

# THE KENNEDY YEARS

Those  
things will  
kill you  
Mr.  
President!



# THE ELECTION OF 1960

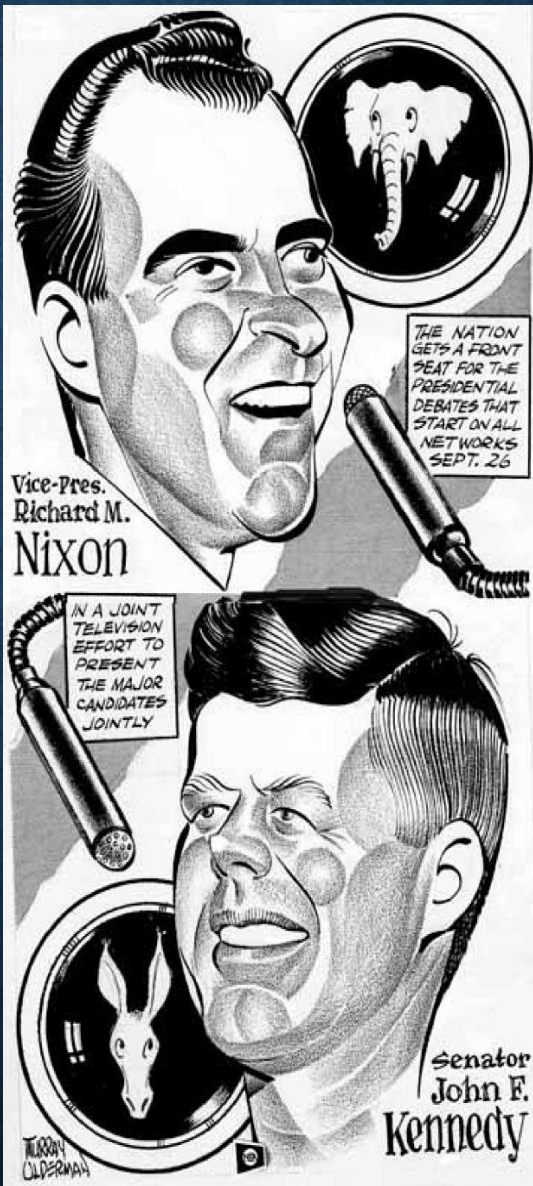
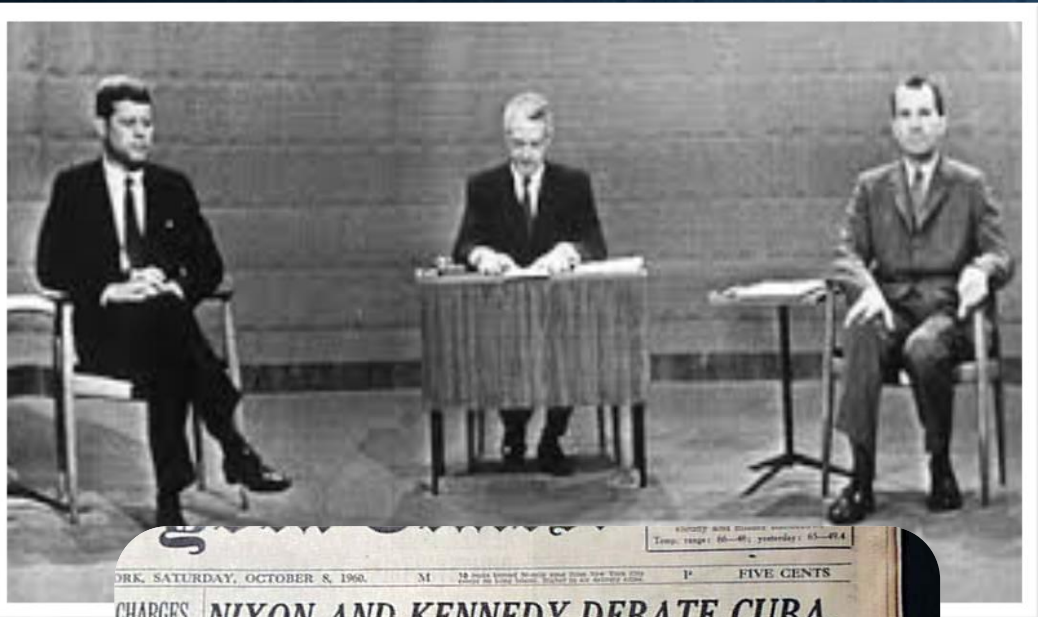
- Vice President Richard Nixon - Republican nominee in 1960
  - Had successfully used the media with “Checkers” speech (1952)
  - Associated with eight years of peace and prosperity
  - Tough on communism as member of Congress
  - Had debated Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev... held his own
- Democrats nominate Senator John F. Kennedy (D-MA):
  - Father was rags to riches story from the 1920s crash...
  - Congressman and Senator from Massachusetts
  - WWII veteran... PT109 commander in the South Pacific
  - Tough on communism in House and Senate
  - Won Pulitzer prize for *Profiles in Courage* in 1957
  - Catholic, experienced, young, and handsome... all of it matters...



