



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **John Tunney Interviews, 05/03/2007, 10/12/2009**

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Miller Center Documents¹

- John Tunney Timeline.
- John Tunney-EMK Key Personal Events.
- John Tunney-EMK Trips.
- John Tunney Committee Assignments.

Secondary Source Materials

- John Tunney bio, <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.
- James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976, pp. 49-54, 265-276.
- Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1999, pp. 21-23, 78-83, 117-126, 282-284, 292-318.
- Charles Powers, "Warming Up for the Big Time," *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 12/12/1971.
- Theo Lippman, Jr., *Senator Ted Kennedy*: New York, W.W. Norton and Co., 1976, pp. 198-213.
- *1972 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973, pp. 196-197.

¹ These are original documents created by Miller Center researchers for the Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project. Please acknowledge credit for any use of these materials.

JOHN TUNNEY TIMELINE

Prepared by Mark D. Nevin

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 05/10/2006

- 1934** John V. Tunney, son of former boxing champion Gene Tunney, is born in New York City. (*Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress*)
- 1956** Tunney graduates from Yale. He and Edward M. Kennedy (EMK) meet while registering for classes at the University of Virginia Law School and become “instant friends.” They rent a house together and are “practically inseparable” for three years. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1999, p. 21)
- 1957** Tunney attends the Academy of International Law at The Hague, Netherlands. (*Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress*)
- 1958**
- Summer* EMK attends the Academy of International Law at The Hague, Netherlands. According to Burns, Tunney and EMK travel together during breaks. (James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976, p. 52; *Congressional Directory*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963; “Edward M. Kennedy,” *Biography Resource Center*)
- Fall* EMK is named campaign manager for John F. Kennedy’s (JFK’s) Senate reelection campaign. Larry O’Brien and Kenny O’Donnell work with EMK to run the day-to-day operations of the campaign. After law school classes resume, EMK travels from Virginia to Massachusetts on weekends to continue his work on the campaign. Tunney also works for the campaign. JFK goes on to win reelection to the Senate by the largest margin in Massachusetts history. (Burns, pp. 62-65; Clymer, p. 25; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, New York: Touchstone, 2001, p. 793; Burton Hersch, *The Education of Edward Kennedy*, New York: Morrow, 1972, pp. 104-105; *The New York Times*, 10/31/1976)
- EMK is named president of the Student Legal Forum, which brings important figures to Charlottesville to speak at the University of Virginia Law School. Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) had also served as president of the Student Legal Forum. Prominent speakers that EMK recruits include Senator Hubert Humphrey (D-MN), Senator Prescott Bush (R-CT), U.S. Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers, and RFK. (Burns, p. 54; Clymer, pp. 21-22)

1959

- Spring* During their third year of law school, Tunney and EMK win the prestigious moot court competition. The judges include U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stanley Reed, Great Britain's chancellor, Lord Kilmuir, and Clement Haynsworth, a federal judge whose nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court EMK later helps to defeat in the Senate. (Burns, p. 53; Clymer, pp. 22; Hersh, pp. 101-102)
- June* Tunney and EMK graduate from the University of Virginia Law School. Tunney joins the Air Force as a judge advocate. EMK is admitted to the Massachusetts bar later in the year. (Clymer, p. 22; *Biographical Dictionary of the United States Congress*; *Time*, 09/28/1962)

1960

- Summer* EMK is named coordinator for JFK's presidential campaign in the Rocky Mountain and Western states. He travels throughout the region making speeches, organizing rallies, and meeting with people. Tunney and other close friends work with EMK on the campaign. (Hersh, p. 141)
- November* JFK wins the presidential election defeating former Republican Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

1961

- September* Tunney is named godfather to EMK's second child, Edward Moore (Teddy) Kennedy, Jr. (Clymer, p. 284; *Time*, 09/28/1962)

1962

- August* JFK spends the weekend at the Tunney family home in Maine. (*John Kennedy's White House Diary*, JFK Library, 08/10/1962)
- November* On the 6th, EMK wins the special election to fill the U.S. Senate seat from Massachusetts that was vacated by JFK in 1960 after winning the presidential election. (*Biographical Dictionary of the U.S. Congress*)

1963

Tunney is discharged from the Air Force as a captain. He is appointed special advisor to JFK's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime. He serves until 1968. (*Biographical Dictionary of the U.S. Congress*)

Tunney talks with EMK about EMK's future plans and EMK tells him that he enjoys being in the Senate and is considering it as a career. (Theo Lippman, Jr., *Senator Ted Kennedy*: New York, W.W. Norton and Co., 1976, p. 272)

1964 Tunney is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Democrat from California. EMK reportedly campaigns for Tunney. (*Biographical Dictionary of the U.S. Congress*; *The New York Times*, 10/31/1976)

