THE POLITICAL THEORY OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

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THE POLITICAL THEORY OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Scope and Purpose

This thesis is an attempt to reveal John F. Kennedy, the politician, as a political theorist. Although Kennedy was a practicing politician necessarily involved in practical solutions for political problems in one particular state and one particular era, this study was undertaken to bring into focus his philosophical ideas. These ideas are universal and influential to twentieth century political thought. Kennedy's philosophy was the underlying current for all his political action, and in the test of time and history the measurement of his success is more likely to be weighted in favor of his political theory than in favor of his political accomplishments.

Kennedy's political thought can be seen as universal in scope and all-encompassing of human problems. This study of his political philosophy includes the full range of the classical metaphysical questions. His theory of the nature of man, the nature of the state, the best state, and world order for the Family of Man are revealed in his writings and
and his speeches. Although his political theory matured as he developed as a man and as a politician, Kennedy's basic philosophy changed very little. A similar thread of political thought can be seen entwined throughout his writings from the book, Why England Slept, which was written as his senior thesis at Harvard, to his last speeches given as President of the United States.

Kennedy was a practicing politician who necessarily had to be a leader with a strong following in order to be successful. His leadership qualities—his dynamic personality, enthusiasm, positive nature—all endowed him with the following of the electorate necessary to rise to the political heights seen in his career. His widespread appeal derived from a combination of a profound sense of tragedy and an equally strong sense of confidence that man could live with and transcend tragedy. He was a man with extreme confidence in himself, in his nation, and in his fellow man throughout the world.

Because he respected himself and his fellow man he was also a humanist who believed in a brotherhood of man based on the Golden Rule. The dignity of man was always present in his political thought, "... no people can become strong in a climate of servitude and social indignity."\(^1\)

Kennedy's interest in politics evolved from his belief in America and American ideals. He was an American patriot. He had a firm belief that it was America's destiny to lead the world to freedom and justice. ... it is a fact of history that responsibility and influence—in all areas, political, military and economic—ultimately rise and fall together. No nation can long bear the heaviest burdens of responsibility without sharing in the progress and decisions, just as no nation can assert for long its influence without accepting its share of these burdens.2

This belief in America's role as world leader brought out Kennedy's universal political thought. He envisioned American liberal democracy as the nerve center with nerve impulses, shooting out in all directions, stimulating freedom and justice in all corners of the world. This idea made Kennedy, the patriot, also a universal philosopher.

He was a hero to many throughout the world, but he had a special appeal to the men of his own culture because he reflected the dominant values of that culture in his eloquent articulations on freedom and equality and dramatic exemplification of personal independence and achievement. Kennedy—the politician, Kennedy—the humanist, Kennedy—the patriot, and Kennedy—the universalist, all combine into a culture hero who also had the perception and vision to see the role

of man and the role of the state in the world order of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This culture hero used ideals from the past, applied them to the present, and projected them for the future. When a man reflects the tone of his culture and writes down his ideas eloquently in such a way as to influence men and ideas in the tide of history he should be considered a political philosopher.

Background

Kennedy's background which was influential to his political thought, necessarily must be understood to evaluate his political philosophy. Kennedy's family background, his religious beliefs, his ethnic origins, and his Americanism are the primary influences which combined to develop the man and his philosophy.

Kennedy came from a family in which an individual's achievement and independence were the measurement of his success. Kennedy developed in an atmosphere of competition and accomplishment within his own family in which each was encouraged to win. Kennedy tasted defeat but was always determined to win. Second best was never enough for a Kennedy. Extreme family loyalty prevailed but each individual member of the family was important and unique in his own sphere. Individual dignity was all important but each member of the family was
expected to help each other against external forces. It is this idea which Kennedy transferred to his concept of the relationship of the individual in the Family of Man.

Kennedy knew personal tragedy within his own family with the death of his older brother and one of his sisters and with the existence of a mentally retarded sister. However, these tragedies did not make Kennedy a defeated, negative, fatalistic individual. Instead, amidst the love and loyalty of his family, personal tragedy was transcended and personal and family pride emerged. Kennedy’s courage to overcome personal tragedy was exemplified in his acceptance of intense physical pain which he endured throughout much of his life. His brother, Robert, gave praise to this courageous quality when he spoke of his many painful ailments. "... I never heard him complain. I never heard him say anything that would indicate that he felt God had dealt with him unjustly."3

Kennedy’s religious beliefs are basic to his belief in the dignity of man. Because man is a creature of God, and because Kennedy believed in a benign supernatural God, he believed that the individual’s responsibility is to achieve

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his highest potentialities in this world and to help his fellow man to achieve his highest capabilities. Man is the captain of his own soul because God gave man the power to reason, so that man could choose between evil and good. God would help those who strove to do good if they themselves made the effort to achieve goodness. It is this same idea that Kennedy transferred to his political thought when he stressed the responsibility of the free individual to help his fellow man achieve freedom and independence if that man used his own initiative to try to win the struggle for freedom. This is why Kennedy believed it was a moral responsibility of free men to promote freedom everywhere.

These actions will require sacrifice on the part of many of our citizens. More will be required in the future. They will require, from all of us, courage and perseverance in the years to come. But if we . . . act out of strength and unity of purpose, with calm determination and steady nerves, using restraint . . ., I am hopeful that both peace and freedom will be sustained.

We face a challenge wherever . . . the freedom of human beings is at stake.\(^4\)

Kennedy's Catholicism stressed the equality of all individuals in the eyes of God. The individual therefore must be treated with dignity in an environment of equal opportunity.

to fulfill the role of man set by his Creator. Kennedy's religion was a personal religion fulfilling his own needs, and he respected the right of each individual to choose the religion best suited for his individual needs. Man cannot be the judge of other men—only man's Creator can sit in judgment on mankind. Therefore each individual must determine his own destiny as he sees it in his own conscious being. Only God knows absolute truth so respect must be given to all men, all ideas, and all beliefs in the search for truth and knowledge.

... I believe in an America where religious intolerance will someday end—where all man and all churches are treated as equal—where every man has the same right to attend or not attend the church of his choice—where there is no Catholic vote, no anti-Catholic vote, no bloc voting of any kind—and where Catholics, Protestants and Jews, at both the lay and the pastoral level, will refrain from those attitudes of disdain and division which have so often marred their works in the past, and promote instead the American ideal of brotherhood.5

The basis of all human morality to Kennedy was the fact that man must act with responsibility to his own conscience in an atmosphere of self-respect and respect for all men as a member of the Family of Men headed by God the Father.

Kennedy's basic presumption of moral law rested on his belief in the existence of God and man's relationship to Him. He believed that, given the social environment which provides for equality of opportunity, each man faces the burden of choice between good and evil and between inactivity and achievement. To Kennedy the most important task of a Catholic is to fulfill God's purpose for man on earth. This purpose is for man to develop his potentialities as a human being. He believed the aim of man's life is to increase the sum of freedom and responsibility in his being. Kennedy had the capacity to encounter differences and yet remain true to his convictions. Every encounter was to Kennedy a challenge which gave his life impetus, action, and dynamism. This is why he believed the diversity of ideas to be the dynamic force in society. Kennedy was a religious man, yet a secular man who spoke to the spiritual needs of men everywhere, giving inspiration and hope to millions throughout the world.

Kennedy's ethnic background had some influence on his political thought. He was of Irish descent. His ancestors had come to America from Ireland as impoverished but proud people who faced discrimination and prejudice with courage and conviction and therefore were able to rise above prejudice through self-achievement. Kennedy valued the inheritance he
received from these proud but spirited ancestors. Speaking
in Wexford, Ireland, he had this to say of his ancestors.

When my great-grandfather left here to become a
cooper in East Boston, he carried nothing with him
except two things, a strong religious faith and a
strong desire for liberty. And I'm glad to say that
all of his great-grandchildren have valued that in-
heritance.

The pride Kennedy felt for these ancestors was a de-
terminant of his belief in the heritage of the immigrants
to American life. Only in an atmosphere of liberty and
equality could these immigrants have accomplished so much and
built a prosperous dynamic nation in so short a period of
time.

Finally, the greatest influence on Kennedy's philosophy
was his heritage as an American. Everything Kennedy believed
grew out of his belief in the American ideals of freedom
and equality. Kennedy believed the American democracy to
be the best example of free progressive government. He
quoted the Founding Fathers and American heroes of the past
incessantly. His belief in America extended to his uni-
versal philosophy of world order. If Americans could demonstrate
freedom in action to the world, then the whole world could

follow American leadership in promoting human freedom everywhere. Kennedy believed it was the destiny of America to lead the world to freedom in a world order based on the dignity of the individual. Robert Kennedy pointed out his brother’s patriotism in a statement about his character. He said throughout his life his brother demonstrated conviction, courage, a desire to help others who needed help, and true and genuine love for his country.

Kennedy was both a nationalist and an internationalist. He believed that the United States was the best nation and he had profound nationalistic pride. However, he believed that this great American heritage should be made available to all peoples around the world. The success of liberty in America should be the example for freedom everywhere. For this reason Kennedy’s philosophy included both nationalism and internationalism.

Kennedy’s Americanism penetrated all the influences on his political thought. His basic political theory included the basic ideals of America—freedom and equality, diversity of ideas in an open forum of debate, and dignity of man in a society in which the state is the servant of the individual and the individual is the source of progress.

7Kennedy, Profiles in Courage, foreword by Robert Kennedy, p. X.
Significance of this Study

It is the universality of his thought which makes Kennedy's political philosophy important to the study of twentieth century political theory. Kennedy was a historical scholar who studied the political behavior of man and applied his understanding of man's political behavior to the basic normative principles in which he believed. He combined an empirical study with a metaphysical base. He used the analytical and empirical approach to clarify normative principles. He believed clarification was necessary to advance human dignity in freedom and equality through a diversity of ideas.

Chapter Two of this work sets forth Kennedy's concept of the nature of man, as derived from his writings. His concept of the nature of man is a universal concept that mankind has a basic nature. Man is a creature of God and therefore his basic nature is good, because Kennedy believed that all things created by God are good including humanity. Because God gave man the power to reason, it is up to man to make the choice between good and evil. He believed that God helps man striving toward goodness but that man must make his own choice in freedom. Kennedy was a liberal Thomist in his belief about God and man's relation to God. He believed that God placed man on this earth to exercise freedom of choice and excellence.
in achievement and that it is man's responsibility as an individual, using his intellect, to fulfill God's purpose on earth. Much like Teilhard de Chardin, he combined the existential ferment with his belief in God. He believed that God's purpose in creating humanity was to provide man with the tools to further the development of human potentialities. Therefore man's first obligation to his Creator is to make his existence in this world meaningful to himself and to his fellow man.

In the far future there may be a new great union for us all. But for the present, there is plenty for all to do in building new and enduring connections.

For we know now that freedom is more than the rejection of tyranny, that prosperity is more than an escape from want, that partnership is more than a sharing of power. . . . These are all, above all, great human adventures. They must have meaning and conviction and purpose; . . .

Because man is basically good, Kennedy believed, man can reach toward perfectibility in an evolutionary spiral in his search for truth and knowledge. Man is naturally inquisitive and so he strives to find truth. As civilization develops, man evolves to a relative perfectibility. But to strive for truth and knowledge man must be free. In order to have a freedom of choice, all men must have equal opportunities

\[8 \text{Kennedy, } \text{The Burden and the Glory, p. 120.}\]
to develop their potentialities during their existence in this world. Kennedy believed freedom and responsibility evolved hand in hand. As individual freedom increased, individual burdens increased. Freedom to Kennedy was a universal movement evolving from the beginning of time. As man reaches toward perfectibility, he acquires more individual freedom and more individual responsibilities. But his dignity as a human being also increases proportionately to his freedom and responsibility.

The free individual should promote freedom for all men because each is a member of the Family of Man. Man is a political and social being, as can be seen from past history and scientific studies of man's behavior. This was an important aspect of Kennedy's political belief. Because man is a political and social being in the Family of Man, he has a responsibility to his brothers to uphold and promote freedom throughout the world. Kennedy envisioned man as being both independent and interdependent and because nations are made up of men, nations likewise must be both independent and interdependent in a world of diversity.

Chapter Three of this study investigates Kennedy's concept of the nature of the state and man's relation to the state. Because Kennedy believed man to be a social being, he thought that man is necessarily dependent on other human beings. It
is in the state that man's moral character, rationality and physical nature develop as the result of his relationships with other citizens of the state. The beliefs of the individual arise from the culture of the society in which he exists. The ideals of the society stem from the religion, literature, social and economic custom and the political organization of the state. The individual is important to the state as the source of progress and the state should be the servant of the individual.

Therefore the purpose of the state is to promote individual development in an atmosphere of freedom and equality. Each state should choose its own means toward progress of civilization within the diversity of its traditions. The diverse elements in the state combine to promote common goals in civic friendship. In a free society man should accept this diversity in an amicable relationship with his fellow citizens of the state. The free dynamic state promotes a free expression of ideas for truth and justice with comity as the unifying force. In Kennedy's political philosophy this diversity of ideas in an open forum of debate is the dynamic source of progress in the family, in the society, in the state, and in the world.

For this reason Kennedy believed the state should be organized under a flexible living Constitution based on basic
principles and ideals of the society but evolving and changing with every generation as it interprets the needs of that culture. A government is needed to promote man's greatest welfare as members of each society, but the individual should be left with the greatest possible moral autonomy to make use of his freedom of choice.

Kennedy's concept of the best state to promote individual freedom and development is examined in Chapter Four. Kennedy believed that the system of American democracy is obviously the example of the best state. The excerpts from Kennedy's writings and speeches in this chapter point out his patriotic nature and his universal beliefs. He stressed the individual's importance in promoting the best state which will in turn promote a nation independent and free but a nation with a moral responsibility to promote freedom throughout the world. Kennedy's thought emphasized the United States as the best state and therefore the best example to the world of a free democracy. Because Kennedy believed that the American nation strives to provide freedom and equality to each and all, it should be the example of success to the world. The American nation is made up of diverse elements and so Kennedy deduced the idea that the same political theory that has succeeded in American democracy could be projected to provide a world order
based on individual freedom and justice as a universal movement. The same principles apply to all mankind; and, therefore, if the dignity of man is upheld in a diversity of ideas in the state as the progressive force in the state, then the diversity of ideas combined with individual dignity can be the dynamism for world progress.

The United States set the example for a successful revolution for freedom and independence and the seeds of liberty have blown across the seas to distant lands so that today the freedom revolutions are the most powerful force alive in world politics.

... leaders learned [in American schools] about dignity and equality of men, and saw in practice the virtues of representative government, widespread education and economic opportunity. These are the ideas and ideals that have caused a revolution—a largely bloodless revolution, but no less far-reaching for that. 9

Because the American nation lit the spark of freedom which has become a flame around the world, Kennedy believed it was the responsibility of the United States as a successful free state to help promote freedom and independence everywhere. "The success of our leadership is dependent upon respect for our mission in the world as well as our missiles--

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9Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 131.
on a clearer recognition of the virtues of freedom as well as the evils of tyranny."\textsuperscript{10}

This freedom revolution does promote nationalism, the second strongest force in the world today. Kennedy did not believe that nationalism was necessarily a deterrent to world order. He expressed the idea that nationalism can be the means to achieve internationalism just as individualism can be the force for achieving nationalism. As men are members of the Family of Man, all men need to strive to provide for the best world that man can develop. Kennedy believed man was the master of his fate—man can overcome tragedy and make his world a better place to live. Although men have enemies, it is imperative that men try to live together in an atmosphere of peace and freedom in which all men can enjoy the good life.

Modern economics, weaponry and communications have made us realize more than ever that we are one human family and this one planet is our home.

\begin{quote}
We must remember that there are no permanent enemies. Hostility today is a fact, but it is not a ruling law. The supreme reality of our time is our indivisibility as children of God and our common vulnerability on this planet.\textsuperscript{11}
\end{quote}

It is the analytical and empirical methods which Kennedy used to clarify normative principles of promoting human dignity

\textsuperscript{10}Kennedy, \textit{The Burden and the Glory}, p. 275.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 132.
in freedom and equality through humanism and the diversity of ideas present in history, in the world today, and the Family of Man tomorrow which should place him in the ranks of influential political philosophers of the Twentieth Century. It is his belief in the individual, the nation and the Family of Man which makes his philosophy influential to political thought.
CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF MAN

Kennedy's concept of the nature of man is that man is relatively perfectible. This belief is basic to Kennedy's political philosophy, which sees man's constant struggle for and closer approximation of perfection. Although he could see the fallibility of man, Kennedy perceived the progress toward perfection which has been realized through history. He believed that this progress will continue as man strives to make his world a perfect place in which to live. Man's natural impulse is to reach toward truth and knowledge. Emphasis upon this good in man's nature will result in the realization of further progress. Man's basic nature demands freedom—individually and collectively. This great force can be guided by a positive leadership to produce an evolutionary spiral toward the perfectibility of all mankind.

To Kennedy, the perfectibility of mankind can never be realized fully because only God is perfect. Man is a creature of an omnipotent God made in His image and therefore relatively perfectible. Kennedy believed in the goodness of man because man was made in this image of God. The extent of the
perfectibility of mankind is the full realization of man's freedom of choice through reason. Man possesses the ability to reason, and through his search for knowledge and truth his ability to reason is developed.

Freedom of choice is dependent on man's ability to reason and the development of man's intellect is dependent on his freedom of choice. Therefore if man is free to pursue knowledge and truth, man can reach toward perfectibility.

Perfectibility of mankind is dependent on freedom of choice, but that freedom of choice must be realized by the individual in a conscious relationship with his fellow man. Man's freedom is therefore relative to all men's freedom. Each man is a creature of God made in His image with the ability to reason, so mankind strives for freedom and independence with equal opportunity to develop his own potential in the pursuit of knowledge and justice. Therefore, equality is as essential to freedom as absence of tyranny.

Man's desire for independence and freedom individually and collectively, should be the positive force in the search for truth and justice. Kennedy had great faith in man's ability to overcome the problems of his world.

