

MAR 19 1976

NYTimes

Senator Church Joins Presidential Race

Senator Church

NYTimes — MAR 19 1976

By LINDA CHARLTON

Special to The New York Times

IDAHO CITY, March 18 — Senator Frank Church of Idaho officially declared himself a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination today, telling a crowd of about 2,500 people standing in the muddy streets of this gold-rush town, "It's never too late—nor are the odds too great—to try."

The 51-year-old Senator's Presidential yearnings have been no secret, but he has delayed his announcement, and the start of his campaign, because of the Senate investigation of intelligence activities.

He has been the leading figure in that investigation, which has in turn given him a sort of national prominence that he might not otherwise have enjoyed as a Senator from this sparsely populated Northwestern state best known for its potatoes.

Mr. Church joins a field of Democratic candidates that has been reduced, in effect, to four—former Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia, Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington, Representative Morris K. Udall of Washington and Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama.

Former Senator Fred R. Hart

Continued on Page 18, Column 3



The New York Times/George Tames

Senator Frank Church of Idaho with his wife, Bethune, working on announcement during bus ride from Boise to Idaho City. Behind them are his mother, Mrs. Frank Church, right, and mother-in-law, Mrs. Chase A. Clark.

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

ris plans to reactivate his campaign for the Pennsylvania primary on April 27, Sargent Shriver will contest only two more primaries and several others have "suspended" or abandoned their efforts.

In his speech, delivered with fervor from the steps of the Boise County Courthouse, Mr. Church assailed what he called "a leadership of weakness and fear" in Washington. He said he was entering the campaign "at this late date" because of his conviction that "the most important issues are being ignored."

These he outlined as being "the restoration of the Federal Government to legitimacy in the eyes of the people," and "better, not bigger, government" by "turning the decision-making homeward again." He pledged to "give free enterprise some breathing room" by seeking controls on huge, multinational corporations and by abolishing "regulations that stifle competition," especially in small businesses.

He stressed that his years of experience in the Senate qualified him for the White House. He emphasized that every foreign policy decision—and he believes this is his specialty—"sends ripples or waves back across America."

Mr. Church chose this tiny city (population 200 plus seasonal tourists) to make his announcement because his grandfather settled here in the 1860's, when the gold rush was at its height and Idaho City had 41 saloons and a population of about 30,000. His motorcade of three buses left Boise in the early morning for the 40-mile drive along spring-swollen rivers beneath brown hills dotted with sagebrush and snow-stippled peaks.

From here, he flew to Port-

and, Ore., for an airport news conference. He will campaign in California for the next three days.

Oregon's primary on May 25 is one of seven primaries that Mr. Church plans to enter. The first will be in Nebraska May 11, followed by Idaho, Nevada and Kentucky, all on May 25; Rhode Island on June 1 and California on June 8. Still under consideration are the primaries in Ohio and New Jersey, on June 8, and such caucus states as Connecticut and Colorado.

Mr. Church laughingly refers to his as the "late, late strategy," but he seems to feel that his chances are good enough to be worth this try. Others, politicians and political observers, are less sanguine, pointing out that he has three nearly insurmountable problems.

The first is that of "turf," or a political base. Outside Idaho, where he won 86 percent of the caucus-chosen delegates to the state convention yesterday and is expected to do at least as well in the May primary, he has no area to look for support.

## 'Don Quixote' of '76

Also, campaign funding is likely to be a particularly acute problem for him, since he neither started fund-raising months ago nor has any primary victories that would stimulate donations now.

Last, and probably the most serious factor, is that he is yet another liberal in a year where, thus far, voters have shown a decided partiality toward "moderate" candidates. To many, the field of "liberals" or "progressives" seems overcrowded already.

Senator Church is not unaware that his entry into an already crowded field of Democrats may be regarded by

others, if not by himself or his supporters, as folly. "Meet the Don Quixote of this campaign," he said at the start of a recent interview in his Senate office.

He is slimmer, less cherubic-looking and less moralistic in demeanor in a personal interview that he often appears in the floodlights of a committee hearing.

