

# Jumping on to a sinking ship?

Ted Kennedy will formally declare his intention to seek the Democratic Party presidential nomination at a Boston press conference on Nov. 7, Stephen Smith, Ted's multimillionaire brother-in-law and campaign manager, announced Oct. 29. Democratic Party insiders were quick to note that Kennedy's already crumbling popular image was responsible for pushing up the announcement, originally scheduled for December, by five weeks.

With some alarm, the Kennedy campaign has begun a rushed drive to pick up as many deserters from the Carter camp—preferably with big names—as possible, by asserting that it's now or never for jumping on the Kennedy bandwagon. The most dramatic reversal came from Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne. Byrne had given President Carter her "wholehearted support" when he addressed a fundraising dinner to retire the Mayor's 1979 campaign debts on Oct. 15.

## Always the gentleman

"I'm tired of screwing around with this," Ted had told a somewhat taken aback Washington press corps on Oct. 26, "I want to get going." Indeed, all the events around Mr. Smith's subsequent announcement show that the driving force behind it was the rapidly fading bloom on Mr. Kennedy's populist campaign. "It's not as if we're running scared," said one of the senator's "Draft Kennedy" workers this week, "but things have changed. People are beginning to ask 'where's the candidate,' and worse, 'what's his position on X?' And we have nothing to tell them."

Kennedy's lack of a believable position on anything has in particular made him "upset over the embarrassment caused him" by the defeat of the "Draft Kennedy" slate of delegates in the Oct. 13 Florida Democratic caucuses. Kennedy's lead over President Carter in the national polls has since then begun to erode steadily, leading to comments that his campaign is "peaking."

"The Kennedy for President Committee is now officially underway," said Smith in his announcement. "This is a campaign, not an exploratory committee."

Heading up the Kennedy Committee with Smith are Paul Kirk and Carl Wagner, two Kennedy family campaign veterans. Marvin Katz, who will be Kennedy's finance coordinator, was borrowed from friendly New York State Senator Pat Moynihan's office.

The plans for the candidacy were finalized at a Kennedy "war council" in Boston over the weekend of Oct. 21, insiders say, which included Robert McNamara, head of the World Bank and former secretary of defense

under John Kennedy; McGeorge Bundy of the Council on Foreign Relations and Kennedy's National Security advisor; W. Averill Harriman, Kennedy's foreign policy advisor; John Kenneth Galbraith, Kennedy's economic advisor; and others.

At the meeting, the family counsel told Ted to get on the phone and get himself some national support ... fast. Kennedy did so, with a round of calls to major Democratic leaders nationally. "Join the campaign now, or you'll be left out," was his message, according to sources who said Kennedy was "stampeding" supporters.

## Committed

The results of this pressure surfaced as the week began, with the most unprincipled sections of the Democratic Party the first to jump onto the leaky Kennedy ship. "In looking for alternatives, we Democrats are fortunate to have the bright star of the Democratic Party, Senator Edward Kennedy," said Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne in her surprise announcement. "He has already demonstrated his courage by being willing to challenge an incumbent," she added somewhat lamely.

Byrne broke a 30 year tradition of the Cook County (Chicago) Democratic machine when she and George W. Dunne, chairman of the Cook County Democratic Committee, urged that the county's delegates "should go committed to Senator Kennedy" to the 1980 Democratic National Convention. The Cook County delegation, following the tradition of the late Mayor Richard Daley, has gone to the convention uncommitted or behind a favorite son to better play for Chicago's interests in the final moments of the presidential nominating convention.

A similar splash into the Kennedy camp was made by Carter's leading Southern direct-mail fundraiser Morris Dees of Alabama, who defected to the Kennedy campaign on Oct. 26. Mr. Dees has no qualms, he told the *Baltimore Sun* that day. "You know me, I'm a liberal. I think Carter will be out of it in March anyway, after the Illinois primary."

Prominent Carter Administration names quickly picked up by Kennedy over the last 24 hours include Ambassador-at-large Dick Clark, the former Democratic senator from Iowa and Ambassador to Mexico Patrick Lucey, the former governor and Democratic kingpin in Wisconsin.

Clark and Lucey are supposed by the Kennedy camp to be major potential factors in picking up large voting blocks for Ted in the crucial early Iowa caucus and Wisconsin primary. But they will have to run hard just to keep from losing Kennedy's current weak standings in the polls there. A Wisconsin commentator recently referred to the voters of that state, for example, as "too moral" for Kennedy.

—Kathy Burdman