



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **Paul Kirk Interview, 11/27/2005, 06/20/2007**

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Miller Center Documents¹

- Paul Kirk Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

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PAUL G. KIRK, JR. TIMELINE

Prepared by Anne Mariel Peters

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 10/05/2005

1938

January On the 18th, Paul Grattan Kirk, Jr. is born in Newton, Massachusetts. He is the son of an associate justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, and will attend parochial schools in Newton during his childhood. (James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, USA: Norton, 1976, p. 235; “Paul G(rattan) Kirk,” *Almanac of Famous People*, 8th ed. Thomson Gale, 2003)

1956

Kirk enters Harvard as a member of the class of 1960. At Harvard, Kirk takes classes from Henry Kissinger and McGeorge Bundy, plays football, and graduates with what he estimates to be a B-minus average. Kirk later enters Harvard Law School, where he is inspired by John F. Kennedy’s presidency to enter public service. (Burns, pp. 235-236)

1968

March On the 16th, RFK announces from the Senate Caucus Room that he will enter the Democratic primaries. (Burton Hersh, *The Education of Edward Kennedy*, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1972, p. 298; Clymer, pp. 108-109; *The Washington Post*, 03/17/1968)

May RFK wins the Indiana primary on the 7th and loses the Oregon primary to McCarthy on the 28th. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1999, pp. 109-112)

As a younger member of Kenny O’Donnell’s wing of RFK’s campaign, Kirk primes Michigan before the arrival of EMK late in the month. A major question for the RFK campaign is what the United Auto Workers (UAW) is going to do; an old element has allegiance to Vice President Hubert Humphrey, but a new element is sympathetic to RFK. (Hersh, pp. 316-318)

On the 25th, EMK attends the Pennsylvania Democratic Convention in Harrisburg, at which there is strong support for Humphrey. Kirk and O’Donnell had “landed on the union people hard,” and EMK and aide David Burke had tried numerous gentler approaches, yet the only leader of significance to support RFK was Rep. Billy Green (D-PA). (Hersh, p. 320)

June After winning the California primary, RFK is shot in Los Angeles on the 5th. RFK dies the next day. (Clymer, pp. 112-114)

Speculation begins immediately that EMK could run with Humphrey to help unify the Democratic Party. (*The New York Times*, 06/07/1968)

- 1969** Kirk joins the staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Administrative Practices and Procedures as assistant counsel. (<http://www.jfklibrary.org/heritage.htm>)
- January* EMK is elected Majority Whip by Senate Democrats. His election is interpreted by some as first step towards a run for the presidential nomination and by others as a sign that he is putting aside presidential ambitions to focus on the Senate. (Clymer, pp.131-133; *Time*, 01/10/1969; *The New York Times*, 02/23/1969)
- 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 is able to escape but his passenger, Mary Jo Kopechne, drowns in the accident. EMK does not report the accident for nearly nine hours.
- 1970** After Chappaquiddick, EMK tries to come off strong in the 1970 Senate election, planning a campaign that would maximize direct exposure to voters. EMK enhances appeals to specific interests in his constituency; pushes voter registration; raises money outside of the family and spends it discreetly; and hosts community forums where he answers questions. Kirk helps EMK go over speech material. (Burns, p. 185)
- November* EMK defeats his Republican opponent for the Senate, Josiah A. Spaulding, with sixty-one percent of the vote. EMK thanks the voters for expressing a "sense of confidence" in him. EMK's staff interprets the margin of victory as enough to preserve his national reputation despite the accident at Chappaquiddick. (*1970 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., p. 1088; *The New York Times*, 11/05/1970)
- 1971** Kirk leaves the Senate Judiciary Committee staff and joins EMK's staff, where he becomes EMK's chief political aide. Kirk advises EMK on health and labor issues, and he is credited with counseling EMK on many of EMK's most significant and innovative domestic policy positions. (Burns, pp. 235-236; <http://www.jfklibrary.org/heritage.htm>)
- January* EMK loses his Majority Whip post 31-24 to Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV), who never formally announced his candidacy. Byrd claims that he was performing most of EMK's tasks as Majority Whip for him anyway; EMK spent relatively little time on the floor, and Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-MT) gradually delegated more responsibility to Byrd. EMK later tells Byrd that that the loss was one of the best things that ever happened to him, pushing him from Senate leadership to committee work. (Clymer, pp. 171-173; *The Washington Post*, 01/26/1971, 12/15/1974; *The New York Times*, 02/28/1971)

