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# Introduction

The US is a federal Union of 50 states each of them has its own government. The seat of the central (federal) government is Washington, D.C.

The population of the USA is about 250 million people; most of the population lives in towns and cities.

The United States is rich in natural and mineral resources. It produces copper, oil, iron ore and coal. It's a highly developed industrial and agricultural country. There are many big cities in the USA, such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and others. The national capital is Washington, D.C. Its population is about 3.4 million. It was built in the late eighteenth century as the centre of government. It was named after George Washington, the first president of USA and general of war.

The USA are the fourth largest country in the World (after Russia, Canada, and China). It occupies the southern part of North America and stretches from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. It also includes Alaska in the North and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. The total area of the country is about nine and half million square kilometers. The USA borders on Canada in the North and on Mexico in the South. It also has a sea border with Russia.

The USA is a presidential republic. The legislative branch of the US Government, or the Congress, represents all of the American states. It consists of two parts: the House of Representatives and the Senate. Each state has two senators, who are elected every 6 years. A senator must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the US for 9 years and live the state she or he will represent. A representative must be at least 25 years old, a citizen for 7 years and live in the state.

USA - the very first state accepted the constitution. It is one of the first countries which have established democracy by the basic form of board. In this report we shall tell about the reasons of occurrence of the constitution and about its influence on development of the state on an example of president's institute.

# Constitution USA

With independence came many problems. The U. S. were joined together under one government by the Articles of Confederation. The articles listed the powers of the central government and the powers of the states. There was a national Congress made up of representatives from each state. But Congress had almost no power at all. The 13 states acted like 13 separate little nations. There were many times when states would not cooperate with the central government. They were too busy quarrelling with each other. The U. S. was in danger of falling.

In May 1787 a meeting began in Philadelphia to change the Articles of Confederation. Representatives from all the states except Rhode Island were present. It was soon decided that whole new constitution had to be written. A constitution is set of laws by which a country is governed.

This meeting became known as the Constitutional Convention. Washington was chosen president of the convention. A 81-year-old Benjamin Franklin took part in its work. A new group of first-rate leaders were at this meeting. Among these leaders were James Madison and Gouverneur Morris. The people who attended the convention did their work very well. The Constitution has lasted to the present.

What kind of government would be the best for the USA?

The delegates all agreed that the new government should continue to be a republic. This means that the people would elect representatives to manage their country.

The delegates knew that they wanted a federal government. In such a government the power is divided between the national and the state governments. The national government would collect taxes and borrow money. It would control trade with foreign countries and between states. The national government would print or coin money. It alone could declare war. All other powers were left to the states. Matters within a state would be settled by that state.

The members of the Constitutional Convention wanted a government that would protect the people's rights, not take them away. So they divided the government's power into three parts, or branches. This is called separation of powers.

The legislative branch was the Congress. Its major job was to make laws. The executive branch was the President and his helpers. It was their job to carry out the laws the Congress passed. The judicial branch was the courts. They had to decide the meaning of the laws.

Each branch had some power over the other two. No one branch would be allowed more power than the others.

A big debate at the convention was over the matter of who would control Congress. Large states wanted representatives to Congress based on the number of people in the state. Small states wanted an equal vote with the larger states. This problem was solved by giving Congress two parts. Regardless of size each state would send two representatives to the Senate, one part of Congress. States with more people would send more delegates to the House of Representatives, the other part of Congress. In order for a law to be passed, it had to go through both parts of Congress.

The new Constitution included a way to make changes, called amendments. If things didn't work out, or if the USA grew о changes, the Constitution could be amended without being entirely changed. This was to prove helpful very soon.

Nine state governments had to approve the Constitution be fore it could become the law of the land. Many states refused to do so unless the Constitution listed people's rights as well as the rights of the government. They argued that important freedoms must be written down. Once the states were promised that this would happen, the Constitution would become law.

James Madison saw to it that these freedoms were written down. Madison had been very active at the Constitutional Convention. After the Convention he worked hard to explain the Constitution to the people. Once the new government was started, Madison wrote many amendments that would make rights like freedom the press, speech and worship part of the Constitution. Ten of these amendments were passed by the states. These first ten amendments to the Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights.

# Nation Grows. Washington Through Jackson. Jefferson

April 30, 1789 was Inauguration Day for the young nation's first President. An inauguration is the ceremony that puts someone office. Washington did not want to be President. He wanted to live at his beautiful home Mount Vernon. But he put his love for his country ahead of his own wishes. Washington traveled from Mount Vernon to New York City. New York City was the nation's first capital. Washington took the oath of office on the Bible. He promised to do his best to keep, protect and defend the Constitution. The Constitution listed the powers and duties of the President.

The new government was started with a Constitution, a Congress, a President and little else. Both Washington and the Congress knew that the new government would have to show its strength very quickly.

The job of President was too big for one person alone. Congress formed three departments to help Washington. These departments went to work on three of the biggest problems facing the new nation.

The State Department would work on relations with other nations. The War Department would build a national navy and army. It is now called the Department of Defense. The Treasury Department would handle the nation's money problems.

Washington chose able leaders for each of these departments. Each leader would be called a secretary. Thomas Jefferson became secretary of state; Henry Knox, secretary of war and Alexander Hamilton secretary of treasury.

Each of these men advised the President. Final decisions were made by the President, however.

The group of advisors became known as the Cabinet. Future Presidents would all have a Cabinet.

The Constitution called for a third branch of government - a Supreme Court. All questions about the Constitution and federal laws would be settled by this court. Washington appointed John Jay as head of the Supreme Court. He was called the Chief Justice.

In 1791 Congress passed a tax law in order to raise money for the new government. Some people thought they would rather fight than pay these taxes. Washington formed an army to stop them. He showed future Presidents how to be a strong leader.

The nation also grew and expanded while Washington was President. The new states - Vermont, Kentucky and Tennessee - entered the Union.

