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OUTLOOK

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Editorials / Columnists

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THE
KENNEDY
LEGACY

"... he was earthy, human, witty, quick, graceful, sometimes petty, bright, sometimes vulgar, funny, irreverent — light years removed from some king at a Round Table."

By Benjamin C. Bradlee

Bradlee, executive editor of The Washington Post, was a friend and neighbor of John Kennedy and author of "That Special Grace," a reminiscence about Kennedy.

THE LEGENDS of Camelot and King Arthur were largely laid upon the land in the 12th Century by one Geoffrey of Monmouth, described in my Encyclopaedia Britannica as a "reckless forger."

The legends of Camelot and John Fitzgerald Kennedy were largely laid upon the land in the 20th Century by his widow Jacqueline in an interview with the skilled, sensitive—and in this particular case, reluctant—journalist, Teddy White, in Life magazine the week after JFK was murdered.

To reread the Arthurian legends more than 900 years after they were written, as a reporter in the Washington of Richard Nixon, is to boggle the mind. Especially that knightly fellowship of the Round Table—Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell, Colson, Dean, Magruder, Ziegler, Stans?

But my mind is also stretched more than somewhat by rereading "For One Brief Shining Moment... Camelot" in the Dec. 5, 1963, issue of Life.

"At night before we'd go to sleep, Jack liked to play some records, and the song he loved most came at the very end of this record," White quoted Mrs. Kennedy. "The lines he loved to hear were: 'Don't let it be forgot that once there was a spot, for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot.'"

"... and it will never be that way again." Perhaps it is unfair to hold a woman, fiercely bereaved, to the judgments reached in a moment of awful pain. Certainly, it is unfair to question her commitment made in the same interview: "I'm never going to live in Europe. I'm not going to travel extensively abroad." That's a desecration. I'm going to live in the places I lived with Jack."

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That may well be history's ultimate judgment of the man and his accomplishments, though surely the durability of that sense of promise, as strong today as it was 10 years ago, will make the next generation of historians careful.

But the point is that's no way to look at Jack Kennedy... through Camelot lenses. King Arthur comes through 900 years of history as some kind of faintly noble, humorless sap, uninvolved in the minutiae of living, free from such vital human frailties as anger, fault-finding, sarcasm.

Not to put too fine a point on it, this was not John F. Kennedy as I remember him. What follows are anecdotes culled from conversations I had with Kennedy while he was President. These conversations were transcribed generally within 24 hours, always within one week. They prove, I suppose, whatever anyone wants them to prove. To me they prove that he was earthy, human, witty, quick, graceful, sometimes petty, bright, sometimes vulgar, funny, irreverent... light years removed from some Middle Ages king at a Round Table.

Feb. 14, 1962: At a White House dance some days before, the President had told me a few minutes after midnight that the swap of Soviet spy Col. Abel for the American U-2 pilot Gary Powers had just been completed. I had told Phil Graham, publisher of The Washington Post, who in turn had told his night editor. The Post had a two-hour worldwide beat, and the rest of the press was furious.

THE PRESIDENT said he was about to order an investigation into the Powers leak, but thought it over for 24 hours and came to the conclusion that he didn't have to. "Plucky (Pierre Salinger) gets such a kick out of tracing those leaks back to me," JFK said. "I have to be more careful." He said he

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Haunted by Legend

UT MY POINT is simply that John F. Kennedy was no King Arthur, and if the Bundy's, McNamara's, Sorensens seem more noble or knightly than most of their successors, the Kennedy White House was no Camelot. The legend that he was and it was has come back to haunt them . . . in the rash of critical re-examinations that began with the first-rate "The Best and the Brightest" and has continued in most of the 10th anniversary reprises of those thousand days, which have labeled John F. Kennedy as long on promise and short on performance.

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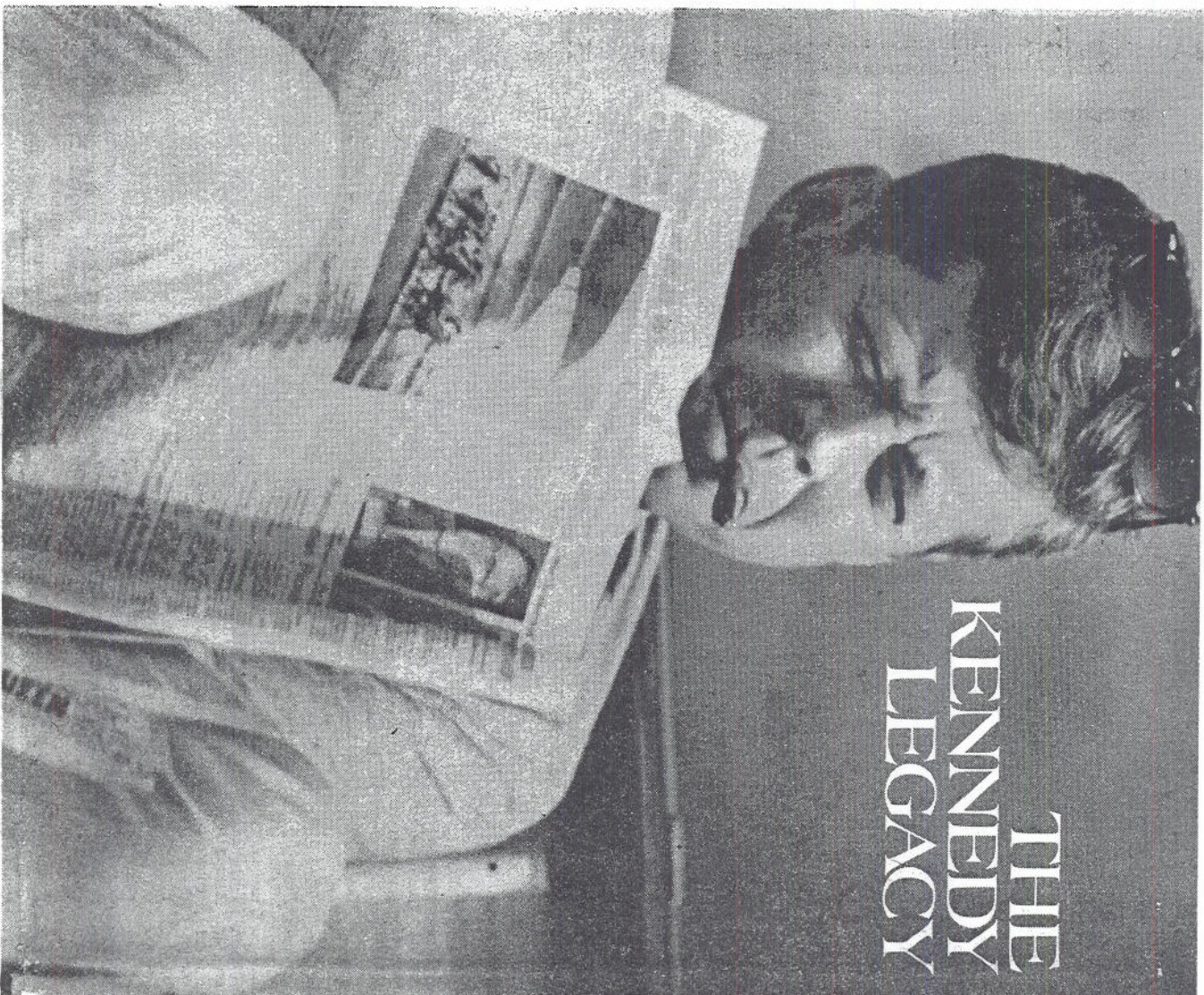
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"Pucky (Pierre Salinger) gets such a kick out of tracing those leaks back to me," JFK said. "I have to be more careful." He said he had blown his stack about the leak on the Cuban embargo and ordered Salinger to spare no effort in finding out who leaked that one. Salinger worked like hell for two days, finally reported back to the President that he had found the culprit.

JFK (eagerly)—Who was it?
Salinger (gleefully)—You.
JFK (crestfallen)—What do you mean?

See LEGEND, Page C5



Hampshire, Aug. 31, 1963.—John F. Kennedy Library photo

'Substance

Or Shadow?'

"A harsh new wisdom is struggling to be born."

Richard Harwood, Page C2

"His statements and innovations with . . ."

'The Crumbling

Of Sand Castles'

Substance Or Shadow?

By **Haynes Johnson**

Johnson, an assistant managing editor of *The Washington Post*, is the author of "The Boy of Pigs" and other books about the 1960s.

THE BODY is that of a muscular, well-developed and well-nourished adult Caucasian male measuring 72½ inches and weighing approximately 170 pounds. . . . The hair is reddish brown and abundant, the eyes are blue. . . .

Even that grim autopsy report, with its clinical descriptions of massive wounds and incisions and condition of lungs, heart, abdominal cavity and skeletal system, contained strangely personal language that made us feel, again, a terrible sense of sudden loss. From then to now, John F. Kennedy has had more of a hold over us in death than he ever had in life.

A decade has passed. Once again the newsstands and bookstores are filled with an outpouring of Kennedy reminiscences. Jack and Jackie, Caroline and John—John, grace and beauty, charm and Camelot, *Remember?* Aside from this artificial anniversary date, what difference does it really make? Ten years after Dallas we still cannot resolve whether the Kennedy legacy was one of substance or shadow.

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IT MAY WELL BE that the most ironic legacy Kennedy left us is his death. The Kennedy assassination brought home the shattering fact of the mortality of our highest leaders. Until that first bullet was fired from the Texas School Book Depository building at the motorcade below in Dealey Plaza, our Presidents were becoming as exalted as emperors of old. They were not mere mortals; they were Presidents, half enshrined in myth and accorded public awe and reverence from the moment they were inaugurated. Their times in office were not just elected terms; they presided over "eras." John Kennedy's murder taught us how fleeting those eras can be, and how fallible the men who personify them are.

Fate and events have been unkind to our Presidents since that day in Dallas. Lyndon Johnson was driven from office by the people who overwhelmingly elected him.

See **DECADE**, Page C2

"A harsh new wisdom is struggling to be born."

Richard Harwood, Page C2

"His detractors are impatient with symbolism."

Sidney Hertzberg, Page C3

"If the bugle sounded, they would serve."

William Greider, Page C5

Two Reassessments

By **Michael Harrington**

Harrington, a leading American Socialist, is the author of "The Other America," which helped launch the War on Poverty.

JOHN F. KENNEDY grew in office. That is the key to his tragically brief presidency.

I did not vote for Kennedy in 1960. I stupidly repeated an old leftist cliché, that Democrats and Republicans are peas in a pod, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and refused to vote for either major candidate.

I recall that blunder for a reason: to emphasize that I do not look back on the Kennedy years as a nostalgic exile from Camelot. Even though I understood early on in his administration that I should have voted for Kennedy, I attacked him for his escalations in Vietnam, his hesitations in civil rights and on many other issues. On Nov. 22, 1963, when I heard the unbelievable news in Milan, I was nearing the end of a year in Europe, anxious to come home and make amends for 1960 by campaigning for him in 1964. I write, then, as a man of the left who was forced against his own prejudices to recognize John Kennedy's contribution.

See **LEFT**, Page C4

By **Richard J. Walden**

Walden, a former aide to Richard Nixon, is the author of "The Founding Father," a biography of Joseph P. Kennedy.

TEN YEARS after his assassination, John F. Kennedy has entered history and the common American tradition. Enshrined in granite, postage stamps, and schoolroom portraits, the martyred President "who died too young" is part of the past that belongs to every citizen.

Less certain, however, is the status—indeed, the definition—of the Kennedy political legacy. It is not even clear to whom it will belong in the future.

The presumptive beneficiaries, of course, are Sen Edward M. Kennedy and the Democratic Party. But their claim, on inspection, proves surprisingly disputable. If the Kennedy legacy is little more than a memory of a distinctive personal manner and "style," Teddy is the heir and can prove it by merely opening his mouth. But if the legacy is more substantial, consisting of positions upheld, policy themes stated, values exemplified and virtues celebrated, there ought to be a fairly clear resemblance between what Kennedy stood for and what the present-day Democratic Party stands for.

See **RIGHT**, Page C4

The Crumbling Of Sand Castles?

By **Tim O'Brien**

O'Brien is a national reporter for *The Washington Post*. His book about his Army service in Vietnam, "If I Die in a Combat Zone," was published this year.

BEFORE JANUARY, 1960, I was aware that a man named Eisenhower was President. But John F. Kennedy was the first President I truly knew—whose movements were familiar, whose voice and manner and physical presence were real, whose private life had been made public to me.

I was 14 when he was elected. I was 17 when he died. I was young.

