



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **John Kenneth Galbraith Interview, 08/13/2005**

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Miller Center Documents¹

- John Kenneth Galbraith Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

- John Kenneth Galbraith bio, *Biography Resource Center*, <http://www.galenet.com>.
- John Kenneth Galbraith oral history interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 09/10/2002, pp. 1-5.
- Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987) pp. 551-553, 588.
- James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976) pp. 122-125, 246-251.
- Burton Hersh, *The Education of Edward Kennedy: A Family Biography* (New York, William Morrow, & Co., 1972) pp. 206-209.
- Theo Lippman Jr., *Senator Ted Kennedy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976) pp. 248-251.
- William V. Shannon, "The Emergence of Senator Kennedy (D., Mass.)," *The New York Times*, 08/22/1965.
- Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1999) pp. 292-320.
- Sue Warner, "Liberal Laments," *The Washington Post*, 06/16/1980.

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JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH TIMELINE

Prepared by Gregg D. Lindskog

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/01/2005

1908

October John Kenneth Galbraith is born in Iona Station in southern Ontario, Canada, on the 15th. (Peggy Lamson, *Speaking of Galbraith: A Personal Portrait*, New York: Tichenor & Fields, 1991, p. 1; John S. Gambs, *John Kenneth Galbraith*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975, p. 13; James Ronald Stanfield and Jacqueline Bloom Stanfield, eds., *Interviews with John Kenneth Galbraith*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004, p. xxix; Richard Parker, *John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005, p. 15)

1931

Galbraith graduates with a B.S. from the Ontario Agricultural College, then a branch of the University of Toronto. (Gambs, p. 13)

Galbraith attends the University of California in Berkley, California, where he studies until 1933. (Gambs, p. 13)

1933

Galbraith accepts a teaching position at an agricultural branch of the University of California. (Gambs, p. 13)

1934

Galbraith completes degree requirements for a Ph.D. in economics in 1934. (Gambs, p. 13)

Summer

Galbraith accepts a summer job with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Galbraith becomes a member of the Democratic Party, swearing that he is a “bona fide Democrat”. (Lamson, pp. 34-35)

Galbraith meets Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. while taking a trip to Boston by boat. (John Kenneth Galbraith oral history interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 09/10/2002, pp. 1-2)

Fall

Galbraith begins work as an Instructor of Economics at Harvard. He will hold the post until 1939. (Lamson, p. 35; *The New York Times*, 09/24/1956)

1935

Fall

As Instructor at Harvard, Galbraith meets Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. at Winthrop House, Harvard University. He will later meet John F. Kennedy (JFK) in the same capacity. (Galbraith interview, 09/10/2002, p. 1; Lamson, p. 39)

1936

Summer

Galbraith works at the Brookings Institution. (*The Washington Post*, 09/30/1937)

1937

- September* Galbraith becomes a U.S. citizen. (Lamson, p. 44)
- Galbraith marries Catherine (Kitty) Merriam Atwater in the Reformed Church of North Hempstead. (*The New York Times*, 09/18/1937)
- Galbraith spends the academic year at Cambridge University. (Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Life in the 20th Century: Innocent Beginnings, 1917-1950*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000, p. 282)

1938 Galbraith returns to Harvard for the academic year. (Schlesinger, p. 282)

1939 Galbraith spends the academic year at Princeton University. (Schlesinger, p. 282)

1940 Galbraith works for the Federal Farm Bureau. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xix)

1941

May Galbraith is appointed as director of the Price Division of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply. (*The New York Times*, 05/02/1941)

1943

May Galbraith leaves the Office of Price Administration and Supply. (Gambis, p. 13; Schlesinger, p. 283)

Galbraith serves on the board of editors at *Fortune* magazine. He will serve on the board until 1948. (*The New York Times*, 09/24/1956)

1945 Galbraith works as director of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. Galbraith will win the Medal of Freedom for his work. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xx; Parker, pp. 174-177; *The New York Times*, 11/26/1949)

1946

December Galbraith authors a report titled "Recovery in Europe" for the National Planning Association arguing that the United States must commit itself to aid Europe in post-war rebuilding. (*The New York Times*, 12/03/1946; *The Washington Post*, 12/15/1946)

1947

January Galbraith is one of the founding members of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). (Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, pp. 19-20)