Washington could have been President for life. But he didn't feel this was right. He had devoted most of his life to helping his country. Now, he was 65 years old and had served two terms, or four-year periods as President. With the exception of Franklin Roosevelt, every President has followed Washington's two-term tradition. In 1797 Washington retired. He went back to the life he loved at Mount Vernon.

Не did not enjoy it for long time. On December 12, 1799 he was caught in a snowstorm while riding around his farm and became sick. Two days later he died. The second president be-came John Adams. He was a true patriot as well as a brave and stubborn man. Near the end of Adam's term as President, the government moved from Philadelphia to Washington, D. C. The most important of Adam's deeds was that he took responsibility of the peace with France in 1800.

The third president of the USA was a very remarkable man, Thomas Jefferson. He was a man of many talents: He was a lawyer. He wrote the Declaration of Independence. He was the representative of the United States at the court of the king of France A person who does this kind of work is called a diplomat. He was the first secretary of state, second vice-president and third President of the USA. While he was President the size of the country doubled.

He came from Virginia. He served that state as governor and Congressman. As an architect he drew the plans for many building in Virginia. At the same time he was also a fine violinist and composer. He studied Native American languages. He knew Greek, Latin and Hebrew. He could speak French and Italian.

His work as scientist and inventor shouldn't be forgotten. He did practical things such as improving farming methods by in venting a new type of plow. He experimented with different seeds. He worked much in education.

Jefferson's greatest accomplishment as President was the Louisiana Purchase. At this time Louisiana included just above all the land from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. The Mississippi River was a highway for those Americans who lived west of the Appalachian Mountains. They took their goods downriver to the port of New Orleans. New Orleans was not part of the U. S. It belonged to France which had received the city and the rest of what is called the Louisiana Territory from Spain in 1800.

Americans living in the West were afraid that France would not allow them to use the port of New Orleans for trade. This was because Napoleon wanted to start another French empire in America. The Americans were to try to buy New Orleans from the French for ten million dollars.

Haiti was a French colony in the Caribbean Sea. Napoleon needed a strong naval base in Haiti if he wanted a French empire in America. But a former slave Toussaint L'Ouverture led the people of Haiti in successful fight for freedom at this time. With out Haiti, Louisiana lost some of its appeal for Napoleon. It also looked as though France would soon be fighting Great Britain. If so, France would be unable to defend Louisiana. The soldiers would be needed in Europe. Napoleon decided to sell the entire Louisiana territory to the USA. It was bought for 15 million dollars. By this act the USA doubled its size.

Jefferson wanted to know more about Louisiana. He wished to find out about the Native Americans, the animals, the minerals, the climate and the type of land. To make such an exploration Jefferson chose Merewether Lewis, his personal secretary, and William dark, Lewis's close friend. They were to try to find a route all the way to the Pacific Ocean. They built a fort and spent the winter on the shores of the Pacific. In the spring they started the trip home, finally reaching St Louis in September 1806. Their diary was a document of great importance. Jefferson received an excellent report of their journey. He learned a great deal about the geography of the new territory. He learned about the animals, trees and plants there. The work of Lewis and dark gave the USA a claim to the Oregon Country. In 1846 this area became part of the USA.

# Presidents of the United States

**Who can be President?** Any natural-born citizen of the United States who is over the age of thirty-five and has lived in the United States for fourteen years or more.

**What does a President do?** The President is the chief executive of the United States. According to the Constitution, he "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." From time to time, he informs Congress in his State of the Union message what has been done and what needs to be done.

Although he cannot force Congress to act, he can suggest a program for them to consider. And as leader of his political party, he can often see that program is carried out, when his party has a majority of seats. He can also prevent Congress from acting by using the presidential veto.

The President plays the chief part in shaping foreign policy. With the Senate's approval, he makes treaties with other nations and appoint ambassadors. But he can also make executive agreements with other nations without approval of the Senate.

He nominates Cabinet members, Supreme Court justices, and many other high officials. These nominations must be approved by the Senate However, he can fill thousands of other important posts under his own power.

The President is Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and commissions officers in all branches of the service.

**How is the President elected?** The voters of each state choose a number of electors equal to the number of senators and representatives they have in Congress. The electoral college, made up of the electors from every vote for the candidate supported by the voters of their state When there are more than two presidential candidates and none gets a clear majority, Congress selects the President from the three candidates who received the most votes.

**How long is the President in office?** The President is elected to a term of four years. Since Article XXII of the Constitution became effective, in 1951, no President may be elected to more than two terms

**When does the President take office?** The new President takes office at noon of January 20 of the year following his election, on taking this oath of office: *"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."*

## Thomas Jefferson

### Jefferson's Reason

Jefferson's words are written and spoken in the USA many times everyday; most often as if the words, phrases and ideas, by themselves alone, constituted some sort of complete statements, some sort of ultimate and final truths about man, world and society. This is a deep, though very popular mistake; one this piece shall try somewhat to amend. The phrases and ideas are admittedly grand, noble and inspiring; most Americans - at least those native born - do not read these words without emotion (due of course to intellectual and emotional culture and education). They are an essential part of what it is to be an "American". Even persons in the USA who may only be educated in the most meager way (and there are unfortunately tens of millions in the USA who are labeled "functionally-illiterate"), often still can at least repeat portions of these famous words quoted above. (This author has observed some of the very poorest, least educated, most socially- and economically - disadvantaged people in America- whose daily lives are surrounded by chronic poverty; drugs, uncontrolled crime and random violence; joblessness; hopelessness;

broken families, etc. - repeat small parts of Jefferson's words, in trying to explain their lives. Jefferson could never have pictured this.)

Jefferson had been raised as a child in the moderate beliefs, doctrines and services of the Anglican Church; it had its original lineage from the Roman Catholic Church, and generally in America became the Episcopal Church. It was the established church of the Virginia colony where Jefferson lived. (Later Jefferson would be influential in disestablishing this church. In other words, he was raised as a boy in the traditions and beliefs of the Christian cosmos with its ancient elements. But this would soon be profoundly challenged. When he, beginning at the age of 16, attended the College of William and Mary, he began a rapid transition from a mild, uncritical world of theological beliefs the Anglican Church is not one of emotional fervor in religion) into the modem critical ideas of the so-called Enlightenment, into the "Age of Reason". And in fact it is necessary to understand not only what Jefferson believed when he wrote Declaration of Independence at the age of 33, but what he did not believe, in order to clearly recognize the meaning of the "American Creed".

