

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTER OF THE ASSASSIN  
OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

Lee Harvey Oswald died before he was given the opportunity of a trial for the murder of the President and thus the case of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy will never legally be solved. Oswald will always be recorded in American History as the suspected and probable assassin. We have the further knowledge that one of the sternest admonitions in the Bible is that of: "Judge not lest ye be judged."

With the above being accepted as a foundation, the reason I have undertaken this analysis of the probable assassin of the President is that to the extent that the personality characteristics of this man and any man in general like him could constitute the make up of a man who might and would possibly assassinate a President or other high government official, it would be a civic duty in conscience of a private citizen to communicate such an analysis to agencies which are charged by law with the responsibilities of safeguarding the life of the President and other officials since they have the obligation in prudence to consider possible individuals who might be construed as a cause for concern in the fulfilling of the tasks of their profession.

I don't know Oswald personally but taking the reports of him and the manifestations of his character as given in the news media, I would hold that an atheist could perpetrate this horrible crime. For the purposes of this analysis I will assume a fictional character named Oswald who does perpetrate this crime to reconcile the facts that while the human being Oswald cannot be licitly judged, the mind naturally seeks a solution to the crime.

When a person believes in and has obedience to Almighty God, he accepts the existence and obligation to build a spiritual life and a moral code as given by this Creator as ruling his conduct as a person individually and in association with other persons in society. For such a person, the center of his life is Almighty God. His actions, behavior and thoughts are performed with reference to God and His Laws. There also exists other possibilities as a philosophy of life. A person can deny that there is a one, true God in Heaven Who created life and rules men and all that exists, and in so doing the person who believes this way now makes himself the center of life and society and in so doing, in effect, makes himself a god. The false "god" that an atheist makes of himself is all-powerful and almighty to the extent of the maximum effect that his will can have in life.

As opposed to the Creator Who is perfection itself and Whose goodness, mercy and justice are infinite, the false "god" that an atheist makes of himself may exercise his will to its maximum power in envy, hatred and malice. To such a person, if the impulse presents itself of beating his wife, since his will is the center of the universe and its exercise is held to be a good, he therefore beats his wife. If the envy, malice and hatred of our country and its constitutional head, the President of the United States as an office and the individual man who holds that office with courage and dedication, is powerful enough to present to the will of that atheist the desire to express these evil qualities and, further if there is no moral frame of reference restraining this will but the will acting is the good sought after; then the person may take the life of this man who was the President of our nation in an act of murder. Let us assume our fictional Oswald is such a man.

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Los Angeles Times by Robert E. Thompson datelined Dallas approximately November 23 1963.

"Lee H. Oswald, 24, an ex-Marine, was booked as Mr. Kennedy's alleged assassin after he had been interrogated for nearly eight hours by federal, state and local law enforcement officers, Dallas Police Chief J. E. Curry, told newsmen Oswald had not confessed.

But, the Chief said, he would be charged with murder based on physical evidence. . . . Investigators said they still have considerable work to do on the case but are convinced that Oswald is guilty of the President's murder. Police said Oswald admitted he worked in the textbook warehouse building from which the shots that killed the President were fired. Oswald would not account for his whereabouts at the time of the assassination, police said. . . . but from the moment Oswald was apprehended, the primary objective of the FBI, the Secret Service, Texas Rangers, and the Dallas Police was to determine whether he fired the fatal shot at the President. Curry said Oswald admitted his Communist sympathies and activities in the pro-Castro "Fair Play for Cuba Committee." But, beyond that, Curry said, Oswald would admit nothing. The Police Chief described Oswald as a stoic."

The reason he refuses to account for his whereabouts and does not confess follows from his past pattern of behavior of defiance of authority. His face shows considerable frustration as a general condition but from the news photos of him just before he was shot while between officers J. R. Leavelle and L. C. Graves, as a specific condition, his face and bearing show considerable self-composure and contentment.

In the police interrogation room while all the investigations from the different agencies stand around him, he has this self-assurance and refuses to confess a crime he committed since he feels a sense of power and superiority to the men around him as he watches their helplessness in the face of the effect of his will. Their chief interest is not in obtaining a confession from him as such. On this day, every man questioning him ardently wishes that this deed could be undone. He sees their uneasiness and exults in the fact that it was the action of his will that is the power in front of which they are helpless.

Most people seldom look at other persons as those persons are, but rather superimpose the qualities they consider important as an overlay to another's character. The average person refers to the assassin as a "kook" or "nut". The reason they say this is that they never look at the assassin as one human being and what he is like but rather put this overlay of their own traits on him and come up with confusion. Nearly all of us spent the weekend of November 22 - 24 in a state of shock as a result of the difficulty in assimilating the enormity of this crime.

The average person starts out with the following premises:

- (1) I love my country and assume that others do too.
- (2) I would never murder any one and I assume that no one else would either.

When a person comes along who retains in his character contradictions of both of these statements to a profound degree and is prepared and does act in reality with these evil elements in his character as motives, no one has to be ashamed of experiencing confusion in trying to understand such an individual.

While the suspect has this sense of power, there also is the fact of his lack of comprehension of the significance of what he has done since if, to him, the exercise of his will is the main good in life, then the social implications of his acts is a meaningless term. With such a person you could mention Kennedy, assassination, Connally and murder all day long and he wouldn't bat an eyelash or twitch a lip. *These terms are of no importance to him.*

The exercise of his will is important to him. The people who are hurt in this exercise of his will are extraneous to his interest. If he was shown a picture of Mrs. Kennedy and her children and was told that as a result of his action this young woman is now a widow and will have to bring up her children without a father, this would have no effect on him since his will acting is important to him and the suffering of this woman and her children are not.