1949

- February* Galbraith authors a report titled “Beyond the Marshall Plan” for the National Planning Association. The report supports the Marshall Plan but argues that more must be done for European political stability. (*The New York Times*, 02/14/1949; *The Washington Post*, 02/14/1949)
- November* Galbraith is named Professor of Economics at Harvard. (*The New York Times*, 11/26/1949)

1952

- February* Galbraith’s *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power* is published. (*The New York Times*, 02/20/1952)
- Summer/Fall* Galbraith is an economic advisor and speech writer for Adlai Stevenson’s unsuccessful 1952 presidential campaign. (*The New York Times*, 03/22/1955)

1955

- March* Galbraith is accused by Senator Homer E. Capehart (R-IN) of writing “favorably of communism.” Galbraith denies the charges. (*The New York Times*, 03/21/1955)
- April* Galbraith’s *The Great Crash* is published. (*The New York Times*, 03/11/1955)

- 1956** Galbraith is asked to help write speeches for Adlai Stevenson’s 1956 presidential campaign. (Galbraith interview, 09/10/2002, p. 12)

1957

- August* Galbraith is named chairman of the Democratic Advisory Council’s committee on economic policy. (*The New York Times*, 08/05/1957)

1958

- May* Galbraith’s *The Affluent Society* is published. It will later win the Tamiment Institute Book Award and the Hillman Foundation Award. (*The New York Times*, 05/27/1958, 12/02/1958, 04/23/1959)

1959

- February* Galbraith is named Paul M. Warburg Professor of Economics at Harvard University. (*The New York Times*, 02/03/1959)
- December* Galbraith and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. accuse Harvard of a Republican bias exhibited in awarding honorary degrees. (*The Washington Post*, 12/09/1959)

1960

- July* At the Democratic Convention, JFK selects Lyndon Johnson as his running mate. Robert Kennedy calls on Galbraith to help allay the concerns of liberal delegates. Galbraith is a close friend of Johnson's and agrees to do it. (John Kenneth Galbraith oral history interview, 09/12/2002, p. 28)
- Galbraith is listed as an advisor to JFK's presidential campaign. (*The Washington Post*, 07/17/1960)
- August* Galbraith's *The Liberal Hour* is published. (*The New York Times*, 07/01/1960)
- November* JFK wins the presidential election. *The New York Times* names Galbraith as one person who might be a candidate to run for JFK's vacated senate seat. (*The New York Times*, 11/10/1960, 11/11/1960, 12/18/1960)
- Galbraith wants to be appointed to the Senate seat, but is told that it will go to JFK's brother. (Lamson, p. 149; Parker, p. 348)
- December* *The New York Times* reports that Galbraith is JFK's choice for Ambassador to India. (*The New York Times*, 12/13/1960)

1961

- March* Galbraith is officially announced as nominee for Ambassador to India. (*The New York Times*, 03/16/1961)
- April* Galbraith arrives in India as Ambassador. (*The Washington Post*, 04/09/1961)
- November* Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and JFK begin a series of high profile talks in the United States. Galbraith is present and involved in the talks which include nuclear arms tests and the growing crisis in Vietnam. (*The Washington Post*, 11/08/1961)

1962

- January* Galbraith resigns his membership in the Cosmos Club after the famed social organization refuses the application of Carl Rowan, a prominent State Department official and African-American. Galbraith had sponsored JFK's membership application in the club in May 1960. JFK also removes his application. (*The New York Times*, 01/10/1962, 01/16/1962)
- March* Galbraith accompanies First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy as she makes a high profile visit to India. (*The New York Times*, 03/13/1962)
- May* Galbraith returns to the United States to seek medical treatment. He had also been hospitalized the previous February. (*The Washington Post*, 02/04/1962, 05/20/1962)

- July* The *Boston Herald* announces that Galbraith will resign his ambassadorship and return to teach at Harvard in February. Galbraith denies the report. (*The Washington Post*, 07/31/1962)
- August* Galbraith writes a letter to JFK opposing the 1962 tax cut. (Sean J. Savage, *JFK, LBJ, and the Democratic Party*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2004, p. 132)
- October* China begins an invasion of India. The United States and other nations condemn the Chinese actions and send military aid to India. (*The New York Times*, 10/22/1962)
- December* Galbraith announces he will remain as Ambassador to India until the Chinese-Indian crisis is concluded. (*The New York Times*, 12/18/1962; *The Washington Post*, 12/18/1962)

