

# Kennedy's Varied Faces: Unknown and Familiar

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Pretty blondes in miniskirts dash from room to room. Young men with long hair sort mail and clip newspapers—and watch the girls in miniskirts. It's 1968, and the place and the people in it are fresh and a part of their times.

But then familiar faces from another era begin popping out of doors. First, there's Kenneth O'Donnell; then Theodore C. "Ted" Sorensen. Pierre Salinger cradles a telephone. He's just as portly as ever, and his long sideburns are his concession to changing times.

This, of course, is Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's national headquarters, hastily installed in parts of three floors in a downtown office building. This is where Mr. Kennedy's speeches will be written, his organization created, his future decided.

## 'Irish Mafia' Comes Back

The old gang—in 1960 it was called the "Irish Mafia"—is here in force, a little heavier, a little older, but dedicated to doing for Bobby Kennedy in 1968 what it did for John Kennedy eight years ago. Hardly a day goes by when a seasoned Kennedy professional doesn't sign up. Last week, an important staff addition was Lawrence F. O'Brien, who resigned as Postmaster General to work for this Kennedy. Earlier, Richard Goodwin, a speech writer who coined the phrase "Alliance for Progress" for John Kennedy and the "Great Society" for Lyndon Johnson, came aboard.

These veterans are all key men in this Kennedy campaign—but this time they won't have everything to themselves. There are new men active in the Kennedy organization, and they are a different breed altogether. These new men—one is only 24—are irreverent, strong-willed, skeptical, and totally dedicated to playing an important part in this campaign. They wonder, in fact, if the old gang really knows how to run a political campaign in 1968.

There are at least four identifiable

groups working in Senator Kennedy's headquarters. First, of course, there are the veterans from 1960—O'Brien, O'Donnell, Salinger, Stephen Smith (Bobby's brother-in-law), Sen. Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, Gerald J. Bruno (probably the best "advance man" in the business). Then there are the new young men who have been working as assistants in Mr. Kennedy's Senate office. They include Adam Walinsky, 31, the chief speech writer until Richard Goodwin joined the staff; Peter Edelman, 30, who co-ordinates research and processes material for the speech writers; and Jeff Greenfield, 24, another speech writer.

## 'Kitchen Cabinet'

There are also a number of people who were associated with Senator Kennedy when he was Attorney General, some of whom are active in the campaign, some of whom constitute a sort of "kitchen cabinet." These include Edwin Guthman, who is now national editor of the Los Angeles Times; John Seigenthaler, editor of the Nashville Tennessean; Burke Marshall, general counsel for International Business Machines, Inc. Finally, there are the members of Bob Kennedy's staff.

Frank Mankiewicz, Robert Kennedy's press secretary and another new face on his staff, has his own identifying phrases for the various groups. He calls the 1960 veterans the "sodbusters" and Ted Kennedy's young assistants the "cattlemen." There is a friendly rivalry too between the "performers" who go on the road and the "managers" who remain behind in the office.

"The performers," says one of the managers, "come back from a trip and ask us, 'How'd we do?' and we tell them, 'You blew it. You ignored the farm vote.'"

Within the Kennedy organization there are those who argue for the so-called "citizens' politics" or "new politics" or "participatory politics." What they mean is the kind of politics that largely ignores working through the party organization and appeals directly to people—young people, Negroes, intellectuals, and others—who are deeply concerned by issues. It's the kind of politics that worked so effectively for Eugene J. McCarthy in New Hampshire and Wisconsin.

## Familiar Phrases

So far, there are strains of both the old and the new in this Kennedy campaign. The accent and inflections of the candidate and the jabbing forefinger to emphasize points are all reminiscent of the 1960 campaign. So are some of the phrases: "We've got to get this country turned around and headed in the right direction." "I'm not satisfied with that. That's not good enough. I think we can do better."

But there are also overtones that are unmistakably of the late 1960s—approval of de-escalation and negotiation of the Vietnam War; a call for block grants of Federal aid to the cities (which the Republicans contend Senator Kennedy has stolen from them) instead of the specific grants in aid traditionally favored by

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There can be no question of the importance of the 1960 veterans. The tacticians in this campaign will be the candidate himself, his younger brother, Ted, and Sorensen, O'Brien, and O'Donnell. The strategists will include Steve Smith, Pierre Salinger, and Fred Dutton, an assistant Secretary of State under John Kennedy.