The effort to improve the conditions of man, however, is not a task for a few. It is the task of all nations, acting alone, acting in groups, acting in the U. N., for
plague and pestilence, and plunder and pollution, for the hazards of nature and the hunger of children are the foes of every nation. The earth, the sea, and the air are the concern of every nation. And science, technology and education can be the ally of every nation.

Never before has man had such capacity to control his own environment—to end thirst and hunger, to conquer poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world or to make it the last.¹

Because man has made tremendous strides in his knowledge and understanding of the physical aspects of the universe through scientific and technological achievement, Kennedy believed it is man's responsibility to use this knowledge to achieve greater understanding among peoples. Now that man has conquered many of the forces of nature he must strive to conquer the fears and prejudices within himself in order to reach toward truth in his understanding of people everywhere.

But man does not live by bread alone, and members of this organization [U. N.] are committed by the Charter to promote and respect human rights. Those rights are not respected when a Buddhist priest is driven from his pagoda, when a synagogue is shut down, when a Protestant Church cannot open a mission, when a Cardinal is forced into hiding or when a crowded church service is bombed. . . . We are opposed to discrimination and persecution on grounds of race and religion anywhere in the world, including our own nation. We are working to right the wrongs of our own country.

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I hope that not only our nation but all other multi-racial societies will meet these standards of fairness and justice. We are opposed to apathetical and all forms of human oppression. . . . Our concern is the right of all men to equal protection under the law; and since human rights are indivisible, this body cannot stand aside when those rights are abused and neglected by any member state.

New efforts are needed if this assembly's Declaration of Human Rights . . . is to have full meaning. A new means should be found for promoting the free expression and trade of ideas, through travel and communications and through increased exchanges of people and books and broadcasts. For as the world renounces the competition of weapons, competition in ideas must flourish, and that competition must be as full and as fair as possible.2

Kennedy's philosophy is based on the belief that man always has and always will be searching for ways to improve the world for future generations. Man may make many mistakes, but he will try to seek out truth no matter how difficult the obstacles are to overcome.

Because man is fallible is no reason to lose hope and faith in his ability to strive to perfect the world in which he lives. Patience and understanding are needed to improve society until gradually man all over the world are able to live in peace and harmony and freedom. A perfect world to Kennedy would be one in which man could live in freedom and

2Ibid., pp. 73-74.
equality and justice for all, free from poverty and hunger and disease, free to develop his potential, and free to determine man's destiny in a peaceful brotherhood of man.

The science of weapons and war have made us all... one world and one human race, with one common destiny. In such a world absolute sovereignty no longer assures us of absolute security. The conventions of peace must pull abreast and then ahead of the inventions of war. The U. N., building on its successes and learning from its failures must be developed into a genuine world security system.

But peace does not rest in charters and covenants alone. It lies in the hearts and minds of all people. And in this world, no act, no pact, no treaty, no organization can hope to preserve it without the support and the wholehearted commitment of all people... I believe the problems of human destiny are not beyond the reach of human beings.3

Because man is a rational being, he can intensify his knowledge of all things by combining his achievements with the collective development of all men in his search for freedom and independence for each and all. These are the possibilities in which Kennedy believed if man used his reason with hope and confidence, learning from the past, living in the present, but looking to the future.

George Bernard Shaw summed up an approach to life. "Other peoples," he said, "see things and say, why? But I dream things that never were and I say, why not?"

3Ibid., pp. 75-76.
It is that quality . . . , the remarkable combination of hope, confidence, and imagination, that is needed more than ever today. The problems of the world cannot possibly be solved by skeptics or cynics whose horizons are limited by the obvious realities. We need men who can dream things that never were and ask, "Why not?"4

Kennedy's theory emphasized not only the rational nature of man but his free and independent nature as well. Man must be free to make his own choices regarding his fulfillment in life. Kennedy's concept of man's freedom was his freedom of choice to realize his full potential in an environment of equal opportunity with justice and dignity for each and all. This is a positive freedom that involves individual responsibility to all other men. Kennedy also believed man to be a social being. "Men are by nature and of necessity social animals."5 For this reason freedom is all encompassing. It is individual, national, and universal. Each individual must be free to make his own choices and it is the responsibility of each free man to uphold freedom for all men in his nation and all men everywhere.

The theory of independence, as old as man himself, was not invented in this hall [Independence Hall], but it was in this hall that the theory became a practice, that the word went out to all the world that "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time."6

4 Ibid., p. 133.
6 Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 130.
Freedom and Equality

The philosophy that man's nature requires freedom and independence was not just a platitude to Kennedy. His political thoughts emanated from this basic theory. Therefore, his political philosophy centered around the spread of freedom to every individual, every society and every nation throughout the world.

The most important test . . . today is how we meet the challenge of imperialism, what we do to further man's desire to be free. On this test we will be judged by the uncommitted millions in Asia and Africa, and watched by lovers of freedom behind the Iron Curtain.\(^7\)

The strength of our appeal is in our traditional and deeply felt philosophy of freedom and independence for all peoples everywhere.\(^8\)

Equality and liberty were not incompatible to this twentieth century idealist. Man needs to be free to make his own choices, but he must follow his conscience. In this manner he will understand that no man is free until all men are free. With these words, Kennedy stressed the interdependence of equality and liberty.

The Constitution of the United States . . . stressed not independence, but interdependence, not

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 80.
the individual liberty of one, but the indivisible liberty of all.\(^9\)

He also pointed out that the elementary right of men to make a free choice goes beyond themselves, beyond their society, and beyond their nation to all people in all nations. In a speech he made in West Berlin, he expressed his view on the interplay between equality and liberty. He told those people that they had a right to be free, to unite their families and their nation. But he also asked them to search for the way of freedom for all men.

While the wall is the most obvious and vivid demonstration of the failure of the Communist system, for all the world to see, we take no satisfaction in it, for it is an offense not only against history but an offense against humanity, separating families... and dividing a people who wish to be joined together... One German out of four is denied the elementary right of free men, and that is to make a free choice.... this generation of Germans has earned the right to be free, including the right to unite their families and their nation in lasting peace with good will to all people. You live in a defended island of freedom, but your life is part of the main. So let me ask you... to lift your eyes beyond the dangers of today to the hopes of tomorrow, beyond the freedoms merely of this city of Berlin, or your country of Germany to the advance of freedom everywhere, beyond the wall to the day of peace with justice, beyond yourselves and ourselves to all mankind. Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free.\(^10\)

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\(^9\)Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 110.

\(^10\)Ibid., pp. 99-100.
Freedom to Kennedy did not mean an absence of restraint in all things. One man's freedom is relative to other men's freedom. Freedom of choice can only be preserved for the individual if all men are given an equal opportunity to be free. "Each man sees his own lot and his own prospects just a little bit different from his neighbor."\(^{11}\) In Kennedy's philosophy, man's freedom of choice must be open to each individual. Each man is an individual, unique in his own being, but equal in the eyes of God. "All of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents."\(^{12}\) It is this diversity of talent among men, when free to develop to the fullest potentiality, which gives the dynamic force to society and to the world.

Some may choose forms and ways that we would not choose for ourselves, but it is not for us that they are choosing. We can welcome diversity; the Communists cannot. For we offer a world of choice; they offer a world of coercion. And the way of the past shows clearly that freedom, not coercion, is the wave of the future.\(^{13}\)

The contest will continue—the contest between those who see a monolithic world and those who believe


\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 11.
in diversity—but it should be a contest in leadership and responsibility instead of destruction, a contest in achievement instead of intimidation. Speaking for the United States of America, I welcome such a contest. For we believe that truth is stronger than error, and that freedom is more enduring than coercion. And in the contest for a better life, all the world can be the winner.\textsuperscript{14}

The open forum of ideas is necessary for progress for individuals, for nations and for all the people of the world. We need to develop a free forum of ideas in this world as we did in our own nation when we founded a nation made up of men from many nations, from many walks of life, and from many cultures. However, this will take courage and vision and action as it did for the people who founded the United States of America on the challenges of a diversity of men. The accomplishments of this nation of immigrants who brought their diversity of talents to this country can be an example to the world that diversity can be a dynamic force to world progress. Kennedy viewed the story of the immigration of peoples to America as merely the story of people striving for freedom. His admiration for the groups of immigrants who came to this country was exuberant. The contributions of immigrants in a free society can be seen in every aspect of

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 71-72.
the American society--religion, politics, business, the arts, education, athletics, entertainment, and science. All these immigrants of diverse origin brought something of value to America. The new customs, traditions, manners, intelligence, and industry of these people resulted in a "new society composed of many societies, a new culture composed of many cultures--a culture and society characterized by differences rather than similarities--a heterogeneous race but a homogeneous nation."  

Kennedy admitted that immigration has caused great difficulties. He realized the difficulty involved in understanding people who have unfamiliar backgrounds and unfamiliar habits. This is human nature. But because those people conquered the fears and suspicions and prejudices they faced, a nation was built based on the hope for personal achievement.

Fear, bigotry, hatred--these do not die easily and since they are not based on fact and logic, they do not yield to the evidence of fact and logic. New people coming to this country, given time and opportunity have found their way up the economic and social ladder.  

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15 Kennedy, A Nation of Immigrants, p. 6.
16 Ibid., p. 15.
17 Ibid., p. 19.
This was the founding of the faith of a nation in equality and freedom as a way of life.

The spirit of striving for personal betterment was kept alive in a positive and a negative way—in a positive way through the hope and endeavor of the newest group and in a negative way by providing a point of reference for older groups, who could measure the reality of their own progress. This is the idea of social mobility. This belief in social mobility has been an American contribution to the world—this is the spirit that so took the French nobleman, Alexis de Tocqueville. He called it the spirit of equality, but it is actually more than that. It is a view of life that recognizes inequalities among men but accepts them as momentary rather than permanent and as susceptible to change under the proper conditions.  

Kennedy had great faith in this "American Dream" and he considered it to be the result of the fundamental belief in freedom and equality for each and all. Through this belief in freedom and equality, a society released the energy of the people to master and build a great nation.

18 Ibid., p. 19. 
19 Ibid., p. 24.
This same belief in freedom and equality can release the energy of all people to create a more perfect world. We can assist freedom-loving peoples of the world to achieve greater political, economic and social freedom. "We need an increase of people-to-people contacts, of cultural, scientific, and educational exchanges, of reciprocal visits by delegations representing every aspect of life. . . ." In this way we can bring the dynamic force of diversity to fruition in this world.

Freedom and Responsibility

This philosophy of freedom and equality steer the Kennedy ship toward the theory of freedom and responsibility. In order that man may preserve his individual and collective freedom, man must strive to spread the truth of freedom and break the chains of slavery throughout the world.

Kennedy believed we need to make a strong stand for freedom and equality as a universal movement. People must be aroused to the fact that the promotion of freedom is a moral responsibility of all free people. Each individual has a responsibility to uphold freedom no matter how great the sacrifice.

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*Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 93.*
This is not the time to keep the facts from the people—to keep them complacent. To sound the alarm is not to panic but to seek action from an aroused public. For as the poet Dante once said, "The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a time of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality."

I will tell you who is selling America short—little men with little vision who say we can't afford to build the world's greatest defense against aggressions—it is those who say we cannot afford to bolster the free world against the ravages of hunger and disease and disorder upon which Communism feeds. These men lack confidence in America.21

If we are not prepared to assist [nations] in making a better life for their people, then I believe that the prospects for freedom in those areas are uncertain... The burden is heavy and we have carried it for many years. But I believe this fight is not over.22

Man's responsibility to uphold freedom does not mean that he should force his ideas of freedom on all men. Kennedy expressed the idea that men are wrong in assuming that what is so dear to them could be made equally compelling to other peoples who have problems so different from theirs.23

Our approach... must... be imaginative, progressive and practical. Above all it must recognize things as they are not just as we would have them be for our convenience. We must talk in terms... that translate themselves into tangible values and self-interest for those peoples as well as ourselves... we

21Ibid., pp. 105-106.
22Ibid., p. 154.
23Ibid., p. 107.
[should] talk with them in terms of their problems, not ours.24

It is the responsibility of free men to uphold freedom, but it must be in such a way that all men will have the freedom of choice to decide their own future. However strongly Kennedy believed in the Democratic way of life, he believed each individual, each group, and each nation should be free to choose the means to achieve the goals of freedom and justice.

Men can choose, in peace and freedom, how their country shall be governed and choose, without threat to any neighbor, reunification with their countrymen. My countrymen, since our country was founded, believe strongly in the proposition that all men shall be free and all free men shall have this right of choice.25

Freedom of choice connotes individual responsibility, in Kennedy's philosophy. By exercising responsibility, man becomes strengthened by courage in overcoming the difficulties posed while striving toward freedom. "Life is not merely soft and easy—it is difficult to meet responsibilities."26

The courage to face the responsibilities of life is the basis of all human morality, according to the Kennedy theory of the nature of man.

24Ibid., p. 108.
25Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 120.
Because each individual should have freedom of choice in facing problems of life with a conscious concern, Kennedy believed in an open society—open to the free exchange of ideas. "It is important to keep faith in the long run judgment of people. Truth can only be found in examining ideas. We believe in human reason." 27 Kennedy's political theory was influenced by his belief in man's ability to shape the world using his intellect, as God intended it to be used. Because man is a creature of God, given the free choice of action—right or wrong—God's will is worked by men on this earth. 28 Reason is a gift of man's Creator. Ideas pave the way for progress—the ideas of the past have shaped our history, the ideas of the present can clarify the mistakes we have made and open vistas of ideas for the future. Civilization was built on ideas.

This basic clash of ideas and wills is but one of the forces re-shaping our globe, swept as it is by the tides of hope and fear, by crises in the headlines today that become mere footnotes tomorrow. Both the successes and the setbacks of the past . . . remain on our agenda of unfinished business. For every apparent blessing contains the seeds of danger; every area of trouble gives out a ray of hope; and


the one unchangeable certainty is that nothing is certain or unchangeable.\textsuperscript{29}

The philosophy that man can shape his own destiny gave rise to Kennedy's firm belief in the freedom of individual choice based on reason. Kennedy knew it takes courage for man to keep alive the spirit of individualism and dissent. But the American nation has remained a free nation because its people have nurtured this spirit of freedom.

An American, by nature, is optimistic. He is experimental, an inventor and a builder, who builds best when called upon to build greatly. Arouse this will to believe in himself, give him a great goal to believe in, and he will create the means to reach it. This trait of the American character is our greatest single national asset. It is time to get on with the business of being true to the work of a choosing people—mankind's best hopes.\textsuperscript{30}

This responsibility of each individual to keep peace and freedom in an open forum of ideas requires continual communication and understanding. It is in this manner man meets his responsibilities.

Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly rebuilding new structures. And however undramatic the pursuit of peace, that pursuit must go on. . . .

\textsuperscript{29}Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., pp. 7-8.
But I would say to the leaders of the Soviet Union, and to their people, that if either of our countries is to be fully secure, we need a much better weapon than the H-bomb, a weapon better than ballistic missiles or nuclear submarines, and that better weapon is peaceful cooperation. We must not let failure to agree on all points delay agreement where agreement is possible.²¹

Kennedy considered understanding and communication to be a vital part of furthering the spirit of freedom. "Communication is important. Understanding is important, making clear our peaceful but determined intentions is important."²² Kennedy believed it was the responsibility of a free and powerful nation to provide strength in the pursuit of peace and freedom around the world but with this strength it is important to combine wisdom and understanding.

We in this generation, are, by destiny rather than choice, the watchmen of the walls of world freedom. We ask, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility, that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint, and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of "peace on earth, good will toward men." That must always be our goal--and the righteousness of our cause must always underlie our strength. For as was written long ago: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."²³

²¹Ibid., pp. 68-69; 70-71.
²²Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 10.
All this plus self-sacrifice makes up a national mood which Kennedy defined as: "... the willingness to bear burdens in order to maintain freedom all over the world."\textsuperscript{34}

In order to promote a close relationship with men throughout the world Kennedy thought it necessary to nourish the seeds of liberty. But all this requires patience, imagination, and strength.

There are times when it is far better to do the right thing as a result of debate and sacrifice than the wrong thing as a testimonial to national unity. In short it is our job to prove that we can devote as much energy, intelligence, idealism, and sacrifice to the survival and triumph of the open society as the ... despots can extort by compulsion in defense of their closed system of tyranny.\textsuperscript{35}

Kennedy believed the watchwords of America—"watchwords of personal and national liberty, of the natural equality of all souls, of the dignity of labor, of economic development broadly shared"\textsuperscript{36}—have placed the burden and the glory of freedom on the United States. By this Kennedy meant that the United States should be the example of freedom to the world as both an ideal and a reality.

\textsuperscript{34}Kraus, \textit{The Great Debates}, p. 374.

\textsuperscript{35}Kennedy, \textit{Strategy of Peace}, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 56.
Our frontiers today are on every continent. "Where liberty is, there is my country," said Ben Franklin. "Where liberty is not, there is mine," said Tom Paine. In the second half of the twentieth century the original American spirit is meeting its greatest test.

For our future and that of the rest of the people of the world, are inseparably bound together, economically, militarily, and politically.

... there remains the need for an imaginative and constructive response to the revolutionary demands of a fast changing world.37

These various elements... lead... to a single goal—the goal of a peaceful world of free and independent states.

And while no nation has ever faced such a challenge, no nation has ever been so ready to seize the burden and the glory of freedom.38

Brotherhood of Man

Kennedy believed that man is a political and social being interdependent with his fellow beings. Man is dependent on the other human beings in his family; in his social, economic and cultural relationships; in his society; in his nation and in his world.

People... are moved by a strong and irresistible desire for unity... There will always be differences among friends and they should be freely and frankly discussed. But these are differences of means, not ends. They are differences of approach, not spirit... It is increasingly clear and

37Ibid.
increasingly understood that the central moving force of our great adventure is enduring mutual trust.39

Kennedy theorized that man as a social being strives for the attainment of unity in a brotherhood of men. Man begins this task by a perception of the necessities required to keep individual rights in the forefront within his own society.

Man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe—the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

We are 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.

