

I. FINDINGS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS IN THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY IN DALLAS, TEX., NOVEMBER 22, 1963

INTRODUCTION : THE KENNEDY PRESIDENCY IN PERSPECTIVE

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, was shot to death on November 22, 1963, while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, Tex. Kennedy had represented for many the dawn of a new era of hope. In his account of the Kennedy administration, "A Thousand Days," historian and Kennedy staff member Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., wrote :

* * * [T]here can be no doubt that Kennedy's magic was not alone that of wealth and power and good looks, or even of these things joined to intelligence and will. It was, more than this, the hope that he could redeem American politics by releasing American life from its various bondages to orthodoxy. (1)

When the young President died, much of the world grieved. West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt's words reflected the sense of loss: "A flame went out for all those who had hoped for a just peace and a better world." (2) A stunned nation felt deeply the loss of a promising leader. The assassination, wrote historian Christopher Lasch, "helped to dispel the illusion that the United States was somehow exempt from history, a nation uniquely favored and destined * * * to be spared the turmoil and conflict which had always characterized the politics of other countries." (3)

PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSINATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES (4)

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the fourth victim of Presidential assassination, preceded by Abraham Lincoln in 1865, James A. Garfield in 1881, and William McKinley in 1901.

The first Presidential assassination occurred within 1 week of the end of the Civil War. President Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, while watching a British comedy, "Our American Cousin," at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. He died the following morning. Booth, an actor and Confederate sympathizer, fled Washington immediately after the crime. He reportedly was trapped in a burning barn by Federal troops on April 26, 1865, where he died of a gunshot wound to the head.

A military commission established to try persons accused of complicity in the assassination of President Lincoln found that the murder was part of a conspiracy to kill Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of State William H. Seward. Having lost

heart, George A. Atzerodt did not attack Johnson as planned, but Seward was seriously wounded by Lewis Payne, a former Confederate soldier. As a result of the investigation by the Office of the Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Army, several defendants were accused of conspiring with Confederate President Jefferson Davis and a group of Confederate Commissioners in Canada to murder Lincoln. The accused were Confederate courier John T. Surratt, his mother, Mary E. Surratt, David Herold, a half-wit Confederate sympathizer, and Confederate veterans Samuel Arnold and Michael O'Laughlin. Edward Spangler, a stagehand at Ford's Theater, and Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, a physician who set the leg Booth injured in his escape from the theater, were accused of aiding the assassin's escape. Mrs. Surratt, Herold, Payne, and Atzerodt were found guilty and hanged on July 19, 1865. Three others received life sentences. John Surratt initially fled to Canada and then to Italy, where he joined the Papal Zouaves in Rome under an assumed name. He was captured in November 1866 and returned to the United States to stand trial on charges of complicity in the assassination. He was freed when the trial ended with a hung jury.

Several conspiracy theories emerged after the Lincoln assassination. Surratt's flight to Italy, coupled with the fact that many of Booth's co-conspirators were Roman Catholic, stirred the anti-Catholic sentiments of the "Know-Nothing Movement", which charged that the assassination was part of a Papist plot. Although the military commission ultimately dismissed the contention that the conspirators were in league with Jacob Thompson, head of the Confederate Commission to Canada, under the supervision of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, that theory also persisted. Another contention was advanced by those who opposed the execution of Mrs. Surratt. Suspicious of those in charge of her arrest and prosecution, they believed that Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton was the real mastermind of the assassination.

In 1866 and 1867, the House of Representatives authorized two separate investigations into the death of President Lincoln. (5) Neither finally laid to rest the suspicions around the death of President Lincoln.

President James A. Garfield was shot in the back by Charles J. Guiteau on July 2, 1881, in Washington, D.C. Guiteau, a religious fanatic and would-be officeholder, had been denied access to the White House after he had asked to be appointed U.S. Ambassador to Austria. When Garfield appointed James A. Blaine as Secretary of State, an incensed Guiteau apparently believed that the President had betrayed a faction of the Republican Party.

In the ensuing murder trial, there was no suggestion that the defendant was involved in any conspiracy. Guiteau maintained that he had acted as an agent of God in a political emergency and therefore was not guilty of wrongdoing. Despite a history of mental illness in Guiteau's family, the insanity defense presented by his counsel failed. Guiteau was declared sane, found guilty and hanged before a large crowd. Contrary to events following the Lincoln assassination, no

theories of possible conspiracy surfaced in the wake of Garfield's slaying.