But much of the tone and style will be set by Robert Kennedy's young Senate staff members—Walinsky, Greenfield, and

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## Surprises Among the 'Cattlemen'

# Kennedy's New Faces for 1968: Brash, Arrogant, and Talented

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Edelman. They are very much in tune with the "new politics" of the current college generation. "I don't think there are three guys who know more about what's current," Frank Mankiewicz says. "If you're three months out of date, or six, or a year, they know it."

Their viewpoints, to a large extent, are reflected in Robert Kennedy's speeches—strong opposition to the Vietnam War, a belief in the political maturity of youth today, a commitment to sweeping action in the cities and on racial problems.

They share the contempt of the "new politics" for many of the assumptions underlying traditional liberalism. They question Cold War foreign policy. They oppose the idea that an immense Federal bureaucracy can solve the nation's problems. They believe that the way to solve many domestic problems is to break the cities down into neighborhoods and turn the control of programs over to local groups.

"They're personally rather radical in their willingness to change institutions," says one member of the campaign staff. "But programmatically they can be very conservative."

(As a side note, it's remarkable that many of the young staff assistants to Richard M. Nixon talk the same way, even the most "conservative" among them. A hero held in high regard by the young staffers in both camps is Daniel P. Moynihan, director of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of M.I.T. and Harvard.)

### 'Friend of Hoffa's'

Adam Walinsky, a New Yorker and a graduate of the Yale Law School (Order of the Coif), is a handsome, strong-featured young man who wears fairly modishly cut suits, has medium-long sideburns, and wears thick glasses. Whereas most of the campaign staffers wear the "PT-109" tie clasps of the 1960 campaign, Adam Walinsky wears a tie clasp shaped like a semi-trailer truck and bearing the legend: "Friend of Hoffa's," an irreverent reference to Robert Kennedy's long and bitter feud with the Teamster boss. Mr. Walinsky got himself into the 1964 Kennedy Senate campaign after toiling in comparative obscurity in the Justice Department while Robert Kennedy was Attorney General (and, according to some, finally deciding that Bobby Kennedy measured up). In Washington he established a reputation for brashness and intellectual arrogance as did his new colleague, Richard Goodwin, nearly a decade earlier. According to one report he once offered to run for mayor of New York, presumably to save that city from itself.

But he can be a very stimulating man to talk to. He is strongly opposed to the war in Vietnam, although he served in the Marine Corps and values the experience. "I think anyone who hasn't had that kind of training has missed something," he says. "It taught me what reserves I have available to me, how I can always reach

America's strategic interests and what war does to us and what we believe in." He picks a book up off a desk and throws it down again. "And know what our capabilities are. One of Aquinas—or was it St. Augustine?—principles of a just war is whether it is successful, whether it can be won. Where does this leave Vietnam?"

His thoughts on domestic policy reflect that phenomenon of the new politics—that some of the most sweeping and far-reaching programs are couched in terms generally associated with conservative Republicans.

### 'What This Country Needs'

"Senator Kennedy refers to the 'journey of a thousand forms and a thousand desks.' What this country needs is a return to individual responsibility. The essence of our system is the identification of individual responsibility for political actions, but the bureaucracy is strangling everything. Everything has to wait on one more signature or approval. It takes three years sometimes to get a form approved. Do you realize what three years means in the life of a child? Civil rights get strangled because no one will take responsibility. There's too little protection at the bottom for the little man, and too little competition at the top. But the young kids today are ready to take responsibility, and in that sense I guess they're conservative. They're not going to accept something some doddering old guy has set out for them."

He walked over to a window and gestured. "I'd like to see a little good conservatism that would result in some attractive new buildings for a change instead of all that glass and plastic crap."

Jeff Greenfield has worked closely with Mr. Walinsky in writing Senator Kennedy's speeches. He is red-haired and looks even younger than his 24 years; he's writing a book on rock-and-roll music. "That's the music we identify with, like our folks talk about Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller. I used to get up at 6 a.m. to stand in line for rock-and-roll shows. I'll bet I averaged five or six hours a day when I was a kid listening to it. It used to drive my father wild."

