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Kennedy Brothers Teaming To Link Rackets, Race Issue

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WASHINGTON, March 28—The Kennedy brothers have shown this jaded capital city something new in the way of political teamwork.

The feat was accomplished by Sen. John Kennedy (D-Mass), the leading candidate for the 1960 Democratic nomination for president, and brother Robert Kennedy, counsel for the Senate Rackets Committee.

On the same day that Sen. Kennedy's labor-management reform bill was favorably reported to the Senate, Counsel Kennedy introduced documentary evidence before the Rackets Committee showing that racket infiltration of the Teamsters Union had stooped to exploiting segregation feelings in the South. This is widely regarded here as the most sensational charge heard against the racket-infested Teamsters in two years' hearings.

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THAT THE incident was prearranged was denied on all sides, but the senator in commenting on the labor-management reform bill said:

"This bill will make it unprofitable for hoodlums to infiltrate the union movement as it bars convicted felons from holding office, provides strict accounting of union funds to members and gives the secretary of labor broad powers to investigate and prevent violations of the standards imposed by the measure."

The Senate Rackets Committee, developing the incident out of an investigation in Miami recently, may have difficulty obtaining substantiating testimony because of failure of witnesses to identify physical evidence. The problem involves the refusal of one Dave Frechette, Miami Teamsters representative, and others to identify a letter to James R. Hoffa, general president of the Teamsters. This means Hoffa can take the position of cooperating with the committee, and the committee will be unable to tie Hoffa to uncooperative witnesses.

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THE COMMITTEE'S counsel, Robert Kennedy, and chief investigator, Kenneth O'Donnell, told this reporter that there probably will be a follow-up session. However, O'Donnell volunteered the belief that it will be difficult to



Robert Kennedy

Sen. Kennedy

break down Hoffa's defense without further substantiating testimony.

The latest sensation out of the Senate Rackets Committee will not only underscore previous disclosures of racket infestation of labor unions but will also cast a doubt on efforts of opposition to

defeat or overhaul the Kennedy labor bill. Deploing the repeated efforts of opponents to change his bill, Sen. Kennedy has charged that the changes would result in no bill at all.

"We have a strong and effective reform bill which protects union finances, insures members' rights to secret elections and remedies abuses of trusteeships," Sen. Kennedy declared recently. He added that he would be satisfied with the result if the bill should be passed as reported by the committee and that it would deal satisfactorily with Hoffa and others like him.

The senator was sitting beside his brother as the Senate Rackets Committee brought out the latest Teamsters' scandal. He refused to add anything further to previous comments.