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Dishonored Nation Grieves

America bows its head in sorrow and shame. The assassination of President Kennedy brings to all Americans the full measure of grief which each of us experiences in the loss of a loved relative. And we are ashamed that this could happen, as it did to three other presidents, in this compassionate, cultured and democratic land.

When the flags of the United States were lowered to half-staff on that black Friday, every American must have looked within himself. Did he see there a measure, no matter how small, of bigotry, hatred, intolerance, arrogance? These are the baser emotions which have been gaining currency in this republic in the years since World War II, when so many of our sons died to stop the spread of dictatorships which thrive on feelings such as these. Who is free of guilt?

The nation grieves and prays. An assassin has dishonored us all.—The Oregonian, Portland.

"With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love..."
John F. Kennedy—Inaugural Address



Communications

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper, in fact the contrary is often the case.

Belongs to Ages

To the Editor: And now, John F. Kennedy, like Abe Lincoln, belongs to the ages. A neighbor called at my house and said "The President has been murdered." It shocked me so that I got a choke in the throat and shed tears, the first time I have cried in close to 80 years (I am now 85).

Wonderful Comfort

To the Editor: This is written the morning after our President Kennedy's tragedy. The sky is bleak and it's raining hard. I have a feeling of "Good Friday" sad, but trust in God that this will all have a repenting effect on all of us as a nation. I sincerely pray that this will stir each and every one of us to acknowledge God in all our ways and to remember that all things work for good to those who love God.

In His Place

To the Editor: As I was sitting here, listening to the people say how sorry they were that a great man had been killed, I started wondering how many of the same people had said terrible things about him the day before. We just don't realize that it doesn't do any good to say how great he was now. If they want him to know, say it before something like this happens.

The Divine Plan

To the Editor: I cannot find it in my heart to fault Lydia entirely for the contents of her M.T. letters. More truthfully the guilt lies, perhaps, at the doors of those of us who, after the death of the Apostles, have sought to be teachers rather than learners.

Fancies and Facts

To the Editor: I note that Arnold Eugene Jenny in his reply to Anna M. Streed (11-10) indulges in some of the most extreme language in denouncing some of the most prominent fighters against the Reds.

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JFK: Intelligence, Vigor, Impatience



By ERIC SEVEREID
(Distributed 1963,
By The Hall
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What WAS John F. Kennedy? How will he stand in history? As this is written, hours after his death, it is hard even to assemble thoughts, easy to misjudge such a complicated human being.

The first thing about him was his driving intelligence. His mind was always on fire; his reading was prodigious; his memory almost total recall of facts and quotations. A friend of mine once crossed the Atlantic on a liner with the Kennedy family, years ago.

BOYS AND GIRLS

Speaking of the woman's need for clothes, as I did in a recent column, it occurs to me that, beyond the reason I suggested, her desire for many and varied articles of clothing may have a lot to do with her girlhood in our particular culture.

National Review, Human Events, American Opinion, U.S. News, Freeman, Williams, Summery, Fagan's Bulletins, etc.

In reply to those who lie about the great patriotic John Birch Society, a subcommittee of the California State Senate under Chairman John M. Burns, after two years investigation of the Society, says, "Our investigation and study was requested by the Society, which had been publicly charged with being a secret fascist, subversive, un-American, anti-Semitic organization. We have not found any of these accusations to be supported by the evidence."

Such working out is not considered quite proper for a little

girl, although I cannot imagine why not. As a result, she is given quiet, gracious, decorative gifts which act as sedatives rather than as stimulants.

I happen to believe that boys and girls, while obviously differing in many psychological traits, at the same time share a common need for action, noise, and the effective discharge of aggressive tendencies.

At an early age, it seems to me, the girl is made to feel—obliquely, if not openly—that her role in life is relatively closed and circumscribed, her childhood a kind of bland preparation for wifehood and motherhood.

OUR NEXT martyr was President Garfield.

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ON SEPT. 6, 1901, while holding a public reception in the Temple of Music at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, President McKinley was shot by an anarchist named Czolgosz, who approached an unsuspecting President with a pistol concealed under a handkerchief that appeared to cover an injured hand.

THERE comes now the assassination of President Kennedy.

A suspect was arrested. He was Lee H. Oswald. He was a former Marine — with a dishonorable discharge. He was a pro-Castro Marxist. He once sought citizenship in Communist Russia.

