

whatever experience you might receive over any other channel until you again turn the tuning knob... Thus, if you are watching a comedy during a news program, or perhaps during an interview with Mr. Churchill, you will have to get that news or the sense of that interview elsewhere. You will always be able to get it from your newspaper. In fact, you will depend on getting it there. The newspaper will still be a vital means of communication."

**John F. Kennedy:  
Poverty amid Prosperity**

*John F. Kennedy was the Democratic Senator from Massachusetts when he addressed The Chicago Economic Club on October 9, 1957, on prosperity and poverty.*



Lawrence Seaway to baseball, has been long and sometimes intense. Legend has it that one Bostonian, who had made frequent visits to the Loop, was agreeably surprised upon arriving in the next world to find, as he exclaimed out loud: 'Heaven is no different from Chicago!' 'Excuse me, sir,' said a doleful bystander, 'you are not in heaven.'

"Even for a local resident to speak of American international responsibilities before a Chicago audience was at one time an invitation to high adventure. Today, however, Chicago provides a natural forum for such a discussion, for it has become one of the great international cities of the world..."

"Similar changes have altered the contours of our foreign policy. It was only 20 years ago that President Roosevelt came here to Chicago to deliver his famous 'Quarantine the Aggressors' address. The articulate response to that speech was generally even more chilling than the winds which usually blow across the Lake Shore Bridge which the president was dedicating. Yet today that same speech would probably be criticized as a weak and tepid pronouncement on the obvious and inescapable responsibilities of American leadership. Such is the measure of progress—or at least change.

"Today, other vast changes in world relationships demand our attention and reassessment of our role as leader. Before noting some of these changes, however, I want to offer a short zoology lesson on the Scandinavian rodent known as the lemming. Never far south of the Arctic Circle, these small, mouse-like animals are—like Americans—noted for being restless, courageous and pugnacious—for never running from a fight. But in certain areas, the Arctic lemmings are even better known for their strange mass migrations, in which they advance steadily and slowly over tremendous areas of land, devouring every blade of grass, every crop, every garden in their path, actually multiplying as they march, swarming through towns and across rivers, not one turning back—until, after a devastating journey of from one to three years, they reach the Atlantic Ocean, plunge blindly and resolutely ahead and perish without a single survivor..."

"Could this nation, this world, be headed for the fate of the lemming? Could we be plunging blindly on, fat and merry and pugnacious and unstoppable, oblivious to the suicidal course toward which our growing population and economic appetite are leading us? Could this be, not the age of the fatted calf or the golden goose, as we like to believe, but the age of the lemming?"

"Fantastic, most of you will say—unrealistically gloomy—and most of our nation's leaders would agree. For this is an age of prosperity, an age of abundance. It is an age characterized by full

employment, rising wages, rising prices and profits, increased productivity, growing international trade, increased national income, rising standards of living, record levels of production, tremendous gains in research, high demand and consumption, accelerated investment, and continued plant expansion. Most countries have greatly exceeded their pre-war levels of output. Even those countries which had suffered the most serious wounds of warfare have experienced recoveries that would have been considered impossible in 1945—recoveries due in considerable measure to the assistance provided by this nation...

“But the hard facts of the matter are that, in the midst of this age of plenty, the standard of living for much of the world is declining, their poverty and economic backwardness are increasing and their share of the world’s population is growing. In the world community of nations, the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. Per capita income in the United States may have climbed to some \$2000 a year for every man, woman and child, but it is \$110 in Egypt, \$54 a year in India and \$25 in Libya. There may be more prosperity in the world than ever before—but strange as it may seem, there is also more poverty than at any time in the history of this planet...

“But how, it may be asked, could this occur? Have we not been giving away large sums of foreign aid? Have we not encouraged reciprocal trade? Has there not been more than enough prosperity to go around?

“Ideally, the boom of the last few years should have spread at least a measure of prosperity to everyone. It should have resulted in a surplus of capital in industrial nations, which in turn would have brought about a heavy flow of investment to the non-industrial nations, where it could earn still higher return...

“The greatest danger...from this growing gap between the very top and the very bottom of the free world economy is not simply a matter of economics. It is a matter of war and peace, of

national security, of stopping the advance of Communism. We have based our foreign policy upon the objective of building strength and freedom in the non-communist world—strength and freedom which can never flourish in nations shackled by a depressed standard of living and chronic economic crises.

“The new nations of the world—Ghana, Tunisia, Indonesia and other key areas—with new hopes and aspirations and new governments, become quickly disillusioned, if not chaotic, when they find themselves saddled with the same economic problems and handicaps...

“It is the highly fragile and precarious condition of these countries which has opened up new opportunities and stimulated new stratagems for the Soviet Union, devising skillful—and not costly—appeals to the under-developed nations... It has done so by fairly painless arms, technical and barter agreements, by small economic aid programs, by loan of personnel, and by persuading significant elements in many of these new nations that the attainment of genuine economic growth and sustained development is best achieved through an adaptation of Soviet techniques and experiences...

“On the basis of these harsh facts, I would say to you that the great challenge to our status and security in the world in the next several years may be neither military nor political, but economic—and the most critical problem in this economic sphere is the problem of the under-developed nations.”