

# JFK: Why can't we have a president like that?

Mike Delaney, FAWM19 #3, 2/1/19

(My wife and I visited the JFK Library yesterday—it was free, due to the shutdown, and the temperature was in the single digits, so it would have been a very cold day for hiking. We listened to JFK's inaugural address in 1961. I was only 7 that year, so I don't recall hearing that speech, though I do remember the day he was assassinated. Hearing the speech, with its lofty, eloquent rhetoric, I couldn't help but say, "Why can't we have a president like that?" I thought I would try to use some of his speech to write a song.)

On a cold winter day in 1961, President John F. Kennedy, only 44 years old  
Gave an inspiring inaugural speech, and he had a clear challenge, a call for all Americans to be bold  
I watched his entire speech, just the other day  
At his Presidential Library on the shore of Dorchester Bay

It was a day of pomp and circumstance, and the message was clear and loud  
The U.S. Marine Band played, I've never seen such a large crowd  
It was quite a spectacle, there was even a man in a top hat  
And I couldn't help but think, "**Why can't we have a President like that?**"

"A celebration of freedom" "not a victory of party, that is what President Kennedy said  
He spoke of poverty, peace, human rights; he was clearly looking ahead  
He pledged to help the "sister republics south of our border"  
Not spewing "American carnage" and the need for military law and order

He swore the "same solemn oath" prescribed centuries ago  
He was "unwilling to...permit the...undoing of...human rights", and it wasn't just for show  
You could tell he was a man of the people who would go to bat  
And I couldn't help but think, "**Why can't we have a President like that?**"

He was eloquent and totally engaging and he used complete sentences, and many, many multisyllabic words  
He said he would strive for a "new world... where the strong are just and the weak secure"  
He spoke to every nation, to our foes and to our friends  
He pledged his support to the U.N., not "Make America Wealthy Again"

Spoke of the "wonders of science", "eradicating disease" and "exploring the stars"  
He also spoke of "loyalty to our faithful allies", and "encouraging the arts"  
A decorated Navy sailor, not a phony in a red MAGA hat  
And I couldn't help but think, "**Why can't we have a President like that?**"

Coda:

He said his goals wouldn't be achieved in 100 days or even in his lifetime  
I cried when he was killed a few months later; the end of his life line  
He was gone way too soon; I wish we could have had a chat  
Maybe someday **we can once again have a President like that**  
Maybe someday **we can once again have a President like that**

Take 2—4/19/20: Heavily Revised...

On a cold winter day in 1961, President John F. Kennedy, only 44 years old  
Gave an inspiring inaugural speech, with a clear challenge, for all Americans  
to be bold

I watched his entire speech, just the other day  
At his Presidential Library on Dorchester Bay

It was a day of pomp and circumstance, the message was clear and loud  
The U.S. Marine Band played, I've never seen such a large crowd  
Quite a spectacle, even a man in a top hat  
I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

"A celebration of freedom" "not a victory of party", that's what Kennedy said  
He spoke of poverty, peace, human rights; clearly looking ahead  
He pledged to help the "sister republics south of our border"  
Not spewing "American carnage" and military law and order

He swore the "same solemn oath" prescribed centuries ago  
He was "unwilling to...permit...undoing of...human rights", it wasn't just for  
show

You could tell he was a man of the people who would go to bat  
And I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

He was eloquent and totally engaging, complete sentences, and multisyllabic  
words

He said he'd strive for a "world...where the strong are just and the weak  
secure"

He spoke to every nation, to our foes and to our friends

He pledged his support to the U.N., not "Make America Wealthy Again"

Spoke of the "wonders of science", "eradicating disease", "exploring the stars"

He spoke of "loyalty to our faithful allies", and "encouraging the arts"

A decorated Navy sailor, not a phony in a red MAGA hat

And I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

Coda:

