

Kennedy's First 100 Days in 'Toughest Job in the World'

Editors Note: On Jan. 20, 1961, a confident young man—the youngest ever elected to the American presidency—took over what is frequently called the toughest job in the world. Today—100 days later—John F. Kennedy has thoroughly tested the meaning of that description. What have these 100 days been like? How have they tested the new President? How has he responded to the enormous challenges of a world convulsed with crisis? United Press International assigned to the task of appraising these 100 days a team of its top Washington experts—men who have observed the new Chief Executive in action daily. Herewith is their comprehensive review of Kennedy's first 100 days.

Washington—President Kennedy finished his first 100 days in office today. They have been days of bright promise, of great challenge, of deep agony.

The young President's troubles are as big as the world, as far-reaching as outer space. His administration, symbolically born in a blitzard, has been riding the fury of a world in turmoil.

Wherever he looked beyond the three-mile limit, he saw signs of crisis—in Cuba, Laos, Viet Nam, the Congo, France and in nuclear test negotiations teetering on the verge of collapse.

At home his domestic program and the national economy were moving sluggishly.

The United States suffered two damaging blows to its prestige last month. The Soviet Union won the race to put a man in space. Then came defeat for the U.S.-approved effort to overthrow the regime of Fidel Castro in Cuba.

By every meter of public opinion, the new President's display of energy and determination has won him personal popularity. The same recorders have indicated that he has failed to instill in Congress and the country that "sense of urgency" he talked about last year.

He has moved aggressively in foreign affairs, searching for ways to build western unity and power against the Soviet Union. Except for the initial failure in Cuba and growing pressure in Laos, he can ask for more time before the results are assessed.

On the domestic front, he has fired a score of messages to Congress. Where possible, he also has moved by executive action—to feed money into the sputtering economy, to open jobs with government and private contractors for Negroes and other minorities. His goals are economic recovery, greater national economic growth and expanded welfare programs.

Here is the appraisal in important areas by members of UPI's Washington staff:

THE WHITE HOUSE
By Merriman Smith

The mood of the new administration shifted quickly during its first 100 days, from the elation of the inaugural period to tension over Cuba and Laos, deep concern over the domestic economy, chagrin at Russian success in putting the first man into space, the sudden eruption of a new French crisis.

Kennedy and those around him met the challenges with hard work and long hours. The President followed a punishing pace. He thought nothing of 12-hour days. Some staff members worked even longer. Kennedy amazed veteran White House employees by returning to his office during the evening, even after a long day. On several occasions, he returned to his office after midnight.

Before inauguration, Kennedy was determined not to get into personal diplomacy and foreign travel early in his administration. In office, however, the international facts of life changed his mind. He found himself playing host to a stream of foreign leaders and he planned two trips out of the country in May to Canada and France.

If there was one descriptive word for the first 100 days at the White House, it was "active." Errors were made, as in the case of Cuba, but Kennedy and those around him kept driving toward noble but elusive goals that have eluded other Presidents—stable prosperity and durable peace.

FOREIGN POLICY
By Stewart Hensley

Kennedy has been trying to set guidelines for long-range policy while hampered by the need to deal immediately with a series of crises. There has been intensive review and re-assessment of all policies punctuated by specific actions forced by the swift pace of developments.

The President won British and German approval of his program for strengthening NATO. U.S. allies generally like his calm and non-belligerent, but firm, approach to dealing with Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev. But a bigger test comes when he meets Charles de Gaulle next month to try to persuade the French president to abandon his present policy of non-cooperation with NATO and the United Nations. And he will be meeting with a de Gaulle beset by grave new problems of his own.

Congo, Laos, and Cuba provided immediate tests of Kennedy's mettle in international affairs. He won at least temporary success when a firm U.S. stand against Soviet attempts to wreck United Nations effort in the Congo won support of majority of Asian and African countries. The final outcome is still unpredictable.

Kennedy's firm support of the royal Lao government against further Communist military inroads, presumably backed with force if necessary, won a pause in fighting and enabled the British to undertake diplomatic efforts. The situation had deteriorated so far that Kennedy felt he would have to settle for a coalition government giving pro-Communists some representation.

The anti-Castro invasion of Cuba presented a delicate problem in which Kennedy had to make clear the United States was not intervening but supported the aims of the invaders. His blunt reaffirmation of U.S. intention to block Soviet intervention was an effort to show the problem as a Communist threat to the hemisphere.

