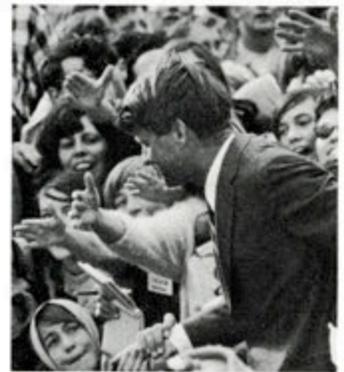


**KENNEDY  
FOR PRESIDENT**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
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I am announcing today my candidacy for the Presidency of the United States.

I do not run for the Presidency merely to oppose any man, but to propose new policies. I run because I am convinced that this country is on a perilous course and because I have such strong feelings about what must be done that I am obliged to do all I can. I run to seek new policies -- policies to close the gaps between black and white, rich and poor, young and old, in this country and around the world. I run for the Presidency because I want the Democratic Party and the United States of American to stand for hope instead of despair, for the reconciliation of men instead of the growing risk of world war.

I run because it is now unmistakably clear that we can change these disastrous, divisive policies only by changing the men who make them. For the reality of recent events in Vietnam has been glossed over with illusions. The report of the Riot Commission has been largely ignored. The crisis in gold, the crisis in our cities, the crises on our farms and in our ghettos, all have been met with too little and too late.

No one who knows what I know about the extraordinary demands of the Presidency can be certain that any mortal can adequately fill it. But my service on the National Security Council during the Cuban Missile crisis, the Berlin crisis and the negotiations on Laos and on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty have taught me something about both the uses and the limitations of military power, about the value of negotiations with allies and with enemies, about the opportunities and dangers which await our nation in the many corners of the globe to which I have traveled. As a member of the Cabinet and a member of the Senate, I have seen the inexcusable and ugly deprivation which ~~WHY~~ causes children to starve in Mississippi, black citizens to riot in Watts, young Indians to commit suicide on their reservations, and proud, ablebodied families to wait out their lives in empty idleness in Eastern Kentucky. I have talked and listened to the young people of our nation and felt their anger about the war they are sent to fight and the world they are about to inherit. In private talks and public, I have tried in vain

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Kennedy Announcement

2.

to alter our course in Vietnam before it further saps our spirit and our manpower, further raises the risks of wider war, and further destroys the country and people it was meant to save.

\* \* \*

...My decision reflects no personal animosity or disrespect toward President Johnson. He served President Kennedy with the utmost loyalty and was extremely kind to me and members of my family in the difficult months which followed the events of November 1963. I have often commended his efforts in health, education, and many other areas; and I have deep sympathy for the burdens he carries today. But the issue is not personal; it is our profound differences over where we are heading.

I do not lightly dismiss the dangers and difficulties of challenging an incumbent President; but these are not ordinary times and this is not an ordinary election. At stake is not simply the leadership of our party or even our country -- it is our right to moral leadership on this planet.

Washington, D. C.  
March 16, 1968