

JFK's American University Speech (6/10/1963)

H470

Reaction to speech:

England's Manchester Guardian called it "one of the great state papers of American History."

Kennedy's domestic political opponents called it "a soft line that will accomplish nothing . . . a tragic mistake."

The Soviet Union permitted the speech to be broadcasted and published inside the Soviet Union *Khrushchev - Post presidential speech since EBA FDR*

Later that day he signed the Equal Pay Act, prohibiting wage discrimination against women.

The next day he directed the admission of the first black students to University of Alabama despite Gov. George Wallace's theatrical stand in the doorway to block their entrance to the Admissions Office. That night on nationwide TV he declared that race discrimination in this country was to end permanently. "Not only as a constitutional issue but as a moral issue." The next week he sent the Congress the 1963 Civil Rights Bill, the most comprehensive civil rights ever.

Followed: In July with the signing of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. . . follow up from AU speech where he announced a moratorium on atmospheric tests.

Hotline. . . .

H/PS #315

Re: Notes on JFK'S AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SPEECH

(CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS WAS THE IMMEDIATE PROMPT TO THIS ACTION).

PREPARATION FOR HIS "PEACE SPEECH" AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

THIS SPEECH WAS FIRST ACT OF A PEACE OFFENSIVE TO END THE COLD WAR.

HE JOINED BRITISH PM HAROLD MACMILLAN TO JOIN HIM IN PROPOSING TO KHRUSHCHEV NEW HIGH LEVEL TALKS ON A TEST BAN TREATY.

AND SUGGESTED THAT MOSCOW BE THE SITE OF THE TALKS. THE SITE WAS A GESTURE OF TRUST. KHRUSHCHEV ACCEPTED.

TO REINFORCE HIS SERIOUSNESS JFK DECIDED TO SUSPEND U.S. NUCLEAR TESTS IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE UNILATERALLY.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SPEECH WAS HIS ATTEMPT TO JUMP START THE PEACE CAMPAIGN.

IN THE SPEECH HE SPELLS OUT THE KIND OF PEACE HE IS TALKING ABOUT:

P.2 NOT A "PAX AMERICANA ENFORCED ON THE WORLD BY AMERICAN WEAPONS OF WAR.."

HERE HE WAS TOUCHING BASE WITH IKE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS WHERE THE OLD SOLDIER WARNED AGAINST THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX. THAT CONJUNCTION OF "AN IMMENSE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND A LARGE ARMS INDUSTRY. . . . THE TOTAL INFLUENCE OFR WHICH IS FELT IN EVERY CITY, EVERY STATE HOUSE, EVERY OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

"IN COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT , WE MUST GUARD AGAINST THE ACQUISITION OF UNWARREANTED INFLUENCE, WHETHER SOUGHT OR UNSOUGHT BY THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX. THE POTENTIAL FOR THE DISASTEROUS RISE OF MISPLACED POWER EXISTS AND WILL PERSIST."

SKIP