



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **Charles Ferris Interview, 06/29/2006**

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Miller Center Documents¹

- Charles Ferris Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

- Charles Ferris bio, www.mintz.com.
- Mike Mansfield, "Eulogy for John F. Kennedy," 11/24/1963, Washington, D.C.
- Edward M. Kennedy, "Tributes to the Honorable Mike Mansfield of Montana in the United States Senate: Upon the Occasion of His Retirement from the Senate," U.S. Senate, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 09/16/1976, pp. 10, 94-96.
- Edward M. Kennedy, "Remarks of Senator Edward M. Kennedy," 04/02/2003, 100th Birthday Tribute to Mike Mansfield, Washington, D.C., www.Mansfieldfdn.org/about_fdn/aboutmmm-pdf/Kennedy.pdf (06/06/2006)
- Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1999) pp. 67-69, 131-133.
- John W. Finney, "Senate Approves 18-Year-Old Vote in All Elections," *The New York Times*, 03/11/1971.
- John W. Finney, "Mansfield Offers Amendment for a Pullout Within 9 Months," *The New York Times*, 06/22/1971.

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CHARLES D. FERRIS TIMELINE

Prepared by Nadia Shairzay

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 06/22/2006

1943

January Michael Joseph Mansfield is elected as a Democrat to the House of Representatives on the 3rd. Mansfield serves four terms. (*Biographical Directory of the United States*, <http://bioguide.congress.gov>)

1953

January On the 3rd, Mansfield is elected to the U.S. Senate from the state of Montana. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)

1954 Charles D. Ferris graduates from Boston College. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*, 1994, <http://www.mintz.com>)

1957 Mansfield becomes the Democratic whip. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)

1961 Mansfield becomes the Senate Majority Leader. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)

1962 Ferris graduates from Boston College Law School. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)

1963 Ferris leaves his job as a trial lawyer for the Justice Department and becomes the Chief Counsel to the Senate Majority and Chief Counsel to Mansfield. Ferris holds this position until 1977. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)

November On the 24th, Mansfield gives the eulogy for President John F. Kennedy. (Mike Mansfield, "Eulogy for John F. Kennedy," 11/24/1963, Washington, D.C.)

1965

April Mansfield and Minority Leader Everett Dirksen (R-IL), on the 22nd, start Senate debate on the Voting Rights bill (S 1564). Mansfield says that the bill will "redeem the rekindled hopes of millions of Americans." (*1965 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1965, p. 547)

EMK introduces a provision, on the 8th, to S 1564 to ban poll taxes. On the 30th, Mansfield and Dirksen introduce a substitute poll tax proposal that does not ban the poll tax but instead states that the attorney general should persuade the courts

to ban the poll tax. Mansfield argues that including a ban on the poll tax may jeopardize the passage of the Voting Rights bill. Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach also argues that Congress may not have the authority to eliminate poll taxes. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow and Co. Inc., 1999, pp. 67-68; *1965 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 548)

May The EMK poll tax provision is defeated on the 11th with a vote of 45-49. (Clymer, pp. 68-69)

On the 19th, Mansfield and Dirksen propose an amendment to the bill which states that poll taxes are an infringement to voting. This passes 69-20. (*1965 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 545)

On the 26th, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 passes the Senate with a vote of 77-19. (*1965 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 533)

August President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act (PL 89-110) into law on the 6th. The act suspends literacy tests and establishes federal voting examiners to guard against discrimination in voter registration. Johnson highlights the “patriotic and selfless” cooperation and effort by Mansfield and Dirksen in securing the passage of the Voting Rights Act. (*1965 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, pp. 533, 564)

1966

March The Supreme Court rules that the poll tax is unconstitutional on the 24th. (Clymer, p. 69)

1968

April On the 4th, Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated. (*1968 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 552)

May EMK, a long-time supporter of gun control, proposes an amendment to the Omnibus Crime Bill applying gun control measures to long-guns. On the 16th, the amendment is defeated, 29-53. (*1968 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 549)

June On the 5th, Senator Robert F. Kennedy (D-NY) is assassinated. The next day Johnson urges Congress to pass legislation banning mail order gun sales and out of state gun sales. (*1968 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 552)

Johnson, on the 24th, again addresses Congress, requesting for national registration of all guns and licenses for all gun owners (S 3633/ HR 17735). Mansfield endorses this legislation. (*1968 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, pp. 553, 564)

- September* The Senate passes HR 17735 on the 18th with a vote of 70-17. (1968 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 560)
- October* On the 9th, the Senate passes the conference report of HR 17735, which bans interstate sale of guns and applies gun control measures to long guns and ammunition. (1968 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 549)
- December* Ferris reportedly calls EMK and asks him to run for party whip. (Clymer, p. 131)