His death did not traumatize me, but it did introduce me to grief. His was my first funeral, and though I mourned before a television set and not before a wooden coffin, it was a funeral and nothing else. I was a bit wide-eyed, self-conscious, even before the TV. I tried to maintain a certain dignity, and at times I succeeded and other times I did not. I was new to grief, but I understood how it must be handled. It is a confrontation between pure sadness and the emotions of helplessness and anger that come with the crumbling of sand castles. In grief, there is terrible sadness, but there is also terrible disillusionment. Disillusionment in the strict sense—the shedding of mistaken ideas, the explosion of fictions such as permanence and grand idealism and invulnerability.

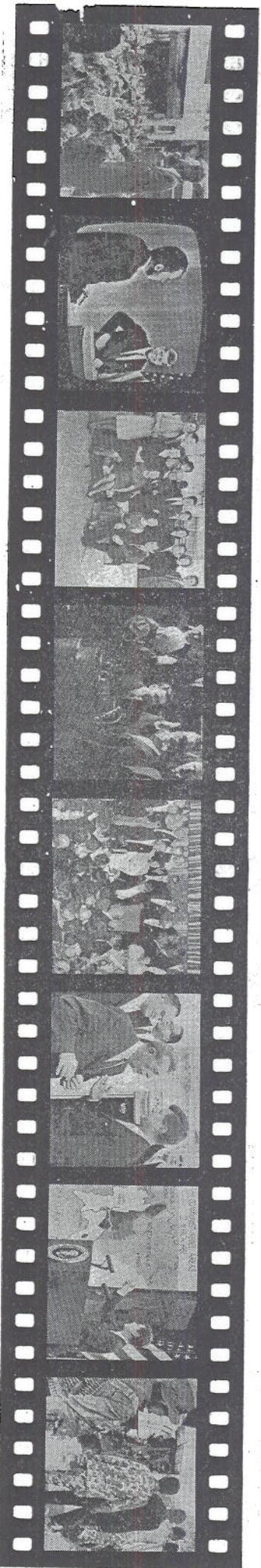
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VULNERABLE. When Kennedy was killed, I felt vulnerable through and through. My own tissue was youthful looking, but it was finally vulnerable. It was then that I understood that the fine and beautiful fictions I lived by had little power against the stark facts of reality and biology.

The reality was my teacher on that Friday afternoon. "Sic semper tyrannis," he said, always loving to puncture emotion. "Sic semper tyrannis. Thus always to tyrants."

Even then it had started. Iconoclasy and iconoclasm. "You have to stand back from all this," he said. "It's terrible. I know. But you'll have to view it as history, because that's what it is now—history. Okay. Who said sic semper tyrannis?"

See **YOUTH**, Page C5



Revisionism and Reality

By Richard Harwood

Harwood, assistant managing editor in charge of national news for The Washington Post, is co-author of "Lynndon."

WHEN JOHN KENNEDY died, a man in Irishman is alleged to have said, "Ah, they cried the rain down that night."

The columnist, Mary McCrovy, told her friend, Daniel P. Moynihan, "We'll never laugh again." To which Moynihan replied, "Heavens, Mary. We'll laugh again. It's just that we'll never be young again."

Those were symptoms of a grief that became one of the great emotional phenomena in all human history. It affected tens of millions of people on every continent. It found expression in poetry and song and prayer and monuments and legends and in memories that today, 10 years after the event, are painful to hold.

"Why?" Harold Macmillan would ask, "was this feeling—this sorrow—at once so universal and so individual? Was it not because he seemed, in his own person, to embody all the hopes and aspirations of this new world that is struggling to emerge—to rise, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the old?"

It would have seemed so then and it would seem so today in those endless clusters of visitors climbing the hill to the grave in Arlington Cemetery, in those numberless shacks and tents and split-levels where the Kennedy picture hangs on the wall, where the Kennedy mementos are pressed away in albums and cedar chests.

It no longer seems so, however, in the new literature that is arising in the great universities and publishing factories of America. In those quarters, history is being revised, Kennedy legends are being dissected, a harsh new wisdom about the man is struggling to be born.

A Central Theme

THE ESSAYIST Ronald Steel, writing in the New York Review of Books in 1970, struck a central theme for the Kennedy debunkers:

"As the brief reign of John F. Kennedy recedes into the historical past, leaving the Vietnam war as its permanent monument, and as Robert Kennedy's unending succession of agonizing reappraisals now seems little more than a footnote to the tribulations of Lyndon Johnson, it is sometimes hard to remember what the Kennedy legend is all about. . . . It got tarnished some

Her personal judgment on Kennedy is unexceptional as an example of New Left revisionism: "I stand with those liberals and liberal-radicals who criticize the Kennedys not for the humanistic promises they so articulately made, but for the preponderant lack of fulfillment of such promises and for the self-centered arrogance that so often underlay the assumption, spoken or not, that only the Kennedys could lead the nation toward the 'American Dream.'"

Where she advances the critique is in her use of the psycho-history technique to argue that Kennedy was guilty of policy deficiencies because he was the victim of psychological deficiencies.

Thus, "A major part of my theme is that the Kennedy demand for power grew out of neurotic competition far more than from genuine competence; that an obsessive-compulsive need for power and social recognition basically motivated the Kennedy triumphs; that this need arose from a profound sense of powerlessness and rejection in individual Kennedy's and in the family as a whole, and that, therefore, the glorious promises, because of their largely neurotic origins, remained largely unfulfilled and unfulfillable."

Specifically, she argues that Kennedy was a man obsessed who took the nation into tragic adventures — the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, Vietnam — out of a neurotic need to prove his manhood.

Today's "counterculture," as Bruce Mazlish remarks in a foreword to the Clinch book, "is a revolution against these 'neurosis.' The counterculture seeks to change the values the Kennedys represented. Manliness in an atomic age is seen as a form of madness, and boys wear long hair like girls to symbolize the acceptance of 'womanliness' and its fusion with 'manliness.' Competition gives way to community. Winning the world is seen as losing one's soul. The constant effort to seem 'strong' is perceived as the outer disguise of an inner fear of 'weakness.'"

Two Different Worlds

ON THE FACE OF IT, it is difficult to reconcile these retrospective judgments of Kennedy with the worldwide sense of loss and love his death occasioned. It is especially difficult today, in a time of approximate détente, in a time when nuclear war seems so unlikely and absurd. Today's children feel an American President laughing and

winning the world propaganda battle and were hostile and warlike in their attitudes toward the United States. There was popular suspicion of proposals to halt nuclear testing and there was an overwhelming willingness — 71 per cent of the people — to go to war with the Soviet Union rather than permit a blockade in Berlin.

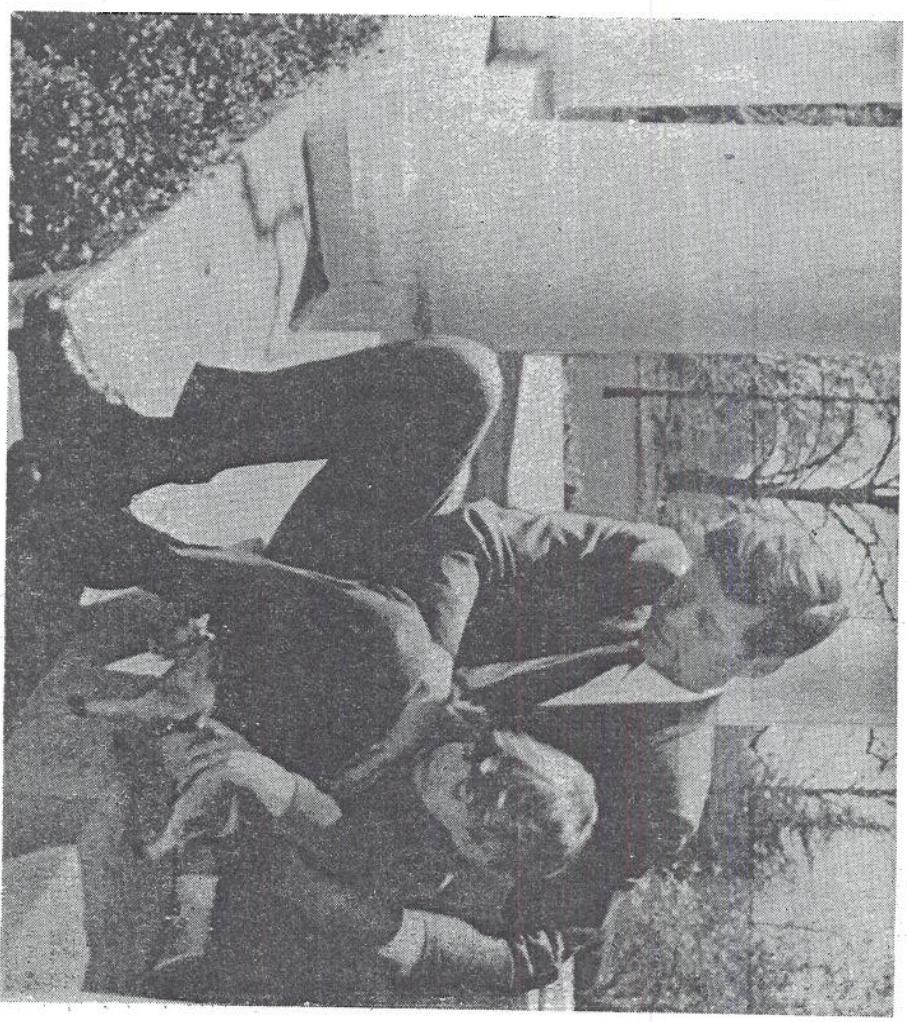
Those were the existential facts of 1960. Armageddon, it seemed then, was man's fate. It may be argued today, as the revisionists argue, that this Cold War mentality was imposed on the world by ignorant men serving the interests of an imperial capitalism — the Trumans and Churchills and de Gaulles. But it was real and it was this real world, not a world that might have been or should have been or could have been, that had to be dealt with by politicians. The task fell to a generation of young men who had themselves been scarred and tested in a great war. What they collectively, and Kennedy in particular, brought to that task was a sense of leadership, a sense of rationality, a sense that somehow the lightrope could be walked and that the world would survive.

The Profits of Hope

LEADERSHIP is a quality not subject to verbal definition; it is existential and Kennedy possessed it. He embodied, as Macmillan said, "the hopes and aspirations" of mankind. He did not solve the problems of war and peace. But he created the conviction that they could be solved. He did not end the problems of racial discrimination, the problems of poverty in the world, the problems of governance. But he inspired the hope that they could be solved.

That is what is missing from the calculus of the revisionists. They applied to his life and his presidency an idealistic cost accounting procedure that measures achievement by what was done and what was left undone. It is a form of cost accounting that leaves out the psychic and emotional profits of hope. It is the kind of accounting that would find Franklin Roosevelt a failure because he left undone the perfection of man and society.

Ronald Steel, in his revisionist article, "The Kennedy Fantasy," was confronted with this existential dilemma: "The question remains why the murderer of the two Kennedys brought forth such an extraordinary outpouring of public grief. Why did so many who did not particularly admire them in life feel an irreparable sense of loss at



White House, April 1963.—John F. Kennedy Library photo.

Substance or Shadow?

DECADE, From Page C1

Richard Nixon, after a similarly great victory, stands in danger of historic disgrace. The thought of his impeachment is no longer unthinkable. And the country itself has endured a series of seemingly unending shocks over this past decade.

The Kennedy assassination was the first of those blows. Since then, nothing has seemed secure or certain. Assassinations of public men that followed his own—another Kennedy, King, Malcolm X, the nearly-fatal assault on Wallace—have brought home the realization that no man, no matter how high or well-protected, is safe. Ri-

Those years were not, of course, benign. The Cold War was still with us. Racial tensions were on the rise. Increasingly bitter ideological arguments divided us: The John Birch Society found Kennedy too liberal, too soft; the liberals thought him too hesitant, too political (less profile, more courage, some of them were saying). But through it all Kennedy moved surely and confidently.

His popularity was astonishing. After the Bay of Pigs invasion, 83 per cent of all Americans approved the way he was acting. For virtually his entire time in office, the Gallup Poll showed that nearly 3 out of 4 citizens backed him.

American power and will were negated. One price of Camelot was Vietnam. No young Arthur emerged to extricate us from disaster abroad and national disunity at home. Surely that legacy has diminished Kennedy's place in our affections. Romance and myth-making, we now see, do not wear well in this constantly changing society. I doubt if anyone today really believes that Jack Kennedy was a young prince of the realm ruling over a court of knights and their ladies fair.

Many scholars are offering other criticisms. Kennedy's excessive promises, they say, raised popular expectations that led eventually to general frustration when they were unfulfilled. Richard Nixon chose opposite themes

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Could it be that the revisionists are right? Could it be that Kennedy deluded and misled us and that all the love and sorrow were won by fraud? It could be. But only if history and Kennedy's existential qualities are erased from the collective memories of mankind.

