

In
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EXTRA

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Irony Marks JFK's Assassination Student Reaction Parallels Nation's Grief

Awe, Sorrow Hits Campus

President John F. Kennedy was shot to death by a hidden assassin early last Friday afternoon in a motorcade procession in Dallas, Texas.

As soon as word of the President's assassination was released, grief rolled across the nation like a gigantic shock wave. One news commentator said "This was truly a shot heard around the world."

At Youngstown University, as across the nation, there was first stunned disbelief, then emotions of grief and bewilderment. Some expressed hatred and anger at the sniper who shot and killed President Kennedy. After the shock wore off emotions of anguish, tears and prayer became dominant.

Word spread rapidly across the campus. Students and faculty immediately flocked to the nearest radios to hear again and again the announcement they still couldn't believe. Then the word came: President John F. Kennedy has been pronounced dead.

A sudden calm came over the cafeteria as students looked at one another still unable to believe it true. Backstage in the University Theater, Drama Guild members stood stunned with their heads partly bowed. Some sobbed while others sighed in bewilderment. One member crossed herself and mumbled "God help us."

Instructors immediately cancelled classes as they and their students started for home to await further details of the President's assassination.

The student body of Youngstown University, as all Americans in this tragic hour, felt the astonishment and sadness of the country and the pain of the Kennedy family.

Council Sends Condolences To First Lady

At their regular meeting last Friday Student Council unanimously voted to send a telegram to the White House.

In the telegram members expressed, on behalf of the student body of Youngstown University, condolences and sympathy for the First Family.

Later that afternoon, Student Council interrupted their meeting to pay homage as the church bells tolled solemnly. Many of the 25 members around the rectangular arrangement of tables, with tears in their eyes, said a silent prayer.

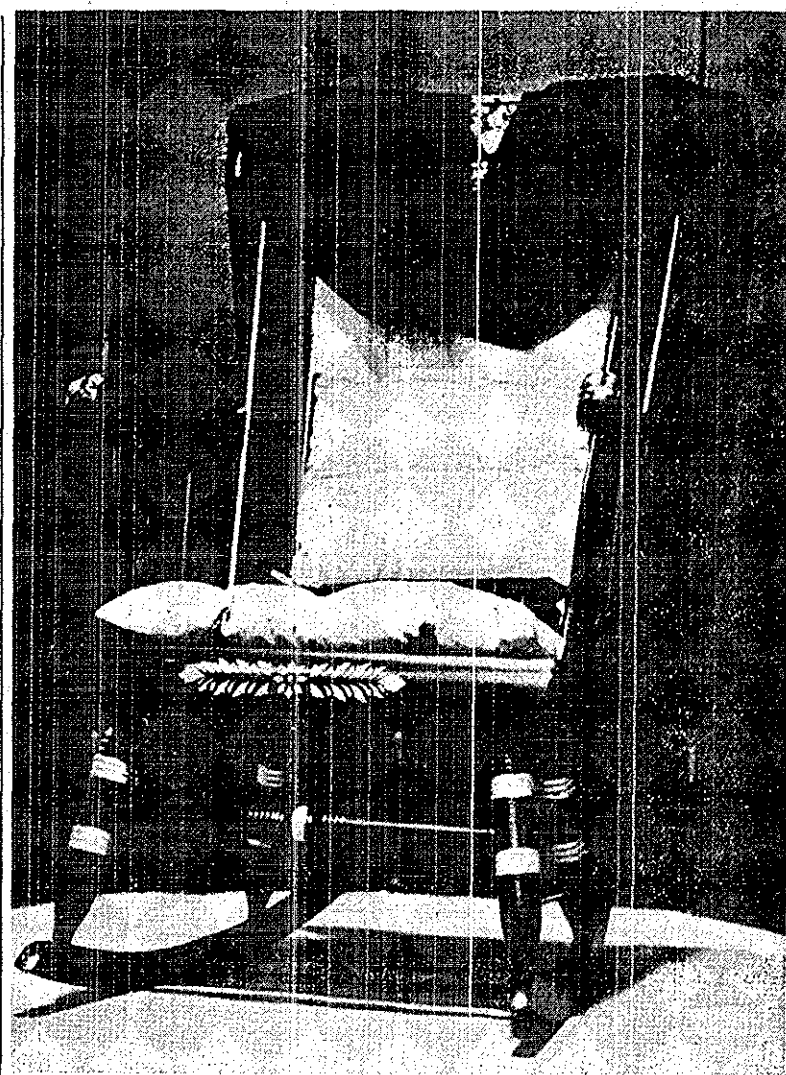


PHOTO BY RON BARNES

Church Rites Stress American Tragedy

"All right-thinking Americans feel that we have been victimized by a great tragedy; that evil has been done to us and our national character," University Chaplain Rev. Albert L. Linder said to students and faculty at memorial services Monday in St. John Episcopal Church.