October EMK's old Army tentmate Matty Troy, who is now the head of the Democratic Party in Queens County, invites Mayor John V. Lindsay of New York, Senator George McGovern (D-SD), and EMK to be guests of honor at the annual Queens Democratic Party dinner. EMK accepts because of his friendship with Troy; however, after it becomes clear that the dinner is being billed as a showcase for potential presidential candidates, Kirk tells Troy that if this is the case, EMK cannot attend. Troy says that this is not true, and disinvites McGovern and Lindsay. (*The Washington Post*, 11/02/1971)

1972

April The Senate passes legislation that would provide Secret Service protection to EMK "because the public thinks" he is a candidate for president. (*The Washington Post*, 04/22/1972)

June On the 13th, EMK tells reporters that he will not accept a draft for vice-president. A week later, Troy announces a press conference at New York's City Hall. He hints that he might get EMK to run; McGovern has told Troy that he would "jump out a window" to get EMK to run as his vice-presidential running mate. Kirk telephones to "chew Troy out," and then puts EMK on the phone to say, "Are you crazy?" Troy's press conference is cancelled. (Clymer, p. 188)

July EMK does not attend the Democratic National Convention in Miami, but staffers Kirk and James Flug are present, as are a circle of advisers, led by Tim Hanan. Kirk says the issue of whether EMK would accept a vice presidential nomination is a "closed topic," although McGovern might call EMK to discuss the vice-presidency in general. (*The New York Times*, 07/11/1972; *The Washington Post*, 07/12/1972)

On the morning of the 13th, the last day of the convention, EMK calls McGovern to tell him, "I just can't do it." (Clymer, p. 188)

EMK reportedly vetoes McGovern's consideration of Boston Mayor Kevin White as his running mate. McGovern selects Senator Thomas F. Eagleton (D-MO) to be the candidate for vice president. (Clymer, p. 189)

August After Eagleton is forced to withdraw as McGovern's running mate, EMK is again asked to run for vice president and refuses. McGovern chooses EMK's brother-in-law Sargent Shriver, reportedly over EMK's objections. (Clymer, p. 190; *The New York Times*, 07/31/1972)

November Nixon defeats McGovern in the presidential election winning 60.83 percent of the popular vote and 521 electoral votes. (*The New York Times*, 11/08/1972)

1973 Governor George Wallace of Alabama invites EMK to attend a Fourth of July rally in Alabama. Kirk first thinks the invitation is a joke, but then sends a memo to EMK with the details of the invitation. EMK consults with senior staff and black leaders; and they recommend that he go. The move is reported to be an attempt for EMK to mend the breach between working class whites, a large portion of Wallace's constituency, and blacks, youths, and other minorities, a large part of EMK's base. (Theo Lippman, *Senator Ted Kennedy: The Career Behind the Image*, USA: W.W. Norton and Company, 1975, p. 106)

July On the 4th, EMK appears with Wallace and suggests that the South could teach the North how to bring about white-black accommodation. EMK had consulted with Governor Wendell Ford of Kentucky on the content of his speech. The visit gets mixed press. (Lippman, p. 106; *The Washington Post*, 07/18/1973)

In the wake of the Wallace visit and EMK's visible wooing of moderate-to-conservative elements of the Democratic Party, speculation that EMK is considering a 1976 presidential bid increases. *The Washington Post* reports that EMK aides have been quietly spreading the word that EMK will run, and that Kirk has been collecting names of supporters in key states for months. Veteran allies of EMK at the state level reportedly ask mayors and other local notables to "call Kirk" when they visit Washington. (*The Washington Post*, 07/18/1973)

1974

January On the 25th, Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman Robert Strauss pays a secret, emergency visit to EMK, calling him off the Senate floor for a private conversation. At a televised interview in Dallas earlier in the week, Strauss had been drawn into speculation about problems to be considered by EMK in deciding whether to run for president. Strauss' comments had been distorted by the press to appear critical of EMK, and Strauss subsequently called Kirk, who was not happy about the interview. After EMK reads the transcript, relations between Strauss and EMK thaw. (*The Washington Post*, 01/26/1974)

September EMK announces that he will not run for president in 1976 because of responsibilities to his family. The health of his wife Joan, suffering from alcoholism, and continuing treatment for Edward M. Kennedy, Jr.'s (EMK, Jr.) cancer reportedly influence his decision. An EMK aide reveals that before EMK made his decision, he met in Cape Cod with Smith, Burke, and Kirk. (Clymer, pp. 225-226; *The Washington Post*, 09/23/1974, 09/24/1974; *The New York Times*, 09/24/1974)

