

III. History and Culture

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

In Memory of President John F. Kennedy

by Harley Schlanger

Nov. 22—At a moment of building tensions throughout the world, with wars ongoing and starvation and deaths from disease taking too many lives, and leaders unwilling to stand up against the private interests of the oligarchs who are operating in the shadows, I recommend we pause for a moment to remember the life of a great American—former President John F. Kennedy, who was taken from us 60 years ago today in Dallas, Texas in an assassination still covered up by the people who were responsible for organizing both his death and the cover-up of his death.

Kennedy was a man of great courage. Most famous perhaps for his willingness to stand up against the shadow government of his time, which was pushing him to go to war with the Soviet Union. Particularly during the 1961 Bay of Pigs crisis, which was in particular the work of Allen Dulles and the CIA, and then again in October 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

President Kennedy famously said that he preferred negotiations to war, even as his advisors were advocating attacks on Cuba, threats to invade or attack the Soviet Union, the deployment of missiles surrounding the Soviet Union, and so on. Kennedy made the statement in his [Inaugural Address](#), “Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.”

That was on January 20, 1961.

Three days earlier, President Dwight Eisenhower had given his [Farewell Address](#) in which he made the following comments. Talking about how the private defense industry had become a permanent part of the



JFK Library

President John F. Kennedy, delivering his inaugural address, Jan. 20, 1961: “Let us begin anew—remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.”

economy after World War II, Eisenhower said,

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence, economic, political, even spiritual, is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the Federal government. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.



White House/Cecil Stoughton

President Kennedy delivering his American University Commencement Address (Peace speech), June 10, 1963: “Let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and the means by which those differences can be resolved ... or at least make the world safe for diversity.”

And he concluded by calling on an “alert and knowledgeable citizenry” to protect against abuses by this power. It was against this military-industrial complex that we can see John F. Kennedy moving in the last months of his life. I want to give you some examples of that.

Recoup the Chance Lost in 1963

Let’s start with his famous June 10, 1963, peace [speech](#), a commencement address at American University in which he announced the moves toward a nuclear test ban treaty, and included an appeal to the Soviet Union at the end of the speech, saying:

So, let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and 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 analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s future. And we are all mortal.

Therefore, in his view, we must act on the basis of this common link. There are examples galore of what he did in these last months. I’m going to take the time to go through three of them.

On June 4, 1963, a week before the American University speech, Kennedy signed Executive Order 11110, which issued U.S. notes through the Treasury rather than Federal Reserve notes. There’s some debate as to whether he intended to go further. I think the evidence is clear that he intended to remove the power of the central banks. The private banks, by the way, controlled the central bank of the United States, the Federal Reserve. Kennedy was in a fight to ensure that there would be credit available for producers. It was

in that context that he issued this executive order.

On June 11, the day after the American University speech, he gave a nationally televised [address](#) on civil rights. He was announcing a package of legislation that he was sending to Congress to carry through a whole new direction of civil rights legislation that would change the country from the period of segregation and discrimination, into a new future. He said:



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President Kennedy meets with Chairman Khrushchev at the U.S. Embassy residence in Vienna, June 3, 1961.

“Every American ought to have the right to be treated as he would wish to be treated, as one would wish his children to be treated.”

Again, what you see is the appeal for the benefit of the other, that we each have responsibility for the common good of our fellow citizens, as well as for our fellow human beings in other countries. This was central to what Kennedy was doing in the last months of his life. The civil rights legislation was not passed until after his death.

From June until his assassination, he was working on a broad project of rapprochement, of détente with the Soviet Union through communication with Nikita Khrushchev, the Premier of the Soviet Union. President Kennedy had authorized a back-channel discussion with Cuba’s Fidel Castro. He was involved in a fight with his military and intelligence community to pull troops out of Vietnam; to end the struggle to enforce colonialism against the Global South. Kennedy made several speeches on this as a Senator, in 1954 on Vietnam, and in 1957 on Algeria. Kennedy came from that Franklin Roosevelt tradition that said that the United States has a tradition of anti-colonial revolution and must not stand on the side of the colonial oppressors against the sovereign interest of states in the Global South. In that sense, Kennedy was pursuing the kinds of policies that we see coming together today in the emergence of the BRICS and other kinds of alliances.

Each of these statements challenged the power of the military-industrial complex. This becomes absolutely clear if you do a deeper dive. I recommend the book by James W. Douglass, *JFK and the Unspeakable*, in which he details the opposition to President Kennedy from the CIA, from the FBI, from the intelligence community, from the networks of the Dulles brothers. And the irony of course is that after his assassination, who was the person coordinating the Warren Commission investigation into his death? It was Allen Dulles; no wonder there was a cover-up.