The world he inherited as he came into the presidency and into our consciousness was a far different world than we live in today. The children of 1960 learned about bomb shelters and practiced air raid drills. There was a

1960 Armageddon it seemed then, was man's fate. It may be argued today, as the revisionists argue, that this Cold War mentality was imposed on the world by ignorant men serving the interests of an imperial capitalism — the Trumans and Churchills and de Gaulles. But it was real and it was this real world, not a world that might have been or should have been or could have been, that had to be dealt with by politicians. The task fell to a generation of young men who had themselves been scarred and tested in a great war. What they collectively, and Kennedy in particular, brought to that task was a sense of leadership, a sense of rationality, a sense that somehow the tightrope could be walked and that the world would survive.

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Steel's thin answer, in the case of John Kennedy, was that he possessed "a true sense of style." But it was more than "style" that inspired lines like Robert Haza's: "President I love as my grandfather loved Lincoln, in the silence after the bugle, lie down. Lie in your forest of stone. Lie close to Lincoln. On the dark hill a flower of light is blooming clear as your eyes were."



White House, April 1963.—John F. Kennedy Library Photo

Substance or Shadow?

DECADE, From Page C1

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The Kennedy assassination was the first of those blows. Since then, nothing has seemed secure or certain. Assassinations of public men that followed his own—another Kennedy, King, Malcolm X, the nearly-fatal assault on Wallace—have brought home the realization that no man, no matter how high or well-protected, is safe. Risks have raised questions not only about the survival of our cities, but our system. Power blackouts, fuel shortages and pollution alerts have created an awareness of how dependent society has become on elements beyond the control of most citizens—or beyond the control of anyone. Corruption and subversion extending to the Oval Office of the White House itself have made us despair about national honor and integrity.

With good reason we have learned not to trust so blindly nor to believe so implicitly in our leaders. If we are not yet a cynical society, we are in danger of becoming one. We are finding it easier to believe in a multitude of conspiracy theories. An atmosphere of doubt and suspicion still surrounds both Kennedy and King assassinations.

Those years were not, of course, benign. The Cold War was still with us. Racial tensions were on the rise. Increasingly bitter ideological arguments divided us: The John Birch Society found Kennedy too liberal, too soft; the liberals thought him too hesitant, too political (less profile, more courage, some of them were saying). But through it all Kennedy moved surely and confidently.

His popularity was astonishing. After the Bay of Pigs invasion, 83 percent of all Americans approved the way he was acting. For virtually his entire time in office, the Gallup Poll showed that nearly 3 out of 4 citizens backed him.

IN THIS PRESENT period of national suspicion and distrust, it's difficult to understand why Kennedy seemed special. Certainly not all Americans loved him. Indeed, many hated and feared him. But no one was immune to him. From the moment he announced his candidacy in the marbled splendor of the old Senate Caucus Room on Jan. 2, 1960, until the end in Dallas, he commanded America's attention as no one since. He seemed so perfect a break with the past. He had everything Americans always admired: youth, energy, power, wit, wealth, charm, good looks, a record as a true war hero, a glamorous wife, lovely children. He promised exciting times, and carefully cultivated the impression of action. He accepted nomination on the West

American power and will were negated. One price of Camelot was Vietnam. No young Arthur emerged to extricate us from disaster abroad and national disunity at home. Surely that legacy has diminished Kennedy's place in our affections. Romance and myth-making, we now see, do not wear well in this constantly changing society. I doubt if anyone today really believes that Jack Kennedy was a young prince of the realm ruling over a court of knights and their ladies fair.

Many scholars are offering other criticisms. Kennedy's excessive promises, they say, raised popular expectations that led eventually to general frustration when they were unfulfilled. Richard Nixon chose opposite themes in his presidential campaign of 1968. We should avoid grand promises, lower our voices and work at bringing our society together. Nixon's themes were correct and the people approved—and then his promises, too, were unfulfilled.

There is something else. A debunking tone runs through many of the Kennedy reminiscences now being published. But the Kennedy legacy will not be determined only by the myth-makers—or breakers. We wept for Kennedy 10 years ago for more fundamental reasons than his specific successes or failures. We sorrowed because, at his best, he made it seem possible to believe we could be betterly because he inspired a sense of confidence, trust and purpose; because of millions he represented the pursuit of

dy's assassination came almost as a surprise, forever enshrining him in history as the glamorous heroic leader he wanted to be, rather than as the politician buffeted by events he could not control."

Full Flowering

LABORATIONS on this theme have appeared in uncounted essays and polemical volumes. They are debated and embellished in the higher learning circles and came to full flower this year in Nancy Gager Chinch's book, "The Kennedy Neuro-

The world he inherited as he came into the presidency and into our consciousness was a far different world than we live in today. The children of 1960 learned about bomb shelters and practiced air raid drills. There was a sense among men of a terrible peril from nuclear war. In the United States the Gallup polls reflected a popular obsession with survival. Half the people believed there was an imminent danger of a new world war; 80 percent preferred a nuclear war to life under Communist rule. There were widespread fears that the Russians were winning the missile race, were

excerpted from commission testimony, sold 400,000. Edward Jay Epstein's "Inquest," in 1966, sold 400,000 paperback.

In 1967 came William Manchester's "Death of a President," which sold over 650,000 copies in hardcover and is still selling 1,000 a year. Probably over a million paperbacks have been sold. Jim Bishop's "The Day Kennedy Was Shot," in 1968, another big best-seller, has gone through five paperback printings.

Revisionist history has not achieved such commercial success, although David Halberstam's gossip-packed "The Best and the Brightest" has sold 175,000 copies and is still going strong.

The modest Jackie literature, eight titles, includes one best-seller: Mary Gallagher's "My Life With Jacqueline Kennedy," published in 1969, which sold 100,000 hardcover copies but is no longer moving.

The latest valentine, just out, is Cecil Stoughton and Chester Chilton's "The Memories—JFK, 1961-1963." And Rose Kennedy's autobiography, due next spring, is certain to be a best-seller.

By Eye Anachronism

The writer is associate editor of The Post's Book World.

THE CARD CATALOGUE of the New York Public Library lists 53 books purporting to be by John F. Kennedy and 210 titles about him in a variety of languages. These include 12 books of poetry and such special items as "Go Caroline!" by George Plimpton, of which only eight copies were printed.

A few of these books have achieved large and lasting sales. Kennedy's own "Profiles in Courage," first published in 1956, has sold well over a million copies in hardcover alone. His "Why England Slept," an undergraduate thesis brazenly published as a book, sold 81,000 copies between 1962 and 1968.

Theodore H. White's "The Making of the President 1960," published in 1961, sold close to a million hard-bound copies and is still selling slowly today. In paperback it has sold nearly 400,000 copies.

In 1965 the great adulatory post-

mortems began to roll. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.'s "The Thousand Days" has probably sold about half a million hardcover, including Book-of-the-Month Club sales, and is still selling about 1,000 a year. Paperback sales are around 600,000. Theodore Sorensen's "Kennedy" published the same year, has sold about 135,000 copies and is still going at about 500 a year. It has gone through seven printings in paperback.

John K. Jessup's "JFK As We Remember Him," Paul Fay's "The Pleasure of His Company," and Pierre Salinger's "With Kennedy" are all still selling. Kenny O'Donnell and Dave Powers' "Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye," published last year, has sold at least 120,000 copies in hardcover. In paperback this fall, it has already sold 1.3 million.

The first successful anti-Kennedy book, Victor Lasky's "JFK: The Man and the Myth," came out in 1966 and sold 125,000 copies.

Assassination books include several big sellers. Bantam Books' paperback of the Warren Commission report, published in 1964, sold 1.6 million copies, "The Witnesses,"

not yet a cynical society, we are in danger of becoming one. We are finding it easier to believe in a multitude of conspiracy theories. An atmosphere of doubt and suspicion still surrounds both Kennedy and King assassinations.

Proof of governmental deception has come to light over Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers, My Lai and the American atrocities, Watergate and his cover-up.

That is not to suggest the Kennedy legacy has been all negative and disillusioning. The brief Kennedy years (only two years, 10 months, and two days) were the last times when America experienced a collective sense of well-being. Now, those years seem incredibly innocent. At the time, the country appeared calm and basically content.

There was no great dissent. There were no riots, no assassinations. It was possible to believe—and many Americans did—that there were no real problems, certainly none our leaders couldn't solve, including the old bugaboo threat of communism. We were just entering, it seemed, our most powerful period, a time when America could do anything it wished at home or abroad, when we were unchallenged either militarily or economically, when we could fight wars overseas against our ideological enemies and wars at home against poverty—and win them all. Whether we were arrogant or naive, confidence prevailed. Kennedy perfectly suited the national mood. As Sen. Fulbright said, "He made me proud of my country."

In the Kennedy years we thought our days were filled with crisis and action and "progress"—Birmingham and Oxford, Miss., and the Negroes (no blacks among us then); Alan Shepard, John Glenn, Cape Canaveral and the space age; Fidel Castro, the Berlin Wall and standing up to Khrushchev in the missile crisis; 50-mile hikes and James Bond, Vaughn Meader and the Beatles; New Frontiersmen and the Peace Corps.

Americans always admired youth, energy, power, wit, wealth, charm, good looks, a record as a true war hero, a glamorous wife, lovely children. He promised exciting times and carefully cultivated the impression of action. He accepted nomination on the West Coast and pointedly said he was facing west toward a "new frontier." On his inauguration day, a day so crisp, cold and clear that it immediately became part of the myth, he stood bareheaded, without a coat, as he called out a summons in brisk tones:

"Let the word go forth, from this time and place to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans . . . now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burdens of a long twilight struggle . . ."

Read these words today and something else comes through. It was martial, belligerent, strident. It was Kennedy who cast such phrases as advising our enemies that "those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside"; Kennedy who spoke of an "hour of national peril" in his first address to Congress; Kennedy who reminded the nation that the American eagle holds both the olive branch and a bundle of arrows in its talons; Kennedy who devoted so much energy—and national treasure—to strengthening America's military arsenal; Kennedy who launched the Bay of Pigs and the Green Berets; Kennedy who accelerated the space budget and said if we could get to the moon before the Russians we should; Kennedy who spoke relatively little about domestic needs or a questioning of national priorities.

And it was Kennedy who set us firmly on the long tortuous road to Vietnam. All these, too, were Kennedy's legacies.

The new historical revisionists are reminding us that Kennedy's exhortations, his rhetoric and fighting stance, entraped us in situations where

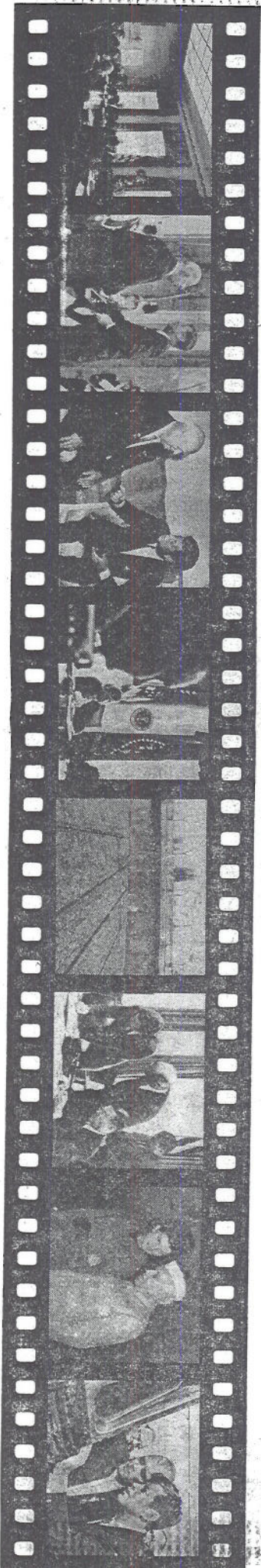
fundamental reasons than his specific successes or failures. We sorrowed because, at his best, he made it seem possible to believe we could be better; because he inspired a sense of confidence, trust and purpose, because to millions he represented the pursuit of excellence in national life.

IL RIGHT: The artificial milestones are being rendered. There is no consensus on Kennedy at the moment. It is too soon for any final verdict. But something curious has happened: to those of us who were affected by the Kennedy years. Some liberals and conservatives who began by opposing Kennedy, such men as Michael Harrington and Richard J. Whalen, now see him in a far more favorable perspective. Some of us in the center, we who felt benefit at the news 10 years ago, today either are ambivalent or disillusioned—or simply don't care. And some, possibly a majority, still cling to a belief that Kennedy represented a special, indefinable quality that has been missing from national life since Dallas.

None of us saw him clearly—either then or now.

It was one of the ironies of his life that John Kennedy, a practical, tough, essentially conservative Irish politician, seemed too liberal for the times. Yet he was riding the crest of his personal popularity when he quoted a poem, "Westward, look, the 'land' is bright," and set out for Dallas on that November day in 1963, leaving behind a tantalizing sense of what-might-have-been and a void no one else has been able to fill.

