

Editorial Page

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

John Fitzgerald Kennedy came to the presidency of the United States as the bearer of great change. He was the symbol of something new, but he died by something as old as time—the hand of the fanatic.

He was the first man in the 20th century to hold the office — and the second youngest in history. He was the first Catholic in the White House. He came as a naval hero of World War II who narrowly had missed death in Pacific waters, and survived a second brush with death in a grave illness nine years ago.

To the nation's high politics he thus brought a fresh stamp. The well-remarked "Kennedy style" was a blend of intellect, vigor, wit, charm, and a clear talent for growth.

On the always shifting, often troubled world scene, he sometimes moved with more caution than expected in young leadership. Soon after entering the White House, he gamely took full blame for the Cuban Bay of Pigs fiasco as an enterprise sadly lacking in boldness.

Yet only his worst enemies withheld from him the label "courageous" when he moved resolutely against Soviet Premier Khrushchev in the great Russian missile crisis in Cuba in late 1962. And he boldly pressed for an East-West test ban treaty this year in the face of heavy charges that this imperiled our security.

In domestic affairs Kennedy won much of his program in beginning 1961, gained far less the following year, and encountered a major stalemate in 1963. The constant note against him was insufficient leadership.

But again, when 1963 brought the greatest racial crisis of this century, Kennedy—at acknowledged heavy political cost

—committed himself to sweeping civil rights proposals that opened a vast new battleground.

Amid all his efforts to put the imprint of vigorous, imaginative youth upon the country's affairs in the 1960s, the late President found himself moving against a deepening background of protest, with an ugly underscoring of violence which he sought with only limited success to wipe away.

Much of this protest went to the steady encroachments of the federal government and its rising cost. But the bitterest reaction was white and Negro response to the enlarging racial struggle. The far right gave the mood its most perilous texture.

With the calamity in Dallas the lesson of the danger inherent in violent extremism now may be deeply implanted in America's conscience.

In this way, Kennedy in death may achieve what the living President could not do to curb the almost ungovernable rancor that increasingly discolored the politics of his brief time in power.

It was John Kennedy's good fortune to surmount many obstacles to rise to his country's highest office and bring with him the winds of a new era.

It was his final tragedy that as he labored in difficult times to use these forces for the nation's and the world's gain, they were swiftly challenged by countering winds of bitter reaction. In Dallas, one swift gust struck him down.

The nation thus loses a young leader whose great promise lived in the shadow of great controversy. The way he died must inescapably cost all Americans deeply in self-esteem as free men of good will.

That is the greater tragedy.



WILLIAM S. WHITE ...

The Republic Must Go On

By WILLIAM S. WHITE

WASHINGTON — When there is death in the family there is shock and horror and grief, and then there is—terribly and inevitably—the harsh awareness that life must go on for those who are left.

When there is death in the national family, death removing the very central arch of the power and purposes of the Western world as brutal death has removed John Fitzgerald Kennedy, horror and grief are inexpressibly multiplied. But one thought, one emotion, must master all others.

This is that the Republic of the United States of America must go on, under the command now of a new President, Lyndon Baines Johnson. It is he upon whom the great burden has now fallen, and it does not seem wrong to thank Providence that the successor is worthy of both the man who has gone and of the country they have both always loved and served, wryly, toughly, unsentimentally and gallantly well.

If ever in all our history there was an hour when men must put aside all that is small, all that is angry and ugly and petty partisan in our national life, this is, supremely, that hour. For unless all the people, the parties, the factions, the regions, the races, the clashing private interests, can summon up among themselves the sense and honor to unite behind the new President, the United States of America will face perils of disunity it has not known before.

Who is this man, Lyndon Johnson, who must now have the support, the help, and the understanding of all who are in the United States and of all they have and are?

What I am now about to say I should never in ordinary circumstance have said, for in ordinary circumstances it would be name-dropping in its most tasteless form. But because of the special circumstances, I say it all the same, so that readers may have some standard to measure the worth of my evidence.

For 30 years—since he was a slim and eager young secretary to a Texas Congressman—I have intimately known Lyndon Johnson as I have never known any other public—or private—man. I have known no other man of more true tolerance, if a tolerance sometimes hidden behind the brusque mannerisms of a master of his profession—politics—sometimes impatient of slower minds and always impatient with those of

smaller motives than his own.

I have known no other man of truer compassion — to the poor and dispossessed, yes, but also to those of more favored status who, too, sometimes weep silently in the night from fears, the anxieties, the pitiless pressures and private despairs any part of humankind.

I have known no man of more true devotion to this country — all of it, North and South, East and West, black and white and brown and yellow. And I have known no public man, anywhere in the world, with a greater talent—indeed a greater genius — who has given greater service, sometimes at a high cost to himself, to that old ideal of one nation indivisible under God and of justice for all so far as justice can be found in a world none of us ever made.