He said his goals wouldn't be achieved in 100 days or even his lifetime

I cried when he was killed a few months later; the end of his lifeline

He was gone way too soon; I wish we could have had a chat

Maybe someday **we can again have a President like that**

Maybe someday **we can again have a President like that**

A fanfare by Leonard Bernstein

<https://leonardbernstein.com/works/view/254/fanfare-for-the-inauguration-of-john-f-kennedy>

That fat bat chat hat mat sat tat drat begat gnat splat shat

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/inaugural-address>

*Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens:*

We observe today not a victory of party but a **celebration of freedom**--symbolizing an end as well as a beginning--signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forbears prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands **the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life**. 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 dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to **a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.**

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, 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.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

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

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

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the **inspection and control of arms**--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides 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 both sides 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**.

**All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.**

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies **a grand and global alliance**, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

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

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 of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which 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.

Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens: We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom--symbolizing an end as well as a beginning--signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forbears prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago. The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. 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 dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world. Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, 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. To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder. To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside. To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few

who are rich. To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge--to convert our good words into good deeds--in a new alliance for progress--to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house. To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support--to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak--and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run. Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides 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 both sides 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.

All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

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

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 of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which 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.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/>

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP – AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY  
INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2017  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

*As Prepared for Delivery –*

Chief Justice Roberts, President Carter, President Clinton, President Bush, President Obama, fellow Americans, and people of the world: thank you.

We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and to restore its promise for all of our people.

Together, we will determine the course of America and the world for years to come.

We will face challenges. We will confront hardships. But we will get the job done.

Every four years, we gather on these steps to carry out the orderly and peaceful transfer of power, and we are grateful to President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama for their gracious aid throughout this transition. They have been magnificent.

Today's ceremony, however, has very special meaning. Because today we are not merely transferring power from one Administration to another, or from one party to another – but we are transferring power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American People.

For too long, a small group in our nation's Capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost.

Washington flourished – but the people did not share in its wealth.

Politicians prospered – but the jobs left, and the factories closed.

The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country.

Their victories have not been your victories; their triumphs have not been your triumphs; and while they celebrated in our nation's Capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land.

That all changes – starting right here, and right now, because this moment is your moment: it belongs to you.

It belongs to everyone gathered here today and everyone watching all across America.

This is your day. This is your celebration.

And this, the United States of America, is your country.

What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people.

January 20th 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again.



The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer.

Everyone is listening to you now.

You came by the tens of millions to become part of a historic movement the likes of which the world has never seen before.

At the center of this movement is a crucial conviction: that a nation exists to serve its citizens.

Americans want great schools for their children, safe neighborhoods for their families, and good jobs for themselves.

These are the just and reasonable demands of a righteous public.

But for too many of our citizens, a different reality exists: Mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities; rusted-out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation; an education system, flush with cash, but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of knowledge; and the crime and gangs and drugs that have stolen too many lives and robbed our country of so much unrealized potential.

This American carnage stops right here and stops right now.

We are one nation – and their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams; and their success will be our success. We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny.

The oath of office I take today is an oath of allegiance to all Americans.

For many decades, we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry;

Subsidized the armies of other countries while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military;

We've defended other nation's borders while refusing to defend our own;

And spent trillions of dollars overseas while America's infrastructure has fallen into disrepair and decay.

We've made other countries rich while the wealth, strength, and confidence of our country has disappeared over the horizon.

One by one, the factories shuttered and left our shores, with not even a thought about the millions upon millions of American workers left behind.

The wealth of our middle class has been ripped from their homes and then redistributed across the entire world.

But that is the past. And now we are looking only to the future.

We assembled here today are issuing a new decree to be heard in every city, in every foreign capital, and in every hall of power.

From this day forward, a new vision will govern our land.

From this moment on, it's going to be America First.

Every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs, will be made to benefit American workers and American families.

We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies, and destroying our jobs. Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength.

I will fight for you with every breath in my body – and I will never, ever let you down.

America will start winning again, winning like never before.

We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth. And we will bring back our dreams.

We will build new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels, and railways all across our wonderful nation.