"Even though the tragic assassination scene was distant, we cannot readily or easily rid ourselves of our responsibility. We may often feel that we are pawns pushed here and there upon the chessboard of American life, but as responsible citizens we must honor our late President for his courage and make it serve as an example for ourselves," he continued.

Over 200 University students and faculty attended the service. ROTC students, in full dress uniform, filled two pews to listen to Rev. Linder pay tribute to the late President John F. Kennedy.

"It is only two years and ten months since our 35th President made his inaugural pledge to defend the constitution. Last week John F. Kennedy gave more—he gave 'the last measure of devotion' to his country," Rev. Linder said solemnly.

He concluded with a quote from Thomas Vail: "... To me the great tragedy for Americans and for the

rest of the world is that President Kennedy seemed to be a man who would do even more in the future than had in the past... All of us will do a better job because of his example. This should be our prayer and our hope."

Catholic students paid homage to the late President at a solemn Requiem high mass Monday at St. Joseph Catholic Church.

Prayers, read from the Roman Ritus, asked mercy for the soul of the departed President. They were especially written to give honor to world leaders.

Father William Kennedy, University Catholic Chaplain, was celebrant at the solemn mass. Father Joseph Lucas was deacon and Father Anthony Lang subdeacon.

Catholic students from the University along with members of the parish joined in offering prayers for their late President.

Many members left the church wiping the tears of grief and sorrow from their eyes.

Assassin Shot as President Is Mourned at Capitol

by Jack Tucker

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President of the United States, was shot to death Friday afternoon in Dallas, Texas. Dallas police charged Lee Harvey Oswald, an avowed Marxist and a sympathizer of Fidel Castro, with the assassination.

Forty-seven hours later, irony struck as Oswald was shot to death in the basement of the Dallas City Jail. Jack Ruby, a Dallas night-club operator, is charged with that slaying.

Oswald was rushed to Parkland Hospital and surgeons frantically tried to save his life. Again irony was present. The accused assassin died in a hospital room less than 10 feet from the place where Mr. Kennedy had died two days earlier. Oswald was accused of being a murderer and died at the hand of a murderer.

But the plot is more complicated: Dallas Police officer J. D. Tippitt, father of three children, was shot to death and Texas Governor John Connally seriously wounded by the late accused Lee Harvey Oswald. Mrs. Tippitt felt grief at the loss of her country's President; she then learned of the death of her husband.

President Kennedy was buried yesterday in Arlington National Cemetery. Chiefs of state and government from across the globe attended services in the capital's vast St. Matthew Cathedral and the burial.

Declared a national day of mourning by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the nation went into low gear and paused to pray and pay homage to Mr. Kennedy.

His courage was tested often, but never found to be lacking. He perpetuated in his own life and activities that which he asked of the country: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

John Fitzgerald Kennedy gave his life for his country.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, Mr. Kennedy's vice president, is now the 36th President of the United States. In his first words to the nation he humbly declared: "I will do my best—that's all I can do. I ask for your help and God's."

But President Johnson gathered up the monumental problems of the presidency and sparked the governmental machine as the world, the nation and his family mourned John F. Kennedy. Top level conferences were held Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Shortly after his arrival in Washington, Johnson conferred with House and Senate leaders and the White House said he had asked for their "united support in the face of the tragedy that has befallen our country."

He said "It is more essential than ever before that this country be united." The legislative leaders of both parties assured President Johnson of their bipartisan support.



PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON now faces monumental tasks.

Tribute to J. F. Kennedy-President

"Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself."

Exactly two years, ten months and six days ago, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President of the United States spoke these words on the steps of the nation's Capitol.

Now dead, this man becomes the symbol of his own statement. He and he alone as President bore the burden of a great nation's weight in the battle against those enemies of man. For almost three years, this was America to the world. This single man called Mr. President. His murder stunned a nation whose ideals are as contrary to an assassin's bullet as they are to Communism.