White House/Cecil Stoughton

The Warren Commission. Chief Justice Earl Warren hands the coverup report on the assassination of President Kennedy to President Lyndon Johnson. To Johnson’s left (with bow tie) is Allen Dulles.

Let Us Start the Kennedy Second Term

What was the fear in London and New York? It was that with a second term, and the possibility of a Robert F. Kennedy Presidency succeeding him, their power would be reduced if not eliminated. There are reports that after the Bay of Pigs crisis, President Kennedy had said he wished to “splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces and scatter it to the winds.”

Given what we know today—the danger that these forces represented back then and still today—let us invoke the spirit of John F. Kennedy to finish the job that he was prevented from completing. That’s the mission of the Schiller Institute. That was the mission that Kennedy’s fellow World War II veteran, Lyndon LaRouche, took forward in his life: The idea that the United States must continue to represent the tradition of an anti-colonial revolutionary power with a Constitution that rests power in the hands of the people, not in the hands of private special interests such as the corporate cartels that control the banking system, the healthcare system, the food delivery system, and so on.

Kennedy made another speech that I want to bring to your attention, which again is relevant for today and is a powerful indication of his thinking. This was a [speech](#) against secrecy before the American Newspaper Publishers Association on April 27, 1961. He said:

The very word secrecy is repugnant in a free

and open society; and we are as a people inherently and historically opposed to secret societies, to secret oaths and to secret proceedings.... And there is very grave danger that an announced need for increased security will be seized upon by those anxious to expand its meaning to the very limits of official censorship and concealment.

Think about that after 9/11 and the revelations of Edward Snowden. JFK went on to say:

I not only could not stifle controversy among your readers—I welcome it....

Without debate, without criticism, no Administration and no country can succeed—and no republic can survive. That is why the Athenian lawmaker Solon decreed it a crime for any citizen to shrink from controversy.

Those words say so much to those of us today who are trying to organize to put an end to the power of this military-industrial complex that President Eisenhower warned us about, and that took the life of John F. Kennedy. It's in that sense that I would invoke his spirit for you to engage in discussion around the Thanksgiving dinner tomorrow, and to bring to life this American tradition which is in danger of being snuffed out by those who wish to have their power to run a unipolar order unchallenged. As Kennedy said, to paraphrase him, we must not only challenge it, but we must welcome the challenge to bring our country back to its traditions.

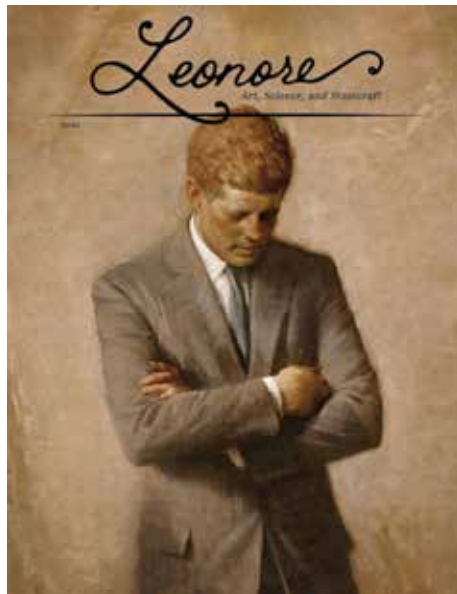
Readers can follow Harley Schlanger's daily video updates on the website of The LaRouche Organization [here](#). This article is adapted from his report on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the 60th anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy. He urged his listeners to go to YouTube, listen to speeches by John F. Kennedy, and engage in critical thinking.

The Schiller Institute

has just released Volume 2, No. 1, of its new journal *Leonore*, which opens with the following from Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.'s October 20, 2002, article, "The Historical Individual":

"The principal cause for the doom of any culture, is that mental disorder typical of popular opinion, which is to assume the validity of any assumptions currently adopted by a learned profession, or religious teaching, or more crudely adopted as 'generally accepted popular opinion'."

The 88-page issue, contains eleven articles, including the first English translation of one of the last letters by the 15th century scientific and political genius, Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, which has been called his "religious last will," and an original translation of Friedrich Schiller's "On the Sublime," described as "perhaps his most refined discussion of the process of the development of the soul."



Preview the issue [here](#) and see the full table of contents.

The preview includes the ground-breaking article by Jason Ross, "Vernadskian Time: Time for Humanity," which addresses "the paradoxes posed by Vernadsky's scientific work," which open the way to an entirely new set of definitions of space, time and matter, taken from the standpoint of the human mind.

The journal is yours as a monthly Schiller Institute contributing member. Memberships start at \$5/month. Sign up [here](#).