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

This much we pledge—and more.40

When Kennedy pledged support for the freedom of new states in his Inaugural Address, he did not expect these states to support our view, but he did expect them strongly to support their own freedom. He pledged efforts to help

39Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 139.

people in mass misery, to help them help themselves break
the bonds of slavery—not to get their votes, nor their
friendships, nor because the Communists were doing it—but
because it is right. 41 "If a free society cannot help the
many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." 42

Man can achieve his own destiny by inspiring within his
own society and his nation a spirit of initiative and inde-
pendence with a devotion to old-fashioned ideals such as
duty, honor, and country. Kennedy's philosophy of individual
freedom, with the connotation of conscious responsibility,
included the projection of this conscious moral freedom to
the society and state in which the individual exercised his
inherent rights.

I don't believe that there is anything this coun-
try cannot do. I don't believe there's any burden, or
any responsibility that any American would not as-
sume to protect his country, to protect our security,
to advance the cause of freedom. And I believe it
incumbent upon us now to do that. . . . we have a
rendezvous with destiny. And I believe it incum-
bent upon us to be the defenders of the United States
and the defenders of freedom. . . . 43

41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Kraus, The Great Debates, p. 429.
The first step of man's responsibility to his society is to educate himself and to strive for the education of every citizen in his nation. While man must try to achieve self-knowledge in order to understand himself, he must also strive to understand his society by achieving a knowledge of the politics of that society so that he is able to participate intelligently in the management of his society's affairs. This participation will enable him to realize his dignity as a free and morally responsible citizen. Education is paramount to the advance of freedom.

In our concern for the future of America, we must educate politicians. Every educated individual should contribute to the political arena and to the critical problems of society which are decided therein, the benefit of the talents which society has helped to develop in you.\(^4^4\)

Kennedy placed a special responsibility on the scholar. "The duty of the scholar—particularly in a republic such as ours—is to contribute his objective views and his sense of liberty to the affairs of his state and nation. We ask of you enlightenment, vision, illumination."\(^4^5\) He carried this idea with his view of the responsibilities of the universities.


\(^4^5\)Ibid., p. 189.
What it is interested in—and this must be true of every university—is in turning out citizens of the world, men who comprehend the difficult, sensitive tasks that be before us as free men and women, and men who are willing to commit their energies to the advancement of a free society. Every resident has a duty to consider where he is, where his city is going and how best it can get there. The scholar, the teacher, the intellectual have a higher duty than any of the others, for society has trained you to think as well as do. You have a special obligation to think and to help forge the future in terms of truth and justice and liberty.

Education was to Kennedy the means to development of each individual's reason so that he could use his freedom of choice in a meaningful way. "An uneducated child makes an uneducated parent, who in another day produces another uneducated child." The need for education Kennedy placed high on the agenda of equal opportunity for each in his quest for freedom of choice. This is a basic right of every American. Each individual should have the equal opportunity to achieve the good life by having the means of education available regardless of his race or color.

... every American ought to enjoy the privileges of being an American without regard to his race or his color. Every American ought to have the

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right to be treated as he would wish to be treated, as one would wish his children to be treated.48

Kennedy understood the value of wisdom and knowledge and he knew that man had a basic self-interest in freedom and equality. All men want freedom and equality for themselves and their children, but they usually think of equality in terms that no one should be given more privileges than they but seldom think in terms that no one should be given fewer privileges than they. Prejudices can be destroyed and equality and freedom advanced through knowledge and understanding. Therefore education is the means to eradicate destructive fear and prejudice which stifles the progress of a society.

Our scientific development has progressed at a fantastic rate, and we must keep pace with this development in our humanitarian progression in civilization in order to cure the human problems that develop with new scientific discoveries.

The greater our knowledge increases, the greater our ignorance unfolds. . . . vast stretches of the unknown and unanswered and the unfinished still far outstrip our collective comprehension.

No man can fully grasp how far and how fast we have come, but condense, if you will, the fifty thousand years of man's recorded history in a time span of but a half century. Stated in those terms, we know very little about the first forty years except

48 Ibid., pp. 242-243.
that at the end of them advanced man had learned to use
the skins of animals to cover himself. Then about ten
years ago, under this standard, man emerged from his
caves to construct other kinds of shelter. Only five
years ago man learned to write and use a cart with wheels.
Christianity began less than two years ago. The printing
press came this year and less than two months ago, during
this whole fifty-year span of human history, the steam
generator provided a new source of power.

Last month electric lights and telephones and auto-
mobiles and airplanes became available. Only last week
did we develop penicillin and television and nuclear
power and now if America's new spacecraft succeeds in
reaching Venus we will have literally reached the stars
before midnight tonight.

This is a breath-taking pace and such a pace cannot
help but create new ills as it dispells old—new
ignorance, new problems, new dangers. Surely the opening
vistas of space provide high costs and hardships, as well
as high rewards. . . . all great and laudable actions are
accompanied with great difficulties, and must be both
erenterprised and overcome with courage.

If this capsule history of our progress teaches us
anything, it is that man in his quest for knowledge and
progress, is determined and cannot be deterred. The
exploration . . . will go ahead whether we join in it or
not.49

To Kennedy this fantastic progress in scientific development
merely pointed out the fact that man can achieve that for
which he strives. Man's conquest over the natural forces in
the universe can be put forth to generate a better life, a
better world, and greater understanding among peoples of all
nations.

49 Ibid., pp. 242-243.
For the first time, we have the capacity to strike off the remaining bonds of poverty, and ignorance, to free our people for the spiritual and intellectual fulfillment which has always been the goal of our civilization.\(^50\)

This was not an idle dream to Kennedy. He believed it could be achieved if dedicated men and women would devote their energies and their time and their toils to promote world peace and human progress. With this belief he established the Peace Corps. Through the exchange of ideas between dedicated men and women and the people they desire to help, man can "... share in the expanding wonders of science, wonders which have captured man's imagination, challenged the powers of his mind, and given him the tools for rapid progress."\(^51\)

This sharing of knowledge, in Kennedy's political thought, should be reciprocal in order to promote better understanding among peoples. He invited people of other nations to contribute to the enrichment of American life and culture through exchange programs of teachers and students.

We need teachers of your literature and history and tradition, opportunities for our young people to study in your universities, access to your music, your art and the thought of your great philosophers. For we know we have much to learn. ... We propose to complete the

\(^{50}\)Kennedy, *To Turn the Tide*, p. 163.

\(^{51}\)Ibid., p. 165.
revolution of America . . . where all men can hope for a suitable standard of living, and all can live out their lives in dignity and freedom.52

Kennedy believed human dignity is necessary for each and every individual and it is the responsibility of each man in this family of mankind to allow others to uphold their dignity. Before making a decision in his freedom of choice, man should educate himself about the play of forces which call for the decision—sifting and defining and choosing between alternatives and then explaining why his choice commends itself to one's reason. It is in these decisions that man must strive to uphold the dignity of his fellow man. Many times this calls for social inventiveness, moral stamina and physical courage in order to find the way to truth and justice.53

The stronghold of our civilization, the individual dignity of the individual free man, has begun to strengthen the bulwarks of freedom. . . . The people who have lived in hopeless poverty, patiently suffering hunger, social injustices and ignorance, have now glimpsed the hope of a better and more abundant life for themselves and their children and they do not intend to be thrust back into darkness.54

Kennedy did not believe the world to be a prison for man as he awaits his execution. Man should be alive, consciously

52 Ibid., p. 167.
53 Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, pp. 3-4.
54 Kennedy, The Burden and the Chance, p. 168.
feeling and perceiving every possibility for a good life here and now. Man should search for truth and justice in this universal laboratory of life, using his sensitivity and rationale freely to find the means of achievement.

"...[All men must be] free to choose their own future and their own system, as long as it does not threaten the freedom of others."\(^5\) To Kennedy, this was freedom with responsibility in a brotherhood of man. "Any dangerous spot is tenable if men--brave men--will make it so."\(^6\) If man's differences are not magnified by his prejudices and if he is brave enough to try to overcome the perils of this world, he will succeed in making this world a better place for all men to live.

Kennedy realistically recognized the weaknesses of mankind within the stronghold of the brotherhood of man which would result in quarrels and conflicting interests within families and nations.

Let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved, and if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For in the final

\(^5\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 11.

\(^6\) Kennedy, \textit{To Turn the Tide}, p. 175.
analysis our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.57

Kennedy believed that the search for peace is universal because man is tied to the family of mortal men. Peace can be attained more realistically by an evolution of human institutions and effective agreements made in the interest of all concerned rather than in a sudden revolution in human nature. World peace does not require that each man must love his neighbor, but that men must be able to live together in mutual harmony, settling differences in a just settlement. Our likes and dislikes change with the tide of time, and events bring surprising changes in the relations between neighbors and nations. Peace to Kennedy was the only rational end for rational men.58

The theory of an evolutionary spiral toward the perfectibility of man can be seen in Kennedy's vision of the future in which man strives toward unity and cooperation in a brotherhood of man.

This is our guide for the present and our vision for the future; a free community of nations, independent

57Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 57.
58Ibid., pp. 54-55.
but interdependent, uniting north and south, east and west, in one great family of men, out-growing and transcending the hates and fears that rend our age.

We will not reach that goal today, or tomorrow. We may not reach it in our lifetime. But the quest is the greatest adventure of our century. We sometimes chafe at the burden of our obligations, the complexity of our decisions, the agony of our choices. But there is no comfort or security for us in evasion, no solution in abdication, no relief in irresponsibility. . . . [we have been] granted the role of being the great defenders of freedom in its hour of maximum danger. This is our good fortune . . . the fate of this generation [is] . . . to live with a struggle we did not start, in a world we did not make. But the pressures of life are not always distributed by choice.59

Kennedy's belief in freedom surpassed all his other convictions in importance. "But I believe . . . strongly that time will prove . . . that liberty and independence and self-determination . . . is the future of many and that free men have the will and the resources to win the struggle for freedom."60 Kennedy was firmly convinced that this was the wave of the future and that the free world was sailing steadily toward unity and cooperation and that free societies do not breed inevitable disunity. Progress toward freedom and equality in a brotherhood of men can only be achieved through a free association of ideas.

59Ibid., pp. 19-20.

60Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 152.
Only the strength and progress and peaceful change that came from independent judgment and individual ideas --even from the unorthodox and eccentric--can enable us to surpass that foreign ideology that fears free thought more than it fears the hydrogen bomb.61

The task for free men is to be the inspiration for all men everywhere. This is a free society's challenge and opportunity to further the spirit of freedom. Kennedy had great faith in both mankind and the spirit of freedom.

... [We must] not confuse the strength of America with consumer luxuries. We must create an America of equal opportunity and economic justice for all men of all ages, races and creeds and America will be—as our founding fathers intended it to be—a living example of freedom to the world.62

If we become known as the friend of freedom, sustaining freedom, helping freedom, helping people in the fight against poverty and ignorance and disease, helping them build their lives, then we can strengthen freedom.63

Kennedy's belief in God and Christianity is the basis for his philosophy of individual freedom with responsibility and equality for all in a brotherhood of men. It is because all men are created by God that all men must be treated equally with dignity. Each man is a unique individual but because all individuals belong to the family of men with an omnipotent God

61Kennedy, Profiles in Courage, p. 17.
62Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 11.
63Kraus, The Great Debates, p. 424.
as the Father of the human race, it is the responsibility of each man to help his brother. He reminded men of the teachings of Christ on the brotherhood of man.

Have we forgotten these words:

"I was hungry and you gave me to eat,  
Naked, and you covered me,  
Sick, and you visited me,  
I was in prison, and you came to me."\(^6\)

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CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF THE STATE

The nature of the state, to Kennedy, develops from the nature of man. Man is a social and political being because he has an inherent need and ability to direct his own life. In order to exercise freedom of choice in properly guiding his life, man must necessarily develop his potential abilities. In achieving this development, man is dependent upon other human beings; for it is only through his relationships with society that he is able to develop his rationality in an educational experience which will unfold his moral character. The full exercise of man's physical nature, his rationality, and his moral character is possible only within the relationships with his fellow man in society. Within that society the beliefs found in religion and literature, in social and economic custom, and in political organization are the ideas and ideals which the collective group pursues to provide the good life for the individuals.

Because Kennedy believed man to be a rational being with a spiritual relationship with an omnipotent God, he believed in individual freedom of choice with responsibility in a
brotherhood of man. All men are equal under God and for this reason each individual in a society should be given equal opportunity to develop his rationality and his moral character. An environment of equal opportunity will be beneficial to the whole society. To Kennedy this is the purpose of man's organization in a society and a state. A state is the collectivity of individual rational beings in a particular geographical area who have common purposes made up of ideas and ideals. These common goals are greater than differences among the individuals.

A free state, in Kennedy's political theory, is made up of unique individuals who unite in groups with common interests striving collectively to provide a society in which individual freedom can be preserved. Therefore, the diversity of individuals who are allowed to develop their own abilities will provide a dynamic society. A dynamic society will preserve itself through its ability to grow and progress while clinging to the basic traditions and customs which make up the ideals of the society. The state must be flexible in its organization but it must be founded on the ideas and ideals of the individuals who make up the state. Kennedy believed it necessary for a free society to keep alive the spirit of freedom through the individual, the group, and the nation.
Freedom must be nourished not only for that society but for all societies everywhere.

Kennedy's philosophy of freedom extends to the foundation, the unification, and the organization of the state. The theory of individual freedom of choice should be the basic ideal in the purpose for the founding of the state. This freedom of choice ideal can be the unifying force of a dynamic society which is made up of diverse elements. Diversity must be preserved in an open free society for progress. The organization of the state must be flexible, providing an environment for development of leadership among the members of the state. The leaders will initiate ideas to stimulate progress toward truth and justice in the evolution of civilization.

Goals of the State

The new ideas and old ideals of the collectivity of individuals in a society are the bases for the establishment of a state to pursue the common goals of that society. In a free state the highest common goal is the preservation of individual freedom of choice. Therefore an environment of equal opportunity is necessary so that each individual can develop his potentialities, a prerequisite to a meaningful freedom of choice. Kennedy believed the state should be the
servant of the individual because the individual is the source of progress. All natural resources should be utilized to provide the best environment for the citizens' welfare.

All of these goals must be organized in an atmosphere of political freedom to preserve the individual's freedom of choice. Each individual should choose the path for his own life and each state should choose its own means to progress. And progress, to Kennedy, could only be achieved in a free state with a free exchange of ideas.

The basis of the founding of the state is the accumulated ideals and ideas which the individuals within the society have perpetuated through their religion, culture, social and economic structure, and political organizations. These ideas and ideals make up the common purposes for the founding of the state.

Kennedy held to the belief of the founders of America that the national purpose for the United States is the preservation of human freedom, and he believed this was not just an ideal but a very practical and possible reality.

My view of the American purpose remains what it has been since the nation's founding: to demonstrate that the organization of men and societies on the basis of human freedom is not an absurdity, but an enriching, ennobling, practical achievement. Our purpose is to demonstrate at home that this ... democracy can solve its problems by the method of consent--by a system of freedom under law. With
respect to the world outside, our purpose is to... help advance the cause of freedom and world law—the universal cause of a just and lasting peace.1

Kennedy's faith in individual freedom of choice extended to every segment of the society for which the state was founded. An environment must be created by the state in which each individual would have the opportunity to develop his potentialities so that he might truly have the freedom to direct the course of his own life with dignity.

A city does not become free merely by calling it a "free city." For a city or a people to be free requires that they be given the opportunity, without economic, political, or police pressure, to make their own choice and to live their own lives.2

So that the individual will be guaranteed freedom of choice, Kennedy believed it was necessary for the state to be the servant of the individual. The purpose of the state is merely to provide the favorable circumstances necessary for man to be able to realize a full and satisfying life.

Our program is to open to all the opportunity for steady and productive employment, to remove from all the handicap of arbitrary or irrational exclusion, to offer to all the facilities for education and health and welfare, to make society the servant of the individual and the individual the source of progress, and thus to realize for all the full promise of American life.

... it is not our military might nor our higher standard of living that has most distinguished us.

1Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 6.
2Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, n.
from our adversaries. It is our belief that the state is the servant of the citizen and not his master.  

In Kennedy's political philosophy, education for all was of primary importance to the success of a free society; for without the training of human minds a free society could fall prey to false ideologies based on the irrationality of fear and prejudice. The progress of a nation depends on its educational development. The maximum development of every individual is a necessity for the economic growth essential to fulfill citizen's needs. The human mind is the fundamental resource of a state. Therefore a high quality of education should be available to all who are willing and able to pursue it.

Educational responsibilities of the state would not be met successfully unless all citizens in the state were given the equal opportunity to pursue their educational desires. Kennedy believed the integration of schools to be a step necessary to implementing equal educational facilities for each and all.

If we are to give the leadership the world requires of us, we must be true to the great principles of our Constitution, the very principles which distinguish us from our adversaries in the world.

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3 Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 10.
4 Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 129.
5 Ibid., p. 135.
Developing through higher education the full potential of so many millions of our young citizens whose skills [are] lost . . . by the irrationality of racial discrimination is not only an essential act of justice—it is also an urgent requirement of [our] security.6

The responsibility for the future lies with every individual in the state and the establishment of a better education for all would be the only possible way to meet the future with hope and confidence—this Kennedy firmly stressed.7 "... all people . . . must be allowed to share in the expanding wonders of science, wonders which have captured man's imagination, challenged the power of his mind, and given him the tools for rapid progress."8

To Kennedy, one of the purposes of the state from the beginning of civilization has been to utilize its natural resources to further wealth and progress of the society. How these resources are used will influence the health, security, economy and well-being of the citizens of the state.9 These natural resources must be utilized to benefit all in the

7Ibid., p. 172.
8Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 165.
9Ibid., p. 120.
society, not just a select few. The society must be based on the utilization of natural resources to provide the good life for the individuals in the state.

[It must be a society] . . . where all men can hope for a suitable standard of living and all can live out their lives in dignity and in freedom.

To achieve this goal political freedom must accompany material progress . . . .