1969

- January* EMK is elected party whip defeating Senator Russell Long (D-LA). (Clymer, p. 133)
- EMK, receiving guidance from Mansfield, prepares his first major piece of legislation, a bill to expand housing and healthcare for the poor. (*The New York Times*, 01/27/1969)
- May* EMK and Mansfield both speak out against the battle of Apbia Mountain (also referred to as “Hamburger Hill”) in Vietnam where many Americans are killed. Mansfield says, “When any senator speaks out of his mind and heart on any aspect of this struggle, his words are not to be dismissed as irrelevant or less by any others in this government.” (Oberdorfer, 355) EMK says that the assaults on Apbia Mountain were “senseless and irresponsible” and “American lives are too valuable to be sacrificed for military pride.” (*The New York Times*, 06/08/1969) Dirksen rebuts EMK’s remarks, arguing that they are damaging to troop morale. Mansfield defends EMK and says that “What [EMK] had to say, he had a right to say.” (*The New York Times*, 06/08/1969)
- June* As party whip, EMK forms a liberal bloc in the Senate. The coalition is made up of Senators Harold Hughes (D-IA), Alan Cranston (D-CA), George McGovern (D-SD), Walter Mondale (D-MN) and Joseph Tydings (D-MD). According to an article in *The New York Times* the coalition says that they will not undermine the leadership of Mansfield. (*The New York Times*, 06/15/1969)

- 1970** EMK proposes lowering the voting age by legislation and not by constitutional amendment. EMK does not offer this as an amendment to the Voting Rights bill over concerns that it will hamper the passage of the bill. Mansfield instead introduces a lowered voting age amendment to the bill, which EMK joins as a cosponsor, and it passes. (*The New York Times*, 03/11/1971; Clymer, pp. 164-165)

1971

- January* EMK is defeated by Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) on the 21st to become the party whip. (*The New York Times*, 01/22/1971)

March EMK tries to attach an amendment to give congressional representation to the District of Columbia to a bill to lower the voting age to 18. EMK receives little support for the measure and Mansfield opposes him. Mansfield moves to table EMK's amendment, arguing that it jeopardizes the passage of the voting bill. The Mansfield motion passes, 68-23. (*The New York Times*, 03/11/1971)

On the 10th, the Senate passes a bill, 94-0 to propose a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to 18 in all elections. (*The New York Times*, 03/11/1971)

June Both EMK and Mansfield craft Vietnam legislation in reaction to details about the U.S. involvement in Vietnam as revealed in the Pentagon Papers. On the 22nd, the Senate adopts the Mansfield amendment to a military draft extension bill (HR 6531). The amendment calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Indochina within nine months (pending the release of prisoners of war). The passage of the Mansfield amendment is the first time the U.S. Congress has proposed to end a war that is still ongoing. EMK also proposes an amendment to the Selective Service Bill to establish a 2.4 million troop limit on the number of soldiers in the armed forces for the next year. Both EMK and Mansfield argue that the Pentagon Papers show that the history of the American involvement in Vietnam is one in which the executive has control at the expense of congressional involvement. The Mansfield amendment is weakened in the House- Senate conference report and the final version to the bill as signed by the president contains no withdrawal deadlines. (*1971 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 320; *The New York Times*, 06/22/1971)

September Mansfield proposes the troop withdrawal amendment again, this time to the defense procurement authorization bill (HR 8687). The amendment calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam within six months. On the 30th, the amendment passes the Senate, 57-38. (*1971 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 324)

November On the 17th, President Richard Nixon signs HR 8687- PL 92-156, which includes the Mansfield amendment. Nixon says that the amendment is "without binding force or effect and it does not reflect my judgment about the way in which the war should be brought to a conclusion." (*1971 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 305)

1972

May After the assassination attempt of Alabama Governor George Wallace EMK is provided with a 24-hour Secret Service detail. According to Francis Valeo, Mansfield has previously lobbied the Nixon administration to give EMK Secret Service Protection. Valeo writes that Mansfield is concerned after RFK's assassination and EMK's foray into presidential politics. (Francis R. Valeo, *Mike*

Mansfield: Majority Leader, A Different Kind of Senate 1961-1976, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, p. 243)

- August* On the 30th, Senator George McGovern (D-SD) reportedly asks Mansfield to be his running mate. When Mansfield declines, McGovern asks EMK, who also declines. (Oberdorfer, pp. 430-431)
- September* On the 18th, the Senate passes an Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets bill, which provides ways to compensate innocent victims of violent crimes and gives cash benefits to survivors of police officers who are killed in the line of duty. The bill is a consolidation of five separate crime bills (S 750, S 33, S 2087, S 16 and HR 8389). Mansfield merges the bills together under HR 8389 to improve its likelihood of getting passed. Mansfield previously sponsors S 750 (compensation to innocent victims). S 33 is a substitute for a bill introduced by EMK. S 33 deals with a life insurance program for state and local police officers. The bill expands those who are eligible for insurance and gives responsibility of running the program to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), not the Justice Department as is originally conceived in the EMK bill. The bill dies in the Senate. (1972 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 783)

