

Chiang Kai-shek, Oral History Statement, 11/22/1964
Administrative Information

Creator: Chiang Kai-shek
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Biographical Note

Chiang Kai-shek, President of the Republic of China (1948-1975), reflects on John F. Kennedy's presidency and legacy, among other issues.

Access

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Transcript of Oral History Interview

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SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Taipei, Taiwan
February 26, 1965

Mr. Frederick G. Dutton
Coordinator
c/o James Harrison
Room 7253
Department of States
Washington, D. C.
U. S. A.

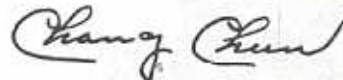
Dear Mr. Dutton,

This is to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of January 16, 1965 and its enclosures.

Regarding your request for President Chiang to sign a legal form of transfer for his recorded tape previously sent to the Kennedy Library, as he has stated in his letter of December 5, 1964 to Mr. Robert Kennedy that the recording or its text in question may be released at any time, you may probably agree that this formality of signing a legal transfer can be done away with.

We thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



CHANG CHUN

66-67

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Taipei, Taiwan
December 5, 1964

Senator Robert Kennedy
Hickory Hill
McLean, Virginia
U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

Earlier in the year, I received your letter of March 23 asking me to take part in the oral history program for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library. Secretary General Chang Chun, in acknowledging your letter on my behalf on May 27, informed you that most likely I would record a statement on November 22, the first anniversary of President Kennedy's assassination. This I have done, and the tape accompanied by both Chinese and English texts, has been sent to you through the U.S. Embassy in Taipei. It should have reached you by now. I wish to add that you may release my recording or its text to the public any time you wish.

Wishing you continued success in your political career,

Sincerely yours,

Chiang Kai-shek

Oral History Statement

By

Chiang Kai-Shek

22 November 1964

For the John F. Kennedy Library

Today is the first anniversary of the tragic assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States. On this occasion I wish to recall to memory some of the efforts he made in behalf of freedom and peace.

Though I never had the pleasure of meeting President Kennedy personally, I was profoundly impressed by the exemplary record of his more than ten years in public life. As early as 1947, when the international situation was deteriorating rapidly, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, then a member of the House of Representatives and only thirty years of age, impressed the world with his strong support for President Truman's [Harry S. Truman] policy of aiding Turkey and Greece. During the years when the situation on the Chinese mainland was going from bad to worse, Mr. Kennedy spoke out for China. In speeches delivered in the House of Representatives, he pointed out the causes for failure of American foreign policy in the Far East and appealed for action to prevent the Communist disaster that was threatening all of Asia. His stand at that time showed his political far-sightedness and his courage in upholding justice. His statements provided much encouragement to peoples who were overcoming extreme difficulties in order to continue the life-and-death struggle to defeat totalitarian tyranny to assure freedom.

During the presidential campaign of 1960, I came to have deep respect for his ability, his great talents, his youthful vitality, and his resourcefulness.

[-1-]

On the occasion of his inauguration, he expressed his concern about world developments and his willingness to shoulder the responsibility for maintaining world peace. I remember that he

said: "Let every nation know, whether it wish us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend or oppose any foe in order to assure the survival and success of liberty." He said further: "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." These remarks were echoed and re-echoed in the hearts of freedom-loving, peace-loving people throughout the world.

President Kennedy met his tragic death without serving out his term. Yet with his great capability and his high political ideals, he recorded brilliant domestic achievements during his brief two years and ten months in the presidency. He earned his rightful place in history and should be ranked with the other immortals of the past. In several of his speeches, he expressed his admiration for Abraham Lincoln. The two shared the same lofty political ideals. President Lincoln, who had signed the proclamation emancipating the Negro slaves, was assassinated by a man of doubtful sonneteer. President Kennedy, sponsored various measures to protect civil rights and to promote freedom, justice and equality of opportunities for all, also met his death at the hands of a lunatic. He may be compared with Lincoln in greatness of spirit and generosity of heart as well. I personally consider President Kennedy as the "second Lincoln" among U.S. presidents

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because of his efforts to restore freedom and hope to the billion people enslaved by the Communists. It is a terrible calamity that in the prime of his life, President Kennedy met the same fate as Lincoln. While we grieve over this tragedy, we may derive some comfort from the fact that President Kennedy, in sacrificing his life to uphold righteousness and to safeguard human rights, earned an immortal page in history beside that of Lincoln. "He who seeks benevolence has found it." President Kennedy could die without regrets.

Though he held the highest office for such a short time, President Kennedy's diplomatic accomplishments were not inferior to those of any other modern world statesman. At the time he took office, the international Communist bloc was at the height of its arrogance. His correct policy and firm stand prevented the Communists from making, any substantial international gains. In the Cuban Crisis of October, 1962, the courageous decision and actions of President Kennedy compelled Nikita Khrushchev [Nikitia Sergeyeovich Khrushchev] to yield and withdraw the Soviet missiles. Thus nipped in the bud was the possible catastrophe of nuclear war for the peoples of the Western Hemisphere as well as for the rest of the world. This contribution of President Kennedy to peace and to the welfare of the people of the world will be written gloriously in mankind's history.

Although President Kennedy won universal acclaim for safeguarding world peace and seeking freedom for all mankind, he was not able to implement fully his ideals in international politics, for the freedom of man, and for the security of the world. He failed, for example, to attain his objective of

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eliminating the evil of Communism in Laos and truly unifying and neutralizing that country. Nor was he able to, carry out his policy of defeating the Viet Cong guerrillas and of

stabilizing the situation in Southeast Asia. Thus the Viet Cong rebels today are more rampant than ever and the situation in Vietnam is more perilous than during his lifetime. President Kennedy did not live to realize his goal of controlling Peiping's nuclear ambitions and of eliminating the danger of atomic war and of promoting the peace and welfare of mankind. Alas, all these unfinished tasks express the tragedy of his loss. Had God seen fit to prolong his life, I am convinced that he would join us in our common task and that together we would be able to prevent the Chi-Coms from engulfing all Asia.