1977 Kirk leaves EMK's Senate staff to practice law in Washington, D.C. (*The New York Times*, 06/24/1979, 10/30/1979; *The Washington Post*, 02/06/1985; <http://www.jfklibrary.org/heritage.htm>)

1978

May A Gallup poll finds that Democrats favor EMK over Carter by 13 points as the presidential nominee in 1980. (Clymer, p. 268; *The New York Times*, 05/07/1978; *The Boston Globe*, 05/12/1978)

December EMK hires Carl Wagner, the current director of political activities for the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, to fill Kirk's old position as senior political aide. Later, when Wagner hears from serious supporters of EMK for president, he refers them to Kirk. Kirk redirects them to Mark Siegel, a Washington political consultant and former Carter aide. (Clymer, p. 282; *The Washington Post*, 12/11/1978)

1979

February With "Draft Kennedy" movements continuing to pick up steam across the country, EMK meets with family and advisors at his home in McLean, Virginia to discuss whether to challenge Carter in 1980. The meeting includes Steve and Jean Kennedy Smith, Joe Kennedy, David Burke, Richard Burke, Carey Parker, Larry Horowitz, Arthur Schlesinger, John Seigenthaler, Ted Sorensen, and Kirk.

August At a Hyannis fundraiser, a reporter overhears Kirk telling Draft Kennedy leaders Joanne Symons and Dudley Dudley, "You're doing a great job." EMK and his office have occasionally issued public disavowals of the Draft-Kennedy campaign. (Clymer, p. 282)

Late Summer EMK decides to challenge Carter for the 1980 Democratic presidential nomination. Before making a final decision, EMK had to first address his children's concern for his safety and his concern for a campaign's impact on his wife, Joan Kennedy. (Clymer, pp. 283-284; Laurence Leamer, *The Kennedy Women*, New York: Villard Books, 1994, pp. 704-705)

Wagner informs Siegel that he can tell potential campaign contributors that EMK has decided to run. (Clymer, p. 282)

September On the 7th, EMK informs Carter at a White House lunch that he will run for president. (Clymer, p. 284; *The New York Times*, 09/12/1979)

October On the 29th, EMK authorizes the formation of a "Kennedy for President" committee, to be headed by Stephen Smith and to include Kirk and Wagner as national campaign directors. Kirk will focus on overall campaign planning, Wagner on field operations. Rick Stearns, an experienced Democratic field operative, will specialize in delegate selection. Steve Robbins will conduct candidate scheduling. Other campaign members will include Morris Dees, an Alabama civil rights lawyer; former EMK press secretary Richard Drayne; and current EMK press secretary Thomas Southwick. (*The New York Times*, 10/30/1979)

- November* On the 12th, Peter Flaherty, former Deputy Attorney General under Carter and a chief engineer of Carter's 1976 victory in the Pennsylvania primary, meets with Smith and Kirk in Washington to discuss the Kennedy organization in Pennsylvania for 1980. Also in attendance were Meyer Berger of Pittsburgh, an important Democratic fundraiser; Al Benedict, the State Auditor General; and John Kerr, an aide to Benedict. (*The New York Times*, 11/14/1979)
- On the 13th, Flaherty informs the Carter re-election campaign that he will be joining EMK's campaign. Although Mayor of Pittsburgh Richard Caliguiri and five members of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation have endorsed Carter, Flaherty will provide the framework for a powerful EMK coalition in Pennsylvania. EMK is also counting on support from William Green, the newly elected Mayor of Philadelphia, for whom he had campaigned. (*The New York Times*, 11/14/1979)
- December* On the 20th, Joseph Crangle, the Erie County Democratic chairman, joins Kirk and Wagner as a national campaign director. Crangle will take over many of Kirk's duties at headquarters while Kirk travels with EMK. (*The New York Times*, 12/21/1979)
- 1980**
- January* A poll taken before the Iowa caucuses finds that EMK is well behind Carter with a 57 to 25 margin. EMK's campaign is unfazed, and Kirk tells the press, "Packing more of your people into the caucuses than the other guy is the name of the game in Iowa, not poll standings." (*The New York Times*, 01/13/1980)
- On the 21st, Carter wins the Iowa caucuses with 59 percent of precinct delegates. EMK comes in second with only 31 percent of the delegates. Despite the extent of the loss, EMK pledges to continue his campaign. (Clymer, pp. 300-301)
- On the 29th, EMK gives a speech at Georgetown University that reveals a change in campaign strategy. EMK mounts an attack on Carter's foreign policy towards Iran and the Soviet Union, in addition to emphasizing more liberal themes such as wage-price controls and regulation of oil. EMK's return to liberal themes is reportedly an attempt to justify EMK's challenge to Carter, and was worked out by Smith, Kirk, speechwriters Robert Shrum and Carey Parker, and policy advisers Jan Kalicki and Peter Edelman. (*The New York Times*, 01/30/1980)
- February* On the 26th, EMK is upset by Carter in New Hampshire. Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman John C. White calls Dudley, the principal organizer of EMK's campaign there, and congratulates him on the campaign. White continually makes attempts to mend fences between the Carter and EMK campaigns, and calls EMK campaign aides after each primary or caucus to

congratulate them and discuss the importance of party unity. (*The New York Times*, 06/03/1980)