This political freedom must be accompanied by social change. For unless necessary social reforms . . . are freely made; unless we broaden the opportunity of all of our people; . . . then our alliance, our revolution, our dream and our freedom will fail. 10

Even though Kennedy believed the greatest challenge of any society is to strengthen the spiritual and cultural values of the state by an ever-broadening base of material advance, he believed each state should be free to follow its own path toward progress within the diversity of its own traditions. 11

In a democratic state this progress would be stimulated by "the freely spoken and freely challenged word that is meant to lay open a vision of the realities lying beyond the sweep of naked eyesight. . . . the first duty of . . . a democratic government is to uphold the integrity of words used in public debate. . . ." 12 The free expression of ideas

10 Ibid., p. 167.
11 Ibid., p. 168.
12 Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 3.
is necessary to man for him to be able to govern himself intelligently. The initiative and leadership of a great society can only be furthered in an open forum of debate. Because he thought this diversity of ideas to be necessary for progress, Kennedy also believed one of the greatest resources of a free society to be the strength and diversity of its private organizations and institutions.  

Unification—Civitatis Filia

Kennedy's pride in our national ancestry gave foundation to his belief in an open pluralistic society of men working together in civic friendship. A free expression of ideas is needed to provide a diversity of ideas. An open forum of debate is the path to truth; and the unifying force of comity in the family, the society, the nation and the world is the path to justice.

Kennedy's philosophy of the origin of the state is the coming together of diverse elements to accomplish common goals. Each element adds to the enrichment of the culture of the society because each group brings different ideas, customs, culture, and history to the whole.

13Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 158.
Brotherhood, tolerance, enlightened relations between members of different ethnic groups—these are after all, simply an extension of the concept upon which all free organized society is based. Some call this concept comity. Some find it in the Golden Rule, others in Rousseau's social contract. Our Declaration of Independence calls it "the consent of the governed." The ancient Romans called it "civitatis filia," [sic] or civic friendship.

It is upon this principle and practice, by whatever name it may be called and regardless of what form it takes, that free societies function, governments operate, and orderly, amicable relations between civilized human beings go on. For although the continued presence of sanctions is a necessary part of any legal structure, we depend, in the last analysis, not upon our police force and our jails for the preservation of law and order, but upon voluntary observance and self-restraint.14

Kennedy found this to be especially evident in the history of the American nation. The immigrants who came to this country founded a nation based on freedom and equality because each of them had started a new life on an equal basis. The many differences of these immigrants were great and varied, but the common goals of freedom and equality overshadowed all differences. "... our forefathers sought to find freedom in diversity and unity in strength."15

This nation was founded by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on the principle that all men are created equal and that the rights of

14 Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, pp. 112-113.
15 Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 111.
every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.\textsuperscript{16}

It has become one country because all of us and all the people who came here had an equal chance to develop their talents.\textsuperscript{17}

Alexis de Tocqueville admired the spirit of equality in the American democracy and Kennedy admired de Tocqueville's insight and critical appreciation of America found in his work \textit{Democracy in America}. Kennedy liked de Tocqueville's analysis of the success of American democracy. De Tocqueville perceived that immigration in America contained the underlying elements if not the development of complete democracy. The two reasons for this in a nation of immigrants are: first, these immigrants had no notion of superiority over one another; and secondly, guarantees of equality among men are poverty and misfortune. Each of these immigrants came to America to start life anew on an equal footing.\textsuperscript{18}

To know America, Kennedy said that we must understand the social revolution which brought immigrants to this country. We must understand why they left their homelands, what they

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 181.
  \item \textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 184.
  \item \textsuperscript{18}Kennedy, \textit{A Nation of Immigrants}, pp. 5-6.
\end{itemize}
did here, how they met the new land, how it met them, and what these things mean to this state today and what they will have to do with the future.\textsuperscript{19} Most of these immigrants did not understand the social revolution nor did they think of themselves as participating in a great revolution, but they were actually forming a new society. They mastered a rugged land, which was extremely difficult; but they also built a new society in their own image.\textsuperscript{20}

Religious persecution, political tyranny, violent revolution in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century, and economic deprivation brought groups of immigrants to America. Kennedy's admiration for the immigrants who were our ancestors developed from his historical study of immigration in this country.

Kennedy found religious persecution to be a central cause of American immigration from the days of the Puritans to the twentieth century. He believed it was false to say that there has always been a spirit of tolerance in America, but the greatest amount of religious tolerance and the highest degree of religious freedom can be found in America when

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 7.

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 15.
comparisons are made with any nation in the modern world. This tolerance, according to Kennedy's study, was due to the variety of religious denominations in this country and the insistence of each group upon practicing religion in its own way. This is why it is no accident that freedom of religion has been a central part of the American creed. All major religions were brought to this country and the American tradition of religious freedom and separation of Church and State were the product of the struggles that moved people in Europe to come to America.

Political tyranny brought many people to America, seeking freedom in the New World. Kennedy referred to the famous words of Emma Lazarus on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," when he spoke of the immigrants who came to our society seeking political freedom. These immigrants seeking political freedom made contributions to the American democratic thought and practice, particularly in the growing trend of American liberalism.

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21 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
22 Ibid., p. 22.
23 Ibid., p. 33.
24 Ibid., p. 17.
The people who came to America because of economic hardships came because of the economic opportunity and social mobility to be found in a free society made up of many groups. The most important contribution of the immigrants, in Kennedy's opinion, was the development and invigoration of the spirit of striving for personal improvement. This belief in social mobility set the tone of the society and gave the people a faith in the society and its way of life. Because of this faith there was an absence of the fatalistic approach to life and individuals looked for a better life giving stimulation to the development of the resources of a progressive nation. This view has permeated both our political and our social system. Every aspect of the American economy has profited from the contributions of immigrants. Labor and brainpower were needed to build this prosperous nation. It is no accident that the period of the greatest immigration coincided with the period of greatest economic expansion. Therefore, Kennedy said, America's unequalled prosperity has been both the result and the cause of this great migratory movement.\(^25\)

These groups of immigrants adjusted to the new society, earned a living, raised a family, learned to live with their

\(^{25}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 22-5.}\)
new neighbors and in this way they built a nation. Each group has brought something new, and in this way contributions have been made to the building of a nation.26

The spirit of freedom and equality that these immigrants--our ancestors--nourished in the founding of this country and in the evolution of the social, cultural, and economic changes which have developed in this society must be preserved by safeguarding all individual freedoms. Kennedy was dedicated to the preservation of the inherent rights of an individual in a free and open society.

We are concerned about those who dismiss the safeguards of the Bill of Rights as legal technicalities which should not be available in times of danger.

Freedom and security are but opposite sides of the same coin--and the free expression of ideas is not more expendable but far more essential in a period of challenge and crisis. I am not so much concerned with the right of everyone to say anything he pleases ... as I am about our need as a self-governing people to hear everything relevant.

We need to be able to go everywhere we can get in, to see things for ourselves. We need to keep our doors open to visitors from around the world. Above all, we must keep our minds open to criticism and to new ideas--to dissent and alternatives--to reconsideration and reflection.

Only in this way can we as self-governing people choose wisely and thoughtfully in our task of self-government. And it is only in this way we can demonstrate once again that freedom is the handmaiden of security--and that the truth will make us free.27

26Ibid., p. 20.
27Kennedy, p.
Kennedy believed so strongly in the free expression of ideas to find truth and justice that he believed a self-governing nation would lose its own soul if it forfeited this basic doctrine.

So let the debate go on--and may the best ideas prevail. . . .

For what we need now in this nation . . . is brain power. The dinosaur was bigger and stronger than anyone else--he may even have been more pious--but he was also dumber. And look what happened to him.

What we need most of all is a constant flow of new ideas--a government and a nation . . . which respect new ideas and respect the people who have them. Our country has surmounted great crises in the past . . . because our ideas were more compelling . . . and more enduring. And perhaps more important, we encouraged all ideas--the unorthodox as well as the conventional, the radical as well as the traditional.28

Kennedy believed in diversity of ideas with the unifying force of comity in his understanding and perception of man as a social being. He applied this perception to man's relationship in the family, in the society, in the nation and in the world.

The family also functions on this same basis of comity. Sanctions are available in the home, too, as I recall--but obviously a child is not to be beaten into observing every customary rule of conduct from morning to night. On the contrary,

28 Ibid., p. 164.
we take it for granted that such observance comes as a matter of course.

What is true in the relations of the family at home can be equally true, I believe, in the family of nations. Without some super-sovereign, some police force, some guaranteed enforcement and punishment, most scoffers say, there can be no such thing as international law and order. But such an attitude fails to recognize that comity, not sanctions, is the basis of law and order among free equals.

It seems to me that it would be well to bear in mind the concept of *civitatis filia* as we consider the tense and troubled situation of the world.

[The] chief concern [should not be] with sanctions and hostilities, with troop authorizations and constitutional powers.29

Kennedy believed that a closed society cannot be successful because it is not open to ideas of progress. "... all the world knows that no successful system builds a wall to keep its people in and freedom out."30

Organization of the State

When men living together in a society organize to preserve or promote their common interests—the foundation of the state—using these goals for their unification in civic friendship, system must be established under a basic law with their consent. This system under a basic law is the organization of the state with the concurrence of its members. To

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Kennedy, a free state would be possible only under a flexible constitution which establishes the means of organizing the government, the type and scope of government, the rights of the individual, and the overall principles which shall govern men's lives. A constitution must be prescribed which will legitimize a government to carry out the necessary functions for the community of people which they either cannot do at all or cannot do so well for themselves in their separate and individual capacities. The prescribed government should be organized to promote man's greatest welfare as a member of society but leave him with the greatest possible moral autonomy as an individual.

... although our civil liberties also serve important private purposes--above all they were considered essential to the republican form of government. [sic] Such a government required that the consent of the governed be given freely, thoughtfully, and intelligently. Without freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, equal protection of the laws and other unalienable rights, men could not govern themselves intelligently.

The authors of the Constitution made clear their own belief that self-government on the one hand, and the truth on the other hand, that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights are in fact two sides of the same coin. ... 

The Constitution ... is a solemn contract made in the name of "We the People"--and it is an agreement that should be renewed by each generation.31

Obviously Kennedy's political theory enveloped the idea of a republican form of government based on a constitution with democratic ideals. This constitution must be flexible in order that the citizens of the community can preserve the fundamental ideals while meeting the needs of changing conditions in the society as each generation renews its faith in the constitution in free elections for governmental representatives. "Members of the Congress, the Constitution makes us not rivals for power but partners for progress. We are all trustees for the American people, custodians for the American heritage. It is my task to report the state of the Union; to improve it is the task of us all."32 "Improving the state of the Union" to Kennedy meant meeting the needs of each generation placed in its era by the tide of events. 

... people everywhere ... look to us—not to our wealth and power, but to the splendor of our ideals. For our nation is commissioned by history to be author and observer of freedom's failure or the cause of its success. Our overriding obligation in the months ahead is to fulfill the world's hopes by fulfilling our own faith. 

... if we cannot fulfill our own ideals here, we cannot expect others to accept them. And when the youngest child alive today has grown to the cares of manhood, our position in the world will be determined first of all by what provisions we make today. 

32Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 3.
for his education, his health, and his opportunities for a good home and a good job and a good life.\textsuperscript{33}

Kennedy's belief in freedom extended to all people throughout the world. He believed that the American nation, successful in freeing itself and its people from the bonds of colonial slavery and progressing to world leadership, has the responsibility to promote the ideals of freedom everywhere. "... if we meet our responsibilities I think freedom will conquer." We must develop sufficient military and economic and social strength—this so the tide does not run against us.\textsuperscript{34}

The state must be organized under a flexible constitution in order that its citizens and government can meet the responsibilities required to keep the spirit of freedom and equality alive.

... there are those who say we want to turn over everything to the government. I don't at all. I want the individuals to meet their responsibilities. I want the states to meet their responsibilities. But I think there is also a national responsibility. This argument has been used against every piece of social legislation ... in effective governmental programs he can do so. I don't believe in big government, but I believe in effective governmental action. And I think that's the only way ... to maintain freedom. It is the only way ... to move ahead.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 4.

\textsuperscript{34}Kraus, The Great Debates, p. 367.
[It is the only way] to meet responsibilities which time and events have placed upon us. If the United States fails, then the whole cause of freedom fails.35

People do not change their patterns nor their methods easily when their community reaches the levels of prosperity that the American nation has reached. Kennedy realized this but he believed men must be open to new ideas to solve new problems while clinging to the ideals laid down in the organization of the state. The idea of a living constitution adaptable to the times is necessary to the progress and survival of the society. But a nation takes a long time to change and it changes very gradually unless there is a shock which will make it change with lightning speed from one position to another.36

Kennedy noted that many shocks are a part of the mid-twentieth century as revolutions—patterned after the American Revolution for freedom and independence—occur around the world. Many simultaneous revolutions are occurring—in Asia, the Mid-East, Latin America, and Africa.

... peoples long dormant under colonial rule are now... in a ferment of a newly won national identity and independence... they are swept up by the

revolution of industrialization; the revolution of explosive population growth; the revolution of consumer demands; the revolution of colored peoples to shake off the badge of inferiority white peoples imposed on them. All this makes for a paramount revolution in the outlook on life itself.\textsuperscript{37}

The shocks reverberating around the world have opened a new vista of ideas which have replaced the empty words of apathetic peoples. Kennedy thought it was necessary to replace empty platitudes with sound, concrete, realistic plans.

\ldots whether the world will exist half-slave or half-free, whether it will move in the direction of freedom \ldots depends in great measure upon \ldots the kind of society that we build, on the kind of strength that we maintain. \ldots the kind of society we have \ldots will be the defense of freedom. \ldots If we meet our obligations, if we're moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world.\textsuperscript{38}

[This is the] end of \ldots an era of illusion--the illusion that platitudes and slogans are a substitute for strength and planning--the illusion that personal good will is a substitute for hard, careful prepared bargaining on concrete issues [or] that good intentions and pious principles are a substitute for strong creative leadership.\textsuperscript{39}

These are the responsibilities Kennedy thought man must face in the world revolution involving social, economic, and political changes. A constitution should be interpreted in

\textsuperscript{37}Kennedy, \textit{Strategy of Peace}, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{38}Kraus, \textit{The Great Debates}, pp. 348-349.

the light of circumstances to meet the changing needs of the people in the community. "Political sovereignty is but a mockery without the means to meet poverty and illiteracy and disease, self-determination is but a slogan if the future holds no hope." Therefore, it is the responsibility of all men to build a community in which freedom of choice can flourish.

Kennedy believed it was necessary to improve the nation's wealth, but he believed wealth to be merely the means of progress and the people in the community to be the ends. Kennedy placed responsibilities on the government established under the constitution, but he also placed responsibilities on all the citizens in a democratic society. It was necessary and important to do all possible to develop the nation's wealth as the means to secure the good life for the people. He believed in capitalism as the best economic system to the achievement of this development of the nation's wealth and thus best for the United States.

... Marx did not know the United States of America. This is no atrophied capitalist society, declining, splitting, failing. We do not live under a dying

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40 Kennedy, *To Turn the Tide*, pp. 216-217.

system, fading from the scene as feudalism faded some centuries ago.

... modern American capitalism, with its unique combinations of public effort and private enterprise, is dynamic, progressive, and still evolving. ... It is still capable of building all the defenses we need and all the schools and homes and industries, too—and at the same time helping to build situations of strength and stability throughout the non-Communist world.42

The responsibility of the public and private sectors of the economy to work together is essential in a progressive society.

... there is no inevitable clash between the public and private sectors, or between investment and consumption, nor ... between government and business. All elements in our national economic growth are interdependent. Each must play its proper role. ...43

Kennedy believed that governmental action is necessary for economic growth, but he believed that business and government were not natural enemies but rather necessary allies.44

Kennedy also believed it was the responsibility of every individual to preserve our natural resources for future generations.

... it is our task in our time and in our generation to hand down undiminished to those who come

43 Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 89.
44 Ibid., p. 88.
after us, as was handed down to us by those who went before, the natural wealth and beauty which is ours...45

Another area of responsibility of the government to be carried forward under the living constitution according to Kennedy's political thought is the founding of a solid tax system. This tax system should be adequate to meet the needs of the government in carrying out the desires of the people. Each citizen must contribute his proper share to the cost of the government established by the constitution. The tax system, however, must encourage efficient use of resources and economic expansion in order to create a growing tax base enabling the people to meet the public needs as well as their needs as private individuals.

A strong and sound Federal tax system is essential to America's future. Without such a system we cannot maintain our defenses and give leadership to the free world. Without such a system we cannot render the public services necessary for enriching the lives of our people and furthering the growth of our economy.46

The highest degree of responsibility in the state, according to Kennedy, should be imposed upon the public officials.

45Ibid., pp. 119-120.
46Ibid., p. 101.
These public officials must maintain high ethical standards, upholding the political morality.

No responsibility of government is more fundamental than the responsibility of maintaining the highest standards of ethical behavior by those who conduct the public business. There can be no dissent from the principle that all officials must act with unwavering integrity, absolute impartiality and complete devotion to the public interest.

For the basis of effective government is public confidence, and that confidence is endangered when ethical standards falter or appear to falter.

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

Of course, public officials are not a group apart. They inevitably reflect the moral tone of the society in which they live. ... Inevitably the moral standards of a society influence the conduct of all who live within it, the governed and those who govern.47

These responsibilities must be included in the goals for founding a state when the people unite to further their common purposes in organizing the state under a constitution. The goals and the responsibilities must be considered together when setting up a constitution for a representative form of government in a structural, functional organization. All citizens in a self-governing republic must meet their individual responsibilities as citizens in order to further the growth and development of the state as necessary under

an evolving constitution. Kennedy believed all this to be necessary in the organization of a state. He also thought that this free nation—America—has endowed us all with many blessings and it is our responsibility to future generations to do all that is necessary to preserve our constitution by preserving its ideas and ideals as well as to stimulate the living constitution.

. . . governments, in every branch, at every level, . . . must be as a city upon a hill, constructed and inhabited by men aware of their grave trust and their great responsibilities.

