

- In Memoriam -

Senator Robert Francis Kennedy 1925-1968

Friend of the Underprivileged
Enemy of Injustice Everywhere

Whether or not you and I agreed with him politically, the sight of several hundred thousand outraged and stunned Americans lined up for 24 city blocks — over a mile — shuffling along for 8 full hours in over-90 degree temperature to pay their last respects to him at St. Patrick's Cathedral (plus the throngs at every station en route from N. Y. to Washington), provided mute, eloquent testimony that the country had just lost its most revered and most esteemed citizen. Nothing like this had ever been witnessed before in our history — not even the funeral of his equally distinguished brother in 1963.

Also, it drove home one great consoling fact — that this is *not* a sick country after all, and that the "lunatic fringe" is greatly in the minority. For if such a surprising percentage of the entire population of our largest eastern cities would turn out to pay such homage to this wonderful and dedicated human being, then all is not yet lost. It demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that there are still enough of us to whom decency, courage, and human dignity command respect — and that there is still a fighting chance we may one day see the "New Frontier" world of tomorrow which was Bobby Kennedy's dream.

If it did nothing else, it demonstrated a few things that are now making all political aspirants pause to take careful note. Campaign issues will now have to be completely re-assessed and perhaps the course of U.S. history altered. For to all candidates a resounding "NO" has now been given to the following questions raised by Bob Kennedy about the desires, needs, and wishes of a majority of Americans:

(1) Will most Americans support a hawkish or war-mongering candidate unconcerned with the fact that 28,000 a year of our young men are senselessly killed in Vietnam, plus 150,000 maimed, wounded

or missing? Or with the fact that the war has brought the government to the brink of fiscal chaos and created dangerous money pressures?

(2) Are most Americans in sympathy with hatred-riddled bigots, extreme right-wingers, and overboard left-wingers whose intolerant attitudes and poisonous propaganda are at the root of the unrest, the social protest and the rioting that is disrupting our country?

(3) Will Americans continue to elect to public office those colleagues of Senator Kennedy who are indifferent toward the urgent need for stricter gun control laws and who have already rejected 80 gun control bills since President Kennedy's assassination?

It is to the everlasting shame, guilt and disgrace of our Congress that they might have prevented last week's tragic loss to the nation but instead yielded to the selfish pressures of various lobbying interests who wanted to continue selling bullets and guns to every kook and imbecile who could come up with a ten dollar bill.


Is our country run by the officials we elect, or by the wealthy National Rifle Assn. with its multi-million dollar Washington lobby which pressures our Congressmen and makes them forget that they have consciences or a sworn obligation to their country?

(Statistical note: we keep all kinds of statistics in the I.D. offices — for example, last year there were 5600 shootings recorded by police in the U.S. — but England and France, which have very strict gun control laws, reported 30 and 12 respectively. Does this tell you anything about the urgency of protesting at once to your national and local lawmakers? And does it ring a bell particularly to our many thousands of subscribers in the New York City area who are terrified to go out in the streets after dark?)

Perhaps it took the murder of three great young idealists in the past 5 years — fighters for a better world — to awaken the public to make a visible effort to stand up and be counted. And if the above truths about the real state of underlying American sympathies were finally revealed to the various candidates last week, then Senator Kennedy's death was not entirely in vain. And if these truths still haven't penetrated the skull of your own favorite candidate, your duty as a decent citizen is to inform him.

(What has all the above to do with the future course of the stock market and the economy? *Far, far more than you would dream . . .* for on the answers to these questions depend the kind of world you, I, and our children will be living in from now on. Is that important enough for you? — Editor)

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