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IN THE MIDST of a media frenzy over whether he intended to challenge President Jimmy Carter for the Democratic nomination in 1980, the late Sen. Ted Kennedy observed: "The press always creates a candidate and public official the

essed with personality flaws and foibles while largely ignoring those — experience, depth of intellect, ability to persuade and strength of

arcasm may have been over the top, its underlying message surfaces campaigns and in the offices of elected government, usually in ions they consider trivial or not connected to their ability to carry out abilities.

that unearthing personal indiscretions is a

He's been the subject of speculation nearly since the day he took office in 2010, fueled by his brash, blunt style and public scraps with legislators, public employee unions, teachers, local officials and virtually anyone else who stood in the path of

progress and compiling a record of achievement that Americans expect from their elected officials.

Major problems

In the meantime, Christie must still manage a government facing serious problems — slow economic recovery and job creation, an unemployment rate above 8 percent, and a budget that appears at this early stage to be in a deficit situation.

He's given no indication that he intends to cease flirting with national ambitions or take any steps to dampen media speculation that he is in the presidential mix.

He received an inkling of what he faces in the chapter devoted to him in "Double Down,"