But the decade since Dallas has taught us not to rely on any one man. Despite all the difficult problems of these years, despite the erosion of confidence and loss of faith, the American people have shown a remarkable resiliency in times of crisis. They responded with patience, fortitude and determination when Kennedy was killed. They have continued to respond that way in all the times of trouble since.



Kennedy and the Intellectuals

By Sidney Hertzberg

Immediately after the assassination of President Kennedy, Hertzberg, as editor of Current magazine, published the recollections of a group of intellectuals, mainly historians. He asked these and other intellectuals for their evaluations of Kennedy 10 years later.

THE RESPONSE to the assassination of President Kennedy 10 years ago dramatized a momentous and hopeful fact of modern political life: that a leader whose hallmark was an intelligent interest in ideas could yet move great masses of people throughout the world.

Men of the mind claimed this fact as a precious legacy whatever they thought of the policies and actions his intelligence nurtured. Revisited 10 years later, intellectuals still cling to this legacy. But, being intellectuals, they agree on little else.

The contrast between the spirit (more than style) and the measurable substance of the Kennedy administration explains many of the conflicting interpretations of it.

On the whole, Kennedy's defenders do not insist that the record he left is impressive for its achieved tangibles. They argue that he "set the stage"—the most frequently used phrase—for good things to come in his second term when he presumably would have enjoyed a more compliant Congress. And they set great store in his role as the symbol of America's best hope and instincts.

But his detractors are impatient with symbolism, imponderables and good intentions. They tend to concentrate on bills enacted, executive orders issued, specific diplomatic moves undertaken. And they feel the drama to be enacted on his stage setting was long overdue.

FOR HISTORIANS, 10 years is no time at all. But Prof. William E. Leuchtenburg of Columbia University, whose special field is recent American history, finds recognizable trends in Kennedy historiography.

"For two or three years after his death," says Leuchtenburg, "the main criticism of his administration was that it was inconsequential. Was he inadequate or was he in office for too brief a time—two years and 10 months—to have made a significant mark? How does one evaluate substance as against style? There has been more attention to the style of Kennedy's presidency than of any other presidency."

"These questions remain with us, but there has been a sharp change. Now the critics are saying it was an important administration but it was malevolent."

"A good deal of the revisionist criti-

more doubtful they become, the more shocking some of them, especially in foreign policy seem."

BUT THE REVISIONIST impulse is not all negative. Irving Howe, editor of Dissent and a spokesman for the older left, has shifted the basis of his judgment:

"People like myself who have come out of the traditional American left have always underestimated the importance of character in the selection of a President."

"Ten years ago, I pointed out what I think was absolutely true, that Kennedy did not have much of a liberal record, that he hadn't made any claims to being a great liberal."

"I said that in order to counteract some of the excessive encomiums for him, but I think now it was really beside the point. What mattered in terms of public response was not a particular piece of legislation or even the fact that he signed the atom test ban treaty. What mattered was people's sense that there was a man in the presidency who represented something fresh, an effort to get away from the dismalness of Republican administrations and in a way I think now that this popular response had more legitimate and perception than my sort of formalistic criticism, accurate though it was at that time."

LOOKING BACK, Lewis S. Feuer, professor of sociology at the University of Toronto, finds a similar lesson.

us in Vietnam," he noted in a list of problems the country faced.

Yet Vietnam became the focus of the sharpest controversy over Kennedy's intentions and the basis of the strongest denunciations of him.

Hans J. Morgenthau, an elder of American foreign policy studies, now distinguished professor at the City College of the City University of New York, is categorical:

"Kennedy increased the number of our advisers from 800 to 14,000. Under his administration we would have gotten as deeply into Vietnam as we did under Johnson's. Kennedy might have gotten out earlier because he didn't have the psychological hangups that Johnson had. But the essentials of the policy were not decisively influenced by the assassination. The difference lies in the different personalities."

OTHERS THINK the personality differences might have had a stronger effect.

John P. Lewis, dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Affairs at Princeton, puts it this way:

"The difference between some sort of sense of proportion in Kennedy and the excessive exuberance with which Johnson approached things would have made a perceptible difference in degree which might have been quite important in Vietnam. Kennedy might have been more restrained and, as it turned out, this might have had important consequences."

Fritz Stern, professor of history at

ent for the New Yorker, wrote a laudatory obituary of Kennedy for which he has no apologies except in the matter of Vietnam:

"I think I went wrong, or largely wrong, in two places. I mentioned the Bay of Pigs and concluded that he had learned enough from that experience never to have a similar one. But then he escalated the war in Vietnam and unquestionably bore some responsibility for what Johnson and Nixon later did."

"I sometimes think that affair would have gone along about as it did even if he had lived and served a second term; at other times, I think that at some point he would have seen the horror of it and found—I can hardly speculate on the means—a way of ending it while he was still President. But I was plainly in error in saying that his education in such matters ended with the Bay of Pigs and in making no mention of Vietnam."

OTHER SPECIFIC aspects of Kennedy's foreign policy arouse less controversy.

The Bay of Pigs blunder is universally condemned. His handling of the Cuban missile crisis has been applauded as a triumph but the revisionist suspicion that he over-reacted is gaining ground. "He did not exhaust the resources of diplomacy before bringing the country to the brink of war," Arthur Link contends.

Almost nobody has a kind word for the Alliance for Progress. Hans Morgenthau's comment is harsh but not untypical: "The idea that you can re-

Communist seizures of power in Western Europe.

"What happened is that containment had become an almost habitual response in the State Department toward all countries. But what had worked in Europe where you have advanced economies, powerful trade unions, socialist movements and a democratic tradition, clearly was not going to work in the so-called underdeveloped countries. The Cuban invasion represented in some sense an automatic and mindless continuation of the containment policy. And of course it failed."

"In the country at large the political and intellectual consequences of that failure were not seriously thought through. The presumption is that if Kennedy had remained in office, with his generally moderate liberal slant, he would have been capable of enough flexibility and intelligence to invoke a major reconsideration of this automatic transposition of the containment policy from a context where it worked to a context where it did not."

ANOTHER SCHOOL of thought is in no doubt about Kennedy's determination to move toward détente. It includes Louis J. Halle, professor at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, now on leave as director of the Research Institute on Communist Affairs at Columbia University. What concerns these men is the manner in which détente is now being pursued.

Ten years ago, Halle's favorable judgment of the Kennedy administra-

tion policy is pursued. Under Kennedy, an East-West détente meant also an increasing sense of shared ideals, with many in the Communist countries looking toward us for inspiration. Détente today, instead, is a conservative balance of power arrangement, devoid of any moral content. As a consequence, some portions of the American public are outraged and many of those living in the Communist countries are disillusioned. One can only wonder whether a détente which operates in a spiritual void can be truly enduring."

THE EFFECT of the Kennedy administration on the country's domestic problems is also a matter of controversy. On civil rights, for example, what some see as unnecessary timidity others insist was essential consensus-building. A view that will be generally accepted as authoritative is expressed by John Hope Franklin, professor of history at the University of Chicago:

"The historical kind of activist would think of Kennedy almost as an obstructionist; whatever he did would be regarded as so minimal as to be unimportant. But one cannot apply the standards of 1973 to 1963. Of course he compromised. And, his tangible achievements were not numerous. But his statements and his general stance toward Negroes were all positive. Style is very important here because it can create an atmosphere in which things happen."

"There are only three Presidents since the Civil War who have been important in the area of civil rights—Truman, Kennedy and Johnson. Truman broke through the thick crust of indifference. Kennedy set the stage for action. Johnson supplied the action. If I had to rank them in importance, Kennedy would be third."

IN COMMENTING on the assassination 10 years ago, Carl N. Degler, professor of history at Stanford, suggested that Americans expected "such monstrous acts elsewhere, but not in America, where goodness reigns as the essential ingredient in their democracy. Even now, in the last half of the 20th Century, American innocence has not yet come to an end." Today he finds a different meaning in the events of Nov. 22, 1963.

"The actual events that make up the past do not, of course, change. What took place in the past happened, whether historians report it or not. But the meaning of the past does change; in fact, it is always changing for us who have lived beyond it, just as our meaning will no longer be adequate for those who come after us. There is, in short, no final meaning to history; there are only meanings."



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"These questions remain with us, but there has been a sharp change. Now the critics are saying it was an important administration but it was malevolent."

"A good deal of the revisionist critique of Kennedy rests on a revisionist approach to the Eisenhower administration. Most historians thought of the Eisenhower period as a time of torpor when critical questions were not attended to. But much of the recent writing sees Eisenhower as a man of peace who kept us out of Vietnam and had the modest view of the presidency and the national state. With the former assessment of Eisenhower as a yardstick, the Kennedy administration looks good. But using the latter assessment, Kennedy can be made to look evil."

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Ten years ago, Halle's favorable judgment of the Kennedy administration was based, to a large degree, on its development of relations with the Soviet Union.

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White House, Oct. 1, 1963.—National Archives photo



THE EFFECT of the Kennedy administration on the country's domestic problems is also a matter of controversy. On civil rights, for example, what some see as unnecessary timidity others insist was essential consensus-building. A view that will be generally accepted as authoritative is expressed by John Hope Franklin, professor of history at the University of Chicago:

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"Thus the meaning of Kennedy's assassination that one perceived in 1963 is true enough in 1973, but today it also has another meaning, one shaped and informed by subsequent events. For if, in 1963, in the light of previous assassinations of Presidents, the killing of John Fitzgerald Kennedy seemed a new sign of Americans' deep belief in their innocence, today, after two more assassinations, the Vietnam war, the withdrawal of Johnson and the emasculation of Nixon, there is another meaning that attaches to the events of Nov. 22, 1963. That date now marks the beginning of America's Time of Troubles—a period not uncommon in the history of other peoples, but without analogy in the now almost 200-year history of Americans."

"All of the events that make these last 10 years troublesome are not as

TEN YEARS AGO, so cautious and respected an historian as Arthur S. Link, professor of history at Princeton University, recipient of the Bancroft prize for biography, editor of the Woodrow Wilson papers and the country's leading Wilson scholar, compared Kennedy with Wilson as well as with the two Roosevelts.

"It is too early to try to fix his place among the Presidents, but," Link ventured, "I am inclined to believe that historians will rank him as a great President."

Ten years later, very few historians, not even Link, are ready to put him in this rank. Link expresses candidly a change that some others feel:

"My reactions to what I wrote 10 years ago are divided and ambiguous. I wrote under the trauma of the assassination and under the spell of Kennedy's great personal charm and magnetism, and both these facts had their effect at the time. I did not overrate him on these qualities, but I should say I somewhat overrated his vision and his abilities. As we look back on 1961-63, what seemed like great events and forward movement don't seem so great and so forward now."

AND ANOTHER Bancroft prize winner, C. Vann Woodward, professor of history at Yale, would like to wait 100 years for a proper evaluation of Kennedy, but in the meantime he is also assailed by doubts:

"The more I think of the record he left, the cooler I become toward the enthusiasm and approval that existed at the time of his administration."

Much of the reputation he earned was based on the promises he made, the expectations he aroused and the sense of tragedy that he didn't live to fulfill them. But his stature was based not on what he did but on what was anticipated of him. These expectations were not realized. Of the things he did do, the further we get from them the

America's loss of self-confidence began with President Kennedy's death," says Feiler. "He emphasized civil duties as well as civil rights. The troubles on the campuses would have been limited if he had lived; he would not have allowed the universities to become areas of unbridled generational revolt. The Democratic Party would not have become the instrumentally of a corps of alienated intellectuals."

"With the loss of the concept of civil duties since his death, the country has veered to demagoguery. From left to right, from Weathermen to Watergate-men, the notion has spread that the end justifies any means."

And Charles Frankel, professor of philosophy and public affairs at Columbia University:

"The randomness of the assassination disoriented our whole culture. Young people, in particular, want and need system in their lives. Kennedy succeeded to a degree in supplying it by evoking the 'civic sense' of the ancient Greeks. That sense became diluted with his death."

HANNAH ARENDT also sees the decade since the assassination as downhill, a process of "subterranean democratization." But she is convinced that the act was not random, that it has yet to be fully explained, and that failure to do so is a contributing factor in our present condition.

"The issue of Current magazine which I edited immediately after the assassination contained comments on Kennedy and his presidency from 46 intellectuals. Only one contributor, the youngest, Sanford A. Lakoff, then assistant professor of government at Harvard, mentioned Vietnam. And it was a mere mention. 'The war contin-

Columbia University, expresses it another way:

"Kennedy would not have pursued a war that would deeply divide the nation and the nation from its allies. He had a deeper sense of history than his successors and at a certain point he would have weighed the factors and decided that the loss of unity was a more serious matter than an unsatisfactory solution in Vietnam."