March

On the 1st, Smith announces that the struggling EMK campaign will dispatch some of its Washington staff to Illinois and New York, where EMK will face his next two primary challenges against Carter. Wagner and Paul Tully will run the campaign in Illinois, and will be joined by Ron Brown, John Howes, and Southwick. Drayne will oversee the press operation in New York. Kirk will be traveling with EMK all the time, as will old hand Eddie Martin. Smith also announces that former Governor of Wisconsin Patrick Lucey will serve as the Washington-based spokesman for the campaign. (*The Washington Post*, 03/01/1980)

On the 4th, EMK wins the Massachusetts primary but loses to Carter in Vermont. (*The New York Times*, 03/05/1980)

Carter wins the Illinois primary on the 18th. (Clymer, pp. 303-304; *The New York Times*, 03/19/1980)

On the 25th, EMK overcomes a recent string of losses to win the New York and Connecticut primaries. (Clymer, pp. 305-307; *The New York Times*, 03/26/1980)

April

On the 1st, Carter wins a landslide victory in Wisconsin. (*The New York Times*, 04/02/1980)

On the 22nd, EMK narrowly wins the Pennsylvania primary. This important win leaves EMK in a much stronger position to challenge Carter for the Democratic nomination. Kirk claims that the Carter campaign has overstated its delegate count by several hundred by projecting results from the first round of primaries onto the second round. (*The New York Times*, 04/24/1980)

May

EMK wins the Washington, D.C. primary but loses in eleven other states, including Indiana, Maryland, Nebraska, and Oregon. EMK offers to release his delegates if Carter will agree to a debate. (Clymer, pp. 309-310)

On the 2nd, White declares the party's presidential contest resolved, and says he will direct DNC efforts under the assumption that Carter will be the nominee. Drayne insists that Carter has not yet won the nomination, and says that Kirk will meet with White to discuss what the chairman's plans are. Flug claims that White's move was designed to relieve the financial burden on the Carter campaign, which is closer to the federal spending limit than the EMK campaign. White denies these allegations, and notes that he would be interested in hiring several EMK aides, such as Wagner, to staff national committee offices in key states. (*The New York Times*, 05/02/1980)

On the 6th, the EMK campaign calls for the resignation of White, charging that White has turned over the reins of the Democratic Party to the Carter campaign. Kirk says that White's hiring of former Carter campaign staff director Les Francis and longtime Carter strategist Robert Keefe, in addition to White's statement that the contest is "resolved," make White's resignation "in the interest of basic fairness and party unity." (*The Washington Post*, 05/06/1980)

Mid-month, Strauss, now Carter campaign chairman, speaks with Kirk about exploring ways to devise a party platform amenable to both sides. (*Christian Science Monitor*, 05/22/1980)

In a memo to deputy Carter campaign chairman Hamilton Jordan on the 29th, Richard Moe, the chief of staff to Vice President Walter Mondale, counsels patience with EMK to the Carter campaign, worrying that public pressure or private jabs might force the EMK campaign "to dig in their heels." Moe has been meeting with Kirk, and urges Carter to call EMK on June 4th to congratulate him on a hard-fought campaign. (Clymer, p. 311)

June

On the 3rd, the final day of primaries, EMK wins in New Jersey, California, South Dakota, New Mexico, and Rhode Island. However, Carter's victories in Ohio, West Virginia, and Montana clinch the nomination. (Clymer, p. 312; *The New York Times*, 06/05/1980)

Also on the 3rd, Carter says he will call EMK to congratulate him on a "great campaign," and that he intends to meet with EMK in several days to discuss accommodations on the party platform. EMK, however, says that he will continue to challenge Carter in a manner constructive to Democratic unity, and Flug says, "We expect this thing to go down to the wire at the convention in August." (*The New York Times*, 06/03/1980)