Of those to whom much is given much is required. And when at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each of us, recording whether in our brief span of service we fulfilled our responsibilities to the state. . . . [we] will be measured by these four questions:

First, were we truly men of courage . . . to stand up to . . . enemies and . . . associates, [and] to resist public pressure as well as private greed? Second, were we truly men of judgment, with perceptive judgment of the future as well as the past . . . ? Third, were we truly men of integrity, men who never ran out on either the principles in which we believed or the people who believed in us . . . ? Finally, were we truly men of dedication with an honor . . . devoted solely to serving the public good and the national interest?

Courage, judgment, integrity, dedication—these are the qualities [I hope] will characterize . . . government's [and individuals'] conduct. . . . 48

48 Ibid., pp. 4-5.
All these ideals, goals, and responsibilities should be evident in attitude as well as deeds when the organization of a state is instituted by individuals collectively agreeing to pursue their common purposes in civic friendship. All individuals, groups and cultures are a part of the state and characterize the nature of the state in the Kennedy political philosophy.
CHAPTER IV

THE BEST STATE

Kennedy defined the state as being constituted of the members of a society living in an interdependent collectivity to pursue common goals and values. He believed that a democracy based on freedom and equality pursuing the goals of individual fulfillment in this world would be the best state. It would provide for the good life for each and all continually changing as the internal and external circumstances evolved in the progress of civilization. These beliefs of Kennedy's sum up the ideals of the liberal democratic state.

The liberal democratic state is the state which can best bring about social progress. Kennedy's view of social progress was this: "It is an effort to create a social framework within which all the people of a nation can share in the benefits of prosperity, and participate in the process of growth."¹ This type of state in Kennedy's opinion was a state in which individual initiative and private enterprise would be encouraged and the role of government would be limited.

¹Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, pp. 171-172.
to supervision, taxation and the provision of the minimum social services needed in the community. However, the government must uphold individual freedom with equal opportunity for all in order to retain the ideals and values of a free society.

Kennedy believed that, in a democratic society, the individual must be able to have a freedom of choice in fulfilling his potentialities and therefore it is necessary for each individual to be provided with political liberty and the means of political expression through government institutions. In this manner all members of the democratic state would be able to provide themselves and their fellow citizens with the social welfare necessary to create an environment for individual fulfillment.

Each state is organized under a government to oversee and manage the various functions needed by the particular society that it serves. Kennedy believed a flexible, living constitution is the best means of prescribing the form of government which will most adequately and continually attend to the needs of the individuals in the state. The particular form of government which Kennedy believed to be the most adequate for a free society is a representative democracy under a constitution which sets down broad prescription for the organization, maintenance, and functions of the government.
This representative democracy would carry out the functions necessary to pursue the purpose of the state, which is to create an environment generally satisfactory to the members of the society so that all members of the society can pursue a good life. In order that all might pursue a good life, all should live in an atmosphere of political democracy in which each individual has the opportunity to have a voice in the government through free elections for governmental representatives. This theory of universal suffrage which Kennedy advocated can only be effective with an enlightened electorate and so the means of education must be available and compulsory to all young people in the society. With universal public education not only will the state be able to achieve an enlightened electorate but political statesmen can be nurtured to apply the principles and beliefs of the society to the changing conditions of the state and its relations to the changing conditions of the world.

Kennedy believed it is necessary for the free and independent state to provide this type of environment because a free people have a responsibility in promoting world freedom. This is the role Kennedy believed belonged to America as world leader in the family of nations.

... it should be clear by now that a nation can be no stronger abroad than she is at home. Only
an America which practices what it preaches about equal rights and social justice will be respected by those whose choice affects our future. Only an America which has fully educated its citizens is fully capable of tackling the complex problems and perceiving the hidden dangers of the world in which we live. And only an America which is growing and prospering economically can sustain the world-wide defenses of freedom, while demonstrating to all concerned the opportunities for our system and society.2

The Purpose of the State

The purpose of a free state to Kennedy is to uphold freedom and equality for the individual and establish and maintain security and independence from external control for the government. Besides these primary purposes, the democratic state should provide an environment in which all its citizens have the equal opportunity to fulfill their individual potential in order to achieve the good life. "The dynamic of democracy is the power and the purpose of the individual, and the policy . . . is to give the individual the opportunity to realize his own highest possibilities."3 This to Kennedy was "the burden and the glory" of a democracy.

Planning for Long Range Goals

That this environment of equal opportunity might be achieved, a government must be established with free elections

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3Ibid., p. 10.
and universal suffrage so that all men in the society may participate in the plans to fulfill the purpose of the state. Careful planning is necessary to provide the means to achieve the most beneficial and long range purposes to provide a good state. Kennedy thought these plans should include plans for use of all resources, educational facilities, and economic development in order to provide an atmosphere of social justice.

First, is the form of social justice. It is impossible to have real progress as long as millions are shut out from opportunity and others forgiven obligations.

The second front is the front of economic welfare: the principle that [everyone] has the right to a decent life for himself and a better life for his children.

Finally, a strong America cannot neglect the aspirations of its citizens—the welfare of the needy, the health care of the elderly, the education of the young. For we are not developing the nation's wealth for its own sake. Wealth is the means, and people are the ends. All our material riches will avail us little if we do not use them to expand the opportunities of our people.

The wealth of the state can be the means to achieve the ends of the state which is the self-fulfillment of the individual. To convey this idea, Kennedy quoted these lines

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of the Greek poet Alcaeus, written twenty-five hundred years ago. "Not houses firmly roofed," he wrote, "or the stones of walls well builded, nay, nor canals and dockyards make the City—but men able to use their opportunities."6

The need for long range plans in many areas is necessary for the state to make progress in achieving its purposes. A state must formulate long-range plans for its own development, plans to establish the targets and priorities of its goals, plans to insure monetary stability, plans to establish the machinery necessary for vital social change, plans to stimulate private activity and initiative, and plans to provide the maximum rational effort.7 A sincere belief in democracy and the freedom of man is the belief that the best road to progress is freedom's road—where each individual has the opportunity to determine his own destiny.8 All citizens should take part in these progressive plans to ensure individual freedom in the state. This was Kennedy's philosophy of democratic progress.

6 Ibid., p. 220.
7 Kennedy, To Turn The Tide, p. 164.
8 Ibid., p. 169.
Our communities should be planned in such a way that every individual can live in a decent home and a suitable living environment. Kennedy thought it a vital necessity to establish the foundation for livable, efficient and attractive communities of the future. It is necessary to reshape the older cities into effective nerve centers for expanding metropolitan areas to cope effectively with the problems of growth in a twentieth century urban society.9

A strong America depends on its cities, America's glory and sometimes America's shame. To substitute sunlight for congestion and progress for decay, we have stepped up existing urban renewal and housing programs, and launched new ones; redoubled the attack on water pollution; speeded aid to airports, hospitals, highways and our declining mass transit systems; and secured new weapons to combat organized crime, racketeering and youth delinquency, assisted by the coordinated and hard-hitting efforts of our investigative services . . . . We shall need further anticrime, mass transit and transportation legislation and new tools to fight air pollution. And with all this effort under way, both equity and common sense require that our nation's urban areas, containing three-fourths of our population, sit as equals at the Cabinet table. I urge a new Department of Urban Affairs and Housing.10

In order to conserve and enhance values in existing urban areas it is important to promote economic efficiency and

9Ibid., p. 93.

livability in areas of future development. The phenomenal growth of populations in the twentieth century will be in and around urban complexes.

The ways that people and goods can be moved in these areas will have a major influence on their structure, on the efficiency of their economy and on the availability of social and cultural opportunities they can offer their citizens. Our national welfare therefore requires the provision of good urban transportation, with the properly balanced use of private vehicles and modern mass transport to help shape as well as serve urban growth. 11

**Progressive Economy**

Of course, this planning for the development of our communities is dependent on a stable but progressive economy. Kennedy considered economic growth and development to be necessary in a state pursuing the good life for its people.

... a free economy need not be an unstable economy, ... a free system need not leave men unemployed, and ... a free society is not only the most productive but the most stable form of organization yet fashioned by man.

But we [need] to maintain both stability and growth in a climate of freedom. 12

Necessary to the progress of the economy in Kennedy's opinion are these methods to make the best use of the nation's


resources. First, a society must not waste able-bodied men and women who want to work. It is important to train and place young people out of school and out of work and to train the young who will be entering the labor market in the future.

Secondly, modernization and development by new investment in industry should be spurred by a tax credit. Third, business and labor should use good sense and a public spirit in keeping their total increases in wages and profits in step with productivity. Fourth, these men in business and labor should be urged to apply the test of the public interest to their transactions for their own and their country's welfare.

Fifth, we should also turn to fully fruitful ends the magnificent productivity of our farms and farmers. Sixth, we should promote long range conservation and recreation programs so our heirs will be bequethed the national estate we have inherited. And finally, we also need to see that all Americans have assurance of equal rights as citizens including equal employment opportunity in which individuals of all races have job opportunities to match individual capabilities.\(^\text{13}\)

This all means that we should strengthen our nation by making the best and most economical use of the nation's resources and facilities.

\(^\text{13}\)Ibid., pp. 4-8.
The capitalistic economic system with a minimum of governmental regulation was the best type of economic system, in Kennedy's opinion. "... we agree, on the necessity of preserving the nation's confidence in free, private, collective bargaining and price decisions, holding the role of government to the minimum level needed to protect the public interest."\textsuperscript{14} This free enterprise economy can only flourish when cooperation exists between all groups in the state. Rational men realize that the government cannot survive without business and that the nation cannot survive without government and business and all other groups in the state exerting their best efforts to provide an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation. The basic premise of a free enterprise system is that it must be competitive to realize its full potential and the government should establish and uphold effective anti-trust laws in the interest of business as well as of the general public. It is also necessary to realize that in a free enterprise system there can be no prosperity without profit. To provide a growing economy there must be investment which is inspired and financed by profit.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 197.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 192-200.
If private investment is encouraged, Kennedy believed it would be responsive to the needs, the laws and the interests of the nation and would cooperate with public activity to provide the vitality needed for success. An atmosphere should be developed and maintained that will encourage the flow of capital in response to opportunity. Kennedy proposed a new tax theory to promote economic investment needed for a progressive state. The tax system, he proposed, would be one which reduces tax liabilities, but which broadens the tax base by ending the unfair and unnecessary preferences and by increasing receipts without any change in tax liabilities by shifting the tax payments of large corporations to a more current time schedule. With this combined program and the increased flow of money into the national income, in time, the federal revenues would increase and at the same time the input of capital into the national economy by the tax reductions would provide for a balanced full-employment economy. The net reduction would increase the purchasing power of American families and business enterprises in every tax bracket with the greatest increase going to low income consumers. This new tax theory would encourage initiative

16 Ibid., pp. 162-163.
and risk-taking on which a free enterprise system depends. More investment, production and capacity use would help provide the new jobs needed every year and reinforce the American principle of additional reward for additional effort. This creation of jobs and economic growth could be achieved by massive federal spending; but Kennedy believed private consumers, employers, and investors should be given the full opportunity to achieve this goal first.17

Kennedy's concern for economic prosperity was greater than his other concerns. Without economic prosperity he believed it would not be possible to achieve the other societal goals.

I say that economic security is the No. 1 issue today. It is not so recognized by everyone. There are those who oppose the tax cut, the youth employment bill, who oppose more money for depressed areas and job retraining and other public needs.

There are those who support our effort for jobs but say civil rights is the No. 1 issue. This nation needs the passage of civil rights legislation if we are to fulfill our constitutional obligations. But no one gains from a fair employment practice bill if there is no employment to be had. No one gains by being admitted to a lunch counter if he has no money to spend. No one gains from attending a better school if he doesn't have a job after graduation. No one thinks much of the right to own a good home,

or to sleep in a good hotel, or go to the theater, if he has no work and no money. Civil rights legislation is important. But to make that legislation effective, we need jobs in the United States.

And some say that the number one issue is education, and this nation must improve its education. . . . But the best schools, the best teachers and the best books—all these are of no avail if there are no jobs.  

Kennedy believed there must be a cooperative effort between the Federal Government, private industry, and local and state governments to strengthen and improve the economic climate of the communities. This can be achieved through a minimum wage. "Our nation can ill afford to tolerate the growth of an underprivileged and underpaid class. Substandard wages lead necessarily to substandard living conditions, hardship and distress." Also this economic improvement can be achieved through an equal access to employment within the Government and those who do business with the Government. Kennedy hoped equal employment would be established in all industry following the leadership in equal employment of the Federal Government. Also important to economic well-being

19 Kennedy, President Kennedy's Program, p. 21.  
21 Ibid., p. 25.
is the need to forge the agricultural abundance into a significant instrument of foreign aid and a weapon against domestic hardship and hunger and also give the farmer a fair return for his labor. 22 A matter of national concern in the economic climate of all communities is the health and medical needs of the citizens. Part of the responsibility rests with the Federal Government because its powers and resources make its role essential for improving health care by social insurance, facilities, personnel, and research. 23

Kennedy's theory for this economic development hinged on his idea that the American nation could do all these things because of its free economic system. "America has the human and material resources to meet the demands of national security and the obligations of world leadership while at the same time advancing well-being at home. . . . [We] must aim at [showing] the world the vigor and vitality of a free economy." 24

Educational Opportunities

Equally important to the progress of a state in pursuing its goal of achieving the good life are the educational

22 Kennedy, To Turn The Tide, p. 117.
23 Kennedy, President Kennedy's Program, p. 15.
24 Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 81.
opportunities available to its citizens. The educational opportunities depend on a prosperous economy but the prosperous economy is dependent on the products of the educational systems. "... leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. The advancement of learning depends on community leadership for financial and political support, and the products of learning, in turn, are essential to the leadership hopes for continued progress and prosperity."25 Some of the greatest assets in a state are the educated men and women. This belief of Kennedy's is the basis for his belief that the national government should play the role of stimulating an educational system of excellence which can serve the national purpose of a free society.26 This is necessary because of the importance of what Kennedy calls "pure science."

We realize now that progress in technology depends on progress in theory; that the most abstract investigation can lead to concrete results; and that the vitality of a scientific community springs from its passion to answer science's most fundamental questions. . . .

The last hundred years have seen a great change—the change in the relationship between science and public policy. . . . The relationship between science and public policy is bound to be complex. . . .

26Ibid., p. 261.
In the last hundred years, science has thus emerged from a peripheral concern of government to an active partner. The instrumentalities devised in recent times have given this partnership continuity and force. The question in all our minds today is how science can best continue its service to the nation, to the people, to the world, in the years to come.

I would suggest that science is already moving to enlarge its influence in three general ways: in the interdisciplinary area, in the international area and in the intercultural area. For science is the most powerful means we have for the unification of knowledge, and a main obligation of its future must be to deal with problems which cut across boundaries, whether boundaries between the sciences, boundaries between nations, or boundaries between man's scientific and his humane concerns. . . .27

It is vital to a nation's security and a nation's domestic well-being to increase the quality and availability of education. A nation's progress will be determined in great measure by the excellence set in its schools and colleges. Failure to improve educational performance is poor social policy and poor economics.28 Kennedy thought it imperative, therefore, for the Federal Government to stimulate and aid education without Federal control. "The proper Federal role is to identify national educational goals and to help local, state and private authorities to build the necessary roads.

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27 Ibid., pp. 264-265.

28 Ibid., pp. 246-247.
to reach these goals. Federal aid will enable schools, colleges and universities to be more stable financially and therefore more independent.\textsuperscript{29}

Kennedy believed it is not only necessary to improve the quality of our educational system, but he believed it imperative that we increase the opportunities and incentives for all citizens to develop their talents to the utmost by completing their educations and continuing their self-development throughout life. If all the young people are educated, not only will the economy prosper, but leadership talents will be developed.

\ldots this concentrated effort of mind and scholarship to educate the young citizens \ldots has not been made merely to give this school's graduates an economic advantage in the life struggle. \ldots There is a higher purpose, and that is the hope that you will turn to the service of the state the scholarship, the education, the qualities which society has helped develop in you. \ldots

In so doing, you will follow a great and laudable tradition which combined American scholarship and American leadership in political affairs. It is an extraordinary fact of history, I think, unmatched since the days of early Greece, that this country should have produced during its founding days, in a population of a handful of men, such an extraordinary range of scholars and creative thinkers. \ldots This is a tradition which we must maintain with increasing strength and increasing vigor.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., pp. 247-248.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 259.
This goal of educational opportunities available to all people would be viewed as a life-long process. "For this country reserves its highest honors for only one kind of aristocracy—that which the founding fathers called 'an aristocracy of achievement arising out of a democracy of opportunity.'"31

The purpose of the state to Kennedy is to provide the good life for each and all of its citizens. This is the good life in a prosperous progressive state in which the environment provides equal opportunities for each individual to attain his highest potentialities. Therefore, the state must provide for the welfare of its citizens in future community plans. It is necessary to provide for the services needed by explosive Twentieth Century populations in urban areas so that natural resources can be preserved for pleasant surroundings and recreational facilities. The state should provide for social needs such as adequate housing, health facilities, and transportation facilities. Another area in which all groups in the state must cooperate is the economic arena. The nation's economy must prosper in order for the society to provide the environment for a life of comfort, cultural development, and educational advancement of its citizens. Finally, Kennedy believed the nation's educational system should be

31Ibid., p. 250.
improved both in quality and quantity in order to stimulate self-fulfillment of its citizens. The purpose of the state is to provide the environment

... where every man has enough to eat and a chance to work, where every child can learn and every family can find decent shelter ... where every man ... can be liberated from the bonds of social injustices, free to pursue his own talents as far as they will take him, allowed to participate in the fruits of progress.32

Form of Government

Representative democracy is the best form of government for a free society, according to Kennedy's political theory. "... man's unsatisfied aspiration for economic progress and social justice can best be achieved by free men working within a framework of democratic institutions."33 To provide freedom for the individual in a free society, man must have a voice in governmental affairs through free elections for representatives. The governmental form of representative democracy in which Kennedy had great faith was the American Government. However, he also believed that every society must determine its own best form of government to provide social and economic progress for the welfare of its people. "... nations themselves ...--they and they alone can mobilize their

32Ibid., p. 159.

33Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 163.
resources, enlist the energies of their people, and modify their social patterns so that all, and not just a privileged few, share in the fruits of growth."