Trucks stopped on highways and husky drivers paid mute respect to a man most of them had never met. On campus here, students gave muffled smiles of recognition to passing friends as tears swelled their eyes. Each person was alone with his own grief. One student said 'Jesus Christ' with all the respect due the sanctuary of St. Peter's in Rome. Another girl kept wiping her eyes asking "Why, why, why?" Three students standing on the steps of the library laughed at what they thought was a joke until another walked by and quietly announced, "He's dead." The grave tone cut short the last echo of their laughter.

The Citizens' Emotions . . .

In a local grade school a teacher fainted. A man walked down the street crying, holding his Rosary in his hand. Church bells started their slow peal and people shuddered with horror and disbelief as the reality of the President's death forced itself into their minds.

This was the grief of a nation. Everywhere it was the same. From one end of the country to the other Americans grieved the death of their president. Divided in political allegiance, united in their loss, they testified to patriotism.

The national anthem played on radios and passing motorists stopped. Gas station attendants stood in their greasy coveralls and veterans raised their hands to salute. Up and down side streets women were putting out flags, many of them with only forty-eight stars—but it was enough to convey the meaning of their purpose. They were mourning the loss of their President.

To shipping clerks and industrialists the emotion was the same: "My President has been murdered." Along with sadness came shame. The assassin was an American too. He held the same rights all Americans hold, yet he had defiled his heritage; in doing this he lessened our national pride.

His blow to our ideals weakened for an instant our belief in freedom; this was perhaps his greatest crime. In a nation liberated from tyranny, one of its members finds it necessary to return to that same violence, so detested it has caused the death of thousands of Americans around the world.

This was our pride, that we were able to boast of a free country with the right of the people guiding the government and selecting its leaders. We had made John Kennedy President. Majority makes its choice and with it comes the obligation of all Americans

to respect that choice.

Who and what was this man we all called President?

He looked like a middle-aged Huckleberry Finn, a shock of chestnut hair hanging nonchalantly down on his forehead. His young face glowed from strength and vitality. His Bostonian accent tainted with Harvardisms made him the brunt of good-natured jokes. His dialect became as famous as Cagney's or Durante's and it was imitated daily by children in Ohio, New York, Kansas, Oregon and California.

A Nation's Idol . . .

He was the idol of school children, the dreamed-of grandson of maiden aunts and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy.

He was the youth of the nation, the hope of success and could call for war on any country in the world any day of the week.

He was the hot steel just out of the melting pot—the hard rock on the face of a skyscraper. Yet he could bend down to talk to a polio-stricken little boy.

He wanted to insure for the people that which they already held. It was his duty that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness should continue for all men born Americans.

In a short five hours after his death the plane Air Force 1 that had carried him around the world returned him home to the White House. Quiet kept a lonely watch for the dead President as his body was enclosed by the night.

The following day, Saturday, guests came to pay their respects. Mrs. Kennedy knelt before her dead husband. To her this was not the President, it was the man she loved and married; the man to whom she bore two children and the man whose memory would be her lifelong companion.

Dignitaries and diplomats bowed their heads before the flagdraped coffin, and around the world in United States embassies heads of governments signed their names in gold-embossed books. A president was dead and the whole world came to pay its tribute.

A Last Farewell . . .

Sunday, John Fitzgerald Kennedy left the White House for the last time. Spotless soldiers and sailors lined the road to the Capitol as the laden caisson moved slowly forward. The drums beat out the murmur of the rolling wheels.

Crowds twelve deep lined Pennsylvania, Delaware and Constitution Avenues. Silent citizens watched the cortege of their President pass for the last time. Fathers lifted children to their shoulders to see Mr. Kennedy for the last time before he enters the pages of American history.

Behind the casket a black stallion pranced dizzily distracting the crowd from its respectful intention. Boots inverted in the stirrups, this was the symbol of the fallen leader and indeed it was. Eyes flashing, young and intent on carrying out his own will, resisting the reins that held him, he swerved and side-stepped stamping out a rhythm livelier than seemed proper. His coal black mane was ruffled by the stiff breeze and the bright sun reflected from his shining coat. He carried the spirit of air and space and freedom and he carried them well.

At the Capitol the President was returned to the people. Solemnly they filed by, many from as far as one thousand miles away. The rotunda of the Capitol filled with the shuffling noise of a quarter of a million people bidding their final farewell to their President. Good-by, Mr. President, in whom we trusted—

Good-by to the fire of our young life. Farewell to you in this day of strife, Thank you, Sir, for your great life . . .