From his personal notebooks - where he wrote ideas which were of real importance to him (they also constitute one of the few sources of insight we have as to the young Jefferson's mind) - we are able to see into his new ideas of the world. Jefferson, while young, was deeply affected by his educational experiences at the College of William and Mary, both by his personal contacts (for example, he came to dine and converse regularly with the Governor of Virginia, whose father had worked for Sir Isaac Newton), as well as by his readings. While only one of the seven faculty members at the College was not an Anglican clergyman: Dr. William Small of Scotland; it was he who the young Jefferson was most influenced by. Of him Jefferson later wrote that he was "a man profound in most of the useful branches of science...from his conversations I got my first views of the expansion of science and of the system of things in which we are placed." (This is a clear, if later-written, indication of Jefferson's transition from a theological-religious to a natural scientific world-view.)

We know from his notebooks that be was deeply impacted by the writings concerning religious and philosophical themes and history of Lord Boling broke (1678-1751), whose works are a rather tedious, rationalist, empiricist critique of all of the religious and philosophical systems then known of in the world. Jefferson seems, from his note-taking, to have read all of the several volumes at this early period as a student. (Jefferson would eventually come to assemble one of the greatest personal libraries of his time in America; it became the core of the current Library of Congress, for, after the British burnt the first one in 1814, Jefferson sold his personal library of about 6,500 books to the US Congress to rebuild its library. Even with this comparatively small reading in Boling broke, Jefferson received a broader and more solid intellectual education than today most Americans do after many years of schooling.)

If Jefferson lived uncritically in the Christian cosmos as a child, Boling broke's critical works (and not only this author) would have deeply affected the Jefferson's young understanding - and this effect in his ideas and philosophy lasted for the rest of his life. So that when we look to see what Jefferson did mean of man and cosmos when he wrote the words still famous around the world today, we find that he did not hold a religious or spiritual view of man and cosmos, as had the early settlers (and still many of Jefferson's contemporaries) of the "age of faith" in American history. Indeed, Jefferson had rejected most of their ideas and beliefs, believing rather in a material, physical, natural scientific view of man and world. (He held a Deist view of God, as the original creator, who had ordered nature and life through the "laws of nature", but otherwise was detached from earthly life. And in general he tended to reduce all religion to morality.) Closer to Darwin in spirit and time (of whose later writings he could know nothing of course), Jefferson would later symptomatically place busts of Bacon, Locke and Newton in his self- designed home of Monticello - which is now become a place of American pilgrimage. This is an indication of his lifelong adherence - beginning as a student - to a natural-scientific view of man and world. Jefferson rejected most religions and metaphysical philosophies and their ideas as myths. (He especially disliked for example Plato, St. Paul, Athanasius and Calvin.) Sometimes he viewed them as the deliberate fabrications of priests and kings to manipulate and control their people. Jefferson thought that man's "reason" should rule man.

### The “American Creed" and Mankind's Spiritual History

Jefferson's words came to be repeated on e. g. "Fourth of July Celebrations" throughout America over the years and came to be a sort of creedal statement as to what it means to be "American" - as we saw also in the President's address in November of 1995 But in fact very few Americans are clear about either the original context or meaning of the "American Creed" - the "cosmos" of these words - or of Jefferson’s rejection of most of the spiritual beliefs which many of these Americans personally hold, commonly blended together with Jefferson's contrasting, antithetically-conceived grand expressions! In other words, these ideas from 1776, still alive today, are in fact only truly to be understood within a scientific-natural view of man, nature, society. God and world. And this is so even though the religious, spiritual and philosophical beliefs of the vast majority of the US people - who often use them in close association with Jefferson's phrases, when they explain and understand America and life - were in fact rejected by Jefferson before (and after) he wrote them. His human and social ideals were conceived within a natural cosmos of man; they are ideals of man in this world. He had rejected a spiritual cosmos and anthropology to man.

Jefferson would, symptomatically, at the end of his great life (devoted largely to serving America) attempt (unsuccessfully) to exclude the teaching of religion from the University of Virginia which he had brought into being. Contrariwise, most Americans - in their (generally) extremely limited knowledge of even their own nation's history-place together views which Jefferson himself considered to be fundamentally antithetical. The beliefs of a greater spiritual cosmos, e.g. Dante's world's, the spiritual-metaphysical beliefs of man and world, cannot properly be fit inside of Jefferson's world and his ideals - at least not realistically intellectually. The cosmos of the "American Creed" has its own reality and dignity - but it is not such that all of the ideas which Americans have come to place inside of its famous phrases, can, truthfully and unproblematically, be placed.

In my view - and no one who reads this great man's biography can doubt his devotion and service to America, Jefferson was true to the history, reality and life of mankind in his time. One of his biographers called him "one of the most devoted disciples of the Age of Reason". (Nostalgia and longing for the "age of faith" - like the time before the "Fall of Man" - is understandable; but the "age of reason" was, if not an inevitability or necessity of history, still nevertheless a new more realistic relationship of man to nature. So that no mere easy return to the past is true or realistic.) He was a realistic man of science; he could not and would not rest in the "age of faith". And, as was characteristic of this and later time, once the Bible and religion were subjected to the "age of reason", the beliefs of the "age of faith" could never be immediately accepted unquestioned again.

While he was close to Darwin in his scientific attitude, he would have deeply lamented Darwin's eventual rejection both of a creator God (chance and natural selection rather than divine design) and the view of man's reason and conscience as special "gifts" (Jefferson) of God to man.

In fact, Darwin and Jefferson (as well as many of their contemporaries of course), were offended by many of the same "unbelievable" aspects of Christianity and in relationship to Jefferson's phrases as well!