Kennedy believed in the American system of combining federalism with the functional division of powers between the executive, the legislative, and judicial branches—each functioning in its own sphere while enhanced by the system of checks and balances in order to preserve integrity of purpose but also to promote interdependence and cooperation between the three branches and between the different levels of government—all responsible to the consent of the governed.

Because our system is designed to encourage both differences and dissent, because its checks and balances are designed to preserve the rights of the individual and the locality against pre-eminent central authority, you and I both recognize how dependent we are, one upon the other, for the successful operation of our unique and happy form of government. Our system and our freedom permit the legislature to be pulled against the executive, the state against the federal government, the city against the countryside, party against party, interest against interest, all in competition or in contention with one another. Our task—your task in the State House and my task in the White House—is to weave from all these tangled threads a fabric of law and progress. Others may confine themselves to debate, discussion and the ultimate luxury, free advice. Our responsibility is one of decision for to govern is to choose."

34 Ibid., p. 164.

Along with the conflicts which develop from the system of checks and balances, Kennedy believed, the system nurtures the seeds of cooperation. "I believe there must be a cooperative effort in which the Federal Government joins with private industry and local and state governments in a maximum effort to strengthen and improve the economic climate of the communities affected."\(^{36}\) This system of government with a competitive yet cooperative spirit is what Kennedy believed made up a dynamic progressive society. Kennedy recognized the value of a government which provided encouragement of initiative, responsibility, and energy in serving the public interest. He recognized the value of dissent and daring, and greeted healthy controversy as the hallmark of healthy change.\(^{37}\)

The Legislature

The great debate goes on in the legislative body of a representative democracy. This is as it should be, according to Kennedy, because this is the deliberative institution, because legislation under the democratic way of life and the federal system of government requires debate and discussion.

\(^{36}\)Public Papers of the President, 1961, p. 7.

\(^{37}\)Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 32.
in order to find compromises between desires of each individual and group and those around them.

The federal system of government is provided to ensure representation in government to minority and regional groups and to provide a division of power to different levels of government. Power is decentralized in a federal system of democracy. The federal deliberative body made up of regional representatives acts as the correlator for pluralism in government. For this reason Kennedy believed the legislator has to compromise interests and ideas in an open debate to find the best solutions to concrete problems. However, the representative has a responsibility to his constituents to make decisions and judgments he consciously perceives to be for the good of all the people. The national legislator in a federal system of government is responsible to his regional constituents but he is also responsible to all the people in the nation because he must legislate for a whole nation.

Each set of extremists in a representative democracy is balanced by the compromise made in the legislative body. The fine art of conciliating should not be criticized as due to a lack of forthright principles in the legislator. The legislator is responsible for keeping the nation united and enabling the government to function. It was Kennedy's belief
that the legislators, using their intellects, should realize that the only way a bill can be passed is to acquire national support for it and this can be achieved through the give and take of compromise.\textsuperscript{38}

In representative federalism, the legislator has a responsibility to his constituents, to his party, to his colleagues and to the nation as a whole, but he also has a responsibility to himself and his conscience. Sometimes this responsibility takes political courage. Kennedy believed that the legislator must be a man of courage—a man of conscience.

He cannot ignore the pressure groups, his constituents, his party, the comradeship of his colleagues, the needs of his family, his own pride in office, the necessity for compromise and the importance of remaining in office. He must judge for himself which path to choose, which step will most help or hinder the ideals to which he is committed. He realizes that once he begins to weigh each issue in terms of his chances for re-election, once he begins to compromise away his principles on one issue after another for fear that to do otherwise would halt his career and prevent future fights for principle, then he has lost the very freedom of conscience which justifies his continuance in office.\textsuperscript{39}

This decision-making is a problem of great difficulty for any

\textsuperscript{38}Kennedy, Profiles in Courage, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., pp. 10-11.
elected official in the legislative body. He is responsible to his constituents but he is also responsible to his nation.

The primary responsibility of a Senator, most people assume, is to represent the views of his state. Ours is a Federal system—a Union of relatively sovereign states whose needs differ greatly—and my Constitutional obligations as Senator would thus appear to require me to represent the interests of my state. . . .

... in Washington we are "United States Senators" and members of the Senate of the United States as well as Senators from Massachusetts and Texas. . . . we come to Washington, to paraphrase Edmond Burke, not as hostile ambassadors or special pleaders for our state or section, in opposition to advocates and agents of other areas, but as members of the deliberative assembly of one nation with one interest. Of course, we should not ignore the needs of our area—nor could we easily as products of that area—but none could be found to look out for the national interest if local interests wholly dominated the role of each of us.40

Although Kennedy believed the essence of democracy to be faith in the wisdom of the people and their views, he rejected the view that a Senator should merely record popular opinion, to vote as his constituents would vote were they in his place. He rejected this view because he had faith in the people, not because he lacked faith in their wisdom. A democratic legislator would have faith in the people's sense of justice, their ability to honor courage, and their respect for conscientious judgment. The legislator would also have faith that people

40Ibid., pp. 11-12.
will think and act for the good of the nation. This is faith in the long run judgment of people. This is the basic faith of democracy—not a faith in a majority will. When voters elect a representative Kennedy believed that they elect him to exercise his own best judgment to determine what is best for his constituents as to their best regional interests and their nation's interest. The constituents can still be the final judges of the wisdom of the legislator's course but Kennedy had faith in the people that they would at least respect the representative's principles which motivated him to take an independent stand.

Kennedy's belief in principles is not contradictory to his realization of the need for compromise in a democratic representative body.

We shall need compromise in the days ahead, to be sure. But these . . . should be compromises of issues, not of principles. . . . We can resolve the clash of interests without conceding our ideals. And even the necessity for the right kind of compromise does not eliminate the need for those idealists and reformers who keep our compromises moving ahead. . . . Compromise need not mean cowardice. Indeed, it is frequently the compromisers and conciliators who are faced with the severest test of political courage as they oppose the extremists' views of their constituents.42

41 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
42 Ibid., p. 17.
The Executive Branch

Kennedy believed these same ideas of political courage applied to the executive branch of the government under the leadership of the President. The duty of the Chief Executive is to execute the laws of the land. "... I have made it clear that since assuming the Presidency that I would use all available means to protect human rights and uphold the law of the land." Kennedy also believed that the President should take the reins of leadership throughout the land --influencing and inspiring governmental officials as well as his constituents, all the people in the nation. "I have tried to make the whole tone and thrust of this office and this administration one that will demand a higher standard of excellence from every individual." Even though Kennedy's philosophy incorporated the belief in strong Presidential leadership, he considered it important to abide by the Constitutional separation of powers with cooperation between all branches.

Our Constitution wisely assigns both joint and separate roles to each branch of the government; and a President and a Congress who hold each other in mutual respect

44 Kennedy, *To Turn the Tide*, p. 228.
will neither permit nor attempt any trespass. . . . I shall withhold from neither the Congress nor the people any fact or report, past, present, or future, which is necessary for an informed judgment of our conduct and hazards. I shall neither shift the burden of executive decisions to the Congress, nor avoid responsibility for the outcome of those decisions.\(^5\)

With Presidential power goes Presidential decision-making.

The greatest responsibility of any President in Kennedy's view is the responsibility of decision-making. A President must use political courage in his choices, deciding between alternatives to the best of his ability with confidence in his decisions as long as he is considering the public interest as a whole.

For an American President, choice is charged with a peculiar and daunting responsibility for the safety and welfare of the nation. A President must choose among men, among measures, among methods. His choice helps determine the issues of his Presidency, their priority in the national life, and the mode and success of their execution. The heart of the Presidency is therefore informed, prudent and resolute choice—and the secret of the presidential enterprise is to be found in examining the way presidential choices are made.\(^6\)

Presidential choices are made after information is filtered to the President from an heirarchical chain of command from many sources into a concentric circle in which the

\(^{45}\)Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 15.

President is the nucleus. The wise Presidential decisions are made only after he has digested the available information from his advisors; but when the President makes a decision, Kennedy believed, he must have confidence in that decision and abide by it with strength, assuming all responsibility for the decision even if many advisers in the presidential enterprise had contributed to the formation of it.

However influential the office of the President is on the outcome of national affairs, Kennedy believed all men are responsible for that outcome in a free democratic state.

I speak today in an hour of national peril and national opportunity. Before my term has ended, we shall have to test anew whether a nation organized and governed such as ours can endure. The outcome is by no means certain. The answers are by no means clear. All of us together—this Administration, this Congress, this nation—must forge those answers.

[There is] no greater asset than the willingness of a free and determined people, through its elected officials, to face all problems frankly and meet all dangers free from panic or fear.47

The Judiciary

It is the duty of the third branch of the government, the Judiciary, to interpret the constitution and the laws of the land for all members of the state in order that they may

47Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, pp. 15-16.
live in peace and harmony under a government of law and justice. The decision of the courts in upholding the constitution in a state must be followed by all the citizens and governmental officials. Kennedy believed the judiciary preserves the freedom and equality of individuals living under a rule of law. The judge interprets the rule of law in particular circumstances to ensure individual freedom in the society. It is the responsibility of all citizens and their elected officials in a representative democracy to respect these court decisions.

The Federal Government will continue to encourage and support action by state and local communities, and by private entrepreneurs, to assure all members of the public equal access to all public accommodations. A country with a color-blind Constitution, and with no caste or classes among its citizens, cannot afford to do less.

Through meditation and persuasion, and, where that effort has failed, through lawsuits and court actions, we have attempted to meet our responsibilities ... where federal court orders have been circumvented, ignored or violated. We have committed all of the power of the federal government to insure respect and obedience of court decisions and the law of the land.48

In a government of laws, not of men, the judiciary must be the arbiter in disputes between individuals and the judiciary must protect individuals and minority groups in a society based on freedom and equality. For this reason even, if citizens

disagree with some particular decision, it must be upheld or the system of law will be destroyed.

This is as it should be, for our nation is founded on the principle that observance of the law is the eternal safeguard of liberty and defiance of the law is the surest road to tyranny. The law which we obey includes the final ruling of the courts, as well as the enactments of our legislative bodies. Even among law-abiding men few laws are universally loved but they are uniformly respected and not resisted.

Americans are free to disagree with the law, but not to disobey it. For in a government of laws and not of men, no man, however prominent and powerful, and no mob, however unruly or boisterous, is entitled to defy a court of law. If this country should reach the point where any man or group of men by force or threat of force could long defy the commands of our court and our Constitution, then no law would stand free from doubt, no judge would be sure of his writ, and no citizen would be safe from his neighbors.49

Political Morality

Kennedy defines political morality as the responsibility of the governmental officials and the individual citizens in the state to uphold freedom for each and everyone in the society and in all societies throughout the world. In a representative democracy the burdens of freedom fall on every man. Both public officials and private individuals share the burdens of freedom. Together they set the tone of the political morality in the society. The political morality of the

49Ibid., pp. 167-168.
society in turn influences the tone of world political morality. Kennedy believed that the basis of the state's political morality--both public and private--is "to practice democracy at home, . . . with all races, to respect each other and to protect the constitutional rights of all citizens."

The public political morality is set by the ethical standards of the governmental officials. These officials have the highest responsibility to uphold the political morality because they are the chosen leaders in a representative democracy. They are sworn to protect individual rights. The right to vote, the right to counsel, and the right to education, are the rights to which all individuals in a society must have equal access along with the basic rights to freedom of religion, speech and press, and assembly. The Bill of Rights in the American Constitution must be upheld to provide the atmosphere and environment necessary for each individual to live his life in human dignity.

The private political morality of the state is shaped by the political ethics of all its citizens, individually and collectively. Free men have the responsibility to ensure the dignity of all men in their human relationships. Every individual has a responsibility to treat all other individuals as

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50Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 52.
he would wish to be treated. Each man must protect the spirit of freedom by practicing the Golden Rule and promoting freedom for all men everywhere. This is a moral issue which is as old as the scriptures and as clear as the American Constitution. Kennedy believed that individual freedom with individual responsibility to provide for equality of all in a brotherhood of man can only be protected, promoted, and developed in a free society under a government of law. If individuals in a free society are politically moral, then the righteousness of the society will come through in relationships with other nations. "[We are] committed to the path of progressive democracy, to social justice and to economic reform, attained through the free processes of debate and consent. . . . Nations which agree in applying at home the principles of freedom and justice are better able to work with each other abroad."52

The responsibility of free peoples, as Kennedy quoted Robert Taft, is "to restore to the minds of men a devotion to equal justice under law."53 In a representative democracy,

51Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 182.
52Ibid., p. 137.
53Kennedy, Profiles in Courage, p. 192.
Kennedy believed all the members of the state have a responsibility to the state because they are a self-governing people. Kennedy believed that men can recognize the need to fit power to responsibilities. "... of those to whom much is given, much is required." Government officials who represent the members of the state have the highest responsibility to uphold the morality, but these officials merely reflect the moral tone of the society as a whole.

I believe that leaders are responsible for their failures only in the governing sector and cannot be held responsible for the failure of a nation as a whole.

As long as a democracy has a representative system, as long as the leaders can be turned out of office at any time on any issue, then those who elect the governmental officials must bear a share of the responsibility.

**Public Morality**

Although it is the responsibility of each member of a democracy to provide the moral tone of the state with the application of the Golden Rule, Kennedy considered the

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54 Kennedy, *To Turn the Tide*, p. 1.


The greatest responsibility to belong to the public officials who must provide leadership in political morality.

Ultimately, high ethical standards can be maintained only if the leaders of government provide a personal example of dedication to the public service, and exercise their leadership to develop in all government employees an increasing sensitivity to the ethical and moral conditions imposed by public service. . . .

... the gravest responsibility of all rests upon the office of the President.57

The President should exercise strong leadership but he cannot succeed without the help of the people of the state, and so he has an obligation to inspire the people to be dedicated citizens. This belief of Kennedy's can be seen in the manner in which he inspired people to become active participants in their government.

... I ask for your help, and your advice. I ask for your suggestions, when you think we could do better.

All of us, I know, love our country, and we shall all do our best to serve it.

In meeting my responsibilities . . . as President, I need your good will, and your support. . . .58

The leadership should be offered by the President, but he must also demand sacrifices of the public officials and the private citizens—and they must be willing to respond to

57Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 112.
58Ibid., p. 198.
those demands.\textsuperscript{59} The only way men can provide for the continual existence of freedom is by establishment of the political morality necessary to keep the spirit of liberty alive. Evidence of this belief can be seen in Kennedy's Inaugural Address.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. . . .

And so my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.\textsuperscript{60}

The political morality can and must be upheld by public officials who have political courage. The public servant should follow a path of courage and conscience--a belief in the rightness of his own course--that he has acted to the best of his judgment according to his conscience. He should have a

\textsuperscript{59}Kennedy, \textit{Strategy of Peace}, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{60}Kennedy, \textit{President Kennedy's Program}, p. 1.
deep-seated belief in himself, his integrity, and the rightness of his cause. By political courage, Kennedy meant standing for principles even though one has to break with his party and his constituents, because his stand runs against popular opinion. Political courage involves the politician's belief in himself.

It was not because they "loved the public better than themselves." On the contrary it was precisely because they did love themselves--because each one's need to maintain his own respect for himself was more important to him than his popularity with others--because his desire to win or maintain a reputation for integrity and courage was stronger than his desire to maintain his office--because his conscience, his personal standard of ethics, his integrity or morality, call it what you will--was stronger than the pressures of public disapproval--because his faith that his course was the best one, and would ultimately be vindicated, outweighed his fear of public reprisal.

It is when the politician loves neither the public good nor himself, or when his love for himself is limited and is satisfied by the trappings of office, that the public interest is badly served. And it is when his regard for himself is so high that his own self-respect demands he follow the path of courage and conscience that all benefit.

Individual Political Morality

Political morality is not confined to public officials--all men in the democratic state are responsible for the tone

61Kennedy, Profiles in Courage, pp. 210-212.
of political morality. This idea corresponds with Kennedy's view of freedom with responsibility in a democratic state.

Not only do the problems of courage and conscience concern every officeholder in our land, however humble or mighty, and to whomever he may be responsible—voters, a legislature, a political machine or party organization. They concern as well every voter in our land—and they concern those who do not vote, those who take no interest in Government, those who have only disdain for the politician and his profession. They concern everyone who has ever complained about corruption in high places, and everyone who has ever insisted that his representative abide by his wishes. For, in a democracy, every citizen, regardless of his interest in politics, "holds office"; every one of us is in a position of responsibility; and, in the final analysis, the kind of government we get depends upon how we fulfill those responsibilities. We, the people, are the boss, and we will get the kind of political leadership, be it good or bad, that we demand and deserve.\(^6\)

This problem of courage and conscience affects all men in everyday life. Man has to choose between courage and compliance whenever he stands against the flow of popular opinion. "A man does what he must—in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures—and that is the basis of all human morality."\(^7\)

The problems of the society concern all sectors of society. The solid ground of mutual confidence is the necessary

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 215. \\
\(^7\)Ibid., p. 216.
partnership of government with all sectors of . . . soci-
ety. . . ."65 It is important that men work together in
mutual confidence in order to progress. A progressive state
is based on the freedom of each individual to realize his
highest potential because of mutual respect among all members
of the society in an atmosphere of freedom and equality.

The heart of the question is whether all Americans
are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities,
whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as
we want to be treated. If an American, because his skin
is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the
public, if he cannot send his children to the best pub-
lic school available, if he cannot vote for the public
officials who represent him, if, in short, he cannot
enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then
who among us would be content to have the color of his
skin changed and stand in his place. Who among us would
then be content with the counsels of patience and delay.66

All people must be freed from the bonds of injustice, freed
from social and economic oppression. A state is not fully
free until all its citizens are free.67 It is the duty of
each to remind every other citizen how urgent it is that all
bars to equal opportunity and treatment should be removed.

We preach freedom around the world, and we mean it,
and we cherish our freedom here at home; but are we to
say to the world and, much more importantly, to each
other that this is a land of the free except for Negroes;

65Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, pp. 203-204.
66Ibid., p. 182.
67Ibid., p. 183.
that we have no second-class citizens except for Negroes; that we have no class or caste system, no ghettos, no master race except with respect to Negroes? . . .

