

movements. It has also welcomed the NAACP and Civil Liberties Union. It accepted the court order for integration of Negroes into its public schools without disorders. A strong Citizen's World Council is active in constantly bringing discussions of vital topics before the people. It was this organization of 250 top executives which invited President Kennedy to speak in Dallas.

The extraordinarily progressive spirit of Dallas not only made the city the number one financial center of the entire South, but brought railroads, factories, airlines, universities, insurance companies, enormous hotels, vast oil stocks, the largest of all state fairs, but with them, as in most such immeasurable accumulations of wealth, a strong conservative tendency. With the rapid growth of this aggregation of financial interests, investors, executives, workers of all shades of political affiliation came in multitudes out of the North and East, indeed from all sections, so that suddenly it became apparent that this cosmopolitan center was no longer predominantly Democratic but actually Republican. It is possible that some Democrats interpret Republican opposition to a Democratic national administration as malignantly reactionary. I would be inclined to find fault with it because it may be rather more materialistic than violent as charged. But none will deny it is vocal.

To be sure, there have been at least two recent unseemly incidents definitely created by Dallas extreme rightists. Privately and officially these acts were repudiated, the guilty were duly arraigned, and the world informed that Dallas in no way approved of hatred or violence as exhibited by this small minority.

#### Control of Hysteria

The historian, Henry Steel Commager, says of violence on the right and left, that we are forced to view our free country of America as a violent country. The press researchers have uncovered the fact that we have had more assassinations of heads of state than any nation in the world. It adds up to something sinister, since it indicts every part of the country. We Texans shall have to concede that the Lone Star state has been notorious for its extremism. Certainly extremism ran rampant in pioneer days, was characteristic of our illustrious heroes like Sam Houston, James Bowie, Davy Crockett, Big Foot Wallace, and their like who also lived in the average frontier settlement. Some analysts insist that Texas history and traditions have inevitably made extremists of us all. It is not surprising, therefore, that under all the conditions as of now each one of us is loaded with a burden of guilt.

What to do under the circumstances does not come as a revelation to any. Methodist Bishop William C. Martin of Dallas sent a letter to his 86,000 constituents in which he advised: "This is no time for hysterical self-condemnation. It is a time to examine our lives in the light of Christ's teaching and example to see if there is any evil thought or purpose in us."

A veteran Associated Press newsmen interviewed leaders of Dallas with the result that every citizen, whatever his affiliation, showed that he felt all were on trial. Perhaps Mr. Joe M. Dealey expressed this as well as any when he spoke as president of the *Dallas Morning News*, a newspaper which fought the Ku Klux

Klan and has always condemned lynching and mob action: "If a man even suspected that he had contributed in any way to the assassination, no matter how indirectly, it would be a terribly sobering thing."

The Bishop's message had been impelled by a controversial sermon preached by a Dallas pastor under his jurisdiction. The pastor had been embarrassed by a national telecast out of New York which reported that the minister had said that children in a North Dallas public school had applauded upon hearing an announcement of the President's death. School authorities countered by saying that no school announcement of it had been made, they had heard no applause, but the children had heard of the death before they were dismissed. It might have been as in other cities when schools were dismissed little children are known to have clapped their hands, presumably over getting out.

Whatever really happened, seventy-five Methodist ministers upon hearing of their brother's embarrassment, without endorsing the contents of his sermon, voted unanimously in favor of a free pulpit and his right to utter his convictions. As a precaution against any possible violence erupting over the minister's incident the police guarded his home. As a matter of fact Superintendent W. T. White of the Dallas Public Schools reports that after thorough investigation it was found that only thirteen pupils out of 142,000 in the entire system betrayed any sign of disrespect for the President when learning of the murder, and these were earnestly dealt with.

It is believed that the Methodist body did right in upholding the policy of a free pulpit. The enemies of freedom usually strike down an unfettered pulpit first. The Communists did and the Fascists did. Religious liberty is basic to all freedoms. Of course, we take immense risks in maintaining a free pulpit, for preaching can be, and often is, the means of fanning the flames of fanaticism, the begetting of bigotry, and creating cruellest persecutions. But that mischief is the risk we take with all free speech, whether spoken or printed. In the instance of the Dallas preacher he might have been somewhat victimized by credulity in respect to rumor, but none can fail to commend his courage in upbraiding his own city for what he conceived as contributing to an atmosphere favorable to evil, for warning that we cannot make a scapegoat of a lone individual, for we are all bound up in the bundle of life together in human society and in a certain sense the guilt of the individual is the guilt of all.

There is another area where Texans have experienced enough anguish to learn that true freedom must not be tampered with, and that is the domain of the teacher. When the writer was connected with Baylor University, and World War I hysteria induced the Texas legislature to ban teaching of the German language from the public schools, an extremist invoked imprecations upon all things German. Dean J. L. Kesler, a graduate of the University of Berlin, who was presiding over the chapel audience on the occasion groaned and the over-wrought students booed their dean. That afternoon the local newspaper played up the incident and boldly charged that Baylor harbored a subversive. The frightened trustees convened hastily and fired the dean over the protests of President S. P. Brooks who asserted that Kesler was the best Christian he ever knew and losing