Here is an aspect - perhaps even more fundamental and definitive in some ways than the problem of the popular and noble "American Dream" - of how Americans are unaware and unconscious of the lineage of their own spiritual and intellectual origin and history. Very, very few even college-graduate Americans could even begin to give a serious account of the relation-ship between their own personal spiritual beliefs, the cosmos of their "American Creed" and the intellectual and spiritual history of mankind (e.g. Indo-European sources, Dionysus the Areopagite's cosmography, Dante's Comedy, even Newton, Laplace, et al). They are simply unaware and uninformed of how America's "ideas" acutally stand inside of not only European, but Occidental and world intellectual and spiritual history. Indeed, I am certain that even the current President of the USA himself- himself an active Christian Southern Baptist believer - would find it difficult to give such an account of the relationship of his Baptist religious beliefs, to the natural ideas of man and cosmos in the "American Creed" which he had cited in his November 1995 speech, in which he defined America to the world. But American ideals - the cosmos of the American Creed-do stand within the entire spiritual and intellectual history of Mankind - however little this may be clearly conceived and worried by Americans themselves.

The cosmos of the "American Creed" is a natural, not a spiritual one. The failure to recognize and understand this clearly cannot be of spiritual and intellectual hope, health and help to Mankind. If America is now in many ways leading the world, it should, presumably, know and understand more deeply and clearly what America and her ideals are actually about.

## Jacksonian Democracy

Andrew Jackson became the U. S. President in 1828. For weeks thousands of people had been coming to Washington, D. C. to see his inauguration. Jackson was the hero of common people. He was truly a President of the people.

Jackson was a fighter. He took part in the Revolutionary War. His soldiers called him "Old Hickory" because hickory wood was the toughest thing they knew. When he had moved to Tennessee he served its people as a lawyer, judge, Congressman and senator. But he won his greatest fame as a soldier. Because of his activities in Florida, the U. S. was able to take control of that area from Spain.

Jackson believed in people who loved him. He felt that common people could run the government. This idea has come to be called Jacksonian democracy. These people elected him as their President. He gave them their first chance to really have a part in government.

Not everyone benefited while Jackson was President- Women, black and Native Americans were not able to take part in gov\_ernment. In fact, in some cases, the government worked against them.

The Cherokee nation serves as an example of what happened to many Native American tribes and people in Jackson's times. The Cherokees had a great deal of land in Georgia and Alabama. They were farmers. They had roads and lived in houses. They had a written language and a weekly newspaper. Their government was democratic. But white settlers wanted their land.

The land was promised to the Cherokee nation by treaty. Missionaries, Congressman Henry Clay, and the Supreme Court all said that the Cherokees had rights to their claims. Even so, the Cherokees were thrown off their land. They were told to go to Oklahoma. With soldiers watching them, they had little choice but to obey.

This journey lasted several months. Disease, hunger and cold brought death to many. Over 4,000 Cherokees Were buried along the Trial of Tears which stretched from Georgia to Oklahoma.

Jackson said that their removal was necessary. Without it, he said, the Cherokees all would have been killed by white settlers looking for more land. Jackson did agreat deal to make people feel a part of government. But he was not ready to give equality to Native Americans. A slave holder, all his life Jackson did not believe in equality for blacks either.

Yet in Jackson's time, some people were starting to oppose slavery. These people were called abolitionists.

## Jonh F. Kennedy

For many Americans the election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy as the 35th President of the United States in 1960 marked the beginning of a new era in this country's political history. Kennedy was the first Roman Catholic and the youngest man ever chosen Chief Executive. He was also the first person bom in the 20th century to hold the nation's highest office.

Born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on May 29. 1917, Kennedy was descended from two politically conscious, Irish-American families that had emigrated from Ireland to Boston shortly after potato blight and economic upheavals had struck their homeland in the 1840s. Kennedy's grandfathers, Patrick J. Kennedy and John F. ("Honey Fitz") Fitzgerald, became closely associated with the local Democratic Party; Kennedy served in the Massachusetts legislature, and Fitzgerald won election as mayor of Boston. In 1914 the marriage of Joseph P. Kennedy and Rose Fitzgerald united the two families. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the second eldest of Joseph and Rose Kennedy's four sons and five daughters.

Joseph P. Kennedy was an extraordinarily successful businessman. Despite the relatively modest means of his family, Kennedy attended Harvard College, and upon graduation in 1912 began a career in banking. During the 1920s he amassed a substantial fortune from his investments in motion pictures, real estate, and other enterprises, and unlike many magnates of his era he escaped unscathed from the stock market crash of 1929. Joseph Kennedy himself was never a candidate for elective office, but he was deeply interested in the Democratic Party. He made large contributions to the presidential campaign of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932; in return, Roosevelt appointed him chairman of the recently established Securities and Exchange Commission, where his business expertise proved especially helpful in drafting legislation designed to regulate the stock market. In 1937 Roosevelt named Kennedy US ambassador to Great Britain.

Despite his wealth and political influence, the Democratic Irish-Catholic Joseph Kennedy never won the acceptance of Boston's Protestant elite. He deeply resented this, and determined that his sons' achievements would equal, if not excel, those of their Brahmin counter-parts. Toward this end he modeled their lives and education after those enjoyed by the Yankee upper class.

John Kennedy, like his brothers and sisters, grew up in comfortable homes and attended some of the nation's most prestigious preparatory schools and colleges. He was enrolled at the age of 13 at Canterbury, a Catholic preparatory school staffed by laymen, but transferred after a year to the nonsectarian Choate School, where he completed his secondary education before entering Princeton University. Illness forced him to leave the college before the end of Ins freshman year. but the following'. autumn he resumed his studies, at Hanard.

Kennedy's college years coincided with a time of world crisis 'The future President had unusual opportunities to combine know ledge gained in the classroom with his own firsthand observations. As a government major at Harvard he benefited from the teachings of some of the nation's most prominent political scientists and historians. men who in the late 1930s were acutely aware of the growing menace of Nazism. Moreover, in 1938 Kennedy spent six months in London assisting his father. who was then serving as US ambassador. "This slay in England gave the young student an excellent opportunity to witness for himself the British response to the Nazi aggression of the 1930s, and he used the insight gained from the experience in writing his senior thesis. This thesis, in which Kennedy attempted to explain England's hesitant reaction to German rearmament, was extremely perceptive. and in 1940 it was published in expanded form in the United States and 6reat Britain under the title Why England Slept.

