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WEEKLY CRUSADER

Vol. 4, No. 3 December 6, 1963

The WEEKLY CRUSADER is published weekly by Christian Crusade, Tulsa 2, Oklahoma. Editor-In-Chief: Dr. Billy James Hargis; Managing Editor, Julian Williams. Subscription Rate: \$10.00 annually. Second-Class Postage Paid at Tulsa, Oklahoma. Circulation 2835.

Additional copies of the WEEKLY CRUSADER are available at 25c each; 12 for \$2.00; 50 for \$5.00. For larger quantities, write for special discount prices. Order from Christian Crusade, Tulsa 2, Oklahoma.



"REFLECTIONS ON THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT"

Billy James Hargis

This article is being written on Monday afternoon, November 25, at 3:00 p.m. It was seventy-four hours ago that the President, John F. Kennedy, was assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

INTRODUCTION

I had flown to San Diego, California, from Tulsa early Friday morning, November 22 (the day of President Kennedy's assassination), to direct an eight-hour Radio Marathon over XERB, San Diego that night at 10:00 p.m., and to begin a three-weeks speaking tour of California, Arizona, and New Mexico. It was to have started Sunday, November 24, with a rally in San Diego.

I had to change planes in Los Angeles. My Western Airlines flight had just left the International Airport in Los Angeles, and had flown out over the Pacific Ocean to begin its turn to San Diego, when the Captain announced on the plane's public address system: "We have bad news for you. The President of the United States has just been shot." Within a matter of a few minutes the Captain announced: "The President of the United States, John Kennedy, has just died."

The shock of this terrifying announcement paralyzed everyone aboard the airplane, as it did millions and millions of other Americans in the same moment. Utter disbelief was written on every face. My first thought, like that of everyone, was "Who? — Why? — How?" Over and over again, these questions burned my mind and my lips.

Upon arrival, I went immediately to the El Cortez Hotel, wrote a statement for the press, called the radio station and cancelled the Marathon, contacted our Public Relations Department in Tulsa to cancel the tour, and made arrangements to return to Tulsa yet that afternoon. After prayer in my hotel room, I made these decisions.

Then, I turned on the television set and sat transfixed before it, hearing and seeing the awful happenings in Dallas, and their aftermath. I was numb with shock.

But not for long. I switched the TV set to another channel, the local NBC affiliate, and the first thing I heard was Bill Ryan of NBC-TV News, blaming the conservatives of Dallas

for the death of the president! He read a news release, which NBC had just received from Moscow, as if it were a factual presentation of what had happened. Of course, the Moscow release would blame the "right-wingers" in Dallas for assassinating the President! But, for an American to countenance such an accusation was unbelievable!

It will be difficult for me ever to forgive Bill Ryan for the unfair and biased manner in which he handled his remarks about the conservatives in Dallas. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that Bill Ryan, without benefit of evidence, had judged the right-wing guilty of the death of President Kennedy. And as I watched him over the past week-end, I have the feeling that he is trying to justify his original rash and snap judgment, which has been proven to be entirely wrong. Time after time, he has continued to try to indict the right wing as being "jointly" responsible for the assassination of the President. May God forgive these men for their hatred of patriotic Americans who wish nothing more than to save this country for our children's sake.

Then, out of the shock and disbelief, a terrible fear gripped my heart. Within one hour after the President had been shot in broad daylight on a Dallas street, anti-communists had already been accused of the crime, without a shred of evidence! My mind went back to the books I had read on the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, and how innocent men and women, who had nothing in common with John Wilkes Booth except a brief, passing acquaintance, were murdered and destroyed in a wave of terror and anarchy which followed. As an anti-communist leader, I know only too well the viciousness of "managed news" and global thought-control. I know that even the THOUGHT of this dastardly deed's having been committed by even a so-called anti-communist could be used as a psychological front to suppress all freedom of speech and to take our country into an absolute dictatorship.

From the terrible insults and abuse which I have personally suffered the last two years at the hands of the left-wing press, it was frightening to imagine what these men would do if they could brainwash the public into believing that this heinous crime was a product of the right-wing. I thought of

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