But precisely because he is a political genius, precisely because he has all his public life been too busy doing things — and too proud — to explain things about himself, this man has had his tireless detractors to a degree rarely seen in American politics.

I have said this is no time for bitterness; accordingly this is no time to go forward with this theme. It is a time, however, a desperately necessary time, to appeal to them right here in print to drop the little

animosities of the past.

For I say, weighing my words in full awareness of their implications, that I have never known a truly first-rate man in either party who, truly knowing Johnson, has ever held or despised or undervalued his incredible capacities, simple dislike and simple disagreement on principle being set aside.

He has his faults, but this can be said of him: There is not anywhere in him an ounce of littleness; he is larger than life in every sense, including his complete inability to comprehend really little purposes in others.

I have said that I have been and have remained his friend through the greater part of the life span of us both; but I have also on many occasions been a critical friend on public issues, and may no doubt be on many occasions again. For among the largenesses of Lyndon Johnson is that one form of criticism, and one alone, can move him to swear like the combat naval officer he once was—like who can also weep for others like a child. This is the criticism of malice based on motives that are small and ugly.

This is a great political figure, a great and natural leader. But this is also, first and foremost and always a man, M-A-N.

"I Still Can't Believe It"



WASHINGTON CALLING ...

Last Talks Recalled

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON—In his office in the White House toward the end of his working day on a beautiful fall evening President Kennedy seemed confident, self-contained, as almost always with the glint of humor flashing quickly and as quickly gone.

It was the last of several private talks I had with him during his presidency.

After waiting a moment or two in the big, softly lit Oval Room he came in from the next-door office of his personal secretary, Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, where through the doorway I had seen him bending over her desk.

Earlier he had held a press conference that he felt was more successful than most. Briefly he talked about a reporter's question to which he had responded with what was for him exceptional gravity.

I had come to see him on a special mission. I proposed to write a short book on the wave of "hate Kennedy" emotion that had caught up certain parts of the country, particularly the South, along with elements in the North as well. This seemed to me, as I said to him, to resemble the know-nothingism of the "hate Roosevelt" wave of the mid-thirties.

I reminded him that I had written in 1936 a magazine article, called "They Hate Roosevelt," which had caused a considerable stir at the time. On the extreme left the Communists attacked Roosevelt as a mere temporizer and do-gooder while from the extreme right he was denounced as a Socialist or worse who meant to nationalize all property.

With the quick perceptivity that characterized him he considered this for a moment. He smiled, a skeptical look on his face.

"Do you think that's really true?" he asked. "I wouldn't think so. I wouldn't think that I was a target in anything like the same way that FDR was."

"This, it should be added, is from my recollection of our talk. But it could hardly be more vivid in the light of the tragedy that has occurred. That quiet room seemed so removed from the turmoil and conflict of the world and yet you sensed that it was the quiet of the eye of the storm. The President, still youthful-looking after nearly three years in the office, sat in his rocking chair with the composure that was his hallmark.

"No," he continued, "it may spill over on me. But I really wouldn't think that I was a primary target as FDR was. These people are very frustrated. They seem to think you can solve everything by going back somewhere. I don't know where. But I don't see why they would direct this at me."

This seemed to me to reflect another Kennedy characteristic. He was reluctant to believe that he was not liked by everyone. He wanted to think that he could be President of all the people. He could not understand why he should be hated.

I spoke of having been a short time before in Mississippi. There I was told by individuals who had been threatened with violence by the extremist groups that the safety of neither the President nor his brother Robert, the Attorney General, could be guaranteed if they came into the state. The impression they gave was that rabid hatred was so deeprooted that acts of

desperation could not be prevented. Some of this I had put in my column.

"Yes, I saw that," the President said. "But I don't want to believe it. I can't believe that that can be true."

"Of course, we get a lot of letters in here that are pretty strong. They're violent even. And I'd be glad to have you see samples of those. But hasn't there always been that sort of thing?"

We talked briefly of the attack on Adlai Stevenson outside the hall in Dallas where he spoke on United Nations Day. Stevenson was hit over the head by a sign-carrying rightist and spat on by a student as extremists shoved in at him when he left the hall following his speech.

"He told me," the President said, "that the ovation he got in the hall from several thousand people was one of the warmest he ever received. Yet it was the 50 or so outside who made the headlines. That's often the way it is—the people on the fringe get all the attention."

Still another characteristic was evident as he talked.

Mr. Kennedy thought of himself as more conservative than the liberals who supported him in his own party. He said:

"You know when I first ran for Congress in 1946 I believed pretty much the line that the centralization of our government had gone so far that it was a great danger and that we were likely to spend ourselves into bankruptcy. So I can understand these people. And if they don't read anything else, and you know in a lot of places the newspapers carry nothing but this sort of thing, how can they reach a judgment on what the situation really is?"