Judging from the profound lamentation of the American nation and its allies at his passing, we may see that both his domestic and international achievements won widespread acclaim at home and abroad. I regard him as one of the greatest American leaders in history. Like a comet, his passage was swift, yet his brilliant light will shine upon the earth forever. On this first anniversary of his death, I express my deepest respects to the memory of a great American President.

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[END OF STATEMENT]

Chiang Kai-Shek Oral History Statement
Name List

K

Kennedy, John F., 1, 2, 3, 4

Khrushchev, Nikitia Sergeyevich, 3

L

Lincoln, Abraham, 2, 3

T

Truman, Harry S., 1

總統爲美國故甘迺迪總統紀念圖書館「口述歷史方案」發表之紀念性談

話：

今天是美國第三十五任總統約翰·費茲傑洛·甘迺迪不幸遇刺逝世週年紀念日，本人願乘此對他生前爲自由和平事業所從事的努力，表示懷念之忱！

本人雖與甘迺迪總統緣慳一面，但是對其生前從事公職十餘年間之光輝紀念，印象至爲深刻。民國三十六年（一九四七），正當國際局勢急劇惡化之際，甘氏以一位年僅三十歲之衆議員身份，即曾強烈支持杜魯門總統援助土耳其與希臘之政策。在中國大陸情勢日趨不利之時，更挺身爲中國仗義執言，他在衆議院發表之演說中，指出美國遠東外交政策失敗之原因，並呼籲阻止正在吞噬着全亞洲之共產赤禍，凡此都能充份表現其偉大的人格及其政

治遠見，與維護正義之道德勇氣，同時亦給予當時正處於困境中爲爭取自由反抗極權暴政進行殊死奮鬥之人民一股充沛的鼓舞力量。

民國四十九（一九六〇）年，甘氏競選總統時，本人曾以其年青有爲，才識卓越，和富有活力，而深爲欽佩！嗣後就任總統職位，本人對其就職演辭中，處處以整個世局爲念，並以維護自由爲己任，記憶良深。甘氏曾說：「讓每一個國家都知道，不論它對於我們是爲友抑爲仇，我們將爲保證自由的存在與勝利，付出一切代價，逃起一切重擔，忍受一切困苦，支持所有的朋友，反對所有的敵人」。他又說：「在漫長的世界歷史中，只有幾個時代的人，能够在最大危險的時刻，被賦予捍衛自由的重任，我決不逃避這一責任——而且極樂意承受」。此等言論，已在全世界愛好自由與和平的人民心中

，引起強烈的反響。

甘迺迪總統雖任期未滿，猝然逝世，但以其卓越之才智與偉大之政治理想，在短短兩年十個月之總統任內，其在美國國內方面之治績，已足光耀史冊，無愧前賢。他在許多次演講中，流露了對林肯總統欽慕之情。甘氏和林肯同具高超的政治理想，林肯總統親筆簽署了黑奴解放宣言，不久即為暴徒所狙擊，甘氏為保護公民權益，促進公平幸福之道德生活，而採取之種種措施，其雄偉的氣魄，與恢宏的胸襟，足可與林肯總統媲美。故余常以甘迺迪總統解放共產奴役下十億人民之自由與生存，為美國總統之第二林肯相期許。所不幸者，甘氏正當盛年，竟與林肯同其命運，吾人對此歷史之重大悲劇，殊不勝其惋惜，但是甘氏為維護正義，保障人權，所作之犧牲，在歷史上

亦足可與林肯總統同其不朽。「求仁得仁」，甘氏雖死，當亦無憾！

甘迺迪總統在任時間雖短，但其在外交方面之一切行事，較諸任何國際政治領袖，絕無遜色。甘氏就任之初，國際共產集團氣焰萬丈，但以甘氏政策正確，立場堅決，遂使國際共產集團，並未能在國際間獲得任何實質權益。民國五十一年（一九六二年）十月間之古巴危權，甘迺迪總統所採取的果敢行動，迫使黑魯雪夫屈服，撤退其在古巴境內的蘇俄飛彈部隊，乃使自由世界和西半球人民，免受一場核子戰爭之災禍，其時對世界人類和平幸福之貢獻，更爲世界歷史中永久光榮之一頁！

雖然，儘管甘迺迪總統，爲保障和平與爭取自由所作之努力，已贏得衆多之讚賞，但是甘氏生前，對他自己國際政治之理想，尙有未能在其任內完

成人類自由與世界安全之抱負者，即如對寮國組織聯合政府，未能達成其消除共禍，成立其爲一真正中立與統一國家的初衷！以及剿除越南共黨游擊隊，以安定東南亞之政策，亦未能在其生前成功，今且越共猖獗愈甚，越局益急！特別是其對中國大陸共匪原子裝置之毀滅，以消除世界核子戰爭之後患，謀求人類和平幸福之偉大願望，亦未能及身實現！余相信此皆爲甘氏畢生之遺憾乎！上帝如能假以時日，益其壽命，余深信甘總統必能與吾人達到其阻止正在吞噬着全亞洲之中共赤禍也。

由於甘迺迪總統被刺逝世時，美國舉國哀悼之深，世界友邦悲傷之切，足見其任內對內對外一切作爲，均能深得人心，本人認爲甘總統實不愧爲美國歷史上偉大領袖之一，雖如慧星之早殞，但其燦爛之光芒，必將永留人間

。本人願在其逝世一週年紀念日，再度對故甘迺迪總統表示深刻悼念之忱！