He, too, is a native of New York City, a graduate of Yale Law, *cum laude*, and an editor of the Law Journal. He may also be one of the few on Robert Kennedy's staff to see the inside of a Big Ten university. He went to undergraduate school at Wisconsin where he majored in philosophy and edited the student newspaper. "I didn't have the cash, grades, or inclination to get into an Ivy League school. I went to the Bronx High School of Science, you know what that is, huh? You sit near the door of the lunch room so you can be first in class. Everyone wants to be first in class so he can be first out and get an extra minute or two of study time. And slide rules. Everyone has slide rules. They get better slide rules when they go to M.I.T. I couldn't do that. I read on my



Speechwriter Adam Walinsky suggests...

ous. Do you know what percentage of the Air Force moonlights? Ah. Do you?" The ensuing conversation wound up a half hour later with the assertion that the New York World Journal Tribune went out of business because traffic congestion made it impossible to get the final stock-market edition trucked to uptown Manhattan in time to catch the evening commuters.

If there is a Kennedy speech in the ensuing campaign on the financial problems of servicemen or evening newspapers, the chances are excellent that Peter Edelman, another legislative assistant to Robert Kennedy, will have provided, or at least processed, the information in it. Along with Milton Gwartzman, a brilliant young lawyer who has helped both Robert and Edward Kennedy from time to time, he supervises the research operation. This generally involves talking with experts in various fields—academics, past and present governmental officials, many of whom are eager to work in a Kennedy campaign.

### A Need for Facts

"You know anyone who knows about lumber in Oregon, water, redwoods, and air pollution in California?" Peter Edelman asks. "We're pretty well up on national issues, as a senator from New York

down and get 50 more steps out of myself." This experience may also account for his explanation of what he considers the callousness of Administration officials to the suffering caused by the Vietnam War. "You know why Walt Rostow [special assistant to President Johnson] is such a hawk?" he asks, shaking an admonitory forefinger at a visitor. "Because I'll bet he's never been in a fist fight. War is just an abstraction to him, a theoretical system. I'll bet money he's never been in a fist fight in his life."

#### A Question on 'Commitment'

But what really gets him going is what he considers an intellectual and semantic slovenliness surrounding American foreign policy since at least World War I. "We've still got that messianic complex of Woodrow Wilson's to democratize the world and make it over in our image," he argues. "So you get bad rhetoric, worse stereotypes, and completely unexamined premises. What are our 'commitments'? What do we mean by that? Does it mean what Dulles implied about protecting the world against Communist aggression? What about Tibet, then? What about Hungary? Is there really a monolithic communism? Does China really control Hanoi? We've got to really accurately define

own a lot, novels, poetry. We used to have poetry readings. I didn't know from nuclear physics the way the rest of them did, but I got what I wanted. It did me a lot of good in college."

#### 'I've Got a New Issue'

Mr. Greenfield apparently has read all of Allen Drury's political novels. He can quote long passages from each of them, which he does regularly and with great glee. He obviously considers the works of Mr. Drury to be a high form of low camp.

He fingered a tear in a shirt sleeve. "I loved Wisconsin. You know what college was for me before I went? A Jack Oakie movie musical. I could just see the sorority girls and cheerleaders forming the chorus line for the next number. That campus, the football, it really got me."

Adam Walinsky burst into the office to interrupt this reverie. "I've got a new issue," he gloated. "Can't you see I'm being interviewed?" Jeff Greenfield complained. "Go on, interview him, let me hear the self-serving answers. No, I'm serious. You know what the three most underprivileged groups in the country are? Students, Negroes, and what else?" Long, dramatic pause. "Servicemen." Jeff Greenfield leaned back. "What are you after, the absentee vote?" "No, I'm seri-

might be expected to be. But there are a lot of local and regional issues we could use help on. And the campaign's demand for material is insatiable. They're eating us alive."

Unlike Adam Walinsky and Jeff Greenfield, Mr. Edelman is a graduate of the Harvard Law School. He is also considerably less volatile, but his politics are the same as theirs.

This means first of all that he is opposed to the war in Vietnam ("Am I a big enough dove for you, Peter?" Robert Kennedy asked just before giving a major Senate speech sharply criticizing the war about a year ago. "No," said Peter Edelman. "Good," the senator grinned. "That makes me feel better.") And, he is attuned to the new politics.