While attending the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo, N.Y., on September 6, 1901, President William McKinley was shot. He died 8 days later, the victim of assassin Leon F. Czolgosz, a factory worker and anarchist. Although an anarchist group had published a warning about Czolgosz 5 days before McKinley was shot and Czolgosz insisted he had acted alone, many believed that the assassination was the result of an anarchist plot. Czolgosz refused to testify at his own trial which was held 4 days after McKinley's funeral. After 34 minutes of deliberation, the jury found him guilty of murder. Czolgosz did not appeal the verdict, and he was executed in the electric chair.

McKinley's assassination came after a wave of anarchist terrorism in Europe. Between 1894 and 1900, anarchist assassins had killed M. F. Sadi Carnot, President of France; Elizabeth, Empress of Austria; and Humbert I, King of Italy. Following McKinley's death, vigilantes in the United States attacked anarchist communities. Anarchist leaders such as Emma Goldman were arrested. Responding to a plea by the new President, Theodore Roosevelt, Congress passed a series of restrictive measures that limited the activities of anarchists and added alien anarchists to the list of excluded immigrants. Despite a spate of frenzied charges of an anarchist conspiracy, no plot was ever proven, and the theories appeared to collapse shortly after the execution of Czolgosz.

Three Presidents who preceded John F. Kennedy were the targets of attempted assassinations. On January 30, 1835, Richard Lawrence tried to kill President Andrew Jackson on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, but both pistols he carried misfired, and Jackson was not injured. Following the attempt, some of Jackson's supporters charged a Whig conspiracy, but this allegation was never substantiated. Lawrence was found not guilty by reason of insanity and spent the rest of his life in mental institutions.

On February 15, 1933, in Miami, Fla., President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt was fired upon by Guisepppe Zangara, an unemployed Italian immigrant bricklayer. Zangara missed Roosevelt, but mortally wounded Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak. Zangara was tried, found guilty of murder and executed. No conspiracy was charged in the shooting.

Two Puerto Rican nationalists attacked Blair House, the temporary residence of President Harry S. Truman in Washington, D.C., on November 1, 1950, with the apparent intention of assassinating the President. A White House guard and one of the nationalists, Griselio Torresola, were killed in the ensuing gun battle. The surviving nationalist, Oscar Collazo, explained that the action against Truman had been sparked by news of a revolt in Puerto Rico. He believed the assassination would call the attention of the American people to the appalling economic conditions in his country. The two would-be assassins were acting in league with P. Albuzio Campos, president of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico. Truman was not harmed during the assault. Collazo was tried and sentenced to death, but President Truman commuted the sentence to life imprisonment.

A NEW PRESIDENT

In an era when the United States was confronted with intractable, often dangerous, international and domestic issues, the Kennedy administration was inevitably surrounded by controversy as it made policies to deal with the problems it faced. Although a popular President, John F. Kennedy was reviled by some, an enmity inextricably related to his policies. The possibility of nuclear holocaust overshadowed the administration's reshaping of cold war foreign policy as it grappled with Cuba, Berlin, Laos, Vietnam, relations in the Third World and Western Europe, and U.S. military strength. At home, an emerging Black protest movement, persistent unemployment, poverty and urban blight, governmental disorganization, congressional resistance to the President's New Frontier program, and the menace of organized crime were among the problems Kennedy faced. He relied on the counsel of some of the foremost thinkers of his age, as he pursued new approaches in leading the country.

In the summer of 1960, Senator John F. Kennedy won the Democratic Party's nomination for President. In his acceptance speech, he emphasized the challenges of the 1960's and declared that "we stand today on the edge of a 'New Frontier'," a phrase that later became attached to his program. Two days before his election in November, Kennedy pledged, "I am not promising action in the first 100 days alone. I am promising you 1,000 days of exacting Presidential leadership." With the slogan "Let's get this country moving again," he pledged to combat unemployment, the sluggish economy, what he called a missile gap, and the Communist government in Havana. Kennedy defeated the Republican candidate, Richard M. Nixon, by a slim margin of 118,450 out of nearly 69 million votes cast. He was the first Roman Catholic and, at age 43, the youngest man ever elected President.