On the 5th, Carter and EMK meet to discuss how to best deal with the Republican challenge in the general election. Before the meeting, EMK meets with aides at his house in McLean, where Kirk's is a lonely voice arguing that the time has come to withdraw from the race. EMK, however, is reported to be angered by a lack of generosity in victory on the part of the Carter campaign, and it is said that he will not exit without substantial concessions and reconciliation. Later in the day, Carter says that he does not expect EMK to drop out of the race. (Clymer, p. 312; *The New York Times*, 06/05/1980)

On the evening of the 5th, Strauss (perhaps cued by Kirk) calls Carter and encourages him to debate EMK. Carter says he does not like the idea but will think about it. (Clymer, p. 313)

On the 6th, at a lunch with his wife, Jordan, Mondale, and aides, Carter says he has decided to debate EMK next week before the platform committee. Everyone thinks that this is a good idea except for Mondale, who argues that such a debate

would be degrading to the Presidency. The next day, Carter's chief adviser from Georgia, Charles Kirbo, also voices his objection. Carter then decides that he will not debate EMK. (Clymer, pp. 313-314)

On the 26th, Strauss calls EMK "spoiled" for his rejection of the Carter-led Democratic Party platform, and vows that EMK will not get his way. (*The New York Times*, 06/27/1980)

July

On the 25th, aides to EMK and Carter confer in a private, three-hour meeting. This is the first major meeting between the two campaigns, and attendees include Jordan, Moe, Wagner, and Kirk. A key objective of the meeting is to head off any disruptive behavior at the convention; some EMK aides have privately said that they might resort to disruptive delaying tactics if a schedule that rushes through a binding rules debate is adopted. EMK strategists want to put off the procedural vote, giving them maximum time to lobby Carter delegates. The outline of a possible compromise emerges: EMK would drop or modify some of his platform demands in exchange for a full, unhurried debate on the binding delegate proposal. After the meeting, Kirk reiterates, "Senator Kennedy is in the race all the way. There is no doubt about that." (*The New York Times*, 07/16/1980, 07/30/1980, 07/31/1980; *The Washington Post*, 07/29/1980)

On the 29th, the Carter campaign proposes that delegates be free to vote as they please except on the presidential roll call. The proposal is a compromise between the increased pressure for an "open convention" without rule-bound delegates and the pro-Carter politicians who want tight discipline on rules and the party platform. Kirk asserts that EMK could potentially siphon off 275 to 300 delegates defecting from the Carter campaign. (*The New York Times*, 07/30/1980)

Also on the 29th, EMK spends the day speaking with delegates via telephone and invites delegates from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia to his home for a pre-convention briefing. In the coming days, EMK will also hold similar meetings for Pennsylvania and New Jersey delegates in Philadelphia, and for California delegates in San Francisco and Los Angeles. EMK's main objective is to persuade the delegates to vote against Carter's "binding delegate" convention rule. Kirk asks, "If President Carter is so secure, then what is the need for a binding delegate rule?" (*The New York Times*, 07/30/1980)

August

On the 5th, the Carter campaign yields to EMK campaign demands for television coverage of debates on the party platform and convention rules. In return, the EMK campaign pledges a party "united behind our nominees" once the convention battles are over. The compromise emerges after a four-and-a-half hour negotiating session, which is attended by Kirk, Jordan, Moe, and Wagner. (*The New York Times*, 08/06/1980)

On the evening of the 10th, EMK tells *Face the Nation* that when he is convinced that Carter has accepted some of his economic policy recommendations "there

won't be any Democrat in this country who will work harder for the success of the nominee" than EMK. Hours later, Carter's chief domestic policy adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, announces that Carter will accept four of EMK's platform amendments, including a pledge not to use unemployment or high interest rates to fight inflation. Eizenstat says that Carter authorized these concessions several days ago. Kirk deems these concessions "the first real victory" of the convention. (*The Washington Post*, 08/11/1980)

On the 11th, EMK loses the procedural vote on binding delegates at the Democratic National Convention, effectively ending his campaign. After the vote, Kirk tells reporters that EMK will not withdraw. However, EMK surprises his family and campaign staff by announcing in the evening that he will withdraw from the race. An anonymous EMK aide claims that EMK decided to withdraw after watching coverage of the rules debate on television with family members and aides, including Joan Kennedy, Jean Kennedy Smith, and several speechwriters and long-time Senate staffers. (*The New York Times*, 08/12/1980)

