

Kennedy drive may fall to Chappaquiddick

Analysis by
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The Pennsylvania primary Tuesday presents a do-or-die situation for Sen. Ted Kennedy. If he wins, he can hang on until the California, New Jersey and Ohio primaries June 3 and get another chance at Pres. Carter. But if Kennedy loses Pennsylvania, there's little hope left for his candidacy.

Polls have shown all along that Democrats believe Kennedy is more able to handle the economy than Carter. Yet many of those same Democrats who believe Kennedy is better able to deal with the country's economic plight have often been unable to bring themselves to vote for the senator from Massachusetts. The circumstances of Mary Jo Kopechne's death 11 years ago weigh more heavily with Democrats than the state of the economy today.

A March Christian Science Monitor story provides a lot for the skeptics to ponder. Here are just some of the points made in that story:

- The evening party on Chap-



Graphic by Tom Eitel

paquiddick included five married men, all friends of the senator, and six young single women, all of who had worked on Robert Kennedy's presidential campaign.

- Most of the guests later testified they had no more than two drinks during the party, and that Mary Jo Kopechne was not a heavy drinker. But a Massachusetts police analysis of blood stains on Kopechne's blouse after the accident found the alcohol content "would be con-

sistent with about 3.7 to 5 ounces, 80- to 90-proof liquor within one hour prior to death."

- Kennedy says it was his intention to return Mary Jo Kopechne to her motel room because she said she was feeling ill. But Kopechne left both her purse and her motel key behind at the party.

- Kennedy has always made a big point of the fact that he had never driven on Chappaquiddick Road before the nighttime accident occurred. But during

the day, Kennedy's chauffeur had driven him over Chappaquiddick Road, the only paved road on the island, three times. The chauffeur had also driven Kennedy over the island's other road, the dirt Dyke Road, to the beach. Dyke Road goes over the bridge off which Kennedy later drove his car.

- Kennedy has also always claimed it would be easy for anyone late at night to make a wrong turn at the intersection of Chappaquiddick Road and Dyke Road and head out toward the island's ferry slip. But a photograph and a map carried in the Chronicle don't seem to bear out this contention. It would appear Kennedy would

have had to make a very sharp and distinct turn to the right off Chappaquiddick Road in order to enter Dyke Road.

- Indeed, the judge at the inquest into Kopechne's death wrote, "I infer a reasonable and probable explanation of the totality of the above facts is that Kennedy and Kopechne did not intend to return to Edgartown at that time; that Kennedy did not intend to drive to the ferry slip and his turn onto Dyke Road was intentional."

- Nine hours elapsed between the time of the accident and the time Kennedy reported it. Although it may be true that he was dazed and unaware for those nine hours, his friends were not. Specifically, the two lawyer friends with whom Kennedy tried to retrieve Kopechne's body would have to know that accidents are supposed to be reported to police within a reasonable period of time.

Kennedy has asked to be forgiven after having been judged "by the basic American standard of fairness." But fairness may have nothing to do with how Kennedy is finally judged.

In Pennsylvania, though, look for Kennedy to perhaps at last overcome the Chappaquiddick factor. In fact, Carter's camp has virtually conceded the state to him. The tide now is turning in Kennedy's favor. The question now is, is it turning too late?

mike lee
cheshire fortnightly

We are the victims of one another's facades.

William H. Whyte Jr.,
The Organization Man

ALL SYSTEMS NORMAL

Ah, old friends. It's been three years since I graduated from South Eugene, and I see a few of them on campus from time to time. We always start our conversations with "You've sure changed!"

So it began when I met Rick the other day. He was the big elitist of my gang: He would only listen to jazz and classical music, he meticulously avoided fads, and when he TP'd a house he'd always be so damn neat about it.

The last time I saw him was graduation night, back in '77. I almost didn't recognize him when we passed each other in the street last week — something about him looked wrong.

"Yeah Mike, I've had it with trying to rebel from peer group pressures," he said. "From now on, I'm going to be normal."

Aha! I thought. That explains the \$15 haircut, the designer jeans, and — my God — that commercially tanned skin.

"Why the sellout?" I asked him. "Back at South High, you were the consummate elitist, always putting down anything the general public liked. You'd sooner moon the principal than hum an Elton John hit."

"Don't put down Elton," Rick

warned me. "His early works with Taupin were classics."

"The question remains."

"Why did I change?" He cast furtive glances to each side and lowered his voice. "I would go to parties — when I was invited — and everyone would gab about sports, the latest hits, drugs. I'd politely laugh and nod on cue, but when I told a witty joke about politics or the economy — hell, all I got were blank stares.

"Mike, I was an outcast of my generation."

He pulled a joint out of his shirt pocket and lit it, taking a long drag.

"Y'know Mike, three years ago I didn't even know what pot smelled like. Now I can't even remember my last breath of fresh air."

I shook my head. "When did all of this happen?"

"A couple of summers back. I went to see Animal House, which looked like a bad TV sitcom with dirty jokes thrown in. But while I was feeling ill, the audience was in hysterics, Lee, they were rolling in the aisles. And that's all anybody talked about for the next month."

"That's when I realized I

wasn't being included. Right then, I stopped reading the newspaper and canceled my New Yorker subscription.

"In two weeks I received more party invitations than in the previous six months."

"Wow," I said.

"I knew I was on to something. I started listening to KSND — they have that cool 'Hot Stuff Stereo' slogan now — and dancing at all-campus discos.

"By that time, I was having affairs with three women."

"Gosh," I said.

"I switched my major from English to business, had my hair styled, bought a new wardrobe and toked pot. To pay for it all, I dealt speed and coke on the street.

"When the frat accepted me, I knew I had made it — certified normal."

"Gee," I said. "What next?"

"Don't ask me," Rick said. "I don't do anything until at least five people I know are doing it — it's safe that way. Hey, I'd like to stick around and shoot the breeze, but I've gotta play frisbee with the gang. We'll see ya."

"So long," I said. And he rollerskated away, blending into the crowd.

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