When we got onto the com-

ing campaign year he was full of zest and seemingly without any serious concern over a struggle that would make such heavy demands on his time and energy. With all of the South gone, he said, and then amended himself to add, or most of it, we'll have to go after states we didn't carry last time. He laughed about Senator Barry Goldwater, saying, "Let him go, let him alone, Barry's doing just fine."

This was a highly competitive man who wanted to win not only every game but every inning of every game. With this went a spirit of derring-do, bravado almost, that often led him to defy danger. On his trip to New York a week ago he declined a police escort, taking his chances on the tangle of traffic in the city to the consternation of the New York police force.

Although the two major pieces of his program, the tax and the civil rights bills, were bogged down in Congress, he seemed undaunted. His mood was in marked contrast with that of a visit I had with him in the oval study upstairs somewhat more than a year after he had taken the oath of office. Speaking of his 14 years in the Congress and his 15 or so months in the Presidency he said in a somber vein that he had begun to wonder if the country was governable at all.

Now on this bright, clear evening he seemed a seasoned man, a man who had met the initial test and who had no doubt of his ability to meet the challenges still ahead. He had mastered the most difficult job in the world and he had any qualms about the future he gave no sign of it. That is the terrible irony of the moment when the bullet of a madman snuffed out his life.



EDSON IN WASHINGTON ...

Just Bare Majority See Peace In Poll

WASHINGTON (NEA) — Only 53 per cent of 3,000 Americans questioned in a scientifically conducted national survey think there is a good chance to avoid a third world war.

The poll was taken by the Elmo Roper organization for the Atlantic Council of the United States, Inc.

Atlantic Council is a private organization to promote a stronger alliance between western Europe and North America. Its three honorary chairmen are ex-Presidents Hoover, Truman and Eisenhower. Its active chairman is Gen. Lauris Norstad, former commander in chief of North Atlantic Treaty Organization armed forces.

Carefully tabulated results of the comprehensive, 60-question survey indicate that "internationalist" sentiment in the United States has made impressive gains over "isolationist" sentiment during the last 10 years.

But the grim fact that only slightly more than half of the adult populace thinks there is a chance of avoiding World War III sticks out in the report with an ominous warning.

Thirty-two per cent of those polled said they thought this war was inevitable, with 13 per cent saying they did not know. This is almost an exact reversal of the results in a simi-

lar poll taken for the Atlantic Council in 1952. With the Korean War still on at that time, 53 per cent of those interviewed thought a third world war was inevitable, with only 33 per cent thinking it might be avoided.

The increase from 33 to 53 per cent in those who think another world conflict can be avoided is still regarded as a kind of "skin-of-our-teeth" escape from disaster. But it can be interpreted to explain many facets of current political thought.

It reflects the opinions of many highly vocal Americans who mistrust the Russians, favor a big buildup of U.S. military forces, think this country must be prepared to fight communism wherever it rears its ugly head, oppose both the nuclear test ban treaty and any steps toward disarmament.

These are the causes held most dear by many of the conservative minority groups in America.

A measure of this minority sentiment is revealed in the Atlantic Council survey finding that only 29 per cent think the United States is doing all it could to prevent World War III. On the other hand, 59 per cent think the United States is doing its best to preserve world peace.



IN WASHINGTON ...

Nikita's Boasts, Facts Don't Jibe

By RALPH de TOLEDANO

Recently, a group of American businessmen who had been wined, dined, and insulted in the Soviet Union, returned full of tales about the wonders taking place there under the inflexible Nikita Khrushchev. The Soviet dictator, they reported, had attended a number of their vodka parties and told them in no uncertain terms that the Red Empire would outstrip the United States and bury us all—in missile dust or wheat.

The vibrations from Comrade Khrushchev's tonsils were, as usual, scanned for hidden meaning by the Kremlinologists and the pundits. The businessmen listened somewhat agog and then gave their reactions to reporters.

It was all very touching—and very phony.

Because the statistics show that the Soviet Union has been more often than not pushing north and moving south in its efforts to make communism work economically. This point has been documented frequently in this space—and if the pundits were polite, they would admit that their condescending smiles were premature.

The latest Khrushchev boasts came to mind when certain significant statistics on the Soviet Union reached me. These are not the kind of facts and figures which make headlines. Very few see them, but they are part of the vast fund of knowledge on which our policy makers should — and sometimes do — draw.

As figures, they are not world-shaking, but they do point a moral. If one recalls Napoleon's dictum that an army moves on its stomach, then they acquire more importance. For they concern the Kremlin's ability to feed the Russian people. More precisely, they have to do with grain production.

It is usually taken as fact that whatever the shortcomings of the Communist homeland, it is at least an improvement over what the Tsars provided before the Revolution. That this is not so hardly matters; people believe it. But it is a fact that the Russians under Tsar Nicholas were able to produce more grain—and export more—than Nikita's USSR can.