1965

October Tunney travels with EMK, who is Chairman of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Refugees, and two other congressmen, to Vietnam to talk with officials about the mounting refugee problem. They meet with U.S. servicemen and survey the overall situation. While generally supportive of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, EMK is concerned that the Johnson Administration is not doing enough to care for people displaced because of the war. (Burns, p. 348; Clymer, pp. 79-82)

1966

Early '66 With EMK set to write a positive article in *Look* magazine on the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Tunney persuades him to adopt a more critical stance. EMK agrees to question U.S. refugee policy and the policy against negotiating with the Viet Cong. EMK later recalls that it was around this time that he first began to seriously question U.S. involvement in Vietnam. (Clymer, pp. 81-83)

November Tunney is reelected to Congress. (*Biographical Dictionary of the U.S. Congress*)

1967

January EMK, Tunney, and their two wives tour North Africa, Egypt, and Geneva. (*Washington Post*, 01/25/1967)

1968

June RFK is assassinated during a campaign stop in California. Tunney accompanies EMK to the hospital to review the remains. (Clymer, p. 117)

August During the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and other Democratic leaders urge EMK to come to Chicago and to consider supporting a movement to draft him for the Democratic nomination for president. Tunney helps to canvass delegates at the convention and counsels EMK not to run. In the end, EMK does not make himself a candidate and Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey wins the nomination. (Clymer, pp. 122-126; Hersh, p. 346)

November Tunney is reelected to Congress, garnering two-thirds of the vote. (*The New York Times*, 10/31/1976)

1969

- May* Tunney and EMK attend a rally of farm workers in California organized by labor leader Cesar Chavez. EMK writes a letter to the Los Angeles district attorney asking for clemency for RFK's killer, who faces the gas chamber. (Clymer, p. 139; Lippman, pp. 98-99)
- July* EMK's accident at Chappaquiddick Island occurs on the 18th. Tunney is one of the few people outside the Kennedy family to meet with EMK in the immediate aftermath of the accident. (*The Washington Post*, 07/23/1969)

1970

- November* Tunney is elected to the U.S. Senate from California, capturing 54 percent of the vote and defeating one-term Republican George Murphy. At thirty-six, he becomes the youngest member serving in the Senate. (*1970 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1971, p. 1076; *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 12/12/1971; *Time*, 11/16/1970)

1971

- Fall* Tunney and EMK co-sponsor legislation (S 2676) to provide federal funds to fight sickle cell anemia. The bill authorizes \$142 million "to establish a national program to control, conduct research on and improve treatment procedures for sickle cell anemia." The Senate approves the measure, but the House takes no action on the bill. (*1971 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1972, p. 564)
- Winter* President Richard M. Nixon names Lewis Powell and William Rehnquist to the Supreme Court. Fellow Judiciary Committee members Tunney and EMK vote for the Powell nomination and against the Rehnquist nomination. They question Rehnquist's commitment to "fundamental values of our political system" and claim his record shows "an almost hostile unwillingness to accept the use of law to overcome racial injustice." Nonetheless, the full Senate confirms Powell's nomination 89-1 and Rehnquist's 68-26. (*1971 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1972, pp. 851-859)
- December* Tunney endorses Senator Edmund Muskie for the 1972 Democratic presidential nomination after stating that EMK "can be taken at his word he's not a candidate." (*The Washington Post*, 12/09/1971)

1972

- Spring* The Judiciary Committee holds confirmation hearings for attorney general nominee Richard Kleindienst. EMK and Tunney oppose the nomination because they believe the White House might have instructed Kleindienst as deputy

attorney general not to appeal an unfavorable ruling against ITT (International Telephone & Telegraph) after the company allegedly pledged \$400,000 for the 1972 Republican National Convention. Kleindienst is eventually confirmed by the full Senate. (*1972 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973, pp. 207-225; Clymer, p. 191; Lippman, Jr., 201-202)

Congress passes S 2676 authorizing \$115 million dollars to establish “a national program for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of sickle cell anemia.” (*1972 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973, pp. 196-197)

June After a weekend camping trip with Tunney, EMK says he would consider running for vice president with leading Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern (D-SD) if he believed it would “make a difference between success and failure on the ticket.” Yet Tunney states that he is “very confident [EMK] doesn’t want [to run for vice president].” (*The Washington Post*, 06/15/1972)

On the 17th, four men are arrested with bugging equipment, cameras, and \$2,300 in cash inside the Democratic National Committee’s headquarters in the Watergate office building. (Michael A. Genovese, *The Watergate Crisis*: Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1999, p. xxii)

October The existence of a White House “dirty tricks” campaign against 1972 Democratic presidential candidates is reported in the press. Chairman EMK instructs staffers on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure to begin a preliminary investigation of “alleged political espionage activities involving the major political parties and their campaign organizations.” Tunney and the three other Democrats on the committee support the decision. (*The Washington Post*, 10/10/1972; Lippman, p. 204)

