



To Move the World: JFK's Quest for Peace

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

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An inspiring look at the historic foreign policy triumph of John F. Kennedy's presidency—the crusade for world peace that consumed his final year in office—by the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Price of Civilization*, *Common Wealth*, and *The End of Poverty*

The last great campaign of John F. Kennedy's life was not the battle for reelection he did not live to wage, but the struggle for a sustainable peace with the Soviet Union. *To Move the World* recalls the extraordinary days from October 1962 to September 1963, when JFK marshaled the power of oratory and his remarkable political skills to establish more peaceful relations with the Soviet Union and a dramatic slowdown in the proliferation of nuclear arms.

Kennedy and his Soviet counterpart, Nikita Khrushchev, led their nations during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when the two superpowers came eyeball to eyeball at the nuclear abyss. This near-death experience shook both leaders deeply. Jeffrey D. Sachs shows how Kennedy emerged from the Missile crisis with the determination and prodigious skills to forge a new and less threatening direction for the world. Together, he and Khrushchev would pull the world away from the nuclear precipice, charting a path for future peacemakers to follow.

During his final year in office, Kennedy gave a series of speeches in which he pushed back against the momentum of the Cold War to persuade the world that peace with the Soviets was possible. The oratorical high point came on June 10, 1963, when Kennedy delivered the most important foreign policy speech of the modern presidency. He argued against the prevailing pessimism that viewed humanity as doomed by forces beyond its control. Mankind, argued Kennedy, could bring a new peace into reality through a bold vision combined with concrete and practical measures.

Achieving the first of those measures in the summer of 1963, the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, required more than just speechmaking, however. Kennedy had to use his great gifts of persuasion on multiple fronts—with fractious allies, hawkish Republican congressmen, dubious members of his own administration, and the American and world public—to persuade a skeptical world that cooperation between the superpowers was realistic and necessary. Sachs shows how Kennedy campaigned for his vision and opened the eyes of the American

people and the world to the possibilities of peace.

Featuring the full text of JFK's speeches from this period, as well as striking photographs, *To Move the World* gives us a startlingly fresh perspective on Kennedy's presidency and a model for strong leadership and problem solving in our time.

Praise for *To Move the World*

"Rife with lessons for the current administration . . . We cannot know how many more steps might have been taken under Kennedy's leadership, but *To Move the World* urges us to continue on the journey."—***Chicago Tribune***

"The messages in these four speeches seem all too pertinent today."—***Publishers Weekly***

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

UN special advisor Sachs (*Price of Civilization*) revisits the Cold War challenges facing the Kennedy administration during the Strangelove-ian era between October 1962 and September 1963. In this careful study, Sachs zeroes in on four key speeches Kennedy delivered in the months prior to his assassination in November 1963. Specifically, the book focuses on the American University commencement address known as the Peace Speech, also the theme of the author's Reith Lecture for the BBC six years ago. JFK, together with gifted speechwriter Ted Sorensen—his "intellectual alter ego"—set out a strategy for nations to live in "mutual tolerance", with ramifications that extend into the 21st century. Influenced by the writings of Winston Churchill and Pope John XXIII, the two collaborated to send a message of hope to the Class of 1963. Two weeks later Kennedy flew to Ireland where he delivered this message to members of the Irish Parliament. By July he announced a partial test ban treaty to the nation, and brought this news to the UN General Assembly. While sound bites of the Kennedy-Sorensen collaboration echo in modern classrooms—"Ask not what your country can do for you"—the messages in these four speeches seem all too pertinent today. (June)

Review

"This book is more than merely an exegesis of the major speeches of the last year of the Kennedy presidency. Rather, it presents Kennedy's approach to achieving peace as a model for leaders of today. . . . The book is rife with lessons for the current administration, given its virtual deadlock with Congress on issues including, but not limited to, gun legislation, the United Nations Treaty on Disabilities, [and] immigration reform. . . . We cannot know how many more steps might have been taken under Kennedy's leadership, but *To Move the World* urges us to continue on the journey."—*Chicago Tribune*

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"After years trying to work out how underperforming economies can reach their full potential, [Jeffrey D. Sachs] has taken time out to offer an act of homage to his childhood hero—John F. Kennedy. And he has singled out one of JFK's speeches for particular praise. . . . The true masterpiece, he believes, was a speech delivered to the American University in Washington DC in June 1963 and generally referred to as the Peace Speech. Sachs has come up with an argument making the case that the Peace Speech deserves wider recognition. . . . Why then does Sachs see the Peace Speech as so important? As he convincingly argues, it is all about context. Before the speech, he says, both sides had unrelentingly used Cold War rhetoric. In the last year of his life, emboldened by his success in defusing the Cuban missile crisis, JFK handled issues of international security with a new confidence and in a new way. . . . Sachs makes his case."—*The Spectator*

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Jeffrey D. Sachs is a world-renowned professor of economics, leader in sustainable development, senior UN

advisor, bestselling author, and syndicated columnist whose monthly newspaper columns appear in more than one hundred countries. He is the director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and Special Advisor to UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon on the Millennium Development Goals, which are designed to reduce extreme poverty, disease, and hunger, a position he also held under former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan. Sachs directs the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network on behalf of the secretary-general. He has received many honors around the world, including the Sargent Shriver Award for Equal Justice, India's Padma Bhushan award, Poland's Commanders Cross of the Order of Merit, and many honorary degrees. He has twice been named among the hundred most influential leaders in the world by *Time* magazine.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Helen Tate:

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Kirk Nutter:

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