the leadership of the party or even our country—it is our right to more leadership on this planet."

THE NEW YORK senator said, "I have previously communicated this decision to President Johnson," and late last night his brother, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., went to Wisconsin to "communicate my decision to Senator McCarthy."

Kennedy said he is running to "end the bloodshed" and to close the gaps in America between "rich and poor, young and old." He said his aim was to make "America stand for hope."

He went on to say he is running "because it is now unmistakably clear" that what he called disastrous policies can be changed only by changing those who made them.

Running the Kennedy machinery will be his brother-in-law, Stephen P. Smith of New York. Kennedy was his brother's campaign manager in 1960.

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