On the 12th, EMK gives a rousing speech defending the liberalism of the Democratic Party and calling for a \$12 billion jobs program. While Carter refuses to support this plank, he announces an economic recovery program that would create new jobs. According to Kirk, the deal was proposed by Mike Berman, a counsel to Mondale and a convention aide to White, and was brokered by Jordan, Wagner, and aides from both campaigns. Subsequently, EMK announces that he will work for the re-election of the president and formally releases his delegates. (Clymer, pp. 316-318; *Newsweek*, 08/25/1980; *The Washington Post*, 08/13/1980; *The New York Times*, 08/16/1980)

On the 14th, anonymous EMK aides tell *The New York Times* that EMK arrived at the convention prepared to support Carter in the likely event that Carter would win the nomination, but continued to press his candidacy in hopes of platform concessions. (*The New York Times*, 08/15/1980)

On the 25th, EMK meets with Carter at the White House and announces his support for the president's new economic program. EMK also agrees to campaign for Carter. (*The Washington Post*, 08/26/1980)

September Aides to EMK and Carter negotiate for EMK to make approximately six campaign appearances on behalf of the president. EMK's campaigning is expected to help Carter in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, which are all industrial states where EMK has strong support. EMK also agrees to appeal to Mexican-Americans to support Carter in Texas and to join Carter at a fundraiser in Los Angeles. In exchange for these appearances, Carter will urge Democrats to help EMK pay off his campaign debt. (*The New York Times*, 09/12/1980)

November On the 4th, Ronald Reagan defeats Carter in the presidential election. Carter wins only 42 percent of the popular vote and 49 electoral votes. (Clymer, p. 319)

1982

November *The Boston Herald* reports that lawyers for EMK and Joan Kennedy are working on a \$4 million divorce settlement that will soon go to court. Kirk, as EMK's lawyer, refuses to comment, as do EMK's Senate spokesmen. (*The Washington Post*, 11/23/1982)

1983 Kirk becomes Treasurer of the DNC. (John F. Kennedy Library Homepage, http://www.jfklibrary.org/newsletter_summer2002_14.html)

1984

December On the 17th, Democratic Party leaders fail to agree on a successor to outgoing DNC chairman Charles T. Manatt. Manatt's term expires in January, and the post is to be filled by February 1. Six people have declared their active candidacy for the post: former California party chair Nancy Pelosi; Duane Garrett, a former co-chair for the Mondale presidential campaign; former Rep. John Cavanaugh (D-NE); Sharon Pratt Dixon; Keefe; and Kirk, who is currently DNC Treasurer. (*The New York Times*, 11/08/1984, 12/18/1984)

1985

January On the 9th, labor leaders meet in Washington, D.C. and decide not to formally endorse anyone for DNC Chairman. However, there is an overwhelming consensus for Kirk at the meeting, and labor officials begin to circulate within the DNC word of their support for Kirk. (*The Washington Post*, 01/29/1985)

On the 28th, Pelosi accuses the AFL-CIO of aiding the candidacy of Kirk, her opponent, by questioning her intelligence and telling DNC members that a woman as chairman would harm the party politically. Pelosi also brings two issues to the forefront: the role of organized labor within the Democratic Party, and the degree to which Kirk is bound to support any future EMK presidential campaigns. Pelosi says, "I have all the credentials. Paul Kirk's credentials are that he's been associated with Teddy Kennedy for fifteen years." (*The New York Times*, 01/29/1985)

February On the 1st, Kirk is elected as the new chairman of the DNC. Many Southern Democrats leave the meeting concerned that their moderate-to-conservative stances have not been addressed. (*The Washington Post*, 02/02/1985)

In the press coverage of Kirk after his election, Strauss recalls that the tensions between the EMK and Carter campaigns in 1980 "were rather severe, but I could always talk with Paul. He always kept his word... Now, I'm aware that some people say that Kirk's election is bad for the Democratic Party, because it sends a signal that labor and Kennedy have taken over. It's not true. Kirk is a centrist in

his thinking. He can represent and do political business in the South and West just as well as in the Midwest and the East.” (*The Washington Post*, 02/06/1985)

June The DNC adopts Kirk’s recommendation that the Party not hold a midterm conference in 1986. The move is an attempt to conserve resources for election years and to reduce the amount of infighting within the Party by reducing the number of forums available for factional debate. (*The New York Times*, 06/26/1985)

1986

May At the beginning of the month, members of the Democratic Policy Commission begin drafting new recommendations for the party platform, encompassing issues such as the rural economy, international trade, family life, and military policy. Kirk, who has limited the panel’s membership to elected officials, says, “The larger interests and broader agenda of the Democratic Party and the nation have superseded the singular agenda of elite groups.” Meanwhile, more than one thousand liberal Democrats, mostly feminists, members of minority groups, labor leaders, peace activists, and advocates of homosexual rights, rally in Washington to denounce what they see as the party’s swerve to the right since 1984. (*The New York Times*, 05/18/1986)

1987 Along with Republican National Committee (RNC) Chairman Frank Fahrenkopf, Kirk helps to establish the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates using seed money from the Twentieth Century Fund. (Commission on Presidential Debates; Stephen Bates, “The Future of Presidential Debates,” *Annenberg Publications Online*, 1993.)