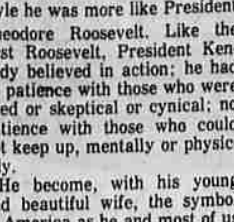
He follows the historic pattern of American assassins.

Without exception, they have been crackpots. That suggests a thought for those of us who have not agreed politically with some of our Presidents. Perhaps we have been TOO PARTISAN. Perhaps our partisanship has been unintentionally carried TOO FAR.

We can make the necessary rationalizations. We can make cracks about the man in the White House without meaning anything disrespectful to the President of the United States.

Perhaps the crackpots CAN'T. At least, it's worth some serious thinking on our part.

Strictly Personal



By Sidney J. Harris
(c) Field Enterprises, Inc.

He brought a new style into government; he surrounded himself with intellectuals, as did Franklin Roosevelt in his first years; but in his personal style he was more like President Theodore Roosevelt. Like the first Roosevelt, President Kennedy believed in action; he had no patience with those who were tired or skeptical or cynical; no patience with those who could not keep up, mentally or physically.

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He Lived Among Us

Nearly all Americans are appalled that a fellow citizen would take the life of the elected President of the United States. But while a single man or a tiny group of conspirators was behind that trigger, millions of Americans must share some of the blame for today's outrage.

The murderer didn't germinate the assassination idea in a vacuum. He lived among us and observed the words and deeds of fellow citizens. And we all know of outrageous examples of disrespect—yes, of arrogant disregard—for constituted authority.

We see a little of this disrespect for our government of law every day, in every community. We have seen it on a grand scale in Alabama and Mississippi, where public officials have fanned the flames by brazen defiance of the law of the land.

WE have seen ignorant and emotionally disturbed people jostle or strike or spit upon our Ambassador to the United Nations, the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Vice-President of the United States.

The man who pulled the trigger presumably belongs in a mental hospital, for surely no sane man could commit such an outrageous crime. But the blame for nurturing such insanity rests upon all who have fostered disrespect for the law, upon all who have condoned it, and upon all of us who have done too little to battle such action.

We can best pay tribute to our departed President by rededicating ourselves to our government of law. We can only hope that this tragic act thus affects all of us, and that it jolts to their senses those Americans who have unwittingly lent encouragement to the assassin.—Capital Journal, Salem.

Television's Lesson

After that totally unbelievable week end — a week end when the world turned topsy-turvy, and the great and the humble of the earth came into our living rooms on the flickering screen — it must be said that television has added a new dimension to history.

It was a magnificent performance. From the first decision, whereby the networks voluntarily gave up millions of dollars in revenues, all through the tragic, shocking and fantastic week end, the networks did a job which can only be looked upon with awe and respect.

Never before in history have so many millions been able to feel they were active participants to one of the great and moving moments in history.

BY relinquishing their sources of income, and by putting their full facilities at work, taking viewers from Washington to Dallas to Hyannis Port, the networks performed a miracle in communications.

And it was in the best possible taste, most of the time. The informed and respectful commentary of most of the announcers, their calm, often sorrowful demeanor, even when caught up in the midst of incredible events, compels respect and admiration.

The utterly shocking contrast of the solemn ceremonies in Washington with the violence and shame in the basement of the Dallas police station; the courage and dignity of the bereaved first lady at one moment and the excited, unthinking laughter of police reporters the next—these left one gasping.

The television networks, so often criticized — and rightly so — for crass commercialism and blatant nonsense, have earned the right to pride these last sad days. They have taught us all — and perhaps themselves — a lesson. Let us hope that it lasts.—E.A.

Flight o' Time

Medford and Jackson County history from the files of The Mail Tribune 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO

Nov. 25, 1953 (Wednesday)
High waters all over Oregon were falling today and the season's first flood appeared to be about over.

Howard Perrin, Klamath Falls architect, is scheduled to arrive in Medford this afternoon to look over the site of the new city elementary school.

20 YEARS AGO

Nov. 25, 1943 (Thursday)
Miss Bernice Reames, Medford, sworn into Marine Corps; scheduled to report for active duty in about six weeks.

From Arthur Perry's "Ye Smudge Pot" column: "Lawn tenders report the trees are all stark and bare and gloomy looking, but leaves keep on falling."