AN ANALYSIS with Marxist overtones of Kennedy's Vietnam policy comes from Barton J. Bernstein, associate professor of history at Stanford and one of the younger revisionists:

"There is no direct evidence that Kennedy would not have continued escalating in Vietnam. He had really initiated American armed involvement, for Eisenhower's token force were really advisers, and Kennedy was not prepared to back out or to watch South Vietnam go Communist."

"It was not simply that he had some fears of a domestic backlash but primarily that he regarded South Vietnam as important or essential to the international capitalist system."

"Like others then, he did believe in the 'domino' theory. In its various forms, one fallen state might, through faint, proximity, encouragement of subversion or revolution, or by its removal from the larger capitalist system, lead to revolutions and overthrows elsewhere and the further weakening of the system. By this analysis, communism had to be stopped, the status quo maintained, and wars of national liberation thwarted or defeated. Vietnam was a test case."

TEN YEARS AGO, Richard H. Rovere, Washington correspondent,

firm backward economies through the instrumentality of governments that have a vital interest in the status quo is of course inflatable."

THE BAN ON nuclear testing in the atmosphere was and continues to be perhaps the most widely hailed single achievement of the Kennedy administration. But there are also reservations. David Riesman, professor in the department of social relations at Harvard, thinks that the ban is responsible for wiping out people's concern about nuclear arms buildups. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is still the gravest danger facing the human race, he believes, but there is now very little public pressure to stop it. And I. F. Stone points out that the limited ban was followed by intensified underground testing and acceleration of the nuclear arms race.

AMONG INTELLECTUALS, almost without exception, debate with the Communist world is regarded as highly desirable. Many credit Kennedy with a growing interest in defense and find evidence for this in his American University speech on June 11, 1963, which was generally interpreted as the beginning of a cautious reappraisal of Soviet-U.S. relations.

Irving Howe, for one, thinks Kennedy would not have perpetuated the Cold War:

"Because Kennedy was open to ideas, I think it is reasonable to speculate that he would have learned from the Bay of Pigs experience. He would have seen something like this—that confinement, the essential American foreign policy after the second World War, was by and large necessary and by and large had served its purpose, which was to prevent

tion was based, to a large degree, on its development of relations with the Soviet Union in the context of the Cold War:

"Ten years later," he writes, "one may note the parallel between Kennedy's achievement in establishing an understanding with Russia and President Nixon's in opening the way to an understanding with China. Having noted it, however, all that remains is contrast."

"The symbolic function of the presidential office is not less important, in the long run, than its executive function. The public figure who fills it is required to represent our American society in the dignity of its aspiration and the nobility of its aspiration. When this function of leadership is fulfilled, the society, feeling itself to be what its leader represents, tends to rise to that level."

"Under President Kennedy it still felt his own stature. But President Nixon has, from the beginning, shown himself blind to the dignity of his office, and in his symbolic capacity he has come, at last, to represent something like the Fall of Man. It is as if he had robbed our society of the virtue Kennedy symbolized, thereby depriving it of moral authority, not only in the eyes of the world but, what is more important, in its own eyes. Today one looks back with nostalgia to a President who, despite his early blunder at the Bay of Pigs, did not fail to uphold our honorable character as a nation."

And Brzezinski:

"I said 10 years ago that Kennedy's death is a great loss to the United States from an international point of view because Kennedy was a true global leader, who in many ways personalized the hopes and the aspirations of the younger generation. "His absence is well demonstrated by the way in which the present de-

marks the beginning of America's 'Time of Troubles'—a period not uncommon in the history of other peoples, but without analogy in the now almost 200-year history of Americans."

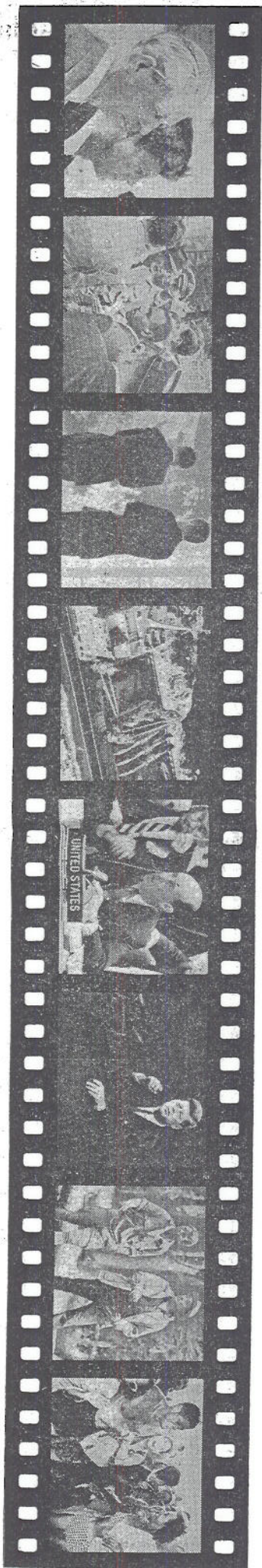
"All of the events that make these last 10 years troublesome are not as neatly connected as the elements in the story of the House that Jack Built, but the analogy is still apt. When John F. Kennedy died in Dallas the beginnings of the Vietnam war had already been laid: United States troops were there and the principle of holding the line in Asia had been enunciated. That beginning was carried to its logical, if not its intended, conclusion by Lyndon Johnson, whose withdrawal from public life was his personal cost; the end of his domestic vision and program was the nation's."

"It was the war, too, that brought Richard Nixon his most vehement opposition as he sought to end the war without seeming to lose it. Further, it was out of Nixon's need for vindication of his course in regard to the war that came the massive effort at re-election, of which Watergate and its 'horrors' was the cost to him and to the nation."

THE ACHIEVEMENT of a consensus on Kennedy's place in history seems remote.

To Henry F. Graff, professor of history at Columbia, Kennedy's impact—not as a President, but as the ideal American—will be strong. "His is a major transitional figure," says Graff. "Washington was our first ideal American. Not until Lincoln was the dramatic image updated. Now Kennedy emerges as the new ideal American. America likes his style. He has legitimized many hitherto unseen aspects of our society. We will see this legacy more clearly in another generation."

I. F. Stone remains unimpressed. "Ten years ago I correctly characterized Kennedy as a conservative in the good sense who moved ever so slightly in the right direction. But by now he is simply an optical illusion."



While House, Oct. 1, 1963—National Archives photo

A View

From the Left

LEFT, From Page C1

The claim I make for his historic significance is both restrained and major. Within the limits of the possible, as defined by his own pragmatic liberalism and the reactionary congressional power arrayed against it, he developed to a surprising degree. How far he would have gone, we will never know. (Robert Kennedy, who survived his brother by a little less than five years, spent them in making the most extraordinary pilgrimage a practicing politician has ever traveled. What if John Kennedy had had those years too?)

John F. Kennedy, in short, must be judged not as a shining knight nor as a failed hero but as a man of his time and place. He did not, by my standards, move nearly far enough in confronting the problems of this society; but he did go so much farther than one could have expected.

He was not, of course, a radical and it is silly to accuse him, as some of his disillusioned followers have, of not having carried out basic transformations of the system. That was never his intention and had it been the people would not have elected him President.

Began With a Disaster

AND YET, within the context of A his political and personal limitations, John F. Kennedy grew enormously. He arrived at the White House a young, and not terribly distinguished, senator from the Eisenhower years with a tiny margin of victory and a Democrat-Republican majority against him in the Congress.

The America which inaugurated him in January, 1961, still believed in the vestiges of the Cold War (as did Kennedy in his speech of that day), in the sanctity of the balanced budget, and it had not begun to come to terms with that great mass movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. The America which mourned John F. Kennedy in November, 1963, was different. It was not transformed — but it was better. That was Kennedy's modest and magnificent achievement.

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There were moments during that week in 1962 when the President of the United States left it up to the leader of the Soviet Union and his associates as to whether a good part of the world would be blown to bits. It might be plausibly argued that, given the prior history of the Cold War, that eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation was unavoidable. But then one must add that the prior history had an insane logic.

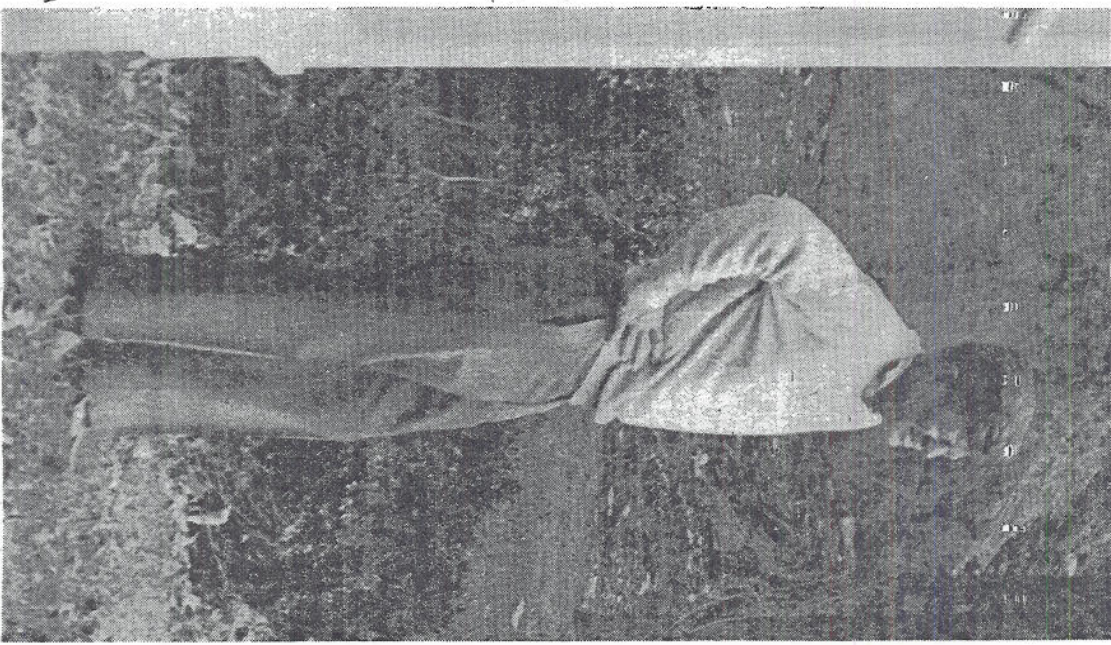
I wonder if the real denouement of the Cuban missile crisis was not Kennedy's American University speech in June, 1963. It was, I think, the most revealing illustration of his capacity for growth. In it he abandoned the Cold War pieties upon which he had campaigned in 1960 and acted in 1961 and 1962.

Nine years before Nixon's voyages to Peking and Moscow, Kennedy proposed that there be an end to the nuclear polarization which threatened the future of the globe. The concrete result of that move was, of course, the Moscow test ban treaty. Like so much else in the Kennedy years, we know that event as a promise, an anticipation, not a fulfillment. But it represented an extraordinary, and welcomed, break in American policy, as well as an example of how a President can change.

Important Departure

THERE IS ONE other Kennedy foreign policy initiative which is relevant to this analysis: the Alliance for Progress. It was, I thought at the time and think now, basically flawed in its strategy. It assumed that there could be a liberal capitalist revolution carried out non-violently in Latin America by a united front of oligarchs, workers and peasants encouraged by financial aid from the United States.

That seriously overestimated the reform potential of the Latin upper classes as well as their commitment to democracy and social change. But if the actual strategy was condemned to failure, the vision which animated it was an important new departure in American policy. On two counts, then, Kennedy's



Virginia泉rity Home, Nov. 16, 1963.—John F. Kennedy Library photo

realized how critical they were of his, and his brother's, actions. Moreover—and this is quite important—the mood which Kennedy created was one in which the civil rights movement could

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IN ECONOMIC management, John Kennedy was the first President to talk a modicum of sense to the American people. It is hard to remember now that President Nixon is a Key-

Alas, there is not. And when the late President's younger brother pronounced on public policy, the family tie is apparent but their political kinship is not. The Kennedy legacy, it seems to me, must go to probate.

The left-liberal Democrats, Edward Kennedy prominently included, have disowned their party's recent past, as personified by President Johnson. But the insurgency against the Vietnam war and the Johnson presidency went much further and cut much deeper than the Kennedy loyalists anticipated. It cut all the way to the root-truth of the matter: Johnson's great "crime" was to adopt Kennedy's worldview, retain Kennedy's advisers, pursue Kennedy's policies, and honor Kennedy's commitments to the bitter end.

And so, when the insurgency finally triumphed with the 1972 nomination of Sen. George McGovern, the moral condemnation of the McGovernites fell on LBJ and JFK alike. Significantly, as the Democratic Party turned itself into a movement dedicated to purging its past, only one candidate, Sen. Henry M. Jackson, dared propose continuity of U.S. policy, and he was cast into darkness as an unrepentant Cold Warrior and superhawk.