1963

- January* Harvard extends Galbraith's leave of absence until September 1963. (*The Washington Post*, 01/16/1963)
- July* Galbraith resigns as Ambassador to India. (*The New York Times*, 07/09/1963)
- Fall* Galbraith returns to Harvard. Galbraith and Samuel Beer host a party with the dual purpose of welcoming Galbraith back to Harvard and to ease the tension between Harvard academics and EMK. Some prominent academics had voiced opposition to EMK's decision to run for the Senate in 1962. (James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976, p. 247; Burton Hersch, *The Education of Edward Kennedy*, New York: William Morrow & Co., 1972, p. 207)
- November* JFK is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

1964

- June* EMK's back is broken in a plane crash on the 19th. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow & Co., 1999, pp. 59-64; *The New York Times*, 12/04/1964)
- July* EMK is transferred by ambulance on the 10th to a suite at the New England Baptist Hospital in Boston. Galbraith, Sam Beer and Jerome Weisner hold one-on-one seminars for EMK on economics, government and science. (Clymer, pp. 61-63; *The New York Times*, 12/04/1964)

1965

March Galbraith criticizes the U.S. policy in Vietnam during a California speech. (*The New York Times*, 03/21/1965)

August William V. Shannon reports that Galbraith is one of EMK's advisers. (*The New York Times*, 08/22/1965)

1966

April Galbraith criticizes U.S. involvement in Vietnam during several speeches in April. Galbraith is identified as one of the top U.S. critics of the war. (*The New York Times*, 04/23/1966)

1967

March Rowland Evans and Robert Novak write that EMK has asked Galbraith to join an advisory council that will help develop policy and ideology for the Massachusetts State Democratic Party. (*The Washington Post*, 05/22/1967)

June Galbraith's *The New Industrial State* is published. (*The New York Times*, 06/26/1967)

1968

March Galbraith publicly supports Robert Kennedy's entrance into the 1968 Democratic presidential primary campaign though did not suggest that he supports his nomination victory. Galbraith and the ADA, a group which he helped found and is the current national chairman, have already publicly supported Senator Eugene McCarthy. Galbraith notes that he and the ADA continue to support McCarthy. (*The New York Times*, 03/14/1968,)

Galbraith says Robert Kennedy has a "good chance" of winning the Democratic presidential primary. (*The New York Times*, 03/17/1968)

April Galbraith calls for the resignations of Dean Rusk, William P. Bundy, and Walt W. Rostow. (*The New York Times*, 04/02/1968)

Galbraith introduces McCarthy at a campaign rally in Boston. Galbraith continues to endorse McCarthy over Robert Kennedy. (*The New York Times*, 04/12/1968)

May Galbraith calls on the ADA to avoid public and partisan discord following the Democratic National Convention later this summer. The ADA renews its support for McCarthy. (*The New York Times*, 05/18/1968, 05/20/1968)

June Robert Kennedy is assassinated in Los Angeles, California. Galbraith attends funeral services. (*The New York Times*, 06/09/1968)

- October* Johnson announces a halt to bombing in Vietnam. (*The New York Times*, 11/01/1968)
- December* Galbraith is one of 90 public intellectuals who gather in Princeton, New Jersey to discuss the problems the U.S. will face over the next decade. (*The Washington Post*, 12/02/1968)
- 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. Following the accident several Kennedy friends arrive to offer EMK advice. Galbraith is unable to travel to Cape Cod due to illness, but offers EMK advice by telephone. (Lester David, *Good Ted, Bad Ted: The Two Faces of Edward M. Kennedy*, New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1993, p. 133; *The New York Times*, 07/27/1969)
- October* Galbraith's *Ambassador's Journal: A Personal Account of the Kennedy Years* is published. (*The New York Times*, 10/20/1969)
- 1970**
- January* Galbraith is selected as honorary chairman of "Referendum '70", a group designed to make the 1970 midterm elections a referendum on the Vietnam War. (*The New York Times*, 01/06/1970)
- Galbraith predicts that EMK will be the presidential nominee in 1972. (*The Washington Post*, 01/27/1970)
- 1972**
- Galbraith is President of the American Economic Association. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xx)
- February* Galbraith supports George McGovern for president. Galbraith advises McGovern throughout the campaign. (*The New York Times*, 02/27/1972, 04/02/1972, 06/18/1972)
- June* Galbraith attends a party honoring the release of EMK's book *In Critical Condition: The Crisis in America's Health Care*. (*The New York Times*, 06/14/1972)
- July* Galbraith sends McGovern a draft of a Democratic nomination acceptance speech. (*The New York Times*, 07/12/1972)
- Evans and Novak report that Galbraith was one of several Democratic activists who strongly opposed the selection of Boston mayor Kevin White as Democratic vice-presidential nominee. *The New York Times* later reports that both EMK and Galbraith, as leader of the Massachusetts delegation to the 1972 convention,