Those who do nothing are inviting shame as well as violence. Those who act boldly are recognizing right as well as reality.68

A democratic state is based on the dignity and worth of the individual and all members should uphold those individual rights which will ensure dignity to each and all. Kennedy believed every man has the right to be treated with dignity because every man is equal in the eyes of his Creator. Kennedy thought the dignity of the individual could be upheld in a nation which upholds individual basic rights. By protecting the basic rights of its citizens, a free nation can be strengthened.69 Because he believed the best state to be a representative democracy, Kennedy considered equal voting rights to be the most important political rights to individual citizens.

The right to vote in a free American election is the most powerful and precious right in the world, and it must not be denied on the ground of race or color. It is a potent key to achieving other rights of citizens. For American history, both recent and past, clearly reveals that the power of the ballot has enabled those who achieve it to win other achievements as well, to

68Ibid.,

gain a full voice in the affairs of their state and nation, and to see their interests represented in the governmental bodies which affect their future. In a free society, those with the power to govern are necessarily responsive to those with the right to vote.70

Racial discrimination cannot be tolerated in a free nation if men want to secure their freedom. Racial discrimination lowers the political morality of all citizens because it is contrary to the principal belief of a free society based on belief in the worth and dignity of the individual.

No act is more contrary to the spirit of our democracy and Constitution, or more rightfully resented by a Negro citizen who seeks only equal treatment than the barring of that citizen from restaurants, hotels, theaters, recreational areas, and other public accommodations and facilities.71

Racial discrimination in employment . . . is inconsistent with the democratic principle that no man should be denied employment commensurate with his abilities because of his race or creed or ancestry.72

Of course, equal educational opportunities should be available to all citizens. "... those of us who recognize the responsibilities of an educated citizen, should now concern ourselves with whether we are providing an adequate education

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70 Ibid., p. 173.
71 Ibid., p. 178.
72 Ibid., p. 177.
for all Americans, whether all Americans will have an equal chance to develop their intellectual qualities. . . . "73

Kennedy believed that the acts of every branch of government and every citizen should portray the faith that righteousness does exalt a nation. The acts of every citizen do establish the moral tone of that society.

You recognize that a free society places burdens upon its citizens. To govern is to choose and the ability to make those choices wisely and responsibly and prudently implies the best of all of us.

No country can possibly move ahead, no free society can possibly be sustained, unless it has an educated citizenry whose quality of mind and heart permit it to take part in the complicated and sophisticated decisions that are demanded not only of the President and the Congress, but of all the citizens who service the ultimate power.74

Public morality and individual morality combine to set the tone of the political morality in a society. Kennedy thought that if the political ethics portray the ideals of freedom and equality within the state, that state would influence the political morality of the world. And Kennedy believed it was the responsibility of a free people to promote freedom universally.

73 Ibid., p. 259.
74 Ibid., p. 258.
Kennedy's concept of freedom and responsibility did not terminate at the boundaries of a state. Free individuals have the responsibility to uphold the freedom of other individuals not only in the community and the state but throughout the world. It is the responsibility of the people of a free state to promote freedom and independence for all peoples so they may secure the best state for their particular circumstances. This can only be accomplished by cooperating with other nations throughout the world to promote freedom and independence in some form of world order in which all can prosper in peace and security.

In urging the adoption of the U. S. Constitution, Alexander Hamilton told his fellow New Yorkers to "think continentally." Today Americans must learn to think intercontinentally.

Acting on our own by ourselves, we cannot establish justice throughout the world. We cannot ensure domestic tranquility, or provide for its common defense, or promote its general welfare, or secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity. But joined with other free nations, we can do all this and more. We can assist the developing nations to throw off the yoke of poverty. . . . ultimately we can help achieve a world of law and free choice, banishing the world of war and coercion.

For the Atlantic Partnership of which I speak would not look inward only, preoccupied with its own welfare and advancement. It must look outward to cooperate with all nations in meeting their common concern. It would serve as a nucleus for the eventual union of all free
men, those who are now free and those who are avowing that someday they will be free.

... Abraham Lincoln spoke at this hall on his way to the nation's capital. And he paid a brief and eloquent tribute to the men who wrote, and fought for, and died for, the Declaration of Independence. Its essence, he said, was its promise not only of liberty "to the people of this country, but hope to the world... that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should have an equal chance."

... [we must] declare now our vow to do our part to lift the weights from the shoulders of all, to join other men in preserving both peace and freedom, and to regard any threat to the peace or freedom of one as a threat to the peace and freedom of all.75

Kennedy thought the promotion of freedom throughout the world was a special responsibility of the United States because he considered this nation to be the best state and the first product of a successful revolution for freedom.

For that Declaration [of Independence] unleashed not merely a revolution against the British, but a revolution in human affairs. Its authors were highly conscious of its world-wide implications, and George Washington declared that liberty and self-government were, in his words, "finally staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."76

Because this nation unleashed a revolution in human affairs, it must provide the leadership, the example, and the promotion of world freedom through an organization of nations

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75 Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 112.
76 Ibid., p. 109.
in some form of world alliance. The United Nations, the world alliance today, should be strengthened to provide the unity of nations needed for world freedom.

Policing . . . is not enough without provision for pacific settlement. We should increase the resort to special missions of fact-finding and conciliation, make greater use of the International Court of Justice and accelerate the work of the International Law Commission.

The United Nations cannot survive as a static organization. Its obligations are increasing as well as its size. Its charter must be changed as well as its customs. The authors of the charter did not intend that it should be frozen in perpetuity.\footnote{Ibid., p. 75.}

If the nations of the world try to achieve better understanding in their relationships in a world organization, then there is hope for a better world--a world in which all men and all nations can have the opportunity to choose freely the best life for themselves and the best state for themselves. This is the goal for which Kennedy believed nations should strive in the world today, a world in which independence and interdependence must co-exist.

[Nations should] 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.

Let [us] unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah to "undo the heavy burdens . . . [and] let the oppressed go free."
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.\(^7\)

**The Freedom Revolution**

In the revolution for freedom and independence throughout the world all free states have the moral responsibility to help other states achieve their goal for freedom. This is what Kennedy called "the freedom doctrine."

Our strength as well as our convictions have imposed upon this nation the role of leader in freedom's cause.

No role in history could be more difficult or more important. We stand for freedom. That is our conviction for ourselves; that is our only commitment to others. . . . We are not against any man, or any nation, or any system, except as it is hostile to freedom. . . . I am here to promote the freedom doctrine.

The great battleground for the defense and expansion of freedom . . . is . . . the lands of the rising peoples. Their revolution is the greatest in human history. They seek an end to injustice, tyranny and exploitation. More than an end, they seek a beginning.

And theirs is a revolution which we would support regardless of the Cold War, and regardless of which political or economic route they choose to freedom.

\(^{78}\) Kennedy, *To Turn the Tide*, p. 9.
We stand as we have always stood from our earliest beginnings, for the independence and equality of nations. This nation was born of revolution and raised in freedom. And we do not intend to leave an open road for despotism.79

Kennedy believed this nation was the first in modern times to revolt for independence and freedom. "'From a small spark kindled in America, a flame has arisen not to be extinguished,' wrote Tom Paine during the American Revolution. And that very flame is today lighting [the world]."80 This flame of liberty does not belong exclusively to America—liberty is for all.

In my own home city of Boston, Faneuil Hall, once the meeting place of the authors of the American Revolution, has long been known as the "cradle of American Liberty." But when in 1852, the Hungarian patriot Kossuth addressed an audience there, he criticized its name. "It is," he said, "a great name, but there is something in it which saddens my heart. You should not say American liberty. You should say liberty in America. Liberty should not be either American or European—it should just be 'liberty.'"

Kossuth was right. For unless liberty flourishes in all lands, it cannot flourish in one. Conceived in one hall, it must be carried out in many. . . . Today, . . . democracy and liberty are more international than ever before. . . . The spirit of Faneuil Hall, must live in many hearts and nations if it is to live at all.

For we live in an age of interdependence as well as independence, an age of internationalism as well as nationalism. . . .

79Ibid., pp. 49-50.
80Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 126.
Our Constitution is old and yours [Germany's] is young, and our culture is young and yours is old, but in our commitment we can and must speak and act with but one voice. Our roles are distinct but complementary, and our goals are the same: peace and freedom for all men, for all time, in a world of abundance, in a world of justice.\(^1\)

This freedom revolution is the most powerful force in the world today according to Kennedy. He believed that this force is stronger than the ideologies in conflict in the cold war, greater than the power of the hydrogen bomb, and more encompassing than any revolution in history, as it is world-wide.

\[\ldots\] The most powerful single force in the world today is neither Communism nor Capitalism, neither the H-Bomb nor the guided missile—it is man's eternal desire to be free and independent. The great enemy of that tremendous force of freedom is called \[\ldots\] imperialism--and today that means Soviet Imperialism and, whether we like it or not, and though they are not to be equated, Western imperialism.\(^2\)

Kennedy believed that it is imperative for nations to reevaluate themselves, in the light of this revolution for freedom and independence spreading throughout the world. Nations need to view themselves as they have actually stood in the past and determine the role they will take in the community of nations in the world of the future. The role that a free nation takes today affects its standing in the eyes of the Free World. Kennedy pointed out that the stand the

\(^{1}\text{Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, pp. 113-114.}\)

\(^{2}\text{Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, p. 66.}\)
American nation takes in the fight to keep the world free will affect this nation's leadership, prestige and security in the world today. This nation must make a firm stand on its position in the world and not follow the path we have taken in the past.

... tepid encouragement and moralizations to both sides, cautious neutrality on all real issues, and a restatement of our obvious dependence upon our European friends, our obvious dedication nevertheless to the principles of self-determination, and our obvious desire not to become involved--[this has been our stand]. We have deceived ourselves into believing that we have thus pleased both sides and displeased no one with this head-in-the-sands policy--when in truth, we have earned the suspicion of all.\textsuperscript{83}

Instead we must ... stress our positive interest in, and moral responsibility for, relieving misery and poverty; and acknowledge to ourselves and the world that, Communism or no Communism, we cannot be an island unto ourselves.\textsuperscript{84}

\textbf{Internationalism Through Nationalism}

The rise of the revolution for freedom and independence throughout the world has also brought the rise of nationalism. Kennedy did not see this as a barrier to realizing world order. Indeed, he believed that men should not try to blame the problems of the world on nationalism or communism but rather that man should take the long-range view of world

\textsuperscript{83}Ibid., p. 69.

\textsuperscript{84}Ibid., p. 143.
order and make a positive effort to encourage nationalism as a means of accomplishing internationalism in the conflict with Communism for the world order of tomorrow.

Wisdom requires the long view. And the long view shows us that the revolution of national independence is a fundamental fact of our era. This revolution will not be stopped. As new nations emerge from the oblivion of centuries, their first aspiration is to affirm their national identity. Their deepest hope is for a world where, within a framework of international cooperation, every country can solve its own problems according to its own traditions and ideals.

It is in the interests of the pursuit of knowledge, and it is in our own national interest, that this revolution of national independence succeed. For the Communists rest everything on the idea of a monolithic world—a world where all knowledge has a single pattern, all societies move toward a single model, all problems and roads have a single solution and a single destination. The pursuit of knowledge on the other hand, rests everything on the opposite idea—on the idea of a world based on diversity, self-determination and freedom. And that is the kind of world to which we Americans, as a nation, are committed by the principles upon which the great Republic was founded.

As men conduct the pursuit of knowledge, they create a world which freely unites national diversity and international partnerships. This emerging world is incompatible with the Communist world order. It will irresistibly burst the bonds of the Communist organization and the Communist ideology. And diversity and independence far from being opposed to the American conception of world order, represent the very essence of our view of the future of the world.85

85Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, pp. 238-239.
Internationalism through nationalism will create a dynamic world order built on diversity. "While each nation must naturally look out for its own interests, each nation must also look out for the common interest. . . ." It is only through this type of cooperation that man can make the world a safe and prosperous place. In order to achieve common goals, men must make common efforts.

History tells us that disunity and relaxation are the great internal dangers of an alliance. Thucydides reported that the Peloponnesians and their allies were mighty in battle but handicapped by their policy-making body, in which, he related, "each presses its own ends. . . which generally results in no action at all. . . they devote more time to the prosecution of their own purposes than to the consideration of the general welfare—each supposes that no harm will come of his own neglect, that it is the business of another to do this or that; and so, as each separately entertains the same illusion, the common cause imperceptibly decays."

But let us go on from words to actions, to intensify our efforts for still greater new associations and institutions on those already established. Lofty words cannot construct an alliance or maintain it; only concrete deeds can do that. Therefore, Kennedy was convinced that it is the responsibility of the strong, free nations to unite to help and encourage nations struggling to be free to stand on their own

86 Ibid., p. 117.
87 Ibid., pp. 118-119.
two feet. The fact that others may not bear their share of the burdens is no excuse for the leader of the free world—the American nation—to shirk its responsibility. We can contribute to aiding developing nations to remain independent by foreign aid programs which will generate economic strength as well as help the development through exchanges scientifically, culturally, and educationally. The guide to world order based on freedom and independence must be formed by the leadership of the American nation which was built on freedom and diversity. This goal for freedom in world order is not a posture but a continuous process that grows stronger each year as nations devote themselves to common tasks.

Not only is this fight for a free world order a moral responsibility, it is necessary for security, according to Kennedy. The opportunity to struggle for freedom belongs to all people who desire to be free, or none can be secure in their freedom. It is imperative that nations cooperate within a world organization in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

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88 Ibid., p. 146.
Communism has sometimes succeeded as a scavenger, but never as a leader. It has never come to power in any country that was not disrupted by war or internal repression, or both. Rejecting reform and diversity in freedom, the Communists cannot reconcile their ambitions for domination with other men's ambition for freedom. It is clear that this system is outmoded and doomed to failure.

... today no nation can build its destiny alone. The age of self-sufficient nationalism is over. The age of interdependence is here. The cause of... unity is based on logic and common sense. It is based on moral and political truth. It is based on sound military and economic principles, and it moves with the tide of history.91

World Order

The type of alliance for freedom that Kennedy believed in is one of shared goals and mutual respect with common ideals to promote a common destiny. This partnership is a growing reality. However, he also thought that the struggle is by no means over and that the effort for world order must not be relinquished.

The Family of Man can survive differences of race and religion. ... It can accept differences in ideology, politics and economics. But it cannot survive in the form in which we know it--a nuclear war [sic]--and neither can it long endure the growing gulf between the rich and the poor.

The rich must help the poor. The industrialized nations must help the developing nations. ...

91 Ibid., pp. 138-139.
Too often we advance the need of foreign aid only in terms of our economic self-interest. . . . [But] it is in our economic self-interest. . . . it helps to stave off the kind of chaos or Communist takeover or Communist attack that would surely demand our critical and costly attention.

The gulf between rich and poor which divides the Family of Man is an invitation to agitators, subversives, and aggressors. It encourages the ambitions of those who desire to dominate the world, which threatens the peace and freedom of us all. 92

The responsibility to promote freedom belongs to all men in the Family of Man, but it is the particular responsibility of the free people who are also strong and prosperous. We should not "forfeit our obligations to our fellow man, obligations that stem from our wealth and strength, from our devotion to freedom and from our membership in the Family of Man." 93 Kennedy did not think the effort to achieve world order is in vain. He believed that if men continue their efforts to secure freedom and independence for all peoples, who desire to be free and independent, the kind of world will be achieved in which all men can live together in peace and freedom. ", . . . history and our own conscience will judge us more harshly if we do not now make every effort to test our hopes by actions, and this is the place to begin. According

92 Ibid., p. 145.
93 Ibid., p. 147.
to the ancient Chinese proverb, 'A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.'"94

Men should now begin the movement toward eventual world order by uniting in alliances, strengthening the United Nations, and cooperating in any endeavor to promote peace and freedom throughout the world. "United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do."95 Kennedy made specific proposals to begin this process: (1) Welcome new states to the ranks of the free and pledge to support them to remain free, not always expecting them to support our view. (2) Pledge our best efforts to help the poverty stricken peoples of half the globe to help themselves. (3) Pledge support to that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective, strengthen its shield of the new and the weak, and enlarge the scope of its activities.96

If the United States begins these programs, strengthens its alliances, helps the underdeveloped nations, and gives

94Ibid., p. 66.
95Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 7.
96Ibid., pp. 7-8.
new impetus to the United Nations, then the rest of the free world will be inspired to follow the American leadership. Kennedy believed this American support was imperative to the strength of the United Nations.

We must increase our support of the United Nations as an instrument to end the Cold War instead of an arena in which to fight it. . . .

And I would address a special plea to the smaller nations of the world to join with us in strengthening this organization, which is far more essential to their security than it is to ours, the only body in the world where no nation need be powerful to be secure, where every nation has an equal voice, and where any nation can exert influence not according to the strength of its armies but according to the strength of its ideas. It deserves the support of all.97

. . . arms alone are not enough to keep the peace; it must be kept by men. Our instrument and our hope is the United Nations, and I see little merit in the impatience of those who would abandon this imperfect world instrument because they dislike our imperfect world. For the troubles of a world organization merely reflect the troubles of the world itself. And if the organization is weakened, these troubles can only increase. We may not always agree with every detailed action taken by every officer of the United Nations, or with every voting majority. But as an institution, it should have in the future, as it has had in the past since its inception, no stronger or more faithful member than the United States of America.98

97Ibid., p. 30.

Even if men do not agree with the decisions of the United Nations, they should strive to follow it. "No policeman is universally popular, particularly when he uses his stick to restore law and order on his beat." It is necessary for the survival of mankind to uphold world law and make greater use of the International Court of Justice. "We far prefer world law, in the age of self-determination, to world war, in the age of mass extermination."

Kennedy believed in a world disarmament under the control of the United Nations. We must reduce both nuclear and conventional arms until all armies and weapons are abolished except those needed for internal order in each state and for a United Nations Peace Force. If this plan were carried out, the world would be free from the terrors of mass destruction, even though it may not be free from conflict, "It would not usher in the era of the super-state, but it would usher in an era in which no state could annihilate or be annihilated by another." Men must divert their efforts to build destructive weapons to new efforts to provide constructive measures for world harmony.

