

Edward Kennedy: The Lawmaker

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Global Research, August 28, 2009

[Planetary Movement](#) 28 August 2009

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Law and Justice](#)

He never lingered over the pain in his past. Memories echoed in the domes, surrounding him with an aura of destiny. The pain of tragic loss; a sister in perpetual absentia; the echoes of bullets lacerating his brothers; a spiraling plane crash that shattered his spine; a panic underwater and the loss of an innocent life; his son's loss of a limb; the perpetual onslaught of rumors whispering scandals; the wind in his face; the tides of the sea; sailing against the winds of time - these could not disturb his dream. He focused his vision as he understood the pulse of time and the concentration of fury in pursuit of justice. Keen, intent and open, in possession of certainty in equality, liberty and justice; he strode the corridors of power and knew the ways and means of Senates and Congresses and Presidents and Pentagons. In a succession of houses or on the crest of waves rippling with monsters of the deep, he was schooled in the lessons of life by parents who nourished him.

Suddenly, the continuity of the world was wrenched from him. An implacable terror displaced security in his mind, members of his family fell into darkness, the future morphed into a twisted dystopia. The world presented danger and uncertainty for him and his family. In the gloaming chaos building up around him, he smote the enemies of peace, justice, equality and liberty. Realizing that he would never know stability, he reached down deeper inside himself for the source of his will. In quiet desperation, the days, the months, the years, the decades washed over him. He arrived at a point where he realized he had survived to exist beyond fear, with hope, with joy and with clarity forged in the crucible of time. Then he was swept forward by his dream - a gift from his brothers - and he summoned forth a vision that glistened like billions of stars.

A nation that required service; a dream of racial equality; the righteousness of civil liberties and equality; the availability of education; health care; continuity amidst the tides of history and above all - peace amongst nations. His departed brothers dreamt their dreams of things that never were, and he captured their visions transforming them into words and forging them into laws. He wielded the hammers of justice, and he shaped the law according to his vision, his hope, his dream. Dreams abided in him. Dreams swept forth before him. Dreams compelled him. Dreams empowered him. Dreams enveloped him and closed over him and transformed him into the most powerful lawmaking dreamer in his nation. He raised his voice and sang his dream unto his nation.

Utterly enthralled, he came to understand — history was surging around him. Time and departure were beckoning. He grasped the wheel of his yacht and sailed against the winds summoning his people to march forward as a new generation of dreamers, carrying and enriching the torch of his dream. Justice and Equality murmured into his inner ear, a constant refrain of the laws that never were, and he asked, Why Not? A murmuring memory of his brothers invaded him, and he divined a refrain of laws defending civil rights that the

privileged fought fiercely against — and of a people searching for the health and well-being that was their beloved human right. The murmurings in his mind became a song that he sang of mighty laws defending the rights of humanity.

These things, America knows. But, in his final hour, he reached out into the future - uncertain of the courses of history - in hope of a better tomorrow before he soared outward into his infinite dream.

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