



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **Neil MacNeil Interview, 05/09/2006**

Robert A. Martin, Research Director

Miller Center Documents¹

- Edward M. Kennedy General Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

- Neil MacNeil, *Dirksen: Portrait of a Private Man*, (New York: World Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 267-268, 295-296, 354-362, 367-370.
- "Teddy and Kennedyism," *Time Magazine*, 09/28/1962, pp. 14-18.
- "The Ascent of Ted Kennedy," *Time Magazine*, 01/10/1969, pp. 13-17.
- "The Kennedys: A Private Inquest," *Time Magazine*, 11/07/1969, pp. 25-26.
- "Inquest on Chappaquiddick," *Time Magazine*, 01/19/1970, pp 18-19.
- "The Kennedys: End of the Affair," *Time Magazine*, 04/20/1970, pp. 17.
- "Teddy: Running or Not," *Time Magazine*, 04/07/1975, pp. 51.
- "'When Carter Goes Down, I Go Up,'" *Time Magazine*, 08/21/1978, pp. 10-11.
- "Playing the Florida Game," *Time Magazine*, 10/15/1979, pp 52-53.
- Neil MacNeil, "The Kennedy Challenge," *Time Magazine*, 11/05/1979, pp 14-26.
- "Carter's Rousing Revival," *Time Magazine*, 12/31/1979, pp. 12-13.

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SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY GENERAL TIMELINE

Prepared by Paul Martin

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/27/06

1961

February Edward M. Kennedy (EMK) is hired to serve as an Assistant District Attorney in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. EMK is one of 26 Assistant District Attorneys working under District Attorney Garrett Byrne.

Fall/Winter EMK tells Boston journalist Eddie Martin that he is thinking of running for the Senate in 1962, and asks Martin if he would be interested in running his campaign's press section. EMK's father, Joseph P. Kennedy, has reportedly been strongly encouraging EMK to run. (Robert F. Kennedy oral history interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 04/13/1964, pp. 189-191; James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1976, p. 76)

1962

February EMK travels to Washington, D.C. and informs Senator Benjamin Smith II (D-MA) that he intends to run for President John F. Kennedy's (JFK's) unexpired Senate seat in the November election. Smith, an old college friend of JFK's, had been appointed to fill the seat when JFK was elected president in 1960. Smith agrees to step aside and provide EMK with whatever help EMK should need. (Theo Lippman, *Senator Ted Kennedy: The Career behind the Image*, New York: Norton, 1976, p. 16; Milton Gwirtzman oral history interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 01/19/1966, p. 26)

March EMK makes his national political debut on *Meet the Press*, in which he discusses the possibility of running for the Senate in 1962. JFK had helped to prepare EMK for his performance. (Adam Clymer, *Edward Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1999, p. 35)

The Kennedys decide to publicly disclose EMK's expulsion from Harvard University after it is learned that Bob Healy, *The Boston Globe's* Washington bureau chief, has picked up reports of the incident. (*Time*, 09/29/1962)

June EMK wins his party's endorsement to run for the Senate at the pre-primary Democratic State Convention in Springfield, Massachusetts on the 9th. Despite losing his party's endorsement, Massachusetts Attorney General Edward McCormack continues to challenge EMK in the Democratic primary. McCormack is the nephew of U.S. Speaker of the House John W. McCormack. (Burns, p. 79)

- August* JFK, Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), Ted Sorensen, Milton Gwirtzman and Joey Gargan work with EMK at different times in Hyannis Port to help prepare EMK for his debates with McCormack. (Gwirtzman interview, 01/19/1966, pp. 28-32; Lester David, *Good Ted, Bad Ted: The Two Faces of Edward M. Kennedy*, Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group, 1993, pp. 77-78)
- EMK and McCormack hold the first of two televised debates on the 27th. McCormack reportedly alienates voters by harshly attacking EMK as unqualified and inexperienced. (Gwirtzman interview, 01/19/1966, p. 28; Clymer, pp. 40-41)
- September* EMK meets with JFK, RFK, Gwirtzman, Gargan and John Culver over Labor Day weekend to discuss his second upcoming debate with McCormack. In the second debate, McCormack abandons his counterproductive strategy of personally attacking EMK. (Gwirtzman interview, 12/23/1971, p. 6)
- EMK defeats McCormack in the Democratic primary. (*Time*, 09/28/1962)
- October* JFK sends Sorensen to Massachusetts to prepare EMK for his appearance on *Meet the Press*. Sorensen reportedly advises EMK not to discuss the Cuban Missile Crisis in his campaign, as EMK's comments could be misinterpreted in Moscow. (Clymer, p. 42; Gwirtzman, 01/19/1966, p. 32)
- November* EMK defeats Republican George Cabot Lodge in the Massachusetts general election for U.S. Senate on the 6th. (*The Boston Globe*, 01/05/2003)
- 1963**
- November* While presiding over the Senate floor on the 22nd, EMK receives word that JFK has been shot in Dallas.
- 1964** EMK makes his maiden speech on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which is signed on July 2nd, and EMK strongly supports the Economic Opportunity Act, which is signed on August 20th. The EOA states that programs will be "developed, conducted and administered with the maximum feasible participation and the residents of the areas and members of the groups served." It also establishes community action programs, including ABCD, to mobilize resources that can be used in a direct attack on the roots of poverty. ("Timeline," Office of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, http://kennedy.senate.gov/index_high.html)
- June* EMK's back is broken in a plane crash on the 19th that kills his administrative assistant, Edward Moss, and pilot Edwin Zimny.
- 1965**
- January* With the help of a cane, EMK is sworn into the Senate with RFK on the 4th. EMK and RFK are both later assigned to the Labor and Public Welfare