worked together to scuttle the White nomination. (Clymer, p. 189; Lamson, p. 202; *The New York Times*, 02/10/1975; *The Washington Post*, 07/17/1972)

1973

- March* Galbraith testifies for the defense in the “Pentagon Papers” trial. (*The New York Times*, 03/13/1973)
- June* Galbraith is named as one of the people on Richard Nixon’s “Enemies list”. (*The Washington Post*, 06/28/1973)
- September* Galbraith’s *Economics and the Public Purpose* is published. (*The New York Times*, 09/16/1973)

1975

- Galbraith retires from Harvard. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xx)
- September* Galbraith along with Arthur Schlesinger Jr., EMK’s brother-in-law Stephen Smith and others form “Non-New Yorkers to Save New York” a group designed to help New York’s growing “urban crisis.” (*The New York Times*, 09/10/1975)

1976

- September* *The New York Times* reports that Galbraith is sent a generic response letter from the presidential campaign of Jimmy Carter following Galbraith’s offer to aid the Carter campaign. Galbraith works on the campaign of Morris Udall. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xx; *The New York Times*, 09/29/1976)

1978

- October* Galbraith and EMK attend the opening of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. (*The Washington Post*, 10/22/1978)

1979

- May* Galbraith and EMK speak at a gathering of supporters of SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II). (*The Washington Post*, 05/15/1979)
- July* Galbraith meets with EMK to discuss whether EMK should challenge Carter for the 1980 Democratic nomination. (*The Washington Post*, 09/12/1979)
- October* Galbraith joins EMK and the Kennedy family at the dedication of the John F. Kennedy Library. (*The New York Times*, 10/21/1979)

1980

- January* Galbraith campaigns for EMK in California. (*The New York Times*, 01/18/1980)
- June* EMK and Galbraith attend the 33rd Annual Convention of the ADA. (*The Washington Post*, 06/16/1980)

- October* The creation of the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award is announced. Galbraith is named as one of the judges of the prize. (*The New York Times*, 10/09/1980)
- 1982** Galbraith is elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters for literature. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xxi)
- 1984** Galbraith assumes the presidency of the combined American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. (Stanfield and Stanfield, p. xxi)
- 1985**
- September* Galbraith wins the Roosevelt Four Freedoms Award. (*The New York Times*, 10/29/1985)
- 1986**
- July* Galbraith attends the wedding of Caroline Kennedy and Edwin Schlossberg. (*The Washington Post*, 07/20/1986)
- 1988**
- October* Galbraith is one of several public intellectuals who defend the maligned term “liberal” in a national newspaper advertisement. (*The New York Times*, 10/26/1988)
- 1991**
- January* EMK calls Galbraith to testify before Congress on the recession and its impact on the labor force. (*The New York Times*, 01/08/1991)
- 1994**
- May* Galbraith attends the funeral of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. (*The New York Times*, 05/24/1994)
- 1995**
- April* Galbraith attends a gathering commemorating the 50th anniversary of Franklin Roosevelt’s death. (*The New York Times*, 04/13/1995)
- 1998**
- October* Galbraith celebrates his 90th birthday with friends and family at Harvard. Harvard announces a fund named for him. (*The New York Times*, 10/16/1998)
- 1999**
- July* Galbraith attends the funeral of John F. Kennedy Jr. (*The New York Times*, 07/24/1999)

November Galbraith calls for a reevaluation of the Presidency of Lyndon Johnson, calling for less emphasis on the Vietnam War and more on the efforts of the “Great Society”. (*The New York Times*, 11/27/1999)

2000

August Galbraith is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. (*The New York Times*, 08/10/2000)