**John F Kennedy Biography Essay**

The name John Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK) incites a single narrative of the assassination of an American president. He was the youngest and 35th United States (U.S.) president. He was also the youngest president to leave office following his assassination on November 22, 1963. To date, people associate JFK's assassination with conspiracy theories because he was unlike other presidents who entered the office and vacated their campaign pledges. During his presidential election campaign, JFK noted how the previous Republican-led administrations let Americans down in terms of military and economic progress. In addition, JFK stated that Russia and its communist agenda would overwhelm the American capitalist ideal. Even though JFK was the youngest United States President, he used his Democratic Party ticket to initiate economic and military policies that made America the superpower it is today.

**JFK's Economic Programs**

***Economic Vision***

In his campaign pledges, Kennedy promised to get America moving again. He achieved that promise by giving Americans an economic vision and implementing policies to support that vision. In his inaugural speech, Kennedy launched the economic vision for his tenure using the famous phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country" (JFK Library, 1961). The economic vision was vital to kickstart the American economy because Kennedy won the presidential elections during the 1960s depression. The 1960s depression resulted from Republican-led policies that implemented contractionary monetary policy. The policy dampened economic growth to contain the rising inflation (Amadeo, 2022). As a result, economic growth was 7.25%, and the Federal government increased interest rates to 4% to curb consumer spending in 1959. Following Kennedy's election into office, the unemployment rate hit an all-time high of 6.6% compared to other recessions. The public outcry for government assistance was overwhelming. Kennedy addressed the public's attitude towards government assistance by setting a vision to rally Americans towards personal responsibility.

***Deficit Spending***

Kennedy implemented economic policies to re-ignite the economy out of recession. While Congress is a significant factor in economic policies, Kennedy bypassed Congress by advising the Federal government to carry forward its government spending by one year. In his first 14 days in office, Kennedy pumped billions into the economy to facilitate immediate recovery from the economic recession and pave the way for increased long-term economic growth (Amadeo, 2021). The foregone federal spending injected $23 billion into State aid programs. The corresponding effect comprised tax refunds, accelerated payment of farm price supports, and G.I. life insurance dividends (Amadeo, 2021). In other words, Kennedy proved that government spending was viable for re-igniting economic growth from a recession. However, foregone federal expenditure was not enough; therefore, Kennedy implemented three other policies to support economic growth: food stamps, tax cuts, and mental health.

***Food Stamps***

First, Kennedy addressed social welfare by implementing the food stamps program. The Food Stamp Act of 1964, which still benefits millions of Americans today, would not have been possible without Kennedy (Caswell et al., 2013). The food stamps program followed the depression model of surplus goods produced by the federal government and redirected to the poor as unemployment relief (Caswell et al., 2013). The government implemented a food stamp program following the Great Depression but terminated the pilot program in 1943 during World War II. Kennedy bypassed Congress to develop a new food stamp piloting program to address the 1960s depression (Caswell et al., 2013). Following his death in 1963, Congress made Kennedy's food stamp program permanent legislation as the Food Stamp Act of 1964.

***Tax Cuts***

Second, Kennedy implemented tax cuts to increase personal income. Kennedy reasoned that the high-income tax rate (91%) was vital to the war but impeded economic growth in peace times (Amadeo, 2021; Schlesinger, 2011). Therefore, Kennedy proposed and implemented tax cuts of 65% to increase financial incentives for investment, personal effort, and risk-taking entrepreneurship. Currently, the income tax rate of 35% would not have been possible if Kennedy did not pave the way.

***Mental Health***

Economists have come to appreciate the negative correlation between mental health and economic growth. Kennedy addressed mental health at a time when most Presidents had never prioritized its national importance. Kennedy amended the Social Security Act on October 24, 1963, to include Mental Retardation Planning and Maternal and Child Health. The amendment increased State funding for mental health programs. In addition, Kennedy amended the Communities Mental Health Act to increase the financing of mental health infrastructure.

**Military Superpower**

Besides economic growth, Kennedy also influenced American foreign policy on international military interventions. For instance, during the Soviet incursion into Germany, Kennedy reinforced the German military, effectively halting the Soviet advance. Similarly, Kennedy deployed diplomacy and the threat of nuclear retaliation if the Soviets continued constructing missile sites in Cuba within striking distance of the U.S.

**Conclusion**

Kennedy significantly improved American economic and military policies, paving the way for America as a 21st-century superpower. While his Republican predecessors tussled with Congress over economic policies and settled for poor solutions, Kennedy leveraged his genius to avoid congressional approval to inject billions into the economy. His other economic stimulus packages, such as food stamps and tax cuts, effectively restored the economy from its depressed state. Addressing mental health addresses social welfare issues that impose adverse economic outcomes. Finally, his foreign policy to stop the communist Soviet influence increased American military power in various parts of the globe today.

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