We will get our people off of welfare and back to work – rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor.

We will follow two simple rules: Buy American and Hire American.

We will seek friendship and goodwill with the nations of the world – but we do so with the understanding that it is the right of all nations to put their own interests first.

We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone, but rather to let it shine as an example for everyone to follow.

We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones – and unite the civilized world against Radical Islamic Terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth.

At the bedrock of our politics will be a total allegiance to the United States of America, and through our loyalty to our country, we will rediscover our loyalty to each other.

When you open your heart to patriotism, there is no room for prejudice.

The Bible tells us, “how good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity.”

We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements honestly, but always pursue solidarity.

When America is united, America is totally unstoppable.

There should be no fear – we are protected, and we will always be protected.

We will be protected by the great men and women of our military and law enforcement and, most importantly, we are protected by God.

Finally, we must think big and dream even bigger.

In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving.

We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action – constantly complaining but never doing anything about it.

The time for empty talk is over.

Now arrives the hour of action.

Do not let anyone tell you it cannot be done. No challenge can match the heart and fight and spirit of America.

We will not fail. Our country will thrive and prosper again.

We stand at the birth of a new millennium, ready to unlock the mysteries of space, to free the Earth from the miseries of disease, and to harness the energies, industries and technologies of tomorrow.

A new national pride will stir our souls, lift our sights, and heal our divisions.

It is time to remember that old wisdom our soldiers will never forget: that whether we are black or brown or white, we all bleed the same red blood of patriots, we all enjoy the same glorious freedoms, and we all salute the same great American Flag.

And whether a child is born in the urban sprawl of Detroit or the windswept plains of Nebraska, they look up at the same night sky, they fill their heart with the same dreams, and they are infused with the breath of life by the same almighty Creator.

So to all Americans, in every city near and far, small and large, from mountain to mountain, and from ocean to ocean, hear these words:

You will never be ignored again.

Your voice, your hopes, and your dreams, will define our American destiny. And your courage and goodness and love will forever guide us along the way.

Together, We Will Make America Strong Again.

We Will Make America Wealthy Again.

We Will Make America Proud Again.

We Will Make America Safe Again.

And, Yes, Together, We Will Make America Great Again. Thank you, God Bless You, And God Bless America.

On a cold winter day in 1961, President John F. Kennedy, only 44 years old  
Gave an inspiring inaugural speech, and he had a clear challenge, a call for all Americans to be bold  
I watched his entire speech, just the other day  
At his Presidential Library on the shore of Dorchester Bay

It was a day of pomp and circumstance, and the message was clear and loud  
The U.S. Marine Band played, I've never seen such a large crowd  
It was quite a spectacle, there was even a man in a top hat  
And I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

"A celebration of freedom" "not a victory of party, that is what President Kennedy said  
He spoke of poverty, peace, human rights; he was clearly looking ahead  
He pledged to help the "sister republics south of our border"  
Not spewing "American carnage" and the need for military law and order

He swore the "same solemn oath" prescribed centuries ago  
He was "unwilling to...permit the...undoing of...human rights", and it wasn't just for show  
You could tell he was a man of the people who would go to bat  
And I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

He was eloquent and totally engaging and he used complete sentences, and many, many multisyllabic words  
He said he would strive for a "new world... where the strong are just and the weak secure"  
He spoke to every nation, to our foes and to our friends  
He pledged his support to the U.N., not "Make America Wealthy Again"

Spoke of the "wonders of science", "eradicating disease" and "exploring the stars"  
He also spoke of "loyalty to our faithful allies", and "encouraging the arts"  
A decorated Navy sailor, not a phony in a red MAGA hat  
And I couldn't help but think, **"Why can't we have a President like that?"**

Coda:  
He said his goals wouldn't be achieved in 100 days or even in his lifetime  
I cried when he was killed a few months later; the end of his life line  
He was gone way too soon; I wish we could have had a chat  
Maybe someday **we can once again have a President like that**  
Maybe someday **we can once again have a President like that**