Legacies Disowned

WITHIN THE LITERARY and intellectual realm, where Kennedy's adroit flattery once prevailed, an anti-Kennedy revisionist campaign is far advanced toward the objective of leveling Camelot. A typical judgment is Richard J. Walton's ("Cold War and Counter-Revolution: The Foreign Policy of John F. Kennedy"): "As congressman and senator, Kennedy never a liberal, and as President he prosecuted the Cold War more vigorously, and thus more dangerously, than did Eisenhower and Dulles."

Thus, on both the political and the intellectual front, the left has not only de-mythologized Kennedy (which is a healthy enough ambition) but has also declared war on his view of the world and the assumptions and policies he acted on to secure America's place in it. This, it seems to me, is an unhealthy entropy which must be resisted.

From the Right

RIGHT, From Page C1

those right-wingers who have forgotten little and forgiven nothing about the New Frontier, moderate conservatives too are still put off by the memory of Kennedy's splendid fakery, the arrogance of his courtiers, and the transparent improvisation of bold initiatives that were swiftly forgotten. But we have endured much worse in the White House during the past five years. "Style" doesn't matter. What matters crucially is the core of the Kennedy legacy.

That core is patriotism. From the first to the last of his thousand days in the presidency, Kennedy told his fellow citizens that America was a good country which could become better. He expressed the faith they felt in themselves, their values and their ideals. He called for individual and national sacrifice on behalf of those ideals, and this struck a deep chord among young people. They were also drawn by his urging that the society pursue and honor excellence.

In the early 1960s, we remained innocent of the supposed evils of "ultrism." Ordinary citizens were unfettered by the idea that they might elect better and abler men to govern them. The reign of mediocrity in Washington since 1969 has done much to restore the vitality of the idea that some men are better equipped to govern than others. There is nothing wrong with government by "the best and the brightest"—provided their qualities include character.

John Kennedy had character. Though as quick to exploit an opportunity or hedge a promise as the next professional politician, he showed in many ways that he understood where politics ended and principled commitment began. The skepticism that intellectuals found so attractive in him was accomplished by an anchored faith in lasting things—family, church, friendship, duty, loyalty and courage—which ordinary men and women recognized and approved. When he assumed responsibility for a blunder—the Bay of Pigs is the classic instance—he did so unequivocally, because he knew it was right and necessary.

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In foreign policy, he began with a disaster: the Bay of Pigs. It is true that, new and untried, he endorsed a truly incompetent (and immoral) plan on the grounds that it had been approved by every one of his military experts. That mitigates his responsibility, but it certainly does not absolve him of it. However, he himself insisted on his own fault in the matter. He did not do so in the style of Richard Nixon, asserting that he is to blame for Watergate and then filling the record with statements making it perfectly clear that he does not believe that for a moment, Kennedy accepted his failure straightforwardly.

That fact affects how I look upon Kennedy's most portentous and destructive error, the escalation of the American presence in Indochina. That was done in consonance with the standard liberal position on the Cold War (which, because it was liberal,

leader of the Soviet Union and his associates as to whether a good part of the world would be blown to bits. It might be plausibly argued that, given the prior history of the Cold War, that eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation was unavoidable. But then one must add that the prior history had an insane logic.

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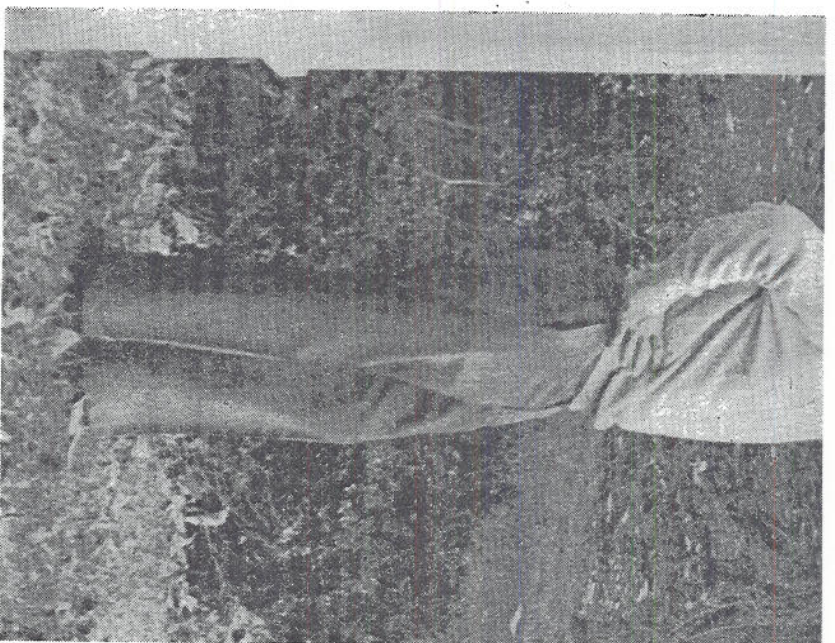
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That seriously overestimated the reform potential of the Latin upper classes as well as their commitment to democracy and social change. But if the actual strategy was condemned to failure, the vision which animated it was an important new departure in American policy.

On two counts, then, Kennedy's foreign policy initiated basic new departures: in proposing an end to the Cold War and negotiating the Moscow treaty; in arguing for American support for a democratic revolution in the Third World. In the first case, Kennedy laid the basis for a détente which was not realized until Nixon; in the second, he articulated a vision which has yet to be acted upon. In both instances, he demonstrated a remarkable capacity for change and growth, for the Alliance was a response to the Bay of Pigs and the Moscow treaty an answer to the Cuban missile crisis. The President learned.

Cautious Moves

ON DOMESTIC issues, the crucial question during the Kennedy



Virginia country home, Nov. 10, 1963—John F. Kennedy Library photo

realized how critical they were of his, and his brother's, actions. Moreover—and this is quite important—the mood which Kennedy created was one in which the civil rights movement could thrive.

First to Talk Sense

IN ECONOMIC management, John Kennedy was the first President to talk a modicum of sense to the American people. It is hard to remember, now that President Nixon is a Keynesian (albeit a shamefaced) and there-fore bumbling Keynesian), that in the early 60s most citizens had a pre-modern view of the economy.

In a famous speech at Yale, and in his pushing for a tax cut, Kennedy began to explain that the United States of America is not a household to be run on a balanced budget, but a complex society in which a tax cut could, by setting off economic growth, actually result in larger tax revenues.

To be sure, Kennedy did not live to see the fulfillment of his interim goal of reducing unemployment to 4 per cent, but he clearly was the man who began the economic education of the American people and who laid the foundation for Lyndon Johnson's full employment policy.

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Can Sen. Jackson and like-minded moderates pull the Democratic Party back toward the center and reconcile it with both the Kennedy legacy and the realities of a dangerous world? I doubt it. Experience teaches that when a party transforms itself into an ideological vehicle, and true believers take the wheel, even an election debate produces only a limited corrective reaction. In the atmosphere created by the Watergate affair and the collapse of the Nixon presidency, the McGovernites are apt to be more self-righteous and intransigent than ever. And more determined to regard JFK as at least half a villain.

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In the early 1960s, we remained innocent of the supposed evils of "elitism." Ordinary citizens were unoffended by the idea that they might elect better and abler men to govern them. The reign of mediocrity in Washington since 1969 has done much to restore the vitality of the idea that some men are better equipped to govern than others. There is nothing wrong with government by "the best and the brightest"—provided their qualities include character.

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An Inner Strength

CONTARY TO his revisionist critics, Kennedy did not heat up the Cold War to prove his virility. He accepted the reality of great-power conflict, sure to continue far beyond his term, and he therefore accepted the challenges, especially in Central Europe and in this hemisphere, that were his responsibility. Although liberal admirers have made much of Kennedy's speech at American University in June, 1963, in which he called on the Soviet Union to sign the limited test-ban treaty and help "make the world safe for diversity," he did not foresee an early or dramatic "end" to the Cold War, but rather a protracted test of

structure error, the escalation of the American presence in Indochina. That was done in consonance with the standard liberal position on the Cold War (which, because it was liberal, often had to represent itself as even tougher and more realistic than conservative anti-communism).

However, there were those within his administration—the then ambassador to India, John K. Galbraith, among them—who warned the young President of the mortal danger in committing American power to a reactionary dictatorship in Saigon. Here, too, Kennedy listened to his military advisers who had begun their annual sifting of light at the end of the Vietnam tunnel. He was wrong to do so and his mistake cost this country and the Vietnamese and the world quite dear.

Flawed Foreign Policy

YET I BELIEVE that Kennedy, had he lived, would have reversed his course. I have no historical evidence on this count. Rather, I base myself on his reaction to the Bay of Pigs. John F. Kennedy was a man who could learn from his disasters (unlike both Nixon and Lyndon Johnson who compound them by pretending they do not exist).

It is on the basis of this aspect of his personality that I am convinced that he would not have indefinitely gone on escalating the war in Vietnam. Kennedy changed in office—a quality singularly lacking in both his successors.

If I am thus at least understanding with regard to his two most dramatic failures, I do not share the conventional judgment that the Cuban missile crisis was his finest hour. That this terrifying episode was handled with skill and great coolness is obvious. But that it took place at all is proof of how flawed our foreign policy—Kennedy's and Eisenhower's and Truman's—was.

Cautious Moves

ON DOMESTIC issues, the crucial question during the Kennedy years was civil rights. In 1960, there had been the sit-ins; in 1961, the Freedom Riders. During the 1960 primary campaign, Kennedy had been the first (and only) Democratic hopeful to make personal contact with Martin Luther King Jr., and during the general election he had made his famous intervention to help King out of jail.

But between 1960 and the March on Washington of 1963, he moved most cautiously in this area. There were the confrontations in the schoolhouse door and support from the Justice Department, under Robert Kennedy, for the Freedom Riders. But there was not that "stroke of the pen" which Kennedy had said would allow the President to put all the power of the federal government behind the drive for racial equality.

Kennedy's argument in defense of his moderation was that his hands were tied by the Dixiecrats and their Republican congressional allies. That, I am sure, was an element in his conduct, yet it does not alter the fact that he responded much too slowly in 1961 and 1962 to the most decisive moral and political issue of the decade.

In 1963, however, the President began to move. In response to King's struggle in Birmingham, the White House became much more positive and in August, 1963, when the delegation from the March on Washington came to Kennedy, he was prepared to move on a fair employment practices provision in the upcoming Civil Rights Act.

In all of this there was, I think, a considerable amount of learning going on. Robert Kennedy had been truly shocked when he met with a group of black activists and intellectuals and

per cent, but he clearly was the man who began the economic education of the American people and who laid the foundation for Lyndon Johnson's full employment policy.

Still, even that accomplishment had its limitations, almost all of them imposed by political constraints. Kennedy had opted to stimulate the economy through a tax cut rather than through social spending, even though George Meany, Walter Reuther and other trade unionists wanted him to take the latter course.

As a result, the tax cuts which he initiated, and President Johnson carried out, disproportionately favored the rich and the corporations. Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger has written, intended to take the social spending route in his second term when he thought he would be much stronger politically. The assassin put an end to that hope.

In another area, putting a man on the moon, almost all liberals and leftists would criticize, if not condemn, Kennedy. I do not.

First of all, it is glibly assumed that the monies spent on space technology could easily be transferred to, say, the struggle against poverty and urban decay. In fact, that is not the case.

Secondly, I believe there is an imperative for mankind to live up to its fullest potential, to move forward, to penetrate the unknown. One may argue on the details of how that is going to be done, for instance making the case for unmanned rather than manned exploration. But since we have the resources both to go to the moon and to cope with the earth, I am glad that John Kennedy posed his somewhat romantic, but yet fundamental, challenge to space. Sometimes in the not too distant future I suspect we will learn that it was a necessary gamble, one that will benefit generations yet to come.

But finally, I cannot conclude my

could grow in office, who could learn from the Bay of Pigs and the missile crisis, who could come to understand that we had to move decisively as a nation in response to the just demands of black America, the mood, the political atmosphere of these United States changed in January, 1961. It was that intangible which was perhaps most important.

Had Kennedy lived, there would have been much more that was specific and concrete in terms of legislation enacted. And perhaps what makes one so sad on the 10th anniversary of Dallas is the sense of the promise that was not permitted to fulfill itself.

The rich young senator from Harvard went to West Virginia in the 1960 primary and saw the poor there as he had never seen them before. He became President, but he did not forget. Then, in 1963, he realized that he had not yet acted on the convictions which grew out of that West Virginia experience. And so he set people to work in his administration to prepare an assault on poverty. They had not finished their preliminary report by Nov. 22, 1963. Like so much else, that was something he was only allowed to begin.

I do not want to sentimentalize the memory of John F. Kennedy. That might make it burn brighter for a moment or two, but it would not protect it from the merciless scrutiny of history. I only want to make my modest, major claim on behalf of his presidency. He did not transform America; he left most of its problems unsolved; he committed some egregious errors.