After receiving his B.S. degree cum laude from Harvard in 1940, Kennedy briefly attended ihe Stanford University Graduate School ot Business, and then spent several months traveling through South America. Late in 1941, when the United States' entry into World War II seemed imminent. Kennedy joined the US Navy. As an officer he served in the South Pacific Theater, where he commanded one of the small PT or torpedo boats that patrolled off the Solomon Islands.

On April 25. 1943, Kennedy assumed command of P 1 -109, the vessel on which, only a little more than four months later, his courage and strength were put to their first serious test. On the night of August 2, 1943, the Japanese destroyer Amagiri rammed PT-109. The force of the destroyer sliced the American craft in half and plunged its 11 -man crew into the waters of Ferguson Passage. Burning gasoline spewed forth from the wrecked torpedo boat, setting the waters of the passage aflame: but Lieutenant Kennedy retained his composure, directed the rescue of his crew, and personally saved the lives of three of the men. Kennedy and the other survivors found refuge on a small unoccupied island, and during the days that followed he swam long distances to obtain food and aid for his men. Finally, on the sixth day of the ordeal the crew was rescued.

Kennedy's bravery did not go unnoticed. For his deeds in August 1943 he subsequently received the Purple Heart and the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. Injuries sustained during his courageous exploits and an attack of malaria ended Kennedy's active military service, however. Later in 1943 he returned to the United States, and in 1945 he was honorably discharged from the navy.

After leaving the navy, Kennedy, like many other young men who had served their country during World War II. had to make a decision about his literature career. At Harvard he had become increasingly interested in government. but he did hot originally plan to seek public office. Members of the Kennedy family had expected that the eldest son. navy pilot Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., would enter politics - a hope cut short when he was killed in a plane crash during the war Deeply affected by his older brother's death. Jonh Kennedy in 1945 compiled a memorial volume. As We Remember Joe. which was privately printed. Shortly afterwards he determined to pursue the career that had been the choice of his late brother

Appropriately. Kennedy sought his first elective office in Easl Boston, the low-income area with a large immigrant population that several decades before had been the scene of both his grandfathers political activities. Announcing his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the US House of Representatives in the 11th Congressional District early in 1946, Kennedy, with the assistance of his family and friends, campaigned hard and long against several of the party's veterans and won the primary. Since the district was overwhelmingly Democratic, Kennedy's victory in the primary virtually guaranteed his election in the November contest. As expected, on November 5, 1946, he easily defeated his Republican rival and at the age of 29 began his political career as a member of the House of Representatives.

East Boston voters returned Kennedy to Congress in 1948 and 1950, and for the six years he represented the 11th District he continuously worked to expand federal programs, such as public housing, social security, and minimum wage laws. that benefited his constituents. However, in 1952 the young politician decided against running for another term In the House. Instead he sought the Senate seat held by the Republican Henry Cabot Lodge.

The incumbent Lodge was well known and popular throughout Massachusetts; in contrast, Kennedy had almost no following outside of Boston. But from the moment he announced his candidacy for the Senate, Kennedy, assisted by his family, friends, and thousands of volunteers, conducted a massive and intense grassroots campaign. This hard work brought results: on November 4, 1952, when the landslide presidential victory of Dwight D. Eisenhower carried hundreds of other Republican candidates into local, state, and federal offices throughout the nation, the Democratic Kennedy defeated Lodge by a narrow margin to become the junior senator from Massachusetts.

On September 12,1953, Kennedy married the beautiful and socially prominent Jacqueline Lee Bouvier, who was 12 years his junior. Shortly after their marriage, Kennedy became increasingly disabled by an old spinal injury, and in October 1954 and again in February 1955 he underwent serious surgery. A product of the months of convalescence that followed was his Profiles in Courage, a study of American statesmen who had risked their political careers for what they believed to be the needs of their nation. Published in 1956, Profiles in Courage immediately became a bestseller, and in May 1957 it won for its author the Pulitzer Prize for biography.

During his years in the House and for the first half of his Senate term, Kennedy concerned himself primarily with the issues that particularly interested or affected his Massachusetts constituents. However, when he resumed his congressional duties alter Ins prolonged convalescence, national rather than local or state affairs primarily attracted his attention.

His determination to run for higher office became evident at the Democratic National Convention in 1956. Adam Stevenson, the party's presidential nominee, declined to name a running male. and instead left the choice of a vice presidential candidate to a vote of the delegates. Seizing this opportunity. Kennedy mounted a strong, if last-minute, campaign lorshe nomination in which he was narrowly defeated by Senator Lstes Kefauver of Tennessee Kennedy's efforts were no entirely unrewarded however. He proved himself to be a formidable contender and. perhaps more important, lie came to the attention of the millions of television viewers across the nation who watched; the eonvention proceeding. He was redeemed to the US Senate in 1958.

Shortly after defeat of Stevenson in 1956. Kennedy launched a nationwide campaign to gain the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination. During the tour intervening years, ihe Massachusetts senator developed the organisation that would help him win his goal. Through his personal appearances, ami writings, he also made himself known to the voters ol the United Stales. Kennedy's tactics were successful He won all the state primaries he entered in 1960 including a critical contest in West Virginia, where an overwhelmingly Protestant electorate dispelled the notion that a Catholic candidate could not be victorious - and he also earned the endorsement of a number of state party conventions.

The Democratic National Convention of 1960 selected Kennedy as its presidential candidate on the first ballot. Then, to the surprise of many, Kennedy asked Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, who had himself aspired to the first place on the ticket, to be his running mate. Johnson agreed, and the Demoeralic slate was complete. For its ticket, the Republican National Convention in I960 chose Vice President Richard Millions Nixon and Kennedy's earlier political rival. Henry Cabot Lodge.