Senator Church defines himself as an alternative. "This is neither meant to be a frivolous candidacy nor do I mean to play the role of a spoiler," he said. But he regards the Democratic contest as becoming a duel between Mr. Carter and Senator Jackson, adding that "many Democrats are looking for an alternative."

Mr. Church conceded that Representative Udall was trying to be that man, but pointed out that Mr. Udall "as yet has not won a race in any state." Of course, Senator Church has not yet won a Presidential primary, either, but he has not yet made an attempt.

### Not Blocking Udall

The Senator insisted in the interview that he was not blocking Mr. Udall because Mr. Church's first primary will be Nebraska on May 11. By then, he said, "Mo Udall must demonstrate that he can win. Unless he can, he won't be considered a clear winner. I withdrew from Massachusetts and stayed out of Wisconsin."

The Senator's strategy is based on the premise that no "clear winner" will emerge from the primaries. "If I am successful in winning the late primaries," Mr. Church said, "I would then come to the convention, not with sufficient votes to win in early ballots, but with momentum and a good possibility of becoming the alternate candidate."

In another sense, his strategy is based on an unspoken belief that the Congressional investigations—into multinational corporations and the nation's intelligence community—have transformed him from a Senator from a sparsely populated state into an at least vaguely recognized face and name.

The Senator never referred to them, but there are precedents for the successful use of Congressional hearings as springboards to national office. At least three members of Congress in the last 32 years have

done so—Harry S. Truman in 1944, Richard M. Nixon in 1952, and Estes Kefauver in 1956.

Before the recent round of investigations into intelligence activities, it was Senator Church's early opposition to the Vietnam War that made his name known nationally. He came to the Senate in 1957. He was then only 32 years old, one of the youngest men ever elected to the Senate. Three years later, he enjoyed a moment of celebrity when he delivered a florid keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles.

Frank Forrester Church—he has dropped the middle name—was born in Boise on July 25, 1924. He was graduated from Boise High School and from Stanford University. Then he went off to the Harvard Law School, transferring back to Stanford after one year with the hope that the milder California weather might ease his back pains.

But the back pains turned out to be cancer, and he was initially given six months to live. A combination of surgery and radiation were entirely successful, and there has been no recurrence of the disease. In World War II, he served in the Army, in military intelligence, and won the Bronze Star.

### From Republican Family

He began practicing law in Boise in 1950, the year he got his law degree. Although he was born into a Republican family, he married into a prominent Democratic one. His wife's father, Chase A. Clark, was a former Idaho Governor.

Mr. Church quickly became active in local politics, was chairman of the state's Young Democrats in 1952 and was elected to the Senate in 1956. He is the only Democratic Senator from Idaho ever to have been elected for more than one term.

He comes from a state generally described as conservative in its politics, but he says, "The people of Idaho have given me much latitude to be my own man."

There was a brief attempt in 1967 to put together a recall petition on the basis of his antiwar leadership, but it died quickly and quietly, and the people of Idaho, the rest of whose Congressional delegation is Republican, have returned him to the Senate. He is now in his 20th year there.

### 'Consolation Prize'

If he remains in the Senate, Mr. Church is likely to become chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—a position that was once "the fulfillment of my ambition," he said, "and which I would gladly accept as a consolation prize should this Presidential effort fail."

But, in the end, he said, a senator, no matter what his seniority and influence, is "only one vote in 535, and I suppose the reason that prompts me into this race is that the office of the Presidency is the only one where there is a chance to change the trend of events for the country. . . . he has some opportunity to reverse trends that I think gravely imperil the United States."

Then the Senator went into the theme that may be the leitmotiv of his campaign: "I've looked in that pit, you know, having conducted the major investigations. I know how far the corruption has spread, the lawlessness, the arrogant contempt for the rights of ordinary citizens. Only a determined President can reverse these trends and bring government back within the harness of the law."