Kennedy and Nixon were actually close friends... Kennedy suffered from back issues and Nixon reportedly wept over fear that Kennedy might die in surgery... Kennedy told his close friends that, if he didn't win the Democrat nomination in 1960, he would vote for Nixon!

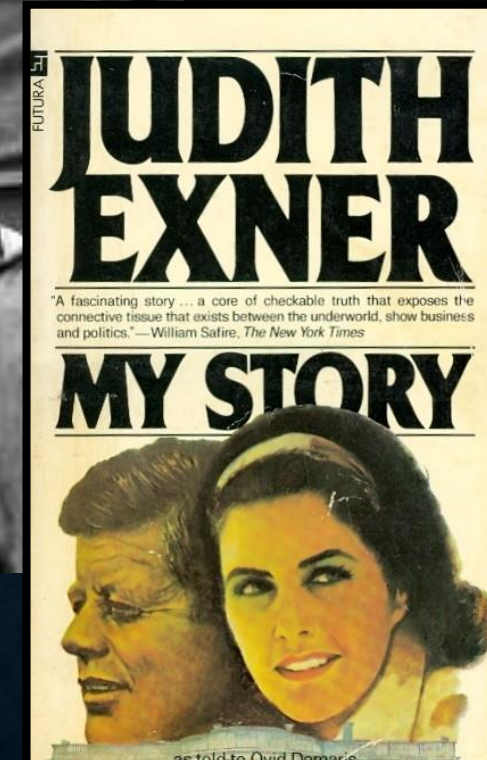


# THE TELEVISED DEBATES



# THE BAY OF PIGS

- Castro overthrows Cuban dictator Batista in 1959
- Eisenhower recognizes the Castro regime... mistake.
- Kennedy inherits this messy situation/ plan:
  - Eisenhower approved CIA plan early 1963
  - Organize Cuban exiles – Miami
  - CIA also plotted Castro's assassination
  - Recruited Mafia hitmen for the attempt
  - Kennedy felt pressure to take Castro out
  - Oh... almost forgot... Judy Exner
  - Oh... and Marilyn Monroe
  - JFK approves Bay of Pigs operation
  - Made agreement with Cuban General Almeida
  - Castro's assassination was "lynchpin" of plan
  - Cuban national hired by Mafia for assassination
  - April 17, 1961...



# BERLIN



¿Es un puro en el bolsillo "compañero?"

- Kennedy's failure in Cuba viewed as weakness by Soviets
- July 1961 over 1,000 crossing into West Berlin per day
- Khrushchev challenges Kennedy in Berlin... supports building of the wall by East Germany
- Kennedy calls up reservists/ small-scale mobilization
- Barbed wire, tank traps, and minefields all faced inward... President Reagan's quote.
- Castro facilitates placing Soviet IRBMs in Cuba
  - 15 minute flight time to major U.S. cities
  - Khrushchev lies to Kennedy about missiles
  - U-2 spy planes reveal the truth... IRBM and

**CUBA** SENSATIONAL MOVE  
BY KENNEDY

**BLOCKADE!**



**Ultimatum to Khrushchev  
'Move those missiles'**

Pictured in Washington— Kennedy as he said last night: We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth—but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

**PRESIDENT KENNEDY** last night announced a full-scale blockade of Cuba to stop a build-up of Russian missiles there.

He said that Cuba had been turned into an offensive base able to rocket destruction into the heart of America.

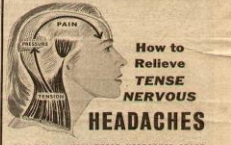
Early this morning a defence spokesman said the United States is prepared to sink Soviet ships if necessary to prevent offensive weapons from reaching Cuba.



**Two types**

The presence of these missiles is to be used to create a major strategic advantage.

The President's ultimatum to Khrushchev and Russia was given in radio and TV broadcast to the American people. He said: Within the next week, we will establish the fact that a system of offensive missiles is in the process of being installed on the island of Cuba.