For the purposes of speculation assuming he had not been shot, when he was visited in jail by his wife and mother, he'd ask for newspapers to read what reporters were saying about him and exult in the glow of his self-importance. This would be an example of how morally obtuse this man is. He would have a silent glee in all the attention being paid him but would not, because of his moral and spiritual condition, comprehend the abhorrence that the public would experience for his act. At the end of his trial assuming he was found guilty, the newspapers would report that Oswald maintained the same stoic composure as the judge sentenced him that he had all during the trial. The word here would not be stoic but uncomprehending. He would not comprehend the fact that society found his act reprehensible.

Assuming he was sentenced to life imprisonment, as the years passed and the Communist and leftist but non-Communist news media around the world raised the cry that Oswald was innocent and that the assassination was a rightest plot he would never consciously say anything to contradict this and would enjoy the attention given him.

As an example which contrasts with this line of behavior and might be considered as the way the average murderer from a motive of passion acts, they had a case in Seattle where an Italian laborer killed his unfaithful wife in a very brutal and violent manner. For the first fifteen hours he was in custody, the man admitted nothing. At this point, the suspect was reported as having gone into a catatonic like fit in which he re-enacted his crime fearfully sobbing all the while. Eight hours later after sleeping, he denied any previous verbal confession which he had made. What probably occurred was that the enormity of his act filled him with overwhelming emotions which caused him to act against his own self-interest.

A father of a young boy hits the child in anger and then is immediately remorseful. The reason he experiences remorse is because of the love the father has for the child. If he didn't have this love, he wouldn't experience sorrow.

If the reader accepts as a speculation the foregoing analysis and then compares the picture of Oswald from the newspapers before and after he was shot, I would premise that the key feature on his face as he is shot is the lack of comprehension he has even of the significance of his own death.

The question presents itself of the spiritual implications of this event. At the split second that the assassin was squeezing the trigger to fire the bullet at 12:30 P.M. on the 22nd of November, Almighty God saw this and as the Ruler of the world, all the societies and people in it and every act and power to act that exists in His creatures could have caused a slight gust of wind which would have swerved the bullet to miss the President by 2 inches. Our Lord had the power to do this, but He did not use it.

It is said that Our Lord never causes evil but rather permits it to occur and that even then He draws good out of the evil act. This assassination was a singularly monstrously evil act.

- (1) Why did our Lord permit it to occur?
- (2) What good does our Lord expect to derive out of this evil act?
- (3) What does He wish that we, His creatures, learn from this event in an understanding which will reflect His glory and goodness?

Possibly we may have to put aside the image of the happy, pleasant America with no problems which has millions of its citizens fleeing a confrontation with their consciences by occupying their attention with subscription pay television, new cars with side windows that move at the press of a button and ~~the~~ distractions.

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The purpose of our Lord in permitting this horrible crime to occur may well be that he is no longer willing to accept only the implicit belief in God that is the foundation of our society and country but wishes that this profession of allegiance and obedience to Almighty God be publicly made and acted upon by both the individuals and institutions of our country.

This implicit belief exists when a person places his hand on the Bible in court and says that: "I will tell the truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God." The implication is that the words and the judicial system that rests on their meaning are worthless without the witness of our Lord.

The people of our country have experienced much grief over this event and possibly some of it is excessive. The assassination of President John F. Kennedy, shocking though it is, has to be viewed in a spiritual perspective.

The life of John F. Kennedy belonged to Almighty God and when He, in His wisdom, chose to call his servant to his eternal reward whether on that day, two days before, ten years before or ten years after November 22, 1963, was an expression of His will -- a will which has to be received by His creatures with a submissiveness characterized by humility and meekness.

Is all the grief that our country experienced, both individually and collectively, equal to the sorrow that our Blessed Mother felt on the day that she saw her Son carry His cross along the road to Calvary and there watch Jesus be crucified?

As individuals and a country, it may be said that to the extent:

- (a) of our faith in Materialism that our scientists are our priests,
- (b) of our faith in secular humanism that our psychiatrists are our priests, and
- (c) of our faith in Almighty God that our Catholic Priests are our Priests (i.e. author's partisan view - it would be a Rabbi or Minister for those of other faiths).

Truths may be drawn from this terrible event that will show forth the glory of God and contribute to the possibility of drawing more souls to Him. As the natural life of John Kennedy ebbed away, despite the frantic efforts of our magnificent medical doctors and the facilities they have, the faiths of Materialism and Secular Humanism and its ministers, the scientists and psychiatrists, stood by helpless and despairing. One faith, that in Almighty God, demonstrated that it lives even through such terrible events in Glory and Majesty and provides to its adherents the spiritual power of the Love of God which has overcome death.

At the end of this analysis, it is necessary to mention once again that as a person who has left the living Oswald will never be able to be tried for this crime. It is the duty of a Christian to wish the mercy of our Lord on the soul of the man Lee Oswald and leave to Almighty God His judgement.

The only justification that can be presented for undertaking such an analysis is that the confusion most people experience due to the main suspect's untimely death, ignorance of motives and the utmost seriousness of the act perpetrated as of now lend themselves, with a realistic knowledge of human weakness, to unscrupulous individuals using this situation to make unfounded charges against second parties and in turn leading to general, unproductive investigative work.

  
Leo A. Gorman

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