Throughout the fall of 1960, Kennedy and Nixon waged tireless campaigns to win popular support. Kennedy drew strength from the organization he had put together and from the fact that registered Democratic voters outnumbered their Republican counterparts. Nixon's strength stemmed from his close association with the popular President Eisenhower and from his own experience as Vice President, which suggested an ability to hold his own with. representatives of the Soviet Union in foreign affairs. The turning point of the 1960 presidential race, however, may have been the series of four televised debates between the candidates, which gave voters an opportunity to assess their positions on important issues, and unintentionally also tested each man's television "presence." Kennedy excelled in the latter area and political experts have since claimed that his ability to exploit the mass media may have been a significant factor in the outcome of the election.

On November 8, I960, the voters of the United States cast a record 68.8 million ballots, and selected Kcnnedy over Nixon by the narrow margin of fewer than 120,000 votes in the closest popular vote in the nation's history. In the Electoral College the tally was 303 votes to 21 John Fitzgerald Kennedy took the oath of office as the 35th President of the United States on January 20, 1961. A number of notable Americans participated in the ceremonies: Richard Cardinal Gushing of Boston offered the invocation, Marian Anderson sang the national anthem, and Robert Frost read one of his poems. Kennedy's inaugural address, urging Americans to "ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country," was memorable. The new Chief Executive also asserted, "Now the trumpet summons us again ... to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle... against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself."

Both challenges were in keeping with what observers would later mark as Kennedy's greatest contribution: a quality of leadership that extracted from others their best efforts toward specific goals. Many felt themselves influenced by his later reminder to a group of young people visiting the White House - that "the Greeks defined happiness as the full use of your powers along the lines of excellence."

Whether because of his-leadership, the climate of the times, or the conjunction of the two, Kennedy's term as President coincided with a marked transformation in the mood of the nation. Before that, complacent in their peace-time prosperity, most Americans were preoccupied with individual concerns. Now came a widespread awareness of needs not previously recognized. No longer could Americans ignore pressing problems that confronted them both at home and abroad, and increasingly, they showed a willingness to try to effect meaningful changes. The new mood was one of challenge, but also one of hope.

As he had promised in his inaugural address, Kennedy successfully sought the enactment of programs designed to assist the "people in the huts and villages of half the world." The Alliance for Progress, a program- ambitious but ultimately less than successful - for the economic growth and social improvement of Latin America, was launched in August 1961 at an Inter American Conference at Punta del Este, Uruguay. The Peace Corps,

which offered Americans a unique opportunity to spend approximately two years living and working with peoples in underdeveloped countries, was a more successful attempt to aid emerging nations throughout the world.

In the realm of foreign affairs, Kennedy's record was a mixture of notable triumphs and dangerous setbacks. He allowed the Central Intelligence Agency to carry out plans laid before his administration for an invasion of Cuba by anti-Communist refugees from that island. Between 1,400 and 1,500 exiles landed on April 17, 1961, at the Bay of Pigs, but suffered defeat when an anticipated mass insurrection by the Cuban people failed to materialize. Severely embarrassed, the administration nevertheless successfully encouraged the creation of a private committee, which ransomed 1,178 invasion prisoners for $62 million.

Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, after repelling the Bay of Pigs invasion, turned to the Soviet Union for military support and allowed the Russians to install secret missile sites in Cuba. From these locations, 90 miles from US soil, the USSR could launch missiles capable of striking deep into the American heartland. Reconnaissance by US observation planes uncovered the Soviet activities. Taking a decisive stand President Kennedy, on October 22, 1962, announced that the United States would prevent the delivery of offensive weapons to Cuba. Kennedy demanded that the USSR abandon the bases and threatened that the United States would "regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union." After a week of intense negotiations. Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev agreed to dismantle all the installations in return for a US pledge not to invade Cuba.

President Kennedy gave wholehearted support to American efforts in space exploration. During his administration the nation increased its expenditures in that area fivefold, and the President promised that an American would land on the moon before the end of the 1960s. (On July 20,1969, two American astronauts fulfilled the President's pledge by becoming the first human beings to set foot on the lunar surface.)

During his presidential campaign, Kennedy had stressed the necessity of improving the American economy, which was then suffering from a recession. His aim was to follow a fiscally moderate course, and the achievement of a bal\_anced budget was one of his major goals. As President he managed to stimulate the sluggish economy by accelerating federal purchasing and construction programs, by the early release of more than $ 1 billion in state highway funds, and by putting $ 1 billion in credit into the home construction industry.

During his administration, however, increasing hostility developed between the White House and the business community. Anxious to prevent inflation, the President gave special attention to the steel industry, whose price-wage structure affected so many other aspects of the economy. After steel manufacturers insisted on raising their prices in April 1962, Kennedy, by applying strong economic pressure, forced the producers to return to the earlier lower price levels. His victory earned him the enmity of many business people, however.

Kennedy sympathized with the aspirations of black Americans, but he included no comprehensive civil rights legislation in his New Frontier program, fearing that the introduction into a conservative Congress of such measures would imperil all his other proposals. The President relied, instead, on his executive powers and on the enforcement of existing voting rights laws. He forbade discrimination in new federally aided housing, appointed a large number of blacks to high offices, and supported Justice Department efforts to secure voting rights and to end segregation in interstate commerce. In 1962 he used regular army troops and federalized National Guard units to force the admission of a black, James Meredith, to the University of Mississippi, and in 1963 he used federal National Guardsmen to watch over the integration of the University of Alabama.

Despite his broad visions of the American future, Kennedy enjoyed limited success in translating his ideas into legislative reality. A coalition of Republicans and conservative southern Democrats in the 87th Congress stopped many of his plans for the introduction of social measures. And even after the Demo\_ratic Party increased its majority on Capitol Hill in the 1962 elections. Congress was slow to cooperate, although it probably was ready to do so just before his presidency came to an end.