Committee. EMK is the senior Senator. (Clymer, p. 65, 72; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1978, pp. 676, 680-681)

October Serving as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees, EMK travels to South Vietnam for his first inspection tour from the 23rd to the 27th.

1966 EMK, through an amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act, creates a national health center system. In 1966, the nation's first comprehensive neighborhood health center is established by Tufts University in cooperation with ABCD at the Columbia Point Housing Project in Dorchester.

Spring EMK begins to criticize the U.S. selective service system as unfair. (Clymer, pp. 83-84)

1968 As a result of EMK's championing of bilingual education, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 is passed by Congress.

January EMK travels to South Vietnam for the second time on the 1st. EMK has an advance team schedule his itinerary for his twelve-day tour to allow him to better assess the situation in Vietnam. After the trip EMK immediately begins to speak out more forcefully against the war. (Burns, p. 348; Clymer, pp. 101-102)

March With RFK's having decided to announce his candidacy for president in 1968, EMK attends an important meeting at Stephen Smith's house to plan RFK's campaign. EMK is assigned to work the non-primary states. (David Burke oral history interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 12/08/1971, pp. 44-46)

EMK travels to Green Bay, Wisconsin to explain why RFK has decided to enter the primary and to discuss how RFK and Eugene McCarthy might work together to avoid splitting the anti-Vietnam vote.

On the 16th, RFK announces his candidacy for president in 1968.

June After winning the California primary, RFK is shot in Los Angeles on the 5th.

August EMK speaks at Holy Cross College in Worcester, Massachusetts on the 21st, which is his first public appearance since RFK's assassination. In the speech, EMK announces that he will not retire from politics and will continue his brother's fight against the war. (Clymer, pp. 121-122)

1969

January EMK defeats Senator Russell Long (D-LA) for the post of Senate Majority Whip. Speculation regarding EMK's candidacy for the 1972 presidential election

quickly builds after his victory. (Burns, p. 348; Clymer, pp. 132-134; *Time*, 01/10/1969)

- July* Following an appreciation party held for former members of RFK's campaign staff, EMK drives his car off a bridge at Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts on the 18th. EMK manages to escape but his passenger, Mary Jo Kopechne, drowns in the accident. EMK does not report the accident for nearly nine hours.
- 1970** EMK continues his commitment to senior citizens by supporting Older American Community Service Employment. He also advocates the Voting Rights Act Extension, maintaining the Civil Rights gained in the 1960's. Due to the skyrocketing costs of home heating, particularly for low-income families and elders, EMK actively works on creating a fuel assistance program for the low-income.
- November* EMK is reelected to the Senate.
- 1971** EMK becomes Chairman of the Senate Health Subcommittee.
- January* EMK loses his Majority Whip post in a close vote to Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV). (Clymer, pp. 171-173)
- 1972** EMK strengthens the Meals on Wheels program for senior citizens in 1972. This program offers nutritional meals to homebound seniors. Another priority for EMK is the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program. This program, popularly known as WIC, offers food, nutrition counseling, and access to health services for low-income women, infants, and children under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.
- July* At the Democratic National Convention, EMK declines an offer to serve as presidential nominee George McGovern's running-mate in the 1972 election. (Clymer, pp. 187-191)
- 1973**
- November* EMK learns that his twelve year old son, EMK, Jr., has cancer in his leg.
- 1974**
- September* Despite leading in the polls, EMK announces on the 23rd that he will not seek the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976. (Clymer, p. 225)
- 1975** As part of his work on a wide range of domestic programs affecting the poor, EMK works on the national Family Planning Initiatives.
- 1976** EMK is reelected to the U.S. Senate.

