

COMICS START NATIONAL TREND

Have You Heard The Latest Joke About Kennedy

By ARTHUR EDSON
AP Newsfeatures Editor

WASHINGTON (AP)—Once upon a time, a comedian pranced

out and peddled his jokes, not one of which dealt with President Kennedy or his bustling family.

That was long ago. Since John F. Kennedy moved into the White House, he and his relatives have been imitated more, cartooned more and joked about more than any other presidential family in history.

A man in the entertainment business points out that the professionals are simply following a national trend.

"You don't have to be a comedian to understand this," he says. "Get into an airplane, or just stand on a street corner, and pretty soon a Kennedy joke will come along."

Political comedy has even acquired an official standing, complete with news conference com-

ment. Between one question on Brazil's fiscal troubles and another on increased aid for Chile was lodged a query on this glut of presidential fun-poking.

"Can you tell us," the President was asked, "whether you read and listen to these things, and whether they produce annoyance or enjoyment?"

"Annoyment," Kennedy said. But he grinned dutifully. In our society no man ever confesses to that cardinal sin, that he lacks a sense of humor.

"Yes," Kennedy continued, "I have read them and listened to them and actually I listened to Mr. Meader's record, but I thought it sounded more like Teddy than it did me—so he's annoyed."

Few needed to be told that

the President was referring to Vaughn Meader, a onetime professional hillbilly who hit the jackpot with his smash record, "The First Family."

Meader is making more out of his Kennedy routine than any other imitator. Indeed, since his take may reach an incredible \$3 million, he's making more out of the presidency than any President ever has.

But long before Meader's astonishing success, every comedian was trying to get the Kennedy's into the act.

The range is complete, from established stars like Jack Benny, Bob Hope and Red Skelton down to club comics who hope, like Meader, that somehow their stuff will catch fire.

This nation has always kidded its Presidents, sometimes good

naturally, sometimes viciously, as in the cartoons that compared Abraham Lincoln with singularly unattractive gorillas.

But the comic pace is uneven. Franklin Roosevelt—and Mrs. R.—were the butt of endless jokes. So was Harry Truman.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, possibly because he was rarely seen except on carefully controlled formal or semiformal occasions, didn't attract nearly so much comedy. What jokes he did inspire, often about his golf, were likely to be puny.

Then came the Kennedy—and the flood.

Personal comedy succeeds only if the listeners can quickly identify the trait being lampooned. For example: Jack Benny has established his stinginess so completely that his slightest comment on money produces automatic laughter.

This is why the Kennedys are irresistible targets. There are so many of them, they are in the news so much, they have so many habits.

They have their own football team. They have an endless supply of relatives. They have Caroline. They have baby John. They have dogs and horses.

Brother Robert has a swimming pool into which guests allegedly fall. Mrs. Kennedy likes art, fox hunts and stunning clothes and hair arrangements. President Kennedy has an accent and some stock phrases that plead for imitation and comment.

The intensity of their drive adds to the merriment. For the Kennedys care, and in caring become more exposed to the humorists' barbs.

Among themselves intimates the Kennedy to have a lively sense of Justice Department party for Robert Kennedy general, turns to be a steady stream of affection and respect stinging here. This is teasing.

With strangers, it is a story. No one likes to be subject of jests by especially the sensitive. The President used the word available—one reporter—when he caused annoyance.

Daisy Cleland, Evening Star society says that at a recent party Kennedy was asked to listen to "The First Family."

"No," said the attorney, and turned abruptly to talk to someone else. His reaction is understandable. On the record Robert wasn't handled as gently as the President, appears eternal kid brother, hates—and feels he's grown.

Although the comedy brings annoyance, or more violent, the Kennedy do nothing about it. When directed at leaders, laughter is the most effective weapon society can have.

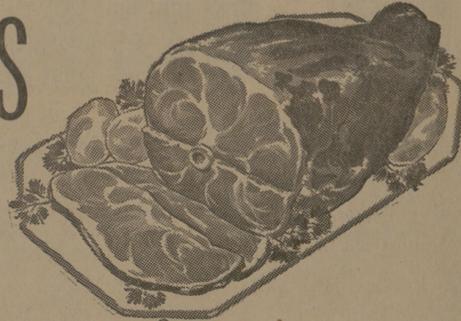
So the fun will go on unabated.

And comedians like Joyce from Massachusetts go on saying things come from the occupied "Hyannis Port."

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Sorority Makes Civil Rights Voice

By The Intercollegiate Press
MADISON, Wis. — Delta Gamma, one of the nation's leading college social sororities, in danger of being ousted from the University of Wisconsin on the recommendation of the University Human Rights Committee, has declared in its national policy that "its chapters should elect persons to membership solely on the basis of their individual worth without regard to race, color, creed or national origin."

The new policy statement came in a letter to the Wisconsin Human Rights Committee which, for months, has been working with the sorority in the development of such a declaration. In October, the committee reported on the national sorority's suspension, last spring, of its Beloit (Wis.) chapter after that chapter had pledged a Negro, but suggested then, and again in November, that banning of the sorority from the University of Wisconsin, in line with Wisconsin's non-discrimination policy, be delayed pending negotiation of the sorority.

AS A RESULT of the policy statement, the sorority is now suggesting that it be allowed to remain on the Wisconsin campus, and to it that its new policy be stated and applied by the organization, local chapters and individual members.

In her letter outlining the policy, Mrs. Kenneth P. Groves, national president of the Delta Gamma, specifically, Omega chapter at the University of Wisconsin, and a chapter of the Delta Gamma, may pledge and according to Delta Gamma, no girl on the basis of individual worth, without regard to race, color, creed or national origin and such action is not to be deemed to be in any circumstance for any action against any member of the chapter.

In its report to the Human Rights Committee, the Wisconsin Chapter of Delta Gamma has urged the prompt reinstatement of the Mu Chapter at Beloit and has offered "to provide its membership with assistance and help to the chapter."

The national sorority stated that its suspension of the chapter was caused by the presence of a Negro and has cited other charges against the chapter.

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