December Kirk announces that he wants the 1988 Democratic platform to be brief and bland, and not to focus on “narrow issues” such as abortion. Such narrow issues produce “a document which Republicans quote to attack Democratic candidates more frequently than Democratic candidates do to promote themselves,” Kirk claims. In addition, Democratic leaders in the South and West will no longer be able to attack the national party platform as a campaign tactic. (*The Washington Post*, 12/05/1987)

1988 Acting upon Kirk’s recommendations, organized labor does not prematurely endorse a candidate for the 1988 presidential election. (*The Washington Post*, 07/17/1988)

July The Democratic Party adopts a platform that is one-tenth of the size of the 1984 platform adopted in San Francisco. (*The Washington Post*, 07/17/1988)

September On the 25th, the Commission on Presidential Debates holds their first presidential debate at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. (*The Washington Post*, 10/06/1988; Commission on Presidential Debates)

December Kirk resigns his chairmanship of the DNC. Although Kirk's reputation is still intact after Michael Dukakis' forty-state loss to George H.W. Bush, it is rumored that Kirk would like to return to his law firm. Kirk's achievements as party chairman include canceling the party's mid-term convention, a haven for party activists, and abolishing the party caucus system, thereby removing the official status of groups representing various races, sexual preferences, etc. Kirk also is credited with turning around DNC finances and attracting the moderates that initially challenged his candidacy because of his ties to EMK, such as Texas party chairman Robert Slagle. (*The Washington Post*, 07/17/1988; *The Economist*, 12/10/1988)

1989

February On the 10th, Kirk is honored by three hundred guests at a reception hosted by party leaders. The event is held at the Ritz-Carlton in Boston, and was intended to be a welcome-home party after Kirk handed over the DNC chairmanship to Washington attorney Ron Brown, who is backed by EMK. EMK says of Kirk, "He believed very deeply in the things which President Kennedy had stated and which was quoted from President Woodrow Wilson that a political party ought to stand for something. He really made the party stand for something." EMK also deems Kirk to be a "longtime family friend" and an "outstanding chairman." Kirk plans to practice law in the Washington office of Boston's Sullivan and Worcester, and dampens speculation that he will pursue a 1990 nomination for governor of Massachusetts. (*The Boston Globe*, 12/15/1988, 02/11/1989)

March After Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy (D-MA) says he will not run for Massachusetts Governor in 1990, Kirk says in light of the withdrawal he is going to seriously consider a candidacy. (*The Boston Globe*, 03/14/1989)

June On the 29th, Kirk says he will keep his options open with regards to a 1990 run for governor. He says he will announce his intentions by September. He does not run. (*The Boston Globe*, 06/30/1989)

1992 EMK's campaign for re-election to the Senate in 1994 begins in the wake of the Palm Beach rape trial of his nephew, William Kennedy Smith. Kirk is involved in the early stages of the campaign, as is pollster Tom Kiley; EMK chief of staff Paul Donovan; Charles Baker, a former Dukakis and Clinton operative; and Shrum, now a media consultant. (*The Boston Globe*, 11/10/1994)

Kirk becomes Chairman of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), a spinoff of the National Endowment for Democracy aimed at channeling grants to further democracy in developing countries. (http://www.stonehill.edu/media_relations/articles/kirk.htm)

September Kirk claims that Richard Burke, the author of an unflattering new book about EMK entitled *The Senator: My Ten Years With Ted Kennedy*, made “a pretty thinly veiled” offer to cancel the book project if EMK’s friends would invest in Burke’s financially troubled companies. (*The Boston Globe*, 09/26/1992)

1994

September Joan Kennedy’s attorney, Monroe Inker, challenges Kirk’s claim that Kirk was not aware until mid-September of Joan Kennedy’s request to renegotiate the terms of her twelve-year old divorce from EMK. Inker claims that Joan had spoken directly to EMK and Kirk in May, June, and during the summer, as Inker had advised her to first try to resolve the situation without lawyers. (*The Boston Globe*, 09/10/1994)