1978

March Senate James Eastland (D-MS) announces his retirement from the Senate. EMK is next in line to serve as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee. (Clymer, p. 268)

December EMK gives an important speech on national health insurance at the Democratic mid-term convention in Memphis on the 9th. Hamilton Jordan, Carter's Chief of Staff, reportedly takes the speech as signaling EMK's intention to challenge President Jimmy Carter for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1980. (Clymer, pp. 276-277)

1979 EMK becomes Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Summer After much discussion with family and friends, EMK decides to challenge Carter for the Democratic nomination and run for president in 1980.

September EMK meets with Carter in the White House on the 7th to inform Carter that he intends to run for president in 1980. (Clymer, p. 284)

EMK reportedly struggles to answer difficult, personal questions during an interview with *CBS Reports'* Roger Mudd from Squaw Island on the 29th. The interview is later aired in November. (Clymer, pp. 285-286)

November Speaking from Boston's Faneuil Hall on the 7th, EMK officially announces his candidacy for the 1980 presidential election.

1980

Early 1980 EMK wins Democratic primaries in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, California, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and New Jersey. The rest go to Carter, the incumbent.

June EMK meets with Carter at the White House on the 5th but is unsuccessful in his calls for a debate. (Clymer, p. 312)

August EMK withdraws his bid for the presidency in a powerful speech to the Democratic National Convention. Commenting on his late entry into the campaign, EMK later says he spent too much time "worrying about whether to run or not to run instead of what to do after I ran." (Clymer, p. 339)

November Ronald Reagan wins the 1980 presidential election. EMK loses his position as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee after Republicans win control of the Senate. ("Edward M. Kennedy," *Biography Resource Center*)

1981 EMK garners Congressional support for Low-Income Energy Assistance Programs (Fuel Assistance).

<i>January</i>	EMK and Joan Kennedy announce on the 21 st that they are getting divorced.
1982	EMK sponsors the Job Training Partnership Act with Senator Dan Quayle (R-IN), which proposes to educate and train the nation's front-line workforce. It strengthens program requirements, provides better targeting of services to reach those most in need, and provides higher quality services. Despite the efforts to eliminate the Summer Jobs Program, EMK has it reinstated.
<i>December</i>	After consulting closely with his family, EMK announces he will not run for president in 1984.
1983	On becoming a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, EMK opposes the untested Star Wars Program and strongly supports Nuclear Arms Control.
1985	
<i>December</i>	EMK announces in a five-minute televised statement on the 19 th that he will not run for president in 1988.
1987	EMK supports a Minimum Wage Increase and the Welfare-to-Jobs Incentives, increasing the job-readiness skills and disposable income for low-income and working poor individuals.
<i>January</i>	EMK becomes Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. He serves as Chairman until 1994.
1988	EMK is reelected to the U.S. Senate.
1991	
<i>Spring</i>	EMK's nephew, William Kennedy Smith, is charged with sexual battery in Palm Beach. EMK had been with Smith earlier on the night in question and is later called to testify. (Clymer, pp. 488-491; Edward M. Kennedy Biography, <i>Almanac of American Politics 2000</i>)
1992	As a strong proponent of Early Childhood Education, EMK assists in the Expansion of the Head Start Program which increases the number of low-income children served by 25%. EMK also works on the Head Start Improvement Act which maintains quality, extends services and authorizes the purchase of buildings to enhance program stability. His actions on the Summer Jobs for Youth Program result in a \$500 million supplemental appropriation that is allocated for fiscal year 1992 for summer jobs which provide an additional 300,000 youth with summer employment.
<i>July</i>	EMK and Vicki Reggie are married in a small ceremony at EMK's home in McLean, Virginia.

1994 EMK works closely with President Bill Clinton to help pass the Family and Medical Leave Act and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which provide seed money for local school-to-work programs designed and run by local business, education, community and labor leaders. He also sponsors the Human Services Reauthorization Act which guarantees the extension of ABCD and all Community Action core funding. It also puts Head Start on a path to reach all eligible children and expands Head Start to cover pregnant women and young children on the 0-3 age group. This act also reauthorizes the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to help families pay their heating bills.

EMK defeats Republican challenger Mitt Romney to be reelected to the U.S. Senate.

1999 After finishing the 1996 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Act (welfare reform), EMK assists the hardest to employ with Welfare-to-Work Initiatives. These initiatives provide individuals with access to job training, adult education, job placement, child care, transportation assistance and case management, and therefore gives families the opportunity to leave welfare. ABCD, in partnership with Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries, initiates a successful welfare-to-work program which is strongly supported by EMK.

2000 EMK is reelected to the U.S. Senate.