**How to Relieve TENSE NERVOUS HEADACHES**  
**ANADIN** NOW THESE HEADACHES START  
Relieves Pain fast  
Relaxes Pressure  
Eases Tension  
Nothing acts faster than **ANADIN**  
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**THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS**

- Closest the U.S. and U.S.S.R. ever come to nuclear war
- U-2 photos reveal Khrushchev's lies to Kennedy
- President's cabinet is divided
- Robert Kennedy provides solution...
  - Quarantine Cuba
  - Prevent further deliveries from Soviets
  - Send U.S. Navy to enforce blockade
- Kennedy cables Khrushchev to "return to earlier situation..."
- Khrushchev sends secret letter to Kennedy...
  - Offers withdrawal for promise to not invade
  - Public relations victory for the young president!



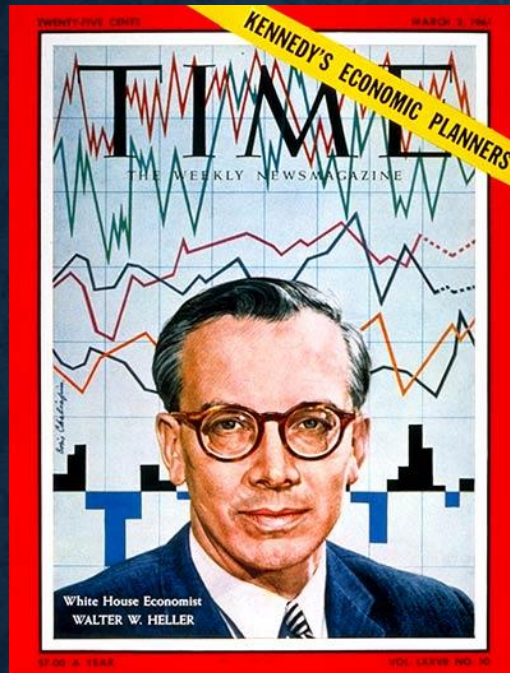
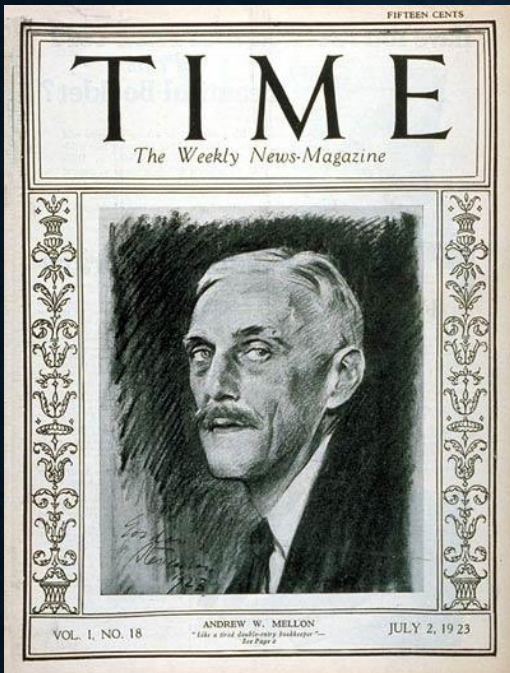
—published in Chicago Tribune, June 1961



# WHERE CAN WE CATCH THEM?

- Soviet dominance in space:
  - Launch Sputnik in August 1957
  - Put Yuri Gagarin in orbit April 1961
- Kennedy commits U.S. to putting man on moon by end of the decade
  - Expenditure of \$5 billion on space yearly until 1969
  - “Beating the Russians to the moon is the top priority of NASA and, except for defense, the top priority of the U.S. government. Otherwise, we shouldn’t be spending this kind of money, because I’m not that interested in space.” JFK
  - Apollo 11 successfully lands Armstrong, Collins, and Aldrin on the moon on July 20, 1969.
  - Soviets slowly shift funding into navy and nukes, having been defeated in space.
  - Apollo was a Cold War victory for the U.S.





# TAX CUTS AND GROWTH

- JFK favored tax cuts to generate wealth in spite of advice from Walter Heller:
  - “Supply-side Mellonism”
  - “The history of taxation shows that taxes which are inherently excessive are not paid. The high rates inevitably put pressure upon the taxpayer to withdraw his capital from productive business.” Andrew Mellon
  - Proposed two year across the board reduction
    - 91% to 70% on top earners
    - 20% to 14% on bottom
  - Added depreciation incentives for new plant and equipment purchases
- American economy over next six years:
  - Savings increased growth from 2%-9%
  - Business investment rates increased 2%-8%
  - GNP increased 40% first two years
  - Job growth doubled
  - Unemployment fell by 1/3
  - Federal revenues increased...

“The (Kennedy) tax cuts paid for itself in increased tax revenues because it did seem to have a tremendously stimulating effect.”