But he learned, he changed, he grew. His legacy is not so much a program or a legislative shopping list. It is that, hampered by severe political constraints, he did get the nation moving again. Not far enough, but moving. The country was better when he was cruelly assassinated than on the day he took the oath of office.

of the Nixon presidency, the McGovernites are apt to be more self-righteous and intransigent than ever. And more determined to regard JFK as at least half a villain.

The relevant experience with ideological blunders of course is Republican, vintage 1964. In spite of their champion's crushing defeat, Sen. Barry M. Goldwater's followers, true believers and therefore returning delegates, held the decisive power at the 1968 Republican convention. On orders from Goldwater, Strom Thurmond and other conservative leaders, these delegates trooped unenthusiastically to the banner of Richard M. Nixon, whom many of them had never trusted. Now, too late, senior Republican conservatives have acknowledged the Nixon betrayal and are moving toward a confrontation with the President, before he carries the Republican Party over the brink to ruin.

The Vital Core

WHAT THE Nixon administration has done, among many other things is to destroy the new Republican "past" even before it could be recorded in the history books. Future GOP orators will not point with pride to these years. Where their immediate political heritage should be, Republicans will face a void.

To be thus deprived is intolerable to conservatives, whose natural home is yesterday. But where can they turn? Certainly not all the way back to Eisenhower, for that was long ago and, besides, Ike had a running-mate. Where then? Republicans are rather shameless borrowers of Democratic ideas and programs after they have aged. Why not co-opt a President seemingly unwelcome in his own party? It is entirely conceivable to me that Republicans in the future will avail themselves of what now seems a free-floating resource—the Kennedy legacy.

Not all of it, to be sure, and not under the old labels. Quite apart from

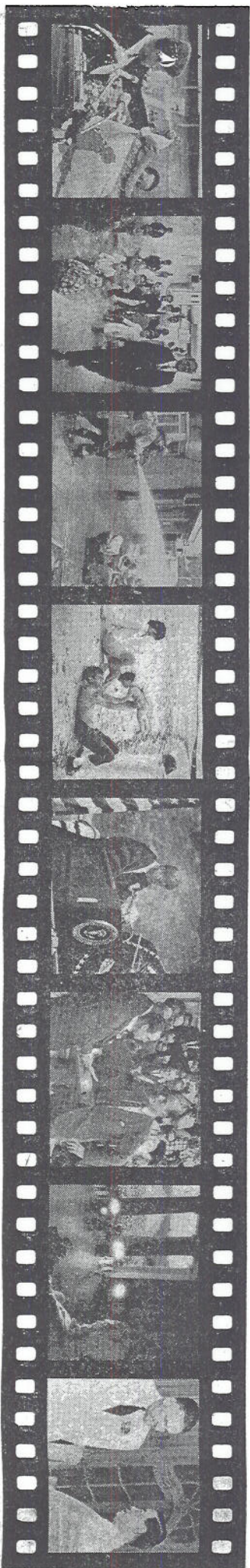
Soviet Union to sign the limited test-ban treaty and help "make the world safe for diversity," he did not foresee an early or dramatic "end" to the Cold War, but rather a protracted test of wills which might gradually yield to accommodation. Just 16 days after his disarmament speech, Kennedy stood at the Wall in Berlin and proclaimed his solidarity with the Berliners and his dedication to "the advance of freedom everywhere."

Such rhetoric carried weight in that era because we possessed the strength to match our obligations. Kennedy inherited unquestioned military superiority—the "missile gap" he had campaigned against closed almost as soon as he entered the White House. He heeded the advice of Walter Heller and adopted tax and fiscal policies that stimulated the sluggish economy. Most of all, our society felt an inner strength and confidence.

In remarks prepared for delivery in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, Kennedy was in a position to say: "... America today is stronger than ever before. Our adversaries have not abandoned their ambitions, our dangers have not diminished, our vigilance cannot be relaxed. But now we have the military, the scientific and the economic strength to do whatever must be done for the preservation and promotion of freedom."

This is no longer true. Indeed, America today is weaker and more vulnerable than ever before. Our political system has been subverted, not by foreign enemies, but by weak, corrupt men who came to power barren of unselfish purpose. Idealism has vanished from public life, and the people regard all politicians with distrust.

There is no "conservative" or "liberal" remedy for this sickness of the national spirit. The cure will come from honest, truthful leadership that summons the best in us—as we remember John Kennedy once did. His legacy awaits the leader who can claim it.



Tribal Loyalty Is Alive and Waiting

By William Greider
Greider is a national reporter for The Washington Post.

THE SURVIVORS are scattered now, yet mysteriously the bond among them lives on. Like an unseen imprint of tribal loyalty, a chemical seal that marks so many as Kennedy men.

Whatever it was, whatever held people so close to Kennedy, to the Kennedy brothers and to his family, to the idea of another Kennedy campaign, whatever it was, it is still alive.

"I think it hangs on," said John Siegenhaler, one of those men who was close, who, like the rest of them, has trouble defining it. "Maybe if they hadn't died the way they died, maybe we wouldn't feel the way we do. Maybe that made us realize our loss. But I don't think so. I think it was real and I think it's still there."

Fred Dutton, who served under John F. Kennedy but was closer to Robert, is more analytical: "There's a chemistry, a little bit of mystery, an awful lot of animism."

It has to do, he thinks, with the timbre of their voices, the gait and manner, the emotional vibrations, more than the issues and ideas.

Lawrence F. O'Brien, former postmaster general, former Democratic national chairman, still best known as JFK's congressional lobbyist, searches for an anecdote to explain.

"The informality of it, my God," O'Brien said, thinking back to the Kennedy White House, mindful of the present one. "We sort of all went to the starting line together. I remember the first day we went into the White House, we didn't have any office assignments or anything like that. We sort of went around and where you put your papers down, that was your office. That was the presidency. But, my God, it looks pretty good now."

There was no anger in the classroom. Blank stares, bewilderment. The teacher was just too old, he had seen too much. And we were too young.

"Don't you know he was ruthless?" I don't care.

"Don't you know his principles were uncertain, masked by clever wit?" I don't care.

"Don't you know he was a politician?"

Now all the Kennedy anecdotes are jumbled together, personal experiences which imperfectly express the essence of two brothers dead, qualities which people see echoed in the third brother, the last Kennedy.

There was the openness of the Oval Office when JFK was President or the shirt-sleeves arguments at the Justice Department thrashing out crisis strategy for Bob Kennedy or the droll, self-deprecating humor of all three, with a bit of an Irish curl aimed at the listener.

"There never was any formal talk or stage talk or BS," said John Nolan, a lawyer who served as RFK's administrative assistant at Justice.

"I think," said Siegenhaler, now publisher of the Nashville Tennessean, "that they had a sense of security, a self-confidence that made it possible for them never to be threatened by any point of view or dissenting opinion."

In any case, the Kennedy sentiment has survived the years, all of the tragedies from Dallas to Chappaquiddick. It exists today as a political given, a reservoir of talent, ideas and goodwill available to Edward M. Kennedy, a commodity beyond measurement.

If the banner were raised again, most of those men would be marching. They await that possibility with the mixed feelings of dread and nostalgia, the same fatalism which is part of that family's mystique.

New and Old Faces
WHAT IS IT worth? Well, plainly, it will be an impediment to the ambitions of Democratic rivals, a feeling that Kennedy men would prefer to

wait, that commitments are impossible until one knows whether there will be another Kennedy campaign.

Or are they passive? Are they merely looking backward toward a lost brilliance when the future belongs to younger people? The old hands ask that question themselves.

Part of the answer is that, yes, there would be new faces in front, energetic young activists and idea men who are not well known now. But if Ted Kennedy is like his brothers—and he is—he would also draw from the circles of friendship and capabilities which first were formed around his two brothers.

When you talk about Kennedy men (and there were no women in the inner circle except, of course, for the sisters and other key posts of the Kennedy administration, a second wave of younger men who were drawn to Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's staff and his fatal presidential campaign of 1968, a third nucleus of talent grouped around Sen. Edward M. Kennedy).

Teddy Kennedy inherits all three. Richard Goodwin, who wrote President Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" speech, who wrote the first campaign rhetoric for Bobby in 1968, was in harness again for Teddy this summer, drafting the carefully balanced prose for Kennedy's Alabama appearance with George Wallace.

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for JFK speeches, is frequently consulted. So are Siegenhaler and John Douglas, a Covington & Burling lawyer who headed the civil division at Justice.

Ideas and Experience
BEYOND THEM, the circle widens

to more casual ties. Fred Dutton, who played strategist and alter ego for RFK in 1968, Frank Menkiewicz, who was Bobby's press secretary; Pierre Salinger, who was President Kennedy's press secretary—the senator sees them now and then. Adam Walinsky, who wrote speeches for RFK, rings in with an idea every so often, so does Peter Edelman, Bobby's administrative assistant, now dean of students at the University of Massachusetts.

These few names only suggest the much larger pool of counsel which is available or would be if there were a Kennedy campaign. Some are strictly idea men, some have the kind of gritty experience which only comes from winning a primary.

But the tribal chemistry extends far beyond the close circle. In Washington, dozens of guys walk around wearing Kennedy's crest—the PT-109 tieclasp—who never met either of the dead Kennedys, except perhaps in reception line or at a crowded staff meeting. They are, nonetheless, touched by the same sense of loyalty, perhaps more fiercely because it is slightly fake.

A Southern Convert
AND BEYOND them, there are men and women all over the country who worked in one of those campaigns, who also think of themselves as Kennedy people.

"I used to travel a lot with Bob Kennedy and we would meet them everywhere," John Nolan remembered. "They would have a tepid or their mother would have President Kennedy's picture on the wall. After the assassination, they would always tell you where they were when it happened. You would meet these people and, it's true, they were as much Kennedy people as you were in terms of feelings."

John Siegenhaler, who traveled the South when the Kennedy name meant social upheaval and conflict, remembers another convert:

"There was a US marshal in Georgia. Might have been Alabama. No, it was Georgia. We were trying to get all the US marshals to take on black guys and I used to go around telling them, 'Boys, you got to do it. This fellow I really struggled with. Finally we got him to take somebody. When Bob got killed, this fellow called on the telephone. I think if Ethel had run the next morning, this fellow would have been in there slugging for her.'"

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"There is an incredible intellectual flow," said Dutton. "Some of it is mushy, some of it is good, but it's a benefit that those other guys don't get."

"Most people appreciate a chance to explain their views," said John Nolan. "Recognition of that simple principle is no small part of the Kennedy's success."

Larry O'Brien remembered another quality in the late President, political courage. O'Brien called it guts—the time JFK faced down the Baptist ministers in Houston, the West Virginia primary where he talked straight about his Catholicism without apologies.

"I'm Catholic," said O'Brien, "and it represented something to me. I never had the capacity to come up to. I think I accepted the mores of the society, the established ways, the way things are. He was a little better, able to face the things of life better than the rest of us."

Uncertain Prospects
WHEN ONE INQUIRES about those days, they respond with a flood of memories. They are grateful for the chance to recall them. Yet the keepers of this flame are not at all sure that it could ever be rekindled for them. More important, they wonder aloud if they would want that. Their muted feelings about the future reflect fears of another Kennedy target, the ache of lost kinship from old campaigns. Normal ambitions notwithstanding, nearly all of them are successful now in their own terms, their own men.

"There's nothing older than the guy who came out of the last campaign," said Nolan.

"The truth of it is," said Siegenhaler, "none of us wants to encourage him to do it. Not for us, it's just unfair to him."

And yet it's there. Most of them recognize that. If the bugle sounded, they would report to colors, ready to serve in whatever way they seemed to be needed.

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'The Crumbling of Sand Castles'

YOUTH, From Page C1

There was no anger in the classroom. Blank stares, bewilderment. The teacher was just too old, he had seen too much. And we were too young.

"Don't you know he was ruthless?" I don't care.

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We sat by campfires and sang about justice, and that was our great sand castle.

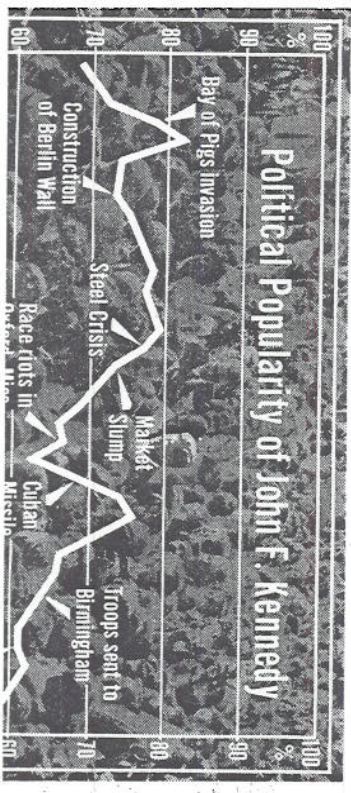
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IT IS IMPORTANT to understand that this generation—those of us whose first life-and-blood President was John Kennedy—was the same generation that spilled the most blood in Vietnam and that simultaneously called most vocally for an end to that war.