John F. Kennedy presided over the execlusive branch of the United States government for only a little more than 1,000 days. During that time American involvement in Vietnam and other areas of Southeast Asia increased moderately, but the beginnings of a thaw in the cold war were also noticeable, and in 1963 the. Soviet Union and the United States signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Kennedy's years in the White House were also marked by increased social consciousness by the US government. With the Great Society program of his successor, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Congress eventually enacted a number of Kennedy's proposals, including medical care for the elderly and greater opportunities for black Americans.

In addition to his various governmental programs, Kennedy's presidency was also no\_table for a new, vital style. John and Jacqueline Kennedy and their two children, Caroline and John Jr., quickly captured the imagination of the nation, and their activities were widely reported by the media. Cer\_tainly the Kennedys exuded a youthful vi-brance, and their interests seemed unending. Jacqueline Kennedy was responsible for redecorating the public rooms of the White House and inviting a glittering array of cul\_tural and intellectual leaders to the executive mansion.

An assassin's bullet abruptly ended the life of John Fitzgerald Kennedy on Novem\_ber 22,1963, as he rode in a motorcade through the streets of Dallas, Texas. The entire nation mourned the tragic death of the Chief Executive. Many millions watched on television as the 35th President was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on November 25, 1963.

Every state of the United States and almost every nation in the world has erected memorials to Kennedy. One of the monu\_ments dearest to his family is the house at 83 Seals Street in Brookline, Massachusetts, where the late President's parents lived from 1914 until 1921 and where four of their chil\_dren - including John - were bom. The house was repurchased by the Kennedys in 1966 and was designated a National Historic Site by Congress in 1967. On May 29, 1969, the 52nd anniversary of John F. Kennedy's birth, the family turned over the deed of the house to the National Park Service.

Both of President Kennedy's younger brothers, Robert F. and Edward M. Kennedy, served in the Senate. Many of the former President's compatriots hoped to see his goals and promise carried forward when Robert Kennedy, who had served as his at\_torney general and closest adviser, an\_nounced early in 1968 that he would seek the Democratic nomination for President. In another tragedy that shook the nation to its roots, Robert Kennedy was shot down by an assassin just after claiming victory in the California presidential primary. He died in Los Angeles just over 25 hours later, on June 6,1968.