The figures are interesting. Between 1909 and 1913, before

Russia was plunged into World War I, the country was exporting an average of 10.9 million tons of grain a year. Russia was, moreover, the world's greatest exporter of small grains in those days.

Now look at what Communism has accomplished. Between 1955 and 1958, the Soviet Union was able to export an average of only 4.8 million tons, or less than half of the Tsarist annual average. And in 1959-62, despite the tremendous and costly effort of the Kremlin to increase grain production, the average was 6.8 million tons a year. What it will be in 1963-64 is anybody's guess, but the figure won't count since it will include many millions of tons of United States, Canadian, and Australian wheat.

The importance of these free world shipments can be understood when it is noted that the Soviet Union is committed to exporting 1.3 million tons of wheat to East Germany alone, as well as close to a million tons to Poland. With production of all grains down 29 per cent by the figures the Kremlin has sheepishly released — and well below that when spoilage (very high this year) is included—the extent of Russia's present agricultural calamity can be seen.

What is of value to the West in contemplating these figures is the shabby picture of communism on the march that it presents. When Lenin seized power, a new world was to be born. And every year since then, the Soviets have boasted mightily of their achievements and of their future.

That future has been retrograde for the Russian people. There is lower industrial productivity than under the tsars, worse housing, fewer consumer goods in the shops. The standard of living is far lower for the average person. What then has the Communist paradise wrought? Nothing but boasts — and the spunkies we hear about. But even in the area of space and rocketry, the Soviets are far from meeting the standards set by the size of their country and its natural resources. And the Kremlin has demonstrated that even with its great head start, it cannot maintain the pace.

Will Nikita bury us? Perhaps, but only in mountains of our own wheat.



STRICTLY PERSONAL

By SYDNEY J. HARRIS

"We ought to rewrite ancient history for children," a woman remarked to me recently, "so that conflict and combat aren't glorified. When they read about the Greeks fighting all the time, and the 10 years of the Trojan War, they think that war, if not noble, is at least normal."

I suggested that this was a misreading of history—especially among the ancient Greeks. Rather than glorifying war, they recognized it as an evil, bitterly necessary though it sometimes might be.

This is most obviously true when we consider the pantheon of the Greek gods, each of whom was given a distinct personality and specific attributes.

As for policies to prevent war, nine per cent of those responding in the survey think the United States should not join any more international alliances. And seven per cent think the U.S. should get out of the alliances it is now in.

But 21 per cent think the United States should continue to work with the United Nations; 33 per cent think the U.N. should be strengthened, and 11 per cent think steps should be taken to convert it into a world government.

Only 12 per cent of those polled, however, would favor surrender of American sovereignty to achieve this end.

As for the kinds of military preparedness the U.S. should take, three per cent of those polled think there should be a "preventive" war just as soon as American military leaders feel they can win.

Four per cent say quit relying on military strength and make the best deal possible with the Communists, even if it means some sacrifice or appeasement.

In between these two extremes, 17 per cent think the United States should rely wholly on its own resources and 68 per cent favor building up friendly country alliances.

This poll is considered important not just as a measure of American opinion on foreign policy, but also as a guide for U.S. political parties and candidates in the 1964 elections.

Ares was the Greek god of war, and he is the most unpleasant character in the entire pantheon. Nothing good is ever ascribed to him—he was surly, belligerent, covetous, quarrelsome, ugly, underhanded, and above all envious of the other gods.

Next, consider the outstanding heroes among the Greeks. They were Achilles and Ulysses, the decisive men in the Trojan War. Yet Achilles was sent to a faraway island, where he disguised himself as a woman, in order to avoid military service.

Ulysses, the boldest and most cunning of Greek warriors, pretended to be a deaf idiot when summoned for the army. He was "drafted" into service only by the trick of throwing his little boy into the path of his plough, and went off to war most unwillingly.

Among the Trojans, Hector (the most sensible, mature and many of the lot) openly opposed continuing the conflict. Which was bound to end in disaster for both sides. Even though he was vanquished, in Greek literature he remains the only "moral hero" of the tragic decade.

In the centuries following, the great Greek plays, far from glorifying combat, deplored and attacked it. Aristophanes mercilessly lashed the courtiers for their aggressions; and the serious playwrights of that time condemned the "hubris" or pride of the Greeks in trying to settle human disagreements by subhuman means—and prophesied that the gods would punish them for these arrogant and bestial acts.

What the lady meant was that most history, beginning with the earliest, is a record of wars and conquests, of military leaders and campaigns. History does not need to be rewritten, or softened; it needs to be taught with intelligence and discrimination and a sense of permanent justice.

Most of all, we need to be told that there are no winners in war. The Greeks were not the only ones to let nothing to the future. It is a sense of shame among their miserable remnants.