On a cold January morning in 1961, the new President stood before the Nation that elected him and voiced these memorable words:

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

No words could have portrayed more aptly the determination of John F. Kennedy as he assumed office as the spokesman for "a new generation of Americans." His mettle yet to be tested, an articulate, confident new President confronted the issues that put him in conflict with forces at home and abroad.

Despite his narrow election victory, Kennedy's popularity was high at the time he took office. The Gallup Poll showed a 69 percent favorable rating. During his term, that popularity fluctuated, and, in the autumn of 1963, it appeared to be in decline. It was concern over that slump and the implications for the 1964 Presidential contest that led, in large part, to Kennedy's decision to make the ill-fated Texas trip in November 1963.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS: A FRAGILE PEACE

The cold war was President Kennedy's foremost concern, as the United States and the Soviet Union stood poised to obliterate each other or to coexist. Kennedy, who emphasized the need for a strong military during his campaign, tacked an additional \$4 billion to the defense budget approved by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. To demonstrate that the United States would not retreat from its treaty commitments, his military buildup was the largest in the peacetime history of the country. John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State under Eisenhower, had relied almost exclusively on a rigid foreign policy based on nuclear power and military pacts. Rejecting "massive retaliation" with nuclear arms, Kennedy urged the strengthening of conventional forces and emphasized the need for a flexible, diversified military that would counter the threat posed by Communist guerrilla armies. Nonetheless, he was committed to negotiation and steadfastly pursued a nuclear arms limitation treaty, despite Soviet threats in Cuba, Berlin, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. Some critics were confused by his call for a strong military while pursuing a nuclear treaty, but Kennedy saw military preparedness as the foundation for achieving peaceful solutions.

Kennedy's first move in United States-Soviet relations was to reply to Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's January 1961 congratulatory note:

We are ready and anxious to cooperate with all who are prepared to join in genuine dedication to the assurance of a peaceful and more fruitful life for mankind.

The Cuban threat

With Premier Fidel Castro's increasing ties to the Soviet Union, Communist Cuba, just 90 miles from the United States, became an early focal point of Kennedy administration concern. In February 1961, Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Gromyko visited Cuba to arrange large-scale economic and military assistance. The United States ended formal diplomatic contacts with Cuba shortly after Gromyko's trip.

Soon after taking office, Kennedy learned that since the spring of 1960, the U.S. Government had been training a guerrilla force of anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Florida and Guatemala with the ultimate objective of invading Cuba and overthrowing Castro. Kennedy sanctioned the training and reluctantly allowed the invasion to proceed, but he limited U.S. participation and support.

On April 17, 1961, a force of anti-Castro Cuban refugees attempted to establish a beachhead in Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The United States had grossly underestimated the popular support for the Castro regime. An anticipated internal uprising never occurred, and Castro's forces defeated the invaders within a few days. President Kennedy accepted "sole responsibility" for the debacle when the United States could no longer disavow its role in the ill-fated expedition. Privately, however, he blamed the CIA and reportedly vowed to "splinter the agency into a thousand pieces."

The Cuban Revolutionary Council, a group of anti-Castro exiles that was to have become the provisional government after Castro's overthrow, was particularly bitter about the Bay of Pigs. Its principal leaders—Antonio Maceo, Justo Carillo, Carlos Heria, Antonio de Varona, Manuel Ray and José Miró Cardona—had formed the Council with the CIA's sanction and had been promised recognition by the U.S. Government. They were outraged by the failure of the United States to support the invasion force. At a meeting with President Kennedy shortly after the invasion, the angry leaders blamed his military advisors for the defeat, but Kennedy replied that he alone was responsible. On the other hand, Kennedy attempted to reassure them, promising that the United States was committed to returning Cuban refugees to their homeland.

A stunning setback for the new administration, the Bay of Pigs defeat resulted in worldwide criticism of the United States, both for its role in the invasion and for its reluctance to back the refugees with sufficient force to allow the expedition to succeed. It also gave Khrushchev the occasion to lecture the new President on international morality and raised questions about Kennedy as a coolheaded leader. While anti-Castro Cuban exiles in the United States believed they had been betrayed by Kennedy and accused him of being a weak leader who was soft on communism, the administration was criticized from the left as a reactionary return to barbarism.