# Presidents at a Glance

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| --- | --- | --- |
| NAME | SERVED | ACHIEVEMENTS |
| **1. George Washington** | *1789-1797* | The first President, he determi­ned in large measure what the job of President should be. Held the country together during its early days and gave it a chance to grow. Ranked by historians as a "great" President. |
| **2. John Adams** | *1797-1801* | Saved his country from an un­necessary war. Ranked by histo­rians as a "near great" Presi­dent. |
| **3. Thomas Jefferson** | *1801-1809* | Bought the Louisiana Territory and doubled the size of the country. Made sure the govern­ment stayed in the hands of the people. Ranked by historians as a "great" or "near great" Presi­dent. |
| **4. James Madison** | *1809-1817* | Allowed the country to get into unnecessary war, but made pea­ce as quickly as possible. Ranked by historians as an "average" President. |
| **5. James Monroe** | *1817-1825* | Took Florida from Spain. Created the Monroe Doctrine. Signed the Missouri Compromise. Ranked as one of the best of the "avera­ge" President. |
| **6. John Quincy Adams** | *1825—1829* | Rated by some historians as a failure because little was done during his term. Some historians rank him as "average". |
| **7. Andrew Jackson** | *1829-1837* | Did more to show how great the powers of the office were than any President after Washington. Used these powers to help make laws. Ranked by historians as *a* "great" or "near great" President. |
| **8. Martin Van Buren** | *1837-1841* | Was caught in one of the na­tion's worst financial depres­sions. This was unfairly blamed on him. Ranked by historians as an "average" President. |
| **9. William Henry Harrison** | *1841* | Was President for only one month. |
| **10. John Tyler** | *1841-1845* | Made clear that on the death a President the Vice President became President with all the powers of the office. Served as a President without a party. Ran­ked by most historians as "below average". |
| **11 .James Knox Polk** | *1845-1849* | Bullied a small, weak nation (Mexico) into fighting a war it did not want, but added Cali­fornia and much of the South-west to the United States. Sett­led the Canadian border without war. Ranked by historians as a "near great" President. |
| **12. Zachary Taylor** | *1849-1850* | Knew little about the duties of a President but faced his problems honestly though with little poli­tical talent. Served only two years. Ranked by many historians as "below average." |
| **13. Millard Fillmore** | *1850-1853* | Sent the U. S. fleet to open trade with Japan. Helped pass the Gre­at Compromise of 1850. Ranked by historians as "below average." |
| **14. Franklin Pierce** | *1853-1857* | Put through the Gadsden Pur­chase acquiring what is now sou­thern Arizona and New Mexico. Favored the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which opened the door to the Civil War. Ranked by historians as "below average." |
| **15. James Buchanan** | *1857-1861* | Faced the final breakup of the nation over slavery. Tried hard to prevent war but made matters worse instead of better. Ranked by historians as "below average." |
| **16. Abraham Lincoln** | *1861-1865* | Held the nation together in its most difficult time. In a speech at the Gettysburg battlefield he said it was the people's duty to make sure "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that go­vernment of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." More than any other one man, he hel­ped make these words come true. Ranked by historians as a truly "great" President. |
| **17. Andrew Johnson** | *1865-1869* | Took office in a. time of great trouble. Fought for what he be­lieved was right, but did not have the power to persuade and lead men. Was impeached by Cong­ress and came within one vote of being removed from office. Ranked by historians from "near great" to "below average." |
| **18. Ulysses Simpson Grant** | *1869-1877* | Was personally honest, but many of the men around him were crooks. His administration was one of the most dishonest in Ame­rican history. One of the three Presidents rated as a "failure". |
| **19. Ruthertord**  **Birchard Hayes** | *1877-1881* | Ended the period of Recon­struction. Tried to reform the federal government after the Grant administration. Tried to improve the civil service system, but met with little success. Ran­ked by historians as "average." |
| **20. James Abram Garfield** | *1881* | Was killed only a few months after taking office. Yet his death may have done more to improve honesty in government than he could have done had he lived. |
| **21. Chester Alan Arthur** | *1881-1885* | Helped pass the first effective civil service laws and admini­stered them honestly. Helped develop a modern navy. Ranked by historians as "average." |
| **22 and 24. Grover Cleveland** | *1885-1889 and* *1893-1897* | Made needed reforms in the federal government. Helped restore the confidence of the people in their government. His intentions were always good, but his methods sometimes failed. Ranked by historians as a "near great" President. |
| **23. Benjamin Harrison** | *1889-1893* | Favored a strong foreign policy. Enlarged the navy. Wanted a be­tter civil service, but Congress continually opposed him. Ranked by historians as "average." |
| **25. William McKinley** | *1897-1901* | Allowed the United States to be pushed into war with Spain, but made the United States a world power. Acquired the Philippines, Hawaii, Guam, and Puerto Rico as United States possessions. Ran­ked by historians as "average." |
| **26. Theodore Roosevelt** | *1901-1909* | Brought tremendous energy and vitality to the office of President. Used the powers of his office to control the power of huge busi­ness concerns. Worked to estab­lish national parks and forests and the Panama Canal. Ranked by historians as one of the "near great" President. |
| **27. William**  **Howard Taft** | *1909-1913* | Worked hard for conservation of natural resources. Helped impro­ve the Post Office system. Fought to break the power of the trusts. Ranked by historians as "average." |
| **28. Woodrow Wilson** | *1913-1921* | Reformed the banking laws. Worked to improve the antitrust laws, to help the American wor­ker, and to lower the tariff. Tried to stay out of World War I, then tried hard to make it a "war to end all wars." Worked for a League of Nations to keep the world at peace. Failed, but left an ideal of which people still dream. Ranked by historians as a "great" President. |
| **29. Warren** **Gamaliel Harding** | *1921-1923* | In large measure let Congress and his Cabinet run the nation. Was more loyal to his friends than to his country. His was pro­bably the most dishonest admini­stration in United States history. Ranked by historians as a "failure." |
| **30. Calvin Coolidge** | *1923-1929* | Believed the powers of the Pre­sident should be very limited and that government should leave business alone. Took very little action but restored honesty and dignity to the presidency. Ranked by historians as "below average." |
| **31. Herbert Hoover** | *1929-1933* | Saw the country plunged into its worst financial depression and was unfairly blamed for it. Tried to improve business, but his efforts were not enough. Ranked by historians as "average." |
| **32. Franklin**  **Delano Roosevelt** | *1933-1945* | Saw the United States through two grave crises: the Great Dep­ression of the 1930s and World War II. Promoted laws that chan­ged the course of American go­vernment. Ranked by historians as a "great" President. |
| **33. Harry S.** **Truman** | *1945-1953* | Was faced by important deci­sions and made most of them correctly. Established the Tru­man Doctrine by which the Uni­ted States would help other nati-ons trying to stay free of Communist control. Worked for social welfare and civil rights laws. Ranked by most historians as a "near great" President. |
| **34. Dwight David Eisenhower** | *1953-1961* | Ended the war in Korea. Tried to lessen troubles with the Soviet Union. Sent troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce scho­ol integration. Ranked by most historians as "average." |
| **35. John Fitzgerald Kennedy** | *1961-1963* | Worked for equal rights for all citizens. Established the Peace Corps. Forced the Soviet Union to withdraw its missiles from Cuba |
| **36. Lyndon Baines Johnson** | *1961-1969* | Pushed more important laws through Congress than any President since Franklin Roosevelt, including civil rights and antipoverty measures. Tried unsuccessfully to make peace in Vietnam |
| **37. Richard Milhous Nixon** | *1969-1974* | Ended U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. Opened relations with Communist China. His administration was caught in one of the worst political scandals in American history. |
| **38. Gerald Rudolph Ford** | *1974-1977* | His fair and open administration helped to heal the wounds of Watergate. Improved relations with China. Was the first person to occupy the White House with­out having been elected either President or Vice President. |
| **39. Jimmy**  **(James Earl) Carter** | *1977—1981* | Helped bring about a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. Improved relations with Latin America by giving control of the Panama Canal to Panama. Worked to improve human rights throughout the world. |
| **40. Ronald Wilson Reagan** | *1981-1989* | Built up U. S. military power Worked to reduce inflation and led the fight to reduce taxes. The national debt increased massively during his administration. In his second term, he began arms-limitation talks with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. |
| **41. George Herbert Walker Bush** | *1989-1993* | His election marked the 200th anniversary of the U. S. presidency. Presided during the breakup of the Soviet Union and the fall of Communist rule in Eastern Europe. In the Persian Gulf war, led a coalition of nati­ons in driving the Iraqi army out of Kuwait. |
| **42. Bill (William Jefferson Biythe) Clinton** | *1993—* | Won back many of the Democratic and independent voter" who supported Reagan during the previous decade. The first President born after World War II, he took office in a time of transi­tion. The Cold War was over, and Americans were beginning to fo­cus on problems at home, inc­luding the national debt and a sluggish economy. |

# Excerpts from Inaugural Addresses of American Presidents

*Every four years when the new President of the United States is introduced into his office, i. e. inaugurated, he takes the oath of office and delivers a speech on the steps of the Capitol.*

###### The American Dream

Let us, then, with courage and confidence pursue our own Federal and Republican principles, our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed, and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which by all its dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here and his greater happiness hereafter - with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people?

*Thomas Jefferson, 1801*

The Unity of the Nation

One section of our country believes slavery is right and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. Such of you as are now dissatisfied still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action.

In your hands, my dissatisfied country-fellowmen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one "to preserve, protect, and defend it."

*Abraham Lincoln, 1861*

Good Will and World Politics

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty.

This much we pledge - and more.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United, there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do - for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not

always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them supporting their own freedom — and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding on the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required - not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge, but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

*John F. Kennedy. 1961*

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