

Quotation from article in "Studies on the Left"
by Leslie Dewart on the Cuban Missile Crisis of '63.

Studies on the Left

The more general restructuring of Kennedy's world political perceptions became evident a little later in another declaration, in which for the first time since the onset of the cold war (and, to date, also for the last), an American President proposed the only American foreign policy which could make possible a stable peace between East and West. I refer to the policy of ending, rather than winning, the cold war:

What kind of peace do we seek? Not a *Pax Americana* enforced on the world by American weapons of war . . . I am talking about genuine peace . . . — not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men — not merely peace in our time but peace for all time. . . .

Some say that it is useless to speak of world peace or world law or world disarmament . . . until the leaders of the Soviet Union adopt a more enlightened attitude. I hope they do. I believe we can help them to do it. But I also believe that we must re-examine our own attitude . . . toward the possibilities of peace, toward the Soviet Union, toward the course of the cold war and toward freedom and peace here at home. . . .

For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is the fact that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we all are mortal.³⁸

FOR THE COLD WAR is not a conflict about whose military dominion shall be imposed upon the world. It is a quarrel about whose concept of peace shall be imposed upon the other side. It is, therefore, indeed tragic, if these words truly signified a sincere conversion, that Kennedy's life was extinguished at the very time when his newly acquired maturity, vision and wisdom had just begun to fructify. For there are no signs that these qualities survived him at any of the high levels of U.S. government. The tragedy of Kennedy's death is not simply that he passed away, but that many like, say, McGeorge Bundy, Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara remained behind, to give to a willing ear and a permissive intellect the same sort of advice that President Kennedy had once taken, but which, through the purifying agony of responsibilities faced, he eventually learned to reject.

³⁸. Speech of June 10, 1963, at American University (*USIS Texts*). ✓✓