1973

- January* Nixon announces the end of U.S. troop involvement in Vietnam on the 23rd. (1975 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 298)
- February* On the 7th, the Senate votes 77-0 to create a select committee to investigate Watergate headed by Senator Sam Ervin, Jr. (D-NC). This is after Mansfield persuades EMK not to seek the position. Mansfield reportedly has concerns that the committee will be too politicized if it is run by EMK. According to Valeo, Mansfield is also concerned that if EMK takes on such a public and controversial role it will open him up to assassination attempts. (Clymer, p. 194; Valeo, pp. 242-243)
- March* The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets bill comes up again before Congress and EMK sponsors S 33 (similar to 1972's S 33). Mansfield and Senator Walter F. Mondale (D- MN) co-sponsor S 300 (victim's compensation). S 33 and S 300, along with two other bills become S 800, an omnibus crime victims package. (1973 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 371)
- April* On the 3rd, S 800 passes the Senate, 93-1. (1973 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 371)

1974

- March* The Senate begins debate on a campaign finance reform bill, S 3044, which is sponsored by EMK. The bill is reportedly sparked, in part, by Watergate. EMK

says the bill is important to “end the corrosive and corrupting influence of private money in public life.” (*1974 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, pp. 617-618)

April S 3044 faces opposition from southern Democrats and conservative Republicans. Twice Mansfield files a cloture petition to limit debate on the bill and to end a filibuster against it. On the 11th, the Senate passes S 3044 with a vote of 53-32. (*1974 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 617)

October The Senate passes the conference report of S 3044 with a vote of 60-16. The bill does not include the campaign finance reform for congressional general elections as EMK had proposed. In response to this EMK says, “Abuses of campaign spending and private campaign financing do not stop at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. They dominate congressional elections as well.” (*1974 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 633)

On the 15th, President Gerald Ford signs the Federal Election Campaign Act into law (S 3044-PL 92-225). It is the first time that campaign spending limits are placed on presidential elections (both primaries and general) and congressional primary elections. (*1974 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 611)

1975

September Busing becomes a major issue to the appropriations bill (HR 8069) for the Departments of Labor and Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) brings up the issue when he offers an amendment to prohibit the HEW from denying funds from school districts in order to get them to bus. The Helms amendment is tabled. Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) proposes a limited version of the Helms amendment. Mansfield, who votes against the Helms amendment, votes for the Biden one. As adopted, the Biden amendment forbids the HEW from withholding funds from school districts to require them to bus, unless it is ordered by a federal court. EMK opposes all anti-busing amendments that are offered. (*1975 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, pp. 894-897)

1977 Mansfield retires from the Senate. He goes on to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Japan until 1988. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)

Ferris serves as General Counsel to House Speaker Tip O’Neill (D-MA) before becoming the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Ferris is Chairman of the FCC until April 1981. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)

1978 Ferris receives an honorary doctorate from Boston College. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)

1981 Ferris joins the law firm of Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Glovsky and Popeo in Washington, D.C. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)

- 1983** The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation is established to promote U.S.-Asian relations and cooperation. Ferris is currently on the Board of Directors and is the Vice-Chairman of the Foundation. (*The Maureen and Mike Foundation*, 2005, http://www.mansfieldfdn.org/about_fdn/board.htm, 06/13/2006)
- 1985** Ferris becomes director of Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)
- 1986** Ferris becomes a Trustee Associate/Trustee of Boston College. (*Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo Biography*)
- 1989**
- January* On the 19th, Mansfield receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)
- 2000**
- September* On the 20th, Maureen Mansfield dies at age 95. (Oberdorfer, p. 508)
- 2001**
- October* Mansfield, at age 98, dies of congestive heart failure on the 5th. (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*)
- On the 10th, Ferris delivers the eulogy at Mansfield's funeral. (Oberdorfer, p. 11)
- November* On the 8th, EMK asks the Senate to print Ferris's eulogy of Mansfield in the Senate Record. (Edward M. Kennedy, "Tribute to Mike Mansfield," November 8, 2001, <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?r107:S08N01-0024>, 06/06/2006)
- 2003**
- April* On the 2nd, EMK speaks at the 100th Birthday Tribute to Mansfield. (Edward M. Kennedy, "Remarks of Senator Edward M. Kennedy," 04/02/2003, 100th Birthday Tribute to Mike Mansfield, Washington, D.C.)