

JOHN F. KENNEDY

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
INAUGURAL ADDRESS

WE OBSERVE TODAY

not a victory of party but a celebration of **freedom**-- symbolizing an end as well as a beginning -- signifying renewal as well as **change**.

FOR I HAVE SWORN BEFORE

YOU AND
ALMIGHTY GOD

THE SAME SOLEMN OATH
OUR FORBEARS PRESCRIBED NEARLY
A CENTURY AND THREE-QUARTERS AGO

THE WORLD IS VERY DIFFERENT NOW

For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life

BUT FROM THE HAND OF GOD

WE DARE NOT FORGET TODAY THAT WE ARE THE HEIRS OF THAT FIRST

Let the word go forth **REVOLUTION**.

from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has

been passed to a **NEW GENERATION** of Americans--born in this century, **tempered by war**, disciplined by

a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and

unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those

human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today

at home and **around THE WORLD**

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 equated not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right.

TO our SISTERS Republic SOUTH OF our BORDER

we offer a special pledge to convert our good words into good deeds in a new alliance for progress to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to

remain the master of its own house. To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

FINALLY TO THOSE NATIONS WHO WOULD

MAKE THEMSELVES OUR ADVERSARY

WE offer NOT a PLEDGE BUT a REQUEST that both sides begin anew FOR PEACE BEFORE the DARK Powers of DESTRUCTION engulf ALL IN PLANNED HUMANITY OR ACCIDENTAL SELF DESTRUCTION

WE DARE NOT TEMPT THEM with WEAKNESS

For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed. But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war. So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

LET EVERY NATION KNOW,
WHETHER IT WISHES US WELL OR ILL,
THAT WE SHALL PAY ANY PRICE,
BEAR ANY BURDEN HARDSHIP FRIEND
MEET SUPPORT OPPOSE FOE
TO ASSURE THE SURVIVAL
LAND THE SUCCESS OF LIBERTY
THIS MUCH WE PLEDGE AND MORE

LET BOTH SIDES,
what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.
for the first time, **FORMULATE**

serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

UNITE to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens ... (and) let the oppressed go free."

SEEK to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths and encourage the arts and commerce.

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 STRONGLY SUPPORTING their own FREEDOM and to remember that, in the past THOSE WHO FOOLISHLY sought power by riding

And if a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are *just* and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

ALL this WILL NOT BE COMPLETED IN THE 100 DAYS nor will it be completed in the first 1000 DAYS NOR IN THE life OF THIS ADMINISTRATION

nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin. In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe. Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle,

Thought embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself. Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

JOHN F. KENNEDY

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

my fellow **AMERICANS**
ask not what your
country can do for you--
ask what you can do for your country.

MY FELLOW CITIZENS
ASK NOT WHAT AMERICA WILL DO FOR YOU

but **WHAT TOGETHER**
WE CAN DO
for the

FREEDOM OF MAN

The image features a large, bold, white text graphic in the center. The top part reads "OFF THE WORLD:" in a large, serif font. Below it, in a slightly smaller but also bold serif font, is the quote "WORK MUST TRULY BE OUR OWN". The background of the image is filled with the text of John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, which is repeated in a grid-like pattern across the entire frame. The text is in a small, white, sans-serif font and is partially obscured by the central graphic.