Kennedy traveled to Europe in June and met with Soviet Premier Khrushchev for 12 hours in Vienna, Austria. Nuclear testing, disarmament, and Berlin were discussed, but the leaders reached no agreement. Khrushchev threatened to end four-power control of Berlin by signing a treaty with East Germany that would give it control over access routes to West Berlin. In late June, he told the allies to get out of the city by the end of the year, charging that the air corridors were being used to import spies and saboteurs into East Germany.

On his return to the United States, Kennedy said :

I made it clear to Mr. Khrushchev that the security of Western Europe, and therefore our own security, are deeply involved in our presence and our access rights to West Berlin; that those rights are based on law and not on sufferance; and that we are determined to maintain those rights at any risk and thus meet our obligation to the people of West Berlin, and their right to choose their own future.

Kennedy responded to Khrushchev's threat with a call for 217,000 more men in uniform. He ordered the draft doubled, tripled if necessary, and requested authority to activate Reserve and National Guard units. With the Soviet determination to eliminate West Berlin and the U.S. commitment to preserve it, the prospect of a third world war was greater than ever. The crisis intensified with the August 1961 construction of a wall that prevented eastern European refugees from entering West Berlin. The United States responded by sending troops and tanks to West Berlin. Western rights remained intact, and the crisis subsided with Khrushchev's decision in late 1961 not to sign a treaty with East Germany. U.S. armored units in Berlin were pulled back in January 1962.

Combating communism in Latin America

Meanwhile, to encourage progressive democracy in the underdeveloped world, the administration embarked on programs of assistance. Peace Corps volunteers brought technical and educational expertise to emerging areas. Promising to "transform the American continent into a vast crucible of revolutionary ideas and efforts," Kennedy determined to wipe out the seedbed of communism in Latin America and contain Communist Cuba by raising the living standards with his Alliance for Progress. He proposed that the Latin American Republics join the United States in a 10-year plan for developing the Americas to satisfy the basic needs of housing, employment, land, health care, and education, thus relieving the economic distress that made the countries vulnerable to Castro-style revolutions. Formed in August 1961, the Alliance for Progress received the enthusiastic support of many Latin Americans, which was evident in the acclaim for Kennedy when he visited Colombia and Venezuela in 1961 and Mexico in 1962. At the Inter-American Conference in January 1962, he said, "I think communism has been isolated in this hemisphere and I think the hemisphere can move toward progress."

The arms race

An escalating arms race and the harmful effects of radioactive contamination from nuclear tests deeply troubled the Kennedy administration. Despite an earlier promise by Khrushchev to join the United States in a no-test policy, the Soviets resumed nuclear tests on August 30, 1961, and exploded 50 devices that fall. Kennedy urged Khrushchev to join with the United States and Great Britain in an agreement banning atmospheric tests. When the Soviet Premier refused, Kennedy ordered resumption of underground tests. In March 1962, after studying Soviet advances, Kennedy reluctantly renewed atmospheric tests with a series of blasts over Christmas Island in the central Pacific. He told a writer it was his fate to "take arms against a sea of troubles and, by opposing, end them."

The missile crisis

Acting on his pledge to defend the Western Hemisphere if it was threatened by Soviet aggression, Kennedy faced the greatest crisis of his brief Presidency in Cuba in October 1962. It was the closest the world had ever come to nuclear war. On October 16, aerial reconnaissance photographs of Cuba appeared to show installation of offensive nuclear missiles. This initial discovery was verified, and on October 20, Kennedy returned abruptly to Washington from a political trip to Chicago on the pretext of a sudden cold. On Monday, October 22, he revealed that the United States had discovered from aerial photographs that the Soviet Union had deployed ballistic missiles and Ilyushin-28 bombers in Cuba. He announced that he had ordered an air-sea quarantine on all offensive weapons bound for Cuba and promised more drastic action if the missiles and bombers were not removed. President Kennedy grimly stated that the United States would intercept any Soviet vessel with arms and that the United States would retaliate if the Soviets attacked any nation in the Western Hemisphere. The U.S. Armed Forces were at combat readiness on "maximum alert." After a tense 6 days, Khrushchev announced his decision

to dismantle and withdraw offensive weapons from Cuba in return for Kennedy's agreement not to invade Cuba and to lift the blockade. Kennedy received widespread international support during the missile crisis and was later credited with having achieved a turning point in the cold war favorable to the West.