October On the 13th, EMK agrees to a compromised debate schedule against Mitt Romney during the last week of the month, the format for which will be set by the sponsoring newspapers, *The Boston Globe* and *The Boston Herald*. The compromise ends nearly a month of haggling over debate schedules and formats, during which the EMK campaign rejected a November 1st debate as too close to the election. Kirk has been EMK’s chief debate negotiator. (*The Boston Globe*, 10/14/1994)

November EMK defeats Romney with fifty-eight percent of the vote. (*Congressional Elections 1946-96*, p. 88)

1995

January On the 24th, Kirk attends the funeral of Rose Kennedy in Brookline. (*The Boston Globe*, 1/25/2005)

1996

Spring Kirk is named as one of two charter members of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation’s Heritage Society, which honors individuals who have included the Foundation in their wills or in long-term planned giving. (<http://www.jfklibrary.org/heritage.htm>)

1998

March JFK’s children and the National Archives claim that nearly five hundred JFK items going up for auction by a private collector, Robert L. White, were obtained illegally by JFK’s longtime secretary, Evelyn Lincoln. Kirk, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the JFK Library Foundation, releases a statement claiming that Lincoln’s “obsession with President Kennedy’s possessions and writings led her to the delusion that even the most personal effects, letters and most significant

historical writings were hers to keep or give away. They never were.” (*The Washington Post*, 03/18/1998)

1999

July On the 16th, John F. Kennedy, Jr.’s plan crashes into the Atlantic en route to the wedding of Rory Kennedy in Hyannisport. Also on board are his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and his sister-in-law.

On the 17th, Kirk arrives in Hyannisport. (*The Boston Herald*, 07/18/1999)

In his capacity as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the JFK Library Foundation, Kirk issues a statement on the death of John F. Kennedy, Jr. (http://www.jfklibrary.org/pr_jfk_jr_2.html)

2000

January Fleet Bank Chairman Chad Gifford and Kirk announce that the first presidential debate will be held at the University of Massachusetts. The announcement is made at the JFK Museum’s Kennedy-Nixon debate exhibit. Kirk had campaigned for Boston as the site, and U-Mass President William Bulger expresses gratefulness to Kirk “for his obvious conflict of interest.” Mayor of Boston Thomas Menino is pleased, but claims that hosting the debate does not “take the sting” out of losing the 2000 bid for the Democratic National Convention. (*The Boston Herald*, 01/07/2000)

October On the 3rd, the first presidential debate is held at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. Kirk and Fahrenkopf are the debate’s organizers. (*The Boston Globe*, 10/04/2000)

2001 Kirk is succeeded by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as Chairman of NDI. (http://www.stonehill.edu/media_relations/articles/kirk.htm)

2002

March On the 17th, Kirk is honored by the Friends of the John F. Kennedy Library as “Irishman of the Year” for his contributions as a political party leader, political consultant, public activist, attorney, and “champion of democratic participation around the world.” EMK praises Kirk for his leadership, dedication, and public service, and Caroline Kennedy thanks him for his devotion to the Kennedy Library. (http://www.jfklibrary.org/newsletter_summer2002_14.html)

September Menino announces the charter membership of “Boston 2004,” the committee that will lead Boston’s bid to host the 2004 Democratic National Convention through the DNC’s selection process. Former DNC chairmen Steve Grossman and Kirk

will each bear the title of chairman emeritus. Kirk and Grossman have been strategizing and fundraising to support the bid. (*The Boston Globe*, 09/25/2002)

2003

October *The Boston Globe* reports that Kirk is negotiating an arrangement on behalf of EMK to create a new Center for the Study of the Senate at the University of Massachusetts at Boston that will eventually be named after EMK. EMK, along with Kirk, initiated the negotiations more than a year ago with Bulger, a longtime EMK ally. EMK's chief of staff, Mary Beth Cahill, has also played a role in the negotiations. (*The Boston Globe*, 10/01/2003)

2004

July On the 25th, Governor of New Mexico Bill Richardson, Rep. Stenny Hoyer (D-MD), EMK, and Kirk welcome more than six hundred government officials, parliamentarians, and dignitaries to NDI's annual International Leaders Forum. This year's event is held in Boston. Kirk and Fahrenkopf participate in a panel discussion on the role of nominating conventions and presidential debates. (http://www.ndi.org/support/ilf/ilf2004/press/pressrelease_072104.asp)

2005

February On the 28th, Kirk presents Senator John Kerry (D-MA) with the John F. Kennedy Library and Foundation Distinguished American Award, and introduces EMK (speaking via telephone) to the audience. (http://www.jfklibrary.org/forum_kerry_distinguished_american.html)