Irony? Schizophrenia? We hated the war, many of us; we fought the war, many of us. In some cases, my own included, those who

cesses to complement a leadership style so few men have. And though I found other than gut defenses for Kennedy, I find in my thinking now that I search for those defenses rather than approach the evidence neutrally and let it take me where it may.

I invoke the name Kennedy as others who search for heroes invoke the names of Sgt. York, T. E. Lawrence, Pericles, Audie Murphy, Ulysses, Jason. There are no halfway heroes: Flaws of character must be chalked off as obstacles put there by fate. They must be seen as elements of tension in an



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"Don't you know he was a politician? Don't you know anything about politicians?" No. And I don't care. It doesn't matter.

"For Pete's sake. He was only human." Not quite. Not exactly.

And biology. "Did you know that Abraham Lincoln was shot in the same place?" said a friend that day. "In the back of the skull, just below the ear. My God, can you imagine the sound it must make as you die, everything blowing up and out, everything exploding, eardrums popping?"

"Can you hear the wit exploding?" Pow, splash. It was all lying in the back seat of that limousine, just splattered against the upholstery."

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When you talk about Kennedy men (and there were no women in the inner circle except, of course, for the sisters and wives), there were really three generations over the last 15 years—those from the White House and Justice and other key posts of the Kennedy administration, a second wave of younger men who were drawn to Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's staff and his fatal presidential campaign of 1968, a third Edward M. Kennedy.

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IT IS IMPORTANT to understand that my generation—those of us whose first life-and-blood President was John Kennedy—was the same generation that spilled the most blood in Vietnam and that simultaneously called most vocally for an end to that war.

Irony? Schizophrenia? We hated the war, many of us; we fought the war, many of us. In some cases, my own included, those who hated the war also fought it. Some of us went to Canada, but not many of us; some of us went to jail rather than fight, but not many of us.

Whether our behavior was rational or stupid, the apparent schizophrenia may have been more a symptom of our trust in politics. The trust ebbed and finally drained dry near the turn of the decade, but no matter. We trusted that justice would prevail and that it could be sought and achieved through American politics. It was a leftover from the Kennedy years.

He set our sights terribly high. The fall was no fun at all. It angered us, turned us sour. Many of us felt we'd been fooled. But the eyeglasses had been hobbled. The reference point for our anger and bitterness was what had been implanted so early, and if it were belted with a sledgehammer it would not go away. We are human and we are

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I invoke the name Kennedy as others who search for heroes invoke the names of Sgt. York, T. E. Lawrence, Pericles, Audie Murphy, Ulysses, Jason. There are no halfway heroes. Flaws of character must be chalked off as obstacles put there by fate. They must be seen as elements of tension in an epic struggle and the whole tragedy must be cleansed.

So for 10 years I have defended Kennedy. Almost instinctively. With thoughtful enough words but for no other reason than to protect against the spoiling of a great tragedy. And, too, to defend myself. It is all quite natural. He was President when I was young.

Salinger—Didn't you tell (Sen. George) Smeathers? Well, George told some friend of mine on the Thomas, George...

true, they were as much Kennedy people as you were in terms of feelings." John Siegenhalter, who traveled the South when the Kennedy name meant social upheaval and conflict, remembers another convert:

"There has been Alabama. No, it was Georgia. We were trying to get all the U.S. marshals to take on black guys and I used to go around telling them, boys, you got to do it. This fellow I really struggled with. Finally we got him to take somebody. When Bob got killed, this fellow called on the telephone. I think if Ethel had run the next morning, this fellow would have been in there slugging for her."

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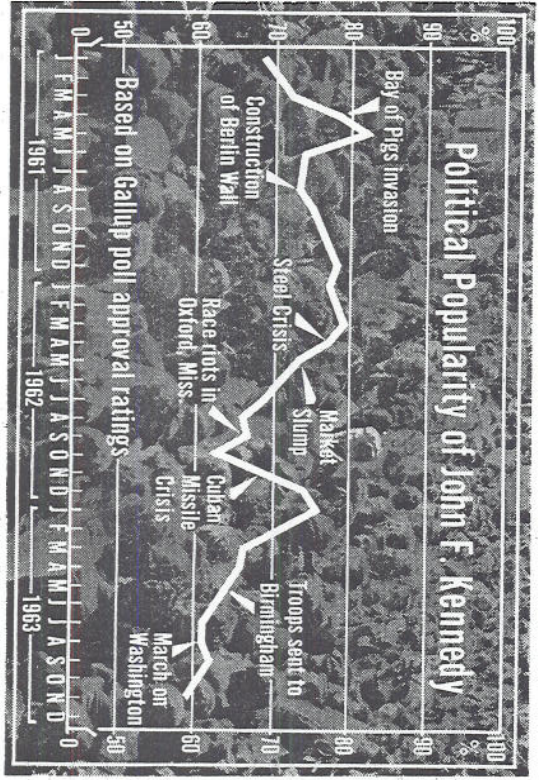
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Conversations With Kennedy

LEGEND, From Page C1

braith (then U.S. Ambassador to India) told me that Jackie took all the bitterness out of our relations with the Indians. If I had gone there, we would have talked about Kashmir

of what he called the Billie Sol Estes gallery ... the picture that showed the President with his inaugural address. He pointed out aggressively that the Democratic National

DURING KENNEDY'S presidency I was unaware that high politics was ever anything other than it was then, in the early '60s.

I was not an uncommonly stupid high school student. Nor uncommonly naive. But, other than what I had learned from Kennedy, I knew nothing about the manner in which Presidents comport themselves.

I found nothing unusual in his elegance. Nothing unusual in his promises for social justice or his patent commitment to making it happen. It did not occur to me that I would ever distrust a President, or feel betrayed by one or feel anything but keen admiration. I appreciated his style and even tried to copy it in sly ways, lengthening my A's and lifting my head. But I believed I was appreciating and copying presidential traits, not traits peculiarly Kennedy's.

In the prairie country of southern Minnesota where I grew up—12 miles from Iowa, 45 miles from South Dakota—Kennedy was not particularly loved. There even ran a deep vein of distaste for him, especially among some of the people who lived on farms, also among some of those who ran the town's small businesses. But I remember no rabid hate. No talk of impeachment. No cheering in Worthington Senior High when the intercom announcement interrupted Miss Wick's English class.

I cannot say I felt any particular love for Kennedy—no more than any other kid my age. Nor is it true that Kennedy alone molded my social perspective. Mine was the generation more of Pete Seeger than John Kennedy. During Kennedy's presidency we drove to the shores of Lake Okobena and engaged in a ritual that now would make high school students snicker. Even to me it now seems impossible.

We sang folk songs: "Where have all the flowers gone, long time passing..." "What have they done to the rain?" "How many roads must a man walk down, before they will call him a man?" "If I had a hammer, I'd hammer out... freedom and justice all over this land." Our songs were not about acid or moon-eyed love or hot rods or God.

was no rain at all. It angered us, turned us sour. Many of us felt we'd been fooled. But the eyeglasses had been imbedded. The reference point for our anger and bitterness was what had been implanted so early, and if it were belted with a sledgehammer it would not go away. We dropped out, some of us. We turned to fantasy, some of us. We fought the bitter end, some of us—through McCarthy and Robert Kennedy and McGovern. And through the decade we were outraged by things that did not so easily outrage others. We were outraged that the world would not abide by the purity of the idealism we had learned from our first teacher.

VIENTIAN, May, 1969. "This is Kennedy's war you know," a lieutenant said. "You can blame it on Johnson and Nixon, but it won't take away from the fact that it's Kennedy's war."

There were no Pentagon Papers then, but I doubt it would have mattered, for it does not matter now.

"You're crazy," I said. "You're crazy." "Sir," he said. "You're crazy, sir." "That's the ticket. But you're fighting Kennedy's war."

"He would have found another way." "There was no other way." "Then he would have manufactured a way."

"He was a politician. You're too young to remember that. He was a politico. He couldn't let South Vietnam go down the drain, he wouldn't have allowed it. He had to balance all the bosses and generals and weapons manufacturers. He was being attacked for softness on the Comms, and there wasn't a thing he was going to do to stop this war."

"It doesn't matter. He didn't live... he didn't have the chance... it doesn't matter." "Look, you have to accept the facts. Those are the facts. I'm just telling you the facts."

LEGEND, From Page C1

Salinger—Didn't you tell Sen. George Smathers, Well, George told some friend of his on the Tampa Tribune.

Feb. 14, 1962. On Vietnam.

THE TROUBLE is we are violating the Geneva agreement, not as much as the North Vietnam agreement, but still. Whatever we do, we have to do in some kind of secrecy." He foresees the situation as fraught with political danger. "The Republicans want it both ways in Vietnam," he said. "That's the privilege of the party not in power. It's just like Korea. We should have taken the enemy across the Yalu, according to the Republicans, but it was always a Democratic war. Now the Republicans want us to defeat communism in Vietnam by any means, but when we try to do it quietly, they howl that they are not being kept informed and that must mean we are not doing enough. Dien is Dien... and the best we've got."

March 3, 1962. On Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara.

HES ONE OF the few guys around who, when you ask him if he has anything to say and he hasn't, says "No." That's rare these days.

March 29, 1962. On Newsweek's coverage of Jackie Kennedy's trip to India. I was chief of the magazine's Washington bureau.

THAT WASN'T ONE of your better efforts, was it? She's really broken her ass on this trip, and you can always find some broken-down Englishman or some NBC stringer to knock anything I don't get all this crap about how she should have been rubbing her nose in the grinding poverty of India. When the French invite you to Paris, they don't show you the sewers. They take you to Versailles. When we have distinguished visitors, we take them to Mount Vernon. We don't take them to some abandoned coal mine in West Virginia. Ken Gal-

braith (then U.S. Ambassador to India) told me that Jackie took all the bitterness out of our relations with the Indians. If I had gone there, we would have talked about Kashmir and Goa, but Jackie did a helluva job."

March 31, 1962. On the news that his brother Teddy had been involved in a cheating episode while a student at Harvard.

IT WON'T GO OVER with you WASPS. They take a very dim view of looking over someone else's exam paper. They go in more for stealing from stockholders and banks."

March 31, 1962. On the appointment of Byron White as justice of the Supreme Court.

WHIZZER WAS JUST the kind of guy I wanted on the Supreme Court. Freund (Prof. Paul Freund of Harvard Law School) was the other choice, but it came down to a question of what the Court needed at this time. I just felt it did not necessarily need at this time in history a legal scholar. What it needed was a man who understood the country, what it was about and where it was going. He has led a broad life; he has had wide experience, and he is also an intellectual. And his judgment is good."

April 10, 1962. On a Newsweek story about the liberals who were criticizing him...

HE LIKED THE STORY, asked who wrote it, but was worried about how Arthur Schlesinger would take the paragraph which has the President saying "Boy, when those liberals start mixing into policy, it's murder." The President asked me... "with your well-known tact"... to let Arthur know that it was somebody else who said it. "Tell him it was Kenny (O'Donnell, JFK's appointments secretary). What breaks their (the liberals) ass, is that 78 per cent popu-

May 15, 1962. On Billie Sol Estes. KENNEDY RESENTED Newsweek's reproduction of the Herald Tribune photo

of what he called the Billie Sol Estes gallery... the picture that showed the President with his inaugural address. He pointed out aggressively that the Democratic National Committee had distributed 67,000 copies of this photo, none of them actually signed by the President. As he was talking about this, he told me that he would have a present for me later, and then in the middle of dinner, the present came. It was the same picture. The President asked the butler for a pen, and he signed it "To Billie Sol Estes," and gave it to me. He obviously thought better of the idea, since as we were getting up from dinner, he asked for it back, saying, "Better not let that one out of here."

June 14, 1962. JFK toasting his brother, the Attorney General.

I WAS TALKING TO (Thomas F.) Patton (President of Republic Steel) this afternoon, and telling him what a sonof-a-bitch he was, and he was proving it, and Patton said to me, "Why is it that all the telephone calls of all the steel executives are being tapped?" And I told him that I thought he was being wholly unfair to the Attorney General, and that I was sure that wasn't true. He asked me why the income tax returns of all the steel executives in all the country were being perused. And I told him that, too, was wholly unfair, that the Attorney General wouldn't do such a thing. And then I called the Attorney General and asked him why he was tapping the telephones of all the steel executives, and the Attorney General told me that was wholly untrue... But of course, Patton was right. Bobby Kennedy interrupted from the floor, saying, "They were mean to my brother. They can't do that to my brother."

Dec. 17, 1962. On his television interview with Senator Voinovich, William J. Lawrence and George Herman.

PRETTY GOOD, what? Well, I always said when we don't have to go through you bastards we can really get our story over to the American people."