On more quiet fronts, the administration pursued programs aimed at strengthening relations with new African nations, increasing Latin American aid and stimulating more Western aid to underdeveloped areas.

INTELLIGENCE
By Donald May

The methods of gathering and evaluating military intelligence gave Kennedy one of his major problems and were involved in the ill-fated Cuban invasion attempt.

Most administration officials blamed the failure of the Cuban rebel assault on a two-fold intelligence misjudgment of Premier Fidel Castro's strength.

Underestimation of Castro's police state control over the people, which prevented a local uprising.

Underestimation of his military strength, mobility of forces and their will to fight. Officials said Castro had more planes and more artillery than anyone had thought. How such a misjudgment could happen for a small country close to American shores was the subject of searching government review.

Other administration moves to feed money into the economy was the proposal for supplemental unemployment insurance benefits. This was one of the first major bills through Congress.

The President sent Congress new budget estimates, showing federal spending at \$80.7 billion for this fiscal year. This left a deficit of \$2.2 billion compared to a \$79 million surplus forecast by Eisenhower.

For the next fiscal year, the revised Kennedy budget indicated spending of \$84.2 billion and a deficit of \$2.8 billion compared to an Eisenhower estimate of a \$1.4 billion surplus. The administration

said the previous administration had underestimated spending and overestimated revenue.

To speed up economic growth, the President asked Congress to approve a \$1.7 billion tax cut to business investing in new plants and equipment. He would offset the loss with higher taxes on dividend income and withholding levies on interest and dividends.

The Federal Reserve System was persuaded to abandon—at least temporarily—its long-standing policy of trading in only short-term securities. Here the goal has been to check the flow of gold abroad and to bring down long-term interest rates.

The gold outflow stopped in mid-February but government experts doubt that this problem has been solved.

NATIONAL DEFENSE
By Charles Cordry

The Defense department, in the words of Kennedy's March 28 budget message, is embarked on a "fresh, clear course for our security in a time of rising dangers and

persistent hope." Many observers call the fresh course only an elaboration and acceleration of Eisenhower defense policies.

In the missile field, the new defense team found that there was no meaningful missile gap—that is, a Russian numerical superiority which would tempt the Reds to attack. They concluded, as did their predecessors, that there was no gap in U.S. ability to deter global war.

The new program, as revealed so far, is based on two principles:

—There must be a retaliatory force so well protected that it can ride out an attack on this country and then devastate Russia.

—The nation's conventional forces must be strengthened. This is intended to reduce the number of situations in which nuclear weapons might have to be used.

The administration appears also bent on developing guerrilla warfare forces in this country and helping other countries to do the same to combat subversion and Communist guerrilla activities.

The first new moves were to increase retaliatory forces and to make them less vulnerable. The Pentagon proposed 29 Polaris missile submarines, 10 more than the Eisenhower administration had scheduled. It planned increases in Minuteman missiles for basing in underground sites. It stepped up research on the bomber-carried Skybolt missile. And it planned to keep half the Strategic Air Command's bombers on 15-minute alert for takeoff instead of the present one-third.

On the conventional arms and limited war issues, jet transports were ordered for the Air Force to haul Army forces to trouble spots quickly. Funds were asked for modernizing Navy ships and for a modest increase in procurement of conventional weapons.

While the administration asked Congress to appropriate more than \$2 billion above the Eisenhower budget, only \$650 million would be spent in fiscal 1962. The defense spending total is now projected at \$43.8 billion in fiscal 1962, the biggest in history,

except in World War II.

AGRICULTURE
By Bernard Brenner

The Agriculture department has pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the farm economy in three months.

But this is intended to be just the beginning of a broader assault on the problems of mounting farm surpluses and declining farm income. The administration has sent Congress its prescription for a long-range change in the farm economy. This is a new system for developing programs to adjust farm production to the market.

The administration bill would authorize the secretary of agriculture, working with farmer committees, to develop new commodity control and price support programs on a crop-by-crop basis. The plans would go to Congress for review. Those which did not involve controls could go into effect unless vetoed by either House within 60 days. Control plans could go into effect only if they won further approval by two-thirds

of the farmers voting in referendum.