99 Ibid., p. 13.
100 Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 210.
101 Ibid., p. 212.
To destroy arms . . . is not enough. We must create even as we destroy, creating world-wide law and law enforcement as we outlaw world-wide war and weapons. . . .

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

. . . peace is not solely a matter of military or technical problems; it is primarily a problem of politics and people. And unless man can match his strides in weaponry and technology with equal strides in social and political development, our great strength, like that of the dinosaur, will become incapable of proper control, and man, like the dinosaur will vanish from the earth.102

Kennedy also believed that in the development of world order men must be able to find some area in which to cooperate with all nations whether they agree or disagree. The United Nations' efforts to promote economic growth should be expanded and coordinated. Nations can cooperate in this development so that all nations, even if they are diverse in their systems and their beliefs, can become free and equal states in fact as well as law.103 Of course a basic premise of Kennedy's philosophy was that diversity is a dynamic force whether it be diversity of ideas, diversity of people in a society, or diversity of nations in world order. "We cannot expect that all nations will adopt like systems, for conformity is the jailer of freedom, and the enemy of growth.

102 Ibid., pp. 215-216.
103 Ibid., p. 217.
Nor can we expect to reach our goal by contrivance or fiat or even by the wishes of all."104

Because Kennedy believed diversity can exist in a world order, he did not shut out the possibility of coexistence with Communist states. He believed we should nourish any seeds of liberty found in any cracks in the Communist Iron Curtain satellites by showing a creative interest, not a closed mind, to any nation that appears to represent an interest in freedom. Kennedy even advocated trying to communicate with any Communist nation on any basis. He suggested improving communications with Red China. We should attempt to restore the historic friendship with the Chinese people. We should form affirmative policies and not cling to an attitude of negative resistance.105 Kennedy believed that it is important to work with peoples of all nations, not just with their regimes. This belief stemmed from his idea that we all belong to the Family of Man.

... in a real sense, all of us, as individuals ... now belong simultaneously to a national and international constituency.106

104 Ibid., p. 222.
106 Ibid., p. 160.
Modern economics, weaponry, and communications have made us realize more than ever that we are one human family and this one planet is our home.

... we must remember that there are no permanent enemies. Hostility today is a fact, but it is not a ruling law. The supreme reality of our time is our indivisibility as children of God and our common vulnerability on this planet.107

To Kennedy the role of the state in world order is to pursue a common effort with other states in providing for freedom and independence for each individual and each state—that is, the freedom to choose the good life in this world. Men need open and peaceful competition as individuals and as peoples in their search for truth and justice. Nations need open and peaceful competition—for prestige, for markets, for scientific achievement, even for men's minds.

Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right; not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.108

Kennedy's theory of the best state combined his belief in American democracy with his universal beliefs for a world order based on the dignity of man. He considered American democracy to be the best example of a progressive free state,

107Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 132.
108Ibid., p. 96.
and for that reason he believed the United States should use creative leadership in promoting freedom and equality around the world.

He used an empirical observation of the national and international situation in the Twentieth Century to elucidate the metaphysical values which he perceived to be necessary as a basis for the achievement of the best state and world order. The best state, in Kennedy's political theory, is a liberal representative democracy, which would provide the social and political environment in which the individual would have the opportunity for self-fulfillment. A free progressive state should provide dynamic leadership in the struggle for a successful world order for the Family of Man.
It is evident from this study that Kennedy did have a political theory. The underlying current of his writings and his speeches carried the force of his political philosophy across the seas to all who are concerned with the cause of human freedom. Kennedy had a true philosophy of government because he had his own vision and his own system of ideas. His faith was in the individual: he believed in man's ability to respond to inspiration to higher motives. It was this belief in the individual's ability to transcend tragedy and perfect his world that brought Kennedy into the political realm.

He believed in his own ability to influence others and to inspire others to greatness. For this reason Kennedy entered the political profession and through his role as a politician articulated his political theory. Kennedy was both a practicing politician and a political theorist, but his political philosophy was basic to his political activity. Although his political philosophy matured with his emergence in professional politics, his basic ideas already provided a nucleus to his final all-encompassing political thought.
Kennedy's political philosophy was the idealism and his political practice was the realism in the formation of the total political thought of the man. He believed in realism through idealism. Truth and justice, freedom and equality are the ideals to lead to the realization of the dignity of man in the political sphere of the universe. The political sphere encompassed the totality of life to this Twentieth Century theorist. Each individual is related to every other individual in the family, in the group, in the society, in the nation and in the world—the political sphere is the universe.

Kennedy is important to the development of twentieth century political thought because he renewed faith in the ideals of humanity buried under the progress of science and materialism. His concrete realistic proposals to further the ideal of human dignity and the worth of the individual—no matter how impoverished, no matter how uneducated, no matter how lowly a position in life he held—inspired millions throughout the world to strive anew for freedom and equality.

The Philosopher and the Politician

Because Kennedy was a politician, many did not realize that he was also a political philosopher. Kennedy sought political power partly because he believed it to be the lever
to move the world political philosophy. The position he held as President of the most powerful influential nation in the free world was to Kennedy the position in which he could wield the greatest influence on the political philosophy in this century. He believed that this influence must combine knowledge and truth with wise leadership.

This link between leadership and learning is not only essential at the community level. It is even more indispensable in world affairs. Ignorance and misinformation can handicap the progress of a city . . . --but they can if allowed to prevail . . . handicap the nation's security. In a world of complex and continuing problems, in a world full of frustrations and irritations, America's leadership must be guided by the lights of learning and reason, or else those who confuse rhetoric with reality and the plausible with the possible will gain the popular ascendency with their seemingly swift and simple solutions to every world problem.1

Kennedy's political theory combined both the empirical study of politics with the classical study of the metaphysical values. This combination emanated from his political interest and his interest in the history of mankind. He combined his experience in political practice with the knowledge gained from history to try to clarify the basic ideals in which he believed. These ideals were the metaphysical values he believed must be basic to political action to promote the political moralism necessary to further development in the evolution

of humanity in civilization. It is imperative that man cling to values, interpreting them in the light of the circumstances in which he lives. This is necessary for man to progress toward the relative perfectibility of mankind—the purpose of man's existence as the rational creation of a benevolent omniscient being.

As a practicing politician Kennedy was convinced that man must use practical means to further his ideals. Therefore he carried his political philosophy into concrete proposals for promoting peace and freedom throughout the world. He had faith that man can shape his own destiny and because political problems are man-made, he believed all tragedy in human affairs could be overcome by man.

However close we sometimes seem to that dark and final abyss, let no man of peace and freedom despair. . . . If we all can persevere, if we can in every land . . . look beyond our own shores and ambitions, then surely the age will dawn in which the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

Together we shall save our planet or together we shall perish in its flames.²

Kennedy did not believe ideals were merely platitudes or slogans. He believed them to be concrete values which must impregnate our political solutions.

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²Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 199.
It matters not how small a nation is that seeks world peace and freedom, for to paraphrase a citizen of my country, the humblest nation of all the world, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of Error. [sic] ³

However, Kennedy knew that ideals alone could not solve problems. Man needs practical solutions, not just values and ideals. "We know that 'might' never makes 'right;' we must also remember that 'right,' unfortunately, never makes 'might.'"⁴ Kennedy believed that righteous causes should be backed by strength whether it is strength of the individual, strength of the organization, strength of the government or strength of the nation. Kennedy thus was both a realist and an idealist.

Realism and Idealism

Realism and idealism were inseparable to this philosopher-politician. He envisioned individual accomplishment, national accomplishment and world accomplishment based on the ideals of humanity to lead to the dignity and freedom of all men. "It is the constructive possibilities on which rest the hopes of all mankind. However dim these hopes may sometimes seem, they

³Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 133.

⁴Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, fourth of unnumbered pages at beginning of book.
can never be abandoned." Man must have faith in his own ability to overcome the problems of the world and provide practical long range plans to work toward the achievement of long range goals.

... let us examine our attitude toward peace itself. Too many of us think it is impossible. Too many think it unreal. But that is a dangerous, defeatest belief. It leads to the conclusion that war is inevitable, that mankind is doomed, that we are gripped by forces we cannot control.

We need not accept that view. Our problems are man-made; therefore they can be solved by man. And man can be as big as he wants. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings. Man's reason and spirit have often solved the seemingly unsolvable, and we believe they can do it again.

I am not referring to the absolute, infinite concept of universal peace and good will of which some fantasists and fanatics dream. I do not deny the value of hopes and dreams, but we merely invite discouragement and incredibility by making them our only and immediate goal.

Let us focus instead on a more practical, more attainable peace, based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions, on a series of concrete actions and effective agreements which are in the interest of all concerned. There is no single, simple key to this peace, no grand or magic formula to be adopted by one or two powers. Genuine peace must be the product of many nations, the sum of many acts. It must be dynamic, not static, changing to meet the challenge of each new generation. For peace is a process, a way of solving problems.

However fixed our likes and dislikes may seem, the tide of time and events will often bring surprising changes in the relations between nations and neighbors.

Kennedy, The Burden and the Glory, p. 54.
So let us persevere. Peace need not be impractical, and war need not be inevitable. By defining our goal more clearly, by making it seem more manageable and less remote, we can help all peoples to see it, to draw hope from it, and to move irresistibly toward it.6

Kennedy's declaration for realistic means to achieve idealistic ends can be seen in all his political philosophy.

Because he was a politician and an historical scholar, he saw the need to study the political behavior of man as he perceived it in an empirical study in present political activity and throughout the history of man. However, contrary to the thinking of the behavioralists of the Twentieth Century, he also saw the need to apply the findings of such studies to the metaphysical values which apply to all mankind. These scientific studies of man's political behavior could be used not only to enhance clarification of the basic human values but also to light the path of progress in finding the realistic means of achieving these goals. Man must combine experience, reason and sensitivity to promote basic philosophical principles necessary to the dignity of man. Rationality and conscious responsibility must be applied to promote freedom and equality in an environment as it exists.

Although Kennedy believed man must face things as they exist, he did not believe in accepting the status quo. He was

6Ibid., pp. 54-55.
a liberal who believed that change is necessary because events and circumstances change. In order to reach toward perfectibility man must always strive for perfection, but change in itself did not mean progress to Kennedy. Change could only mean progress if it is based on the ideals which can promote human progress toward a better world. However, because he believed man has never reached perfectibility and therefore man is fallible, he believed that men need a diversity of ideas as a dynamic force for progress. A diversity of ideas can realistically enlighten the search for truth.

Because Kennedy believed that realism can promote idealism, he believed that the individual and his ideas are the source of progress for the state and that the purpose of the state is to promote individual development. If individual development is promoted, then the individual will be able to make free choices using his reason to search for truth. To Kennedy the human mind is the key to all development and progress in human affairs.

The mission is to create a new social order, founded on liberty and justice, in which men are the masters of their fate, in which states are the servants of their citizens and in which all men and women can share a better life for themselves and their children. That is the object of our common policy.

So we are all idealists. We are all visionaries. Let it not be said... that we left ideals and visions
to the past, nor purposes and determination to our adver-
saries. . . . And we shall ever remember what Goethe told
us—-that the "highest wisdom, the best that mankind ever
knew" was the realization that "he only earns his freedom
and existence who daily conquers them anew."7

The Importance of Kennedy to Twentieth Century
Political Theory

Two distinct facets of Kennedy's political philosophy
exist: The practical realistic aspect and the theoretical
idealistic aspect. Both facets are interdependent and
entwined throughout his political thought. The practical
aspect emanates from Kennedy, the professional politician, and
the theoretical aspect emanates from Kennedy, the political
theorist. As the politician he influenced people throughout
the world to return to normative political theory.

Kennedy's Practical Philosophy

John F. Kennedy should be ranked as one of the important
Twentieth Century political philosophers because he has
inspired a renewed hope in an era of disillusionment. In an
era in which men have found their existence to be an absurdity,
Kennedy has found man's existence to be of extreme value in
the evolution of mankind.

7Ibid., p. 121.
Kennedy gave hope to the individual realistically and idealistically to transcend tragedy, and to shape his own destiny. Each individual has a responsibility to develop his own human existence in a meaningful way as the basis of human morality. The nature of political morality is dependent on the tone of individual morality. The political morality of a nation will help to shape the political morality of the world. Each individual and each nation has the responsibility in his freedom of choice to provide for the dignity of all men and all nations.

Kennedy gave concrete proposals to further the progress of mankind with the existence of freedom and equality in a world of diversity.

Where nature makes natural allies of us all, we can demonstrate that beneficial relations are possible even with those with whom we most deeply disagree, and this must someday be the basis of world peace and world law.8

The existence of man is important according to this philosopher because it is the existence of each individual and the ideas formulated by each individual which will shape the world. Individuals have shaped the world in the past, individuals are shaping the world today and individuals will shape the world of tomorrow. What man has created in his world in

8Kennedy, To Turn the Tide, p. 31.
the past has shaped our world of today and what man creates in the world today will shape the future world.

We like to look . . . beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth to catch a dreaming glimpse of peace. In the words of Edmund Burke, we sit on a "conspicuous stage" and the whole world marks our demeanor.⁹

Kennedy believed that it is necessary to understand the harsh logic of events in order to make constructive policy for the future of mankind in this world shaped by events of the past. And he believed that men in their political realm must make constructive policies to help shape a better world for men universally and for all time. A strong free nation has the moral responsibility to be more than a volunteer fire department to the world. A nation rushing to put out a fire where fire breaks out, but then leaving the inhabitants to build up their homes and pick up the pieces with whatever resources are available will not succeed in insuring freedom to those people. Free men in free nations should offer a revolution—a political, economic and social revolution which is superior to the revolution offered by the Communists—a revolution which is peaceful, democratic and locally controlled. This revolution should be offered not as a political maneuver,

⁹Kennedy, Strategy of Peace, pp. 53-54.
not as a business proposition, not as chattels in the balance of power, but as a revolution of their own making for their own welfare and for the security of freedom everywhere.10

If man considers the importance of his existence in the light of Kennedy's reasoning, it is difficult to see man's existence as an absurdity when it has the influence and responsibility for the world to be inherited by future generations. To Kennedy this is the challenge that should inspire men to make their existence meaningful and purposeful to help promote the gradual evolution of freedom.

Kennedy's philosophy not only gave hope to the hopeless striving to break the chains of servitude, but it also inspired the individuals who know freedom and equality to use this freedom of choice to achieve self-fulfillment not only materially but also spiritually by experiencing and understanding humanitarianism. In a secular world overshadowed by materialism and scientific development Kennedy's philosophy showed men how to fill their spiritual needs by promoting closer relationships with all peoples in order to nourish the seeds of liberty.

The success or failure of men's endeavor to undo the heavy burdens of mankind depends on the fight men make

10Ibid., pp. 63-64.
individually and collectively to alleviate the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war. In this endeavor a grand and global alliance is needed to assure a more fruitful life for all mankind.\textsuperscript{11}

This world organization should try to explore the problems that will unite peoples and nations instead of belaboring the problems which divide them.

Today the United Nations is primarily the protector of the small and the weak and a safety valve for the strong. Tomorrow it can form the framework for a world of law, a world in which no nation dictates the destiny of another, and in which . . . vast resources . . . will serve constructive ends.\textsuperscript{12}

Throughout all of Kennedy's political philosophy could be seen his faith in mankind and hope for the future. His political thought was made up of challenge and courage in promotion of individual and political morality as the role of man in securing freedom and peace for the Family of Nations and the Family of Man. Any new problems which man faces should be the challenge to inspire individual and collective maturity in the evolution of mankind in civilization. This is the way in which Kennedy lived his life and the way in

\textsuperscript{11}Kennedy, \textit{Public Papers of the President}, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{12}Kennedy, \textit{The Burden and the Glory}, p. 33-34.
which he believed every man should live in his search for truth and justice.

We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people.13

**Kennedy's Political Theory**

Kennedy can be classified as a political theorist in the traditional sense because the specific problems he perceived to be evident from his empirical and analytical study of politics required his analysis of the classical metaphysical questions. Political theory necessarily deals with normative principles although empirical methods can help to elucidate and correlate the traditional theory.

Kennedy's political theory is consistent but not always systematic because he did most of his writing as a political activist and for political oratory. Although he did not write down his political ideas as a systematic theory, his theory can be deduced from his speeches and writings. A discovery of this study is that Kennedy's theory was consistent throughout even though the theory did evolve and mature with the political man himself.

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Although Kennedy's thoughts were not set down in any systematic theory, all of the basic elements to an ordered theory were revealed in his writing. Kennedy examined the ideas of the nature of man, the nature of the state, the best state, and world order. Within these fundamental concepts of his theory he dealt with such metaphysical values as freedom, equality, truth, justice, man's relation to a supernatural being, and the dignity of man.

This theorist was optimistic in his thinking but he was not utopian. He rejected utopianism as unrealistic and impractical. Utopian ideals to Kennedy were harmful because they lead people to incredulity or to mental stagnation. Kennedy's optimism, in contrast to utopianism, inspired political thought and action in his followers. Although Kennedy was anti-utopian, sometimes his writing and oratory are so optimistic that one might infer from them the absolutism of the utopian.

For the most part, Kennedy did not have an original political theory. It was rather a derivative and combining theory emanating from empirical observations, historical studies and classical and contemporary literature and theory.

What was original in Kennedy's theory was the new direction for theory he was predicting by conjecture. He brought
political theory into practical politics inspiring people to become political activists and political theoreticians. He influenced followers to combine the idealistic with the realistic in the search for truth and justice to provide for the dignity of man. Probably Kennedy's greatest contribution to contemporary political theory was his exaltation of metaphysical values in an era of materialistic, secular sophistication. In an era when it was passé to proclaim and adhere to traditional, normative concepts such as love of country, belief in God and faith in humanity, Kennedy unashamedly enunciated and exemplified all these ontological and metaphysical values. He fed the spiritual needs of men everywhere starved by materialism and secularism and gave to political theory a popular respectability.
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