

[John F. Kennedy on the Containment of Communism]

s.l., August 12, 1952.

Autograph Manuscript, 11 pages.

[*strikeout*]

This is the 6th time in as many years that the Mass. A F of L. [*inserted: have*] has done me the high honor of inviting me to address their annual convention.

I came here first in 1947 [*struck: when*] as a new member of Congress. [2]

II

1947 was a [*struck: time*] [*inserted: year*] of great expectations; We looked [*struck: to*] forward to a world at peace – at home we hoped that the industrial gains of war [*inserted: a by product*] would make a better life for the people of this Country.

Now six years later [*inserted: in this summer [discount].*] all of that has changed and [3] many of our glittering hopes [*inserted: of other years*] have turned to ashes [*inserted: around us*] [*struck: and we continue to pay heavily for the years til I was to*]

And the dread problems that march across our horizons in one endless column try our ingenuity and [*inserted: tax our*] imaginations.

[4] Abroad, we are faced by an enemy, [*struck: relentless*] power less, unrelenting and implacable who seeks to dominate the world by subversion and conspiracy and when all else fails to military force – of which he now possesses [5] through productively far poorer a substantial superiority. In 1952 or 1953 while that superiority lasts he may [*struck: also*] choose to plunge the world into the most destructive [*strikeout*] [*struck: a war*] [*inserted: war*] in the human race's long history. Or he [6] may, believing [*inserted: that*] time is a friend, [*inserted: illegible*] continue his efforts to seize control by [*struck: the*] more subtle methods [*struck: wh*] which have proved so successful in the past.

All problems [*struck: still*] are dwarfed by the necessity of the West to maintain against the Communists a balance [7] of power – and we note with concern the crumbling away of our defenses [*struck: in*] [*inserted: in many areas of*] the Middle & Far East.

[*strikeout*]

[*struck: I sometimes*]

But In our efforts to contain the tide of Communist expansion, it would [8] be a mistake to judge the Communist threat as primarily military, although it is Russian military prestige that [struck: has] gives [struck: persua] [inserted: force &] persuasion [struck: to her] [struck: [attraction]] to [struck: the beliefs of] its political & economic [9] doctrines. Certainly we must [struck: stand] devote all our available energies [strikeout] to the task of rebuilding our military strength and we should use every means at our disposal to persuade our friends in the West to do likewise.

[10] But the Communists also [struck: seek to] move a head by exploiting by [struck: more subtle] means – more subtle but equally dangerous – they exploit the resentment of those [strikeout] [struck: and] [strikeout] people too long [struck: held dominate] deprived of their fair share of a nation’s income – of those who [11] [strikeout] desiring to work – but who cannot find it – by those [struck: too long held] who live on the marginal edge of starvation – who see little hope for their children – by those who seek [rules] [inserted: to see their nation] [struck: to the] free & independent – and [inserted: yet] are dominated by an ancient master –

Notes: The word “powerless” on page four was probably meant to be “powerful.” Written on stationary of the House of Representatives.