Walter Heller, *Testifying before Congress in 1977*





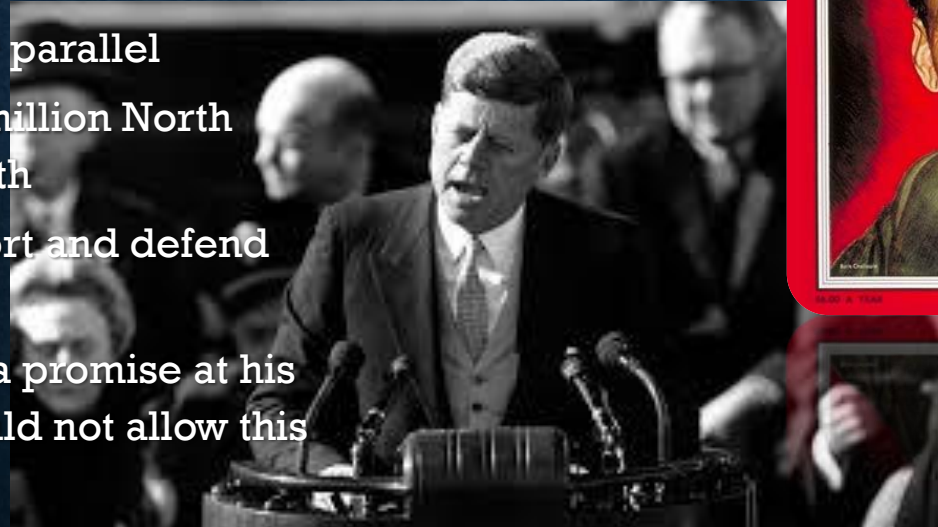
# QUAGMIRE

## Domino Theory

Rising communist sentiment in Vietnam leads U.S. President Eisenhower to describe the situation as a "**domino theory**" that will threaten Southeast Asia.



- Eisenhower deserves much of the blame for Vietnam...
  - America had been paying 80% of French effort in Vietnam
  - 1954 accords ended the French presence there
  - Ho Chi Minh had been supported by the OSS during WWII as a spy
  - Eisenhower's "Domino Theory"
  - Open and free elections in Vietnam probably would have brought Ho to power
  - Vietnam divided at the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel
  - Upon division almost one million North Vietnamese fled to the South
  - Eisenhower failed to support and defend South Vietnam
  - President Kennedy makes a promise at his inaugural speech... he would not allow this domino to topple...



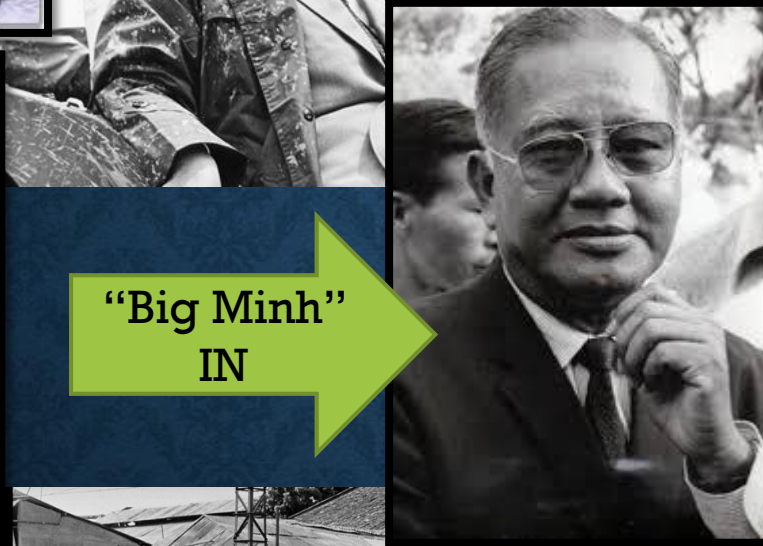
# VIETNAM



Premier Diem  
OUT



Buddhist Self-  
immolation



“Big Minh”  
IN



- JFK was advised that 40,000 American soldiers would be needed to fight 17,000 Vietcong rebels
  - If North Vietnamese got involved... it would require three times as many soldiers
  - JFK dispatches 500 Green Berets to Vietnam
  - By 1963, almost 17,000 American troops in South Vietnam
  - At final press conference, JFK says... “For us to withdraw... would mean a collapse not only of South Vietnam but Southeast Asia... So we are going to stay there.”
  - All his military advisors agreed that America should increase American commitment to South Vietnam

Kennedy and his advisors plan a coup...

- South Vietnamese Premier Diem was criticized in western press – anti-Buddhist policies
- Kennedy always watched the press closely to control public opinion
- November 2, 1963, Diem and his brother shot and knifed several times... “Big Minh” comes to power.

# ASSASSINATION

