



JFK@100

The Kennedy Presidency 1962

JFK at 100 presented by Kennedys and King | May 2017

PRESIDENT KENNEDY
On Employee Unions



"I have always believed that the right of Federal employees to deal collectively with the Federal departments and agencies in which they are employed should be protected."

From a letter written by Mr. Kennedy one week before he was elected President.

"The American Federation of Government Employees has played a notable part in broadening and deepening the standards of career and merit service in our Government. I look forward to working with your members as I take on my new responsibilities."

Telegram from President Kennedy to AFGE Civil Service Banquet held the day following his inauguration.



January 17: Kennedy signs a law granting federal employees the right to form unions and bargain collectively. By 1967, there are over 1.2 million federal employees in unions, and the idea expands to local and state governments. On February 2, Ted Shackley moves to the Miami CIA station to supervise Operation Mongoose, the secret war against Cuba.



On February 10, Kennedy arranges an exchange of Soviet spy Rudolph Abel for U2 pilot Gary Powers in Berlin by attorney James Donovan. On March 15, Kennedy signs the Manpower Development and Training Act. It will eventually aim at alleviating African American unemployment. By the fall of 1967, nearly 350,000 persons were retrained, and over 90% will get jobs within a year.



March 16: The Pentagon proposes Operation Northwoods to Kennedy: proposals for false flag operations as a pretext to invade Cuba. JFK rejects them. On March 17, in Birmingham, Fred Shuttlesworth, Frank Dukes, and students from Miles College begin a department store boycott. This will mushroom into a year-long campaign eventually joined by Martin Luther King and the Kennedys.



On April 4, Kennedy gives Defense Secretary Robert McNamara John Kenneth Galbraith's report recommending withdrawal from Vietnam. From here on, McNamara becomes JFK's agent for his withdrawal plan. On April 11, in a televised address, Kennedy attacks the steel companies for breaking a deal he had brokered between them and the union not to raise their prices. After RFK issues subpoenas, steel capitulates in 72 hours.



June 7: Kennedy announces he will move for a tax cut to increase demand and ward off a recession. His Keynesian advisors, Walter Heller and James Tobin, agree to a capital investment plan afterwards to ratchet up the economy into fourth gear. On July 2, CIA pilot Allen Pope is released from Indonesian house arrest by Sukarno at the request of Bobby Kennedy.



On July 6, David Rockefeller and JFK exchange letters in *Life* magazine on differing views of the economy. The politeness masks deep divisions between the two men. On July 17, Kennedy's Medicare bill is defeated by a combination of the AMA and Senator Robert Kerr. On the day of his assassination, Kennedy was working with Rep. Wilbur Mills to bring the bill back.



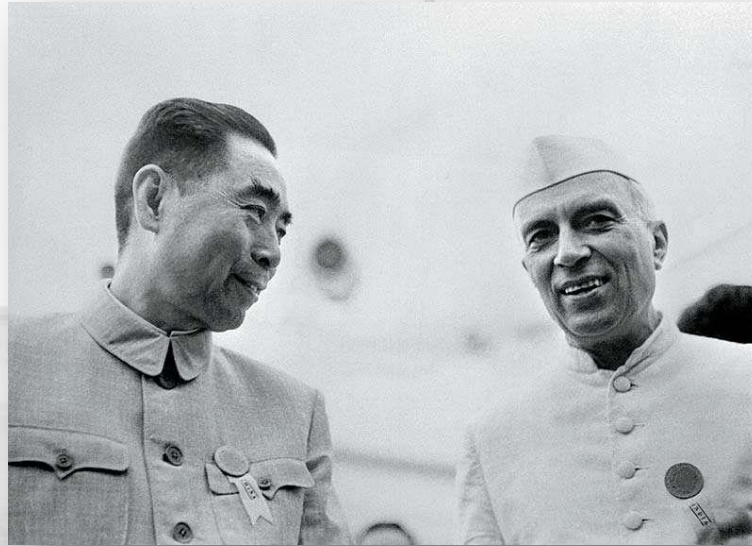
July 23: Laos neutralization plan signed in Geneva. Kennedy insists on this even though it allows infiltration by North Vietnamese troops into the south. On July 25, and on McNamara's orders, the Joint Chiefs order the Pacific command to prepare a phased withdrawal from Vietnam that would conclude in 1965.



August 15: Robert Kennedy and Ellsworth Bunker formalize the New York Agreement which turns over West Irian to Indonesia. On September 30, Gov. Ross Barnett and Gen. Edwin Walker provoke a riot over the admittance of James Meredith at Ole Miss. Two people are killed, 27 are shot. Kennedy sends in hundreds of marshals and regular army troops to quell the violence.



October 15: Kennedy learns the USSR has sent ICBMs into Cuba. This begins a 13-day nuclear crisis which ends with an accepted offer by Khrushchev to remove missiles from Cuba if JFK withdraws NATO missiles from Turkey and Italy. On October 31, Operation Mongoose is placed on hiatus and is formally disbanded the next month.



October 20: China invades India. Kennedy begins a massive weapons airlift to help Nehru. He also agrees to send an aircraft carrier fleet. China halts the invasion the day after this decision was made.



On November 16, Programs for Fair Practices agreement signed by 116 unions to eliminate discrimination in membership and apprenticeship programs. On November 20, Kennedy signs an executive order prohibiting discrimination in sales and rental of housing.



December 11: Khrushchev writes a letter to Kennedy; this begins a push for détente by JFK, Khrushchev, and Pope John XXIII, urged on by author Norman Cousins. On December 21, attorney James Donovan negotiates the release of Bay of Pigs prisoners from Cuba for \$53 million in food and medicine.



December 29: Kennedy approves U.S. participation in Grand Slam, the UN military mission to stop the Belgian and British goal of separating Katanga from Congo. This achieves its aim when the separation movement is crushed by the end of January.



“If we can contain the powerful struggle of ideologies, and reduce it to manageable proportions, we can proceed with the transcendent task of disciplining the nuclear weapons which shadow our lives, and of finding a widened range of common enterprises between ourselves and those who live under communist rule. For, in the end, we live on one planet and we are part of one human family...”

John F. Kennedy