**TONY BADGER 22.11.2013**

The first chair of the Kennedy Memorial Trust had been British ambassador in Washington in the Kennedy Administration, an important figure in the Cuban Missile crisis, and a close friend of the first family. David Ormsby Gore wrote to Mrs Kennedy to console her. The President, he wrote, had ‘GREAT THINGS TO DO AND HE WOULD HAVE DONE THEM.’

It is not, however, the sad might-have-beens of history or the promise unfulfilled that we remember today. On Wednesday President Obama said we remember President Kennedy because he ‘embodied the best of the people he led, determined to make the world anew.’ He was the embodiment of what is now celebrated as ‘the greatest generation’, a youthful vigorous contrast to the earlier generation of western leaders who were still in power – Macmillan, De Gaulle and Adenauer. His memory is burnished today because his generation had reason to believe that they *could* make the world anew and they *trusted*, rather than despised, government. We remember a president who understood the desires of young nations and inspired young people to serve in the Peace Corps.

We remember a president who was comfortable with ideas and willing to see his own ideas challenged, who championed science and cherished intellectuals and, above all, made government service once again an honorable calling after the ravages of McCarthyism. No wonder that Bobby Kennedy was enthusiastic about the Kennedy scholarships because he hoped they would bring together ‘the traditional humane studies and modern technology and their application in government and international affairs.’

We remember a president who refreshingly admitted that the job was harder than he imagined; a Cold War president who was determined to stand firm against the Soviets from Europe to South East Asia but who also opened back channel negotiations with Khruschev and negotiated, in the face of military opposition, a Test Ban Treaty which aimed to eliminate nuclear tests in the atmosphere. He was the first Cold War president to speak of the Soviets as an adversary to be competed against rather than as an enemy to be destroyed. He was the first modern President to come to realize and to tell the American people that civil rights was *the* inescapable moral issue facing the nation.

It is not surprising, therefore, that death of President Kennedy that we mark today still evokes such a profound sense of loss on both sides of the Atlantic .

To mark that loss, I would like to ask everybody to stand while I join Lord Hill, Ambassador Barzun and Tatiana Schlossberg in laying wreaths on the memorial.