"There's been a great change in politics in the past eight years," Mr. Edelman argues. "There's a great feeling on the part of people that they have no impact on events and people are disturbed about it. You have to appeal to that need to participate, and I think Senator Kennedy can do it best. Youth has been politicized as never before through the Peace Corps, Vista, the civil-rights and antiwar movements. They're willing to get out and work instead of getting summer construction jobs. They've been affected irretrievably and now they're ready to come back into the political process. You can get large numbers of young people to work in volunteer groups, canvassing on issues, registering voters, influencing delegate selection. That's why we thought we could take on an incumbent President."

#### 'Going the Same Way'

The faith of these young men that their candidate shares and embodies their ideals is complete, and to a great extent he does. But it would be wrong to overestimate their influence over Robert Kennedy. "Bob was heading in that direction anyway," says another campaign aide. "He just got guys who were going the same way."

Their loyalty and admiration do not necessarily extend to the other 1960 veterans. It is possible, in fact, to overhear some of the younger and more obscure give a critical reading of John Kennedy's eloquent 1960 inaugural speech on the grounds that it shares the assumptions about America's world role of which so many of the young men are critical.

A much more widespread feeling, however, is that the 1960 veterans may be too much attuned to organizational politics and not the participatory politics of 1968. "I doubt that those black books and files of Larry O'Brien's will be much good this year," says one. The men working with Mr. O'Brien and Kenny O'Donnell on organization and delegate hunting disagree. "It may be 30 per cent participatory, but the other 70 is organization," says one. "Maybe in four years, or eight, a man can be nominated and elected as those young guys think."

It is easy to forget, however, that getting large numbers of people to participate in a campaign, getting many people to do a little work, is a Kennedy campaign trademark and has long been an operating principle of Larry O'Brien's. And it would be unreasonable to think that men like Larry O'Brien and Kenny O'Donnell aren't aware of the changes. "In 1960 you could identify the people who had influence on

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the delegates—Governor Meyner of New Jersey, Dave Lawrence and Bill Green in Pennsylvania, Mike DiSalle in Ohio, Matt Welsh in Indiana, Mennen Williams in Michigan, Pat Brown in California," says Mr. O'Donnell. "Now we're trying to sort out who's who. You have to get to the delegates on an individual basis. It's a lot more work and takes an enormous amount of manpower, but I think we can do it."

There is another measure of the changes the past eight years have wrought: Ted Sorensen, once the most liberal member of



**Mr. O'Brien**

John Kennedy's entourage and the man who helped most to move the late President to increasingly liberal points of view, is now considered by many to be one of the most cautious and conservative in Robert Kennedy's group. Mr. Sorensen, for example, was one of the last holdouts against the senator's joining the Presidential race, long after men like Kenny O'Donnell and Adam Walinsky had urged him to run.

But there can be no doubt of Ted Sorensen's influence in the campaign. When Robert Kennedy decided to announce, he had Adam Walinsky and Mr. Sorensen submit speech drafts. The Walinsky version was considerably more pugnacious in challenging President Johnson and his policies—but, according to other staff members, the final product reflected generally the views of Ted Sorensen, who is still friendly with such Administration figures as Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

Now, Adam Walinsky will be working on speeches with Richard Goodwin, and while that could lead to some jealousy and rivalry, Mr. Goodwin's views are considerably closer to Adam Walinsky's than they are to Ted Sorensen's. There is also talk of rivalry between Frank Mankiewicz and Pierre Salinger.

**Work Enough for All**

Perhaps the pressure of several primary elections will absorb most of the energy and ambition of all the Kennedy staffers. Certainly there appears to be work enough for everyone.

Robert Kennedy's road will be a rough one, and there are even those who now believe Hubert Humphrey should be the favorite to win his party's nomination. Mr. Kennedy, these people point out, is the object of much scorn in many parts of the country. No one would take him terribly seriously if his name weren't Kennedy and if he didn't have considerable appeal of his own, especially with those blocs that constitute the grass roots of the new politics.

His staff knows the problems—even though individual members may disagree on how they should be resolved. How this staff—perhaps the most interesting and maybe the most controversial around—functions will be a major factor in Mr. Kennedy's drive for the White House.

—JAMES R. DICKENSON