30 YEARS AGO

Nov. 25, 1933 (Saturday)
Medford and Bend High School football teams to play Thanksgiving day on Van Scoyev field for state championship; Darwin Burgher's Medford team defeats Ashland 37 to 0 to win right to play in title game.

Former Heavyweight Champion Jack Dempsey visits briefly in Medford; plans return trip within a month.

40 YEARS AGO

Nov. 25, 1923 (Sunday)
Hunters Fred Sheffield, Warren Butler, Seelye Hall and L. C. Garlock provide ducks for Medford 40 and 8 duck dinner.

Glenn Fabrick, accompanied by his son and a number of high school students, leaves to attend football game in Eugene.

50 YEARS AGO

Nov. 25, 1913 (Tuesday)
Attorney Gus Newbury scheduled to give memorial address at annual Elks memorial services in Page Theater.

George E. Boos, Medford, reports on organizational meeting of Tri-State Pacific Coast Good Roads Association held in Eureka, Calif.

What's Your I.Q.?

Nine or ten correct is superior; seven or eight is excellent; five or six is good.

- 1. Pan was the Greek God of what?
2. What is the literal meaning of Rio de Janeiro?
3. Complete the following saying: "Many a true word is spoken in..."
4. Mt. Vernon, home of George Washington, fronts on what river?
5. Nutmeg State is one of the nicknames applied to which state?
6. When Cortez conquered Mexico, who was the Mexican emperor?
7. With what poem by Longfellow do you associate the forest primeval?
8. Which is father south, the tip of Africa, or the tip of South America?
9. What is the name given to a line joining two points on the circumference of a circle?
10. The term "eagle" is used in what game?
Answers: 1. Forests, pastures, flocks and shepherds. 2. River of January. 3. "...jest." 4. Potomac River. 5. Connecticut. 6. Montezuma. 7. Evangelical. 8. South America. 9. Chord. 10. Golf.

Shock, Grief, Anger and Pride
By Arthur Hoppe
[Portrait of Arthur Hoppe]

It hit so hard. So suddenly. We were standing in the office, a group of reporters, laughing over some small anti-Kennedy joke. Not a vicious joke. One he would probably have laughed at himself.

Then there was the word he was shot. There was the first moment of blankness — of sheer incredulity. We gathered around a battered radio on one reporter's desk and stared at its chipped, ivory-colored plastic case for... How long was it? An hour?

And slowly it became believable. And, as it became believable, the shock grew. "I'm going to be sick," one woman kept repeating over and over. "I'm going to be sick."

And as the believability grew and the shock grew, there grew within those of us around the battered radio still another emotion — a hard, burning knot of anger.

"The bastards," said an old reporter, his eyes hard, "the dirty bastards." We all nodded, filled with anger and hate for those who did this. And I thought of all the deaths this old reporter had seen — murders and fires and wrecks. I thought of how we reporters armored by our shell of cynicism, could usually manage very good jokes about disasters, jokes that would seem in terrible taste to outsiders, jokes we traditionally use to flout our professional toughness and perhaps to protect our human sensitivity.

But this time there were no jokes. There was only the shock and the grief and the anger. And yet it was only one man who had died. Not a small child, nor a defenseless cripple, not even someone we knew. But a mature, powerful man. A man, moreover, who, during his life, some of those around the radio had not particularly admired and few, if any, had truly loved.

Then why this choking grief we all shared at his death? Why this burning anger toward his assassin? I don't know. Partly, I suppose, it is because we all identify with a President, as we do with any famous man. He is part of our conversation, our casual thought, part of the fabric of our lives.

But in the case of a President, I think it is more than that. He was not merely the President. He was our President.

Whether we voted for him or not, he was our President. He had made a thousand speeches and shook ten thousand hands and traveled a hundred thousand miles to present himself to us. And we — we, the people — had elected him.

And now all this was for nothing. A single man firing a single bullet with a simple squeeze of his finger had destroyed what we, the people, had built. And I think that what at least partly grieves and angers all of us so much is this flaunting of our system, this terrible injustice. I hope so. I think so. And mingled in these other emotions for me, there is growing another — pride. I am proud that all of us feel this grief and anger so deeply. Whatever our politics or our cynicism. For our grief and our anger, I believe, is the measure of our love for democracy.



"You can tell Christmas is just around the corner — the magazines are as thick as telephone books!"