

E NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1969

McCarthy Is Quoted as Saying '68 Kennedy Entry Broke Vow

By WARREN WEAVER Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8 — A forthcoming book by British journalists quotes Senator Eugene J. McCarthy as saying that Senator Robert F. Kennedy broke a promise not to oppose him for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

The book, "Divided They Stand," is an account of the 1968 election by reporters for The London Daily Express and will be published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., on Jan. 22. It contains an interview conducted with Senator McCarthy last September while he was on a post-convention vacation in France.

In that interview, Mr. McCarthy recalled the details of a meeting with Senator Kennedy in March of 1968 in which, according to the Minnesotan as quoted in the account, agreement was reached that the New York Senator would not enter the race.

This report of the episode was described by Senator McCarthy today as "not accurate." A spokesman, having read quotations from the book to Mr. McCarthy, acknowledged that the interview in France had taken place but contended that "Senator Kennedy never gave any private word to that effect."

Kennedy Aide Silent

Informed of the statements attributed to Senator McCarthy, Frank Mankiewicz, who was Senator Kennedy's press secretary at the time, said: "All these matters are now permanently in the past, and I don't see any value in discussing them."

The book attributes to Senator McCarthy the following description of his conversation with Senator Kennedy about the time of the New Hampshire primary last March:

"I said to Kennedy: 'I think I have a chance. But I must have a clear run. You can have it all in 1972. I pledge my support for that, but in return, I want you to leave it to me in 1968. Will you give me that clear run?'"

Then, the book quotes Mr. McCarthy as saying, Mr. Kennedy replied that he would and added: "I tell you what I'm telling everyone. I shall not run. You can count on it."

'Stenographic Account'

The interview with Mr. McCarthy upon which this section of the book was based was

conducted by John Ellison, Paris bureau chief of The Express. At the newspaper's London office today, officials said that he had "a full stenographic account" in his own notes to substantiate his quotes.

Later in the interview, the book reports, Mr. McCarthy observed:

"Had Bobby Kennedy stuck to his word, not only would he almost certainly be alive today but most probably he would have emerged as President of the United States in 1972."

According to the British interview, the Kennedy-McCarthy meeting took place "a few days before" the New Hampshire primary, in which the Minnesotan surprised his party by making a strong showing against President Johnson.

All other evidence indicated, however, that it was held on March 13, the day after the primary. That was the only occasion upon which the two Senators met in the office of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, which all sources agree was the site of the conversation.

Day of 'Reappraising'

One Kennedy source pointed out that March 13 was the day the New York Senator had said he was "reappraising" his decision not to seek the nomination, and that he would thus have been unlikely to make contrary private pledges to Mr. McCarthy at the same time.

Among other observations attributed by the book to Senator McCarthy are these:

"From the moment Senator Kennedy announced his candidacy, 'whatever chance I had was written off' and the Democratic candidate was certain to be either President Johnson or Vice President Humphrey.

"If Mr. Kennedy had not been assassinated, their forces could have combined at the Chicago convention to write a different Vietnam plank into the platform, but they never would have united on a candidate.

Both Kennedy and McCarthy sources agreed that the Minnesotan had told Senator Kennedy at their meeting that he planned to serve only one term as President if he was nominated and elected. But that was the only point on which they reinforced the book's account.