### Years of 'Preparation'

Since many of Mr. Church's positions are close if not identical to those of other liberal candidates, he is stressing his years of "preparation for the Presidency" as the factor that sets him apart. A five-minute "biography" scheduled to be shown on network television this week winds up with this appeal: "In this era of the accidental President, isn't it about time we had a President prepared for the Presidency?"

Since public morality, especially in foreign policy, has been the Senator's specialty, it is natural that he should see this issue or combination of issues as his strong suit in bidding for the nomination. His years in the Senate, Mr. Church said, "have given me an intimate knowledge of what the problems are in Washington. Senator Church, who often

speaks in complete and complex sentences rich with polysyllabic words, sees foreign-policy error—his own field of expertise—as the root cause of many of the current domestic problems. "Massive investments in foreign lands" by American multinational corporations, for instance, are losing this country about 150,000 jobs a year, he says.

Like most of his fellow Democrats, he favors changes in tax laws to help small business, and control the "problem of giantism in our economy." In addition, he goes along with the current liberal demands to break up of the giant oil companies. His particular emphasis in domestic policy is on moving the decision-making process concerning Federal grants-in-aid out of Washington and into the states in an effort to "refresh the well-springs of the democratic process."

On three issues that matter a great deal to certain voters, Senator Church defines his position this way:

**EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT.** He was one of its original co-sponsors, and adds that he was one of the first senators to have a woman administrative assistant, Verda Barnes, now retired but working in his campaign.

**ABORTION.** "I recognize the [Supreme Court abortion] decision as the supreme law of the land," and as President would not "take sides" in any debate about it. He is also the author of the "conscience amendment," allowing medical personnel and religiously based hospitals not to perform or take part in abortions.

**GUN CONTROL.** Here Mr. Church, like Mr. Udall, votes his constituency; he is opposed to any form of Federal gun control.

On busing, the Senator said: "We should strive very hard to achieve quality education and do everything that can be done short of forcing busing, but in those cases when forced busing is ordered, then the constitutional right must be upheld."

#### 'Two Big Enigmas'

Mr. Church said he saw "two big enigmas" shadowing the course he is plotting. The first is money, and although he was not a formally announced candidate until today, he has been appearing at fund-raisers in New York and Washington for months. He qualified for Federal matching funds in six weeks, has received \$209,000 so far, and has, he said last week, about \$350,000 in the bank.

His national campaign director, Carl Burke, a Boise lawyer, describes the campaign as "lean." Another said it was a "go-cheap" endeavor. Henry M. Kimelman, the businessman who performed the same chore for Senator George McGovern in 1972, is the chief fund-raiser.

The second crucial question is "whether or not another alternative candidate pre-empts the field, and that would be, I think, Mo Udall." The entrance last week of Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. of California into that state's primary — which Mr. Church has said he "must win" and others say he must do well in—"complicates the situation" there, the Senator acknowledged earlier this week.

#### The 'Third Senator'

Aside from Mr. Burke, who has run all of his campaigns—and perhaps even more than Mr. Burke, many say — it is Bethine Church, his wife, who is his most influential adviser. She has been called the state's "third Senator." She will be campaigning herself full time.

After Nebraska, the plan is for Mr. Church to enter primaries in Idaho, Oregon, Nevada and Kentucky on May 25, then Rhode Island on June 1 and California on June 8. Still being considered as possible options are the primaries in New Jersey, Ohio and Connecticut, and such caucus states as Colorado.

Peter Curtin, a 34-year-old native of New Jersey who is administrative assistant to Governor Byrne and special assistant to Mayor Kenneth Gibson on Newark, is running the campaign from the Senator's second-floor headquarters in Southeast Washington.

One feature he said he regarded as particularly strong was what he called a "stroke and convert" operation—"going after the uncommitted [delegates]," those committed to "faltering" candidates, those who might be amenable to the

suggestion that Mr. Church would be a good second choice.

If it goes according to plan, the Senator said, "then it will be said, 'Well, Frank Church was the only one who figured it out this year, against the conventional wisdom' of entering early primaries. If it doesn't, then I'll be able to say back, as everybody figured, it was too late."