Before sending that plan to Congress, the administration won passage of an emergency bill to raise 1961 price supports for corn and other feed grains. The bill was designed to cut feed surpluses by requiring farmers who want supports to cut acreage in return for land-retirement payments.

The boosts in feed grain supports were coupled with administrative action to increase farm income by raising supports for other major products including milk, cotton, rice, peanuts, soybeans, flax, and dry beans.

To give farmers springtime cash, the administration tapped reserves to increase federal farm credit funds, and eased credit regulations.

It also moved to expand its food donations to the needy at home and its food-for-peace program abroad.

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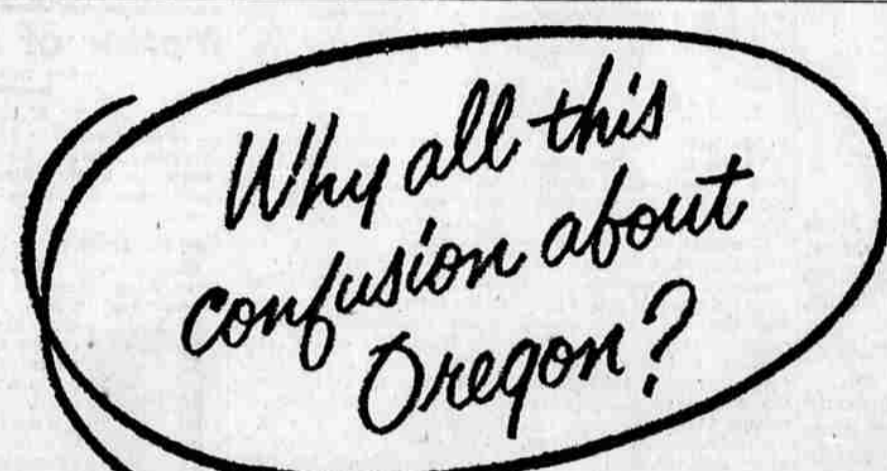
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If you're not a native of the Northwest (and one out of every three of us came here after World War II), you know just how true this map is. And un-funny. Thousands of otherwise enlightened Americans still regard New York as the center of the solar system, and Portland as a trading post somewhere south of Sitka! In drawing up their vacation plans, these people unfortunately rule out the Northwest as an isolated wilderness accessible only by wagon train.

Other than hometown pride, why should you care if these out-of-staters feel that way? The answer is basic dollars and sense. Tourists are Oregon's #3 industry. More than 6 million of these Easterners—and Californians, and Midwesterners, and Southerners, and Canadians—still manage to visit us every year, leaving behind 170 million good spendable dollars. They spend about \$6 a day, or about \$20 for the average family of 3.3 people. (Did you ever see 3/10ths of a tourist?) Suppose your community figures out a way to attract an additional 100 families per day for the 90-day tourist season. This could be the same thing as enticing a new industry with an \$180,000 annual payroll! See what we mean?

What can you do? Plenty! Turn State's witness. Be a one-man Chamber of Commerce. Make yourself insufferable with your out-of-state friends. Be a "Texan." (You've certainly got more to shout about.) Tell the next Californian you see about our lakes and seashores and mountain peaks and festivals and booming cities and more.

When you're traveling in other states this summer, proselyte for Oregon all the way. Spread some of our famous Oregon hospitality around. Convert these myopic out-of-staters into far-sighted Oregonians—maybe they'll bring their industries and their fat payrolls with them. Every new industry and every new family who moves here benefits all of us.

We're with you! The men and women who work for Pacific Telephone Northwest (all 6,000 of us) have picked this state for our home. We're here for keeps. Like you, our future is invested in Oregon. Join us—and the Chambers of Commerce and the State Government—in making this the most traveled, the most prosperous state in the nation!

ABOUT THE MAP: This marvelous factual fiction is the inspiration of Minnesota-native Daniel K. Wallingford who was amazed at how little New Yorkers knew about America. It is copyrighted and was published in 1939 by the Columbia University Bookstore.

If you have any misguided out-of-state friends who plan to visit you this summer, give us their names and addresses and we'll send them a free reprint of this ad and other information about Oregon. Write: Economic and Industrial Development Office, Rm. 802, 509 S.W. Oak Street, Portland 4. Or call CA 6-5978. Or contact your local Telephone Business Office. Let's tell the world about Oregon!