

# BOSTON ASSESSES 2 NONCANDIDATES

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Humphrey and Kennedy, at  
Hearing, Are Reported to  
Wield Much Influence  
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Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, Feb. 16—If the Democratic Party were a corporation and Gallup Poll preference points were stock, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota would be the largest single shareholders in the party and, in tandem, a controlling bloc.

Both men are declining to run for outright leadership in the form of the Democratic Presidential nomination, but they sat through an all-day hearing on New England's sputtering economy today as if to test their influence on their party's thinking.

A large part of their influence is their ability to make other politicians wonder about it.

"It's clear to me," said Kevin Harrington, president of the Massachusetts State Senate, "that Senator Kennedy wants to play a commanding role in the nominating process."

"It's significant that Hubert and Teddy are playing footsie," said Edward J. McCormack Jr., a one-time rival of Mr. Kennedy in Massachusetts Democratic politics who held a peacemaking fund-raiser for the Kennedy Senate re-election campaign here tonight.

### 'A Lot to Say'

"I asked people if they can imagine a Humphrey-Kennedy ticket this year. I don't know if Teddy wants it. But if they don't run themselves, between them they could have a lot to

### Kennedy vs. Humphrey: One Vote for Beauty

BOSTON, Feb. 16 (UPI)—An 84-year-old Boston woman spotted notable noncandidates Hubert H. Humphrey and Edward M. Kennedy entering a popular harbor-front restaurant for lunch today and could not resist.

"Senator, you're so handsome. You should be the next President," she commented.

Mr. Kennedy smiled.  
She shook Mr. Humphrey's hand.

say about who will be the nominee."

Clement A. Norton, a politician of Boston's "last hurrah" era who was a friend of Senator Kennedy's grandfather, the late Mayor John F. Fitzgerald, was nearly overcome with Humphrey enthusiasm.

"I've never heard a man with the public record you have," the 82-year-old Mr. Norton told the Minnesota visitor.

"What about grandpa?" Senator Kennedy broke in.

"He'll run," Mr. Norton said of Mr. Humphrey, currently a noncandidate for the Presidency. "He's the right type. Teddy wouldn't have him here if he wasn't for him, and Teddy's the most powerful man we've got."

Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Kennedy both professed modesty about their influence and denied absolutely any conspiracy in arranging today's hearing two weeks before the Massachusetts primary. Mr. Humphrey's name is not on the Massachusetts ballot, but his friends here, including Mr. McCormack, are urging "no preference" ballots as a sort of write-in vote for the Minnesota.

### Part of a Series

The hearing, they said, was just the fifth in a series by the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, of which Mr. Humphrey is chairman, on the unemployment problem around the country. It was Senator Kennedy, a committee member, not Senator Humphrey, who added the Boston hearing to the schedule. And the virtue of the date, Mr. Kennedy said, was only that today was a Monday holiday in which no Senate business could compete.

If there was influence involved, the Senators wanted it known, it was only the power of their voices in defense of Federal social programs at a moment when some of the active Democratic candidates want to join the Republicans in trimming the Government.

"It appears," Senator Kennedy responded to the long litanies of economic misery this morning, "that those who strive to be heard on these issues are on the run."

"We're just a couple of old friends," Senator Humphrey said, "getting together and helping each other out."