Hugh Webb

His Spirit of Youth in The White House - A New Ideal

by Mary Popa

To those who had witnessed what seemed to be one indignity after another hurled in the face of President Eisenhower, the young Kennedys represented youth, freshness and vitality—a willingness to act and get things done. The tired policies of an exhausted administration had culminated in Mr. Eisenhower's humiliating summit defeat. Now the world was charmed and captivated by the energy of the young man from Massachusetts, and he entered the White House on a wave of their optimism and support.

As the new President stepped forward to take the oath of office, the audience rose and cheered. By the time he had finished their hearts lay at his feet. John Kennedy, now this nation's 35th president and the youngest ever elected was history's man of the hour; and the American people waited to hear what they could do for their country.

Five days after the inauguration, a delighted Mr. Kennedy held his first press conference and the free world was heartened as he announced the release of the two RB47 flyers captured by the Russians. The move was hailed by allies as an ease in international tensions, and it was expected that the young leader would soon adopt the vigorous course of action against the Communists that he had promised.

It cannot be said that Mr. Kennedy did not try. But his childlike confidence in the success of his visit with Premier Khrushchev was soon to be badly shaken. Whatever he had hoped to gain from the Vienna meeting, the sense of total inefficacy was not one of the emotions he had ever expected to experience. He returned to Washington, sobered and serious. Here was no ordinary opponent and it was obvious that more than the young President's faith would be needed to deal with him.

It was a somber Mr. President who later declared to the nation, "Our hopes for an end to nuclear tests, for an end to the spread of nuclear weapons, and for some slowing down of the arms race have been struck a serious blow." Yet he still managed to add, "I am not fearful of the future."

To us it appeared as though at last someone was pointing out the gravity of the situation. Apprehensive we might be—but the Camp David euphoria had broken its hold. We were ready and willing to uphold our Chief of State in whatever action he might adopt. Fear had taken a back seat to the values at stake, and we were grateful that our government seemed prepared to defend them.

Space Age Irony
The former senator from Massachusetts had relished the prospect of a challenge. Since that night in 1956 when he lost the vice presidential nomination by a whisper, he looked forward eagerly to the day when he would occupy the White House as Chief Executive. He sincerely expected the country to start moving forward.

The psychological impact of the Sputnik I launching seemed to be stark proof of the nation's demoralization. Mr. Kennedy felt it was his duty to his fellow countrymen to atone for the sins of the Eisenhower era. Thus Alan Shepherd became a hero overnight and the space budget was prepared for a take-off of its own.

We had been thrilled with Shepherd and we honored him. But it was a choirboy's picnic beside the frenzied hysterical glee with which we greeted John Glenn. We were even-even with the Soviets and

from now on, President Kennedy made increase in space funds his personal crusade.

The budget was touched off and began to climb to heights unknown. And with a child's naive trust that space could be preserved for peaceful purposes, he suggested that the United States and Russia pool their technical know-how in mutual cooperation toward a common objective.

It is the irony of the decade that on the day of his death, John Kennedy was to have addressed the Japanese people in the first TV relay to be beamed from the U.S. to Japan.

The mind of a child is guileless. It is unaware that evil exists—it is uncomprehending in its face. Reports from Spanish journalists and from Cuban political refugees had failed to awaken the administration to the consequences of the Castro take-over.

It was not until the photographs of Russian missiles on Cuban soil were placed in front of the President and it was explained to him that the weapons were really there, ninety miles off the American mainland, that he grasped what was happening. He had hoped they would go away; he wondered why they hadn't.

A young innocent harrassed by reality wonders why that reality has chosen him as its victim. Never the less he must act. And when President Kennedy pledged the United States to act against any aggression, citizens all over the land were prepared to rally to his side against a Ukrainian buffoon and a bearded borrachon.

We were ready to help and we said so. We realized the crisis and would have risked our lives in the cause of justice and human dignity. But no one asked us. Young Jack preferred to do it all himself.

As Others Saw Him
The view of Kennedy as most of world saw him had once been stated simply and truthfully by a London journalist.

"What America's friends most want to see is an American President who is young enough to belong wholeheartedly to the twentieth century, young enough to do a job without having to retire to the golf course every day."

Himself the result of an amazing political success story, President Kennedy held out hope and promise to a morally exhausted humanity. This is why the world mourns him and why grown men sobbed in the streets. If the future is not to be inherited by spirited, energetic, vital young men and women, who will inherit it? If youth doesn't stand a chance, who does, they thought?

To those whom the President's death stunned into immobility, to those who had only their tears and prayers to offer in silent, honest tribute to the man they regarded as the embodiment of the moral ideal that is America—to these John Kennedy had been the child of the twentieth century—in the truest sense of those words.

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