1973

February The Senate votes 70 to 0 to create the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities (the Watergate Committee) to investigate the Watergate break in and cover up, campaign espionage and sabotage, and campaign financing. The Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure ends its investigation and turns over its materials to the Watergate committee. EMK and his staffers provide the Watergate Committee “with a great deal of assistance.” (Genovese, p. xxiv; *Watergate: Chronology of a Crisis*, p. xxii; Lippman, p. 206)

July EMK, Tunney, and Congressman William Green III (D-PA) take their sons camping in Colorado. (Burns, p. 290)

Summer Tunney sponsors a bill (S 782) that requires the Justice Department to publicly disclose the details of antitrust settlements (consent degrees reached before an antitrust suit comes to trial) and contains new and stiffer penalties for antitrust violations. The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously reports the bill. It eventually passes the full Senate, but the House fails to vote on it in 1973. (1973 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1974, pp. 273-275)

1974

August On the 9th, Nixon resigns his office and Vice President Gerald R. Ford is sworn in as the 38th President. (Genovese, p. xxix)

November Tunney travels to Europe and the Middle East with EMK and members of the Kennedy family.

December Congress passes S 782, the Antitrust Procedures and Penalties Act. (1974 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1975, pp. 291-292)

1975

May-June Tunney joins with EMK and a handful of other Democrats in the Senate in a “major, concerted effort to reduce some spending and kill some of the specific weapons programs proposed” in a defense appropriations bill for 1976. Congress eventually passes a \$90.5 billion Defense Department budget, the largest in the nation’s history, with EMK voting for it. Tunney is successful in getting an amendment passed that prohibits the CIA and other government agencies from providing further assistance to anti-Soviet factions in Angola. (1975 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1976, pp. 873-887; Lippman, pp. 195-197)

1976

Fall Tunney and EMK co-sponsor a bill (S 2278) that enables private citizens who file and win federal civil rights suits to recover attorney’s fees from the losing party. Despite a filibuster led by Senator James B. Allen (D-AL), the Senate and the House approve the measure. (1976 *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1977, pp. 411-413)

November Tunney loses his bid for reelection to the Senate to Republican challenger Samuel I. Hayakawa, a scholar and former president of San Francisco State College. (*The New York Times*, 11/04/1976)

1979

Summer After much discussion with family and friends, EMK decides to challenge President Jimmy E. Carter for the Democratic presidential nomination. He is considered a favorite to defeat Carter. In making his decision, EMK asks Tunney, who was reportedly “never an enthusiast for the race himself,” to speak with his godson Teddy Kennedy, Jr., who is worried about his father’s safety. (Clymer, pp. 283-284)

1980

January EMK loses the Iowa caucus to Carter 59 percent to 31 percent and reportedly considers dropping out of the race. But after several meetings with his advisors, including Tunney, he decides to continue with the campaign. (Clymer, pp. 300-301; *The Washington Post*, 02/05/1980)

Spring A few months after the Soviets invade Afghanistan, Tunney is in Moscow on business and accepts a message from Soviet official Andrei Pavlov stating that Moscow would be willing to work with EMK on an agreement to withdraw from Afghanistan. EMK offers some proposals, but Moscow does not reply. (Clymer, p. 306)

August After a long and bitter campaign, EMK concedes the presidential nomination to Carter after his drive for an “open” Democratic Convention fails. (*The Wall Street Journal*, 08/12/1980)

November Carter loses the presidential election to former Republican California Governor Ronald W. Reagan.

EMK AND JOHN TUNNEY TRIPS

Prepared by Mark D. Nevin

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 06/20/2006

- Summer 1958: EMK and Tunney travel in Europe while one or both were studying at The Hague during law school.
- August 1962: JFK spends the weekend at the Tunney family home in Maine.
- October 1965: EMK, Tunney, and two other congressmen travel to Vietnam.
- January 1967: EMK, Tunney, and their two wives tour North Africa, Egypt, and Geneva.
- June 1972: EMK and Tunney go on weekend camping trip.
- July 1973: EMK, Tunney, and Congressman William Green III (D-PA) take their sons camping in Colorado.
- November 1974: EMK travels to Europe and the Middle East with Tunney, Joan Kennedy, Rose Kennedy, Jean Kennedy Smith, and Bob Hunter.

SENATOR JOHN V. TUNNEY AND EDWARD M. KENNEDY SENATE COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS IN COMMON

Prepared by Mark D. Nevin

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 03/22/2006

Edward M. Kennedy was elected to the Senate in 1962. John V. Tunney (JVT) was elected to the Senate in 1970, took his seat in 1971, and served one term until 1977.

Committee Assignments in Common: 1971-1977

Judiciary

Subcommittee Assignments in Common:

Administrative Practice and Procedure (EMK chaired)

Antitrust and Monopoly

Constitutional Rights (JVT chaired in 75 & 76)

Sources: *Congressional Staff Directories*