

## DEMOCRATS HEAR KENNEDY WILL RUN

California Liberals Indicate  
He Seeks '76 Nomination—  
No Formal Commitment

By CHRISTOPHER LYDON  
Special to The New York Times

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Feb. 14—Among the rich Democratic liberals here who fueled the antiwar politics of 1968 and 1972, the word is being passed this week that Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts is indeed running for President in 1976.

The message is calming some anxiety, within the old peace movement, about the e drive by Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington for the Democratic nomination. Within the same circles, it depresses further the low interest in alternatives to Mr. Jackson— notably Senator Walter F. Mondale of Minnesota, who was courting backers here today.

"Teddy's going, no doubt it any more" is the word on the grapevine. The message stems from a meeting in Senator Kennedy's Washington office last week; it is evidently being strengthened by wishful repetition.

### Washington Meeting

Harold Willens, a real estate developer here who raised millions of dollars for Senator Eugene J. McCarthy's Presidential bid in 1968 and millions more for Senator George McGovern in 1972, had a two-hour lunch with Mr. Kennedy in Washington last Thursday.

Mr. Willens declined to quote the Senator in an interview last night. But with friends and allies in the McGovern campaign—men like Max Palevsky, the electronics tycoon, movie-maker and largest single shareholder in the Xerox Corporation, and Miles Rubin, the head of a diversified manufacturing empire—Mr. Willens left no doubt that Senator Kennedy was running.

Constant ministrations by telephone to this key base of Democratic contributors — including calls from Mr. Kennedy, from Paul Kirk, his political aide, and from David Burke, a former Kennedy assistant, now in the investment business in New York — confirm the sense that the Kennedy campaign has begun, even if for tactical reasons it remains unannounced for another year or more.

In his meeting with Mr. Kennedy last week, Mr. Willens

seems to speak for the scores of wealthy liberals that he has recruited over nearly a decade into a powerful independent force within the Democratic party. On their behalf, Mr. Willens made several contentions including the following:

1. That Senator Jackson's hawkishness on Vietnam and his seeming enthusiasm about a new cold war with the Soviet Union make him virtually unacceptable to this faction as a Democratic Presidential candidate.
2. That liberal candidates like Senator Mondale, who might otherwise be acceptable on the issue, are politically unimpressive.
3. That Senator Jackson could come close to pre-empting the nomination within the next few months unless Senator Kennedy gives an early signal that he actively intends — despite his official uncertainty — to be a candidate.

On each point, Mr. Willens said, Senator Kennedy responded with a sympathetic understanding. To Mr. Willens and his friends, the signal has been given. Yet Mr. Willens is not explicit about a Kennedy commitment. "I hope — I would rather say hope than think—," Mr. Willens said, "that despite the personal sacrifice and dangers involved, he'll be able to make a decision with his eye on history."

Mr. Willens, who with many of the men he speaks for are Jewish, guesses that an even larger and more powerful group of American Jews is already committed to Senator Jackson. The Senator has been an outspoken champion of Israel — often in a cold war context.

While the Nixon Administration was still banking on its detente with the Russians to help cool the fighting in the Middle East last October, for example, Senator Jackson's fire protest against Soviet aid to the Arabs hastened American aid to Israel. Senator Jackson's amendment to the Administration's trade bill has made trade privileges for the Russians contingent upon the freedom of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel.

Positions like that, Mr. Willens contends are all the more reason to oppose Senator Jackson. "Scoop Jackson has cleverly and intelligently picked up the banner of Israel, and he's running swiftly with it," Mr. Willens asserted. "But it