Among anti-Castro Cuban exiles and some rightwing factions in this country, however, there was outrage over Kennedy's decision. Despite his reassurances that the Cubans would be returned to their homeland, he had promised not to invade Cuba. Militant rightwing extremists argued that the United States should have invaded Cuba, removed the Russians and their arms, and toppled Castro.

On December 29, 1962, President Kennedy greeted over 1,000 Cubans who had been captured at the Bay of Pigs and ransomed from Castro's jails by the United States. In a ceremony at the Orange Bowl in Miami, he accepted the brigade's invasion flag and addressed their concerns about the future. The President declared, "I can assure you that this flag will be returned to this brigade in a free Cuba."

Southeast Asia

Abandoning the Eisenhower administration's mistrust of neutral nations, Kennedy pursued a cautious approach in Laos where Communists had captured many of the northern provinces in 1961. In July 1962, the United States was able to get all parties in Laos to agree to a tripartite coalition government and withdrawal of all foreign troops.

In South Vietnam, however, the administration decided to take a stand against Communist-inspired "wars of liberation." U.S. involvement dated back to 1956, when the Eisenhower administration backed the decision of the South Vietnamese Government to postpone elections there because Communist victory appeared imminent. The United States was pledged to support the pro-American regime of Ngo Dinh Diem in the fear that if one Southeast Asian nation fell to the Communists, others would soon follow. Kennedy continued that policy, although with growing reluctance by 1963.

In 1961, Viet Cong guerrillas backed by Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam attacked South Vietnamese troops, murdered officials, and placed the Diem regime in jeopardy. Kennedy responded initially by sending more than 4,000 military advisers to South Vietnam and, over the following months, U.S. participation grew steadily. In his move away from the "all or nothing" nuclear arsenal strategy of the 1950's, Kennedy emphasized a varied military capability to meet the jungle warfare tactics of the enemy in countries such as Vietnam. He also directed economic aid to Southeast Asia to meet the Communist threat there. In November 1962, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara announced that the United States was winning the war in South Vietnam.

When the Chinese invaded northern India in 1962, Kennedy authorized an airlift of arms to halt the Chinese Communist advance.

Pledge to defend Europe

To some critics, Kennedy's foreign policy, combining military bluster with negotiation, appeared vacillating and self-defeating. Their misgivings seemed to be confirmed by actions of some traditional allies of the United States. President Charles de Gaulle of France, for example, insisted on a defense capability independent of the United

States and refused to sign any nuclear arms limitation treaty, thus threatening the cohesiveness of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In addition, Kennedy's acceptance of the principle of neutrality, manifested by the Laos agreement, was criticized by some who believed countries were either American friends or enemies.

Kennedy reasserted his pledge to defend Western Europe during a trip there in June 1963. "The United States will risk its cities to defend yours," he assured the West Germans, who feared a pullout of U.S. troops. In a speech to an enthusiastic West Berlin crowd, Kennedy described himself as a "Berliner," saying that "all free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin."

Cold war thaw

Uneasiness over Cuba continued in 1963. The Soviet presence was symbolized by an attack of a Cuban Air Force MIG fighter on an American shrimp boat in March 1963. Some 17,000 Russian troops still occupied the island nation, and 500 anti-aircraft missiles plus a large supply of other Soviet armaments were emplaced there.

Yet, with Kennedy's foreign policy emphasis on gradual progress, a thaw in the cold war was perceptible. In a major policy address on June 10, 1963, at American University in Washington, D.C., Kennedy proposed a "strategy of peace" to lead the United States and Soviet Union out of the "vicious and dangerous cycles" of the cold war.

Let us focus on a peace based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution of human institutions.

He announced that the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union would begin work on a treaty to outlaw nuclear tests.

A major accomplishment of the Kennedy administration, the nuclear test ban treaty, was signed in Moscow on August 5, 1963, and ratified by the U.S. Senate in September. This limited treaty, prohibiting atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, represented the first limitation of arms expansion since the beginning of the cold war in 1945. The administration had hoped, however, for a more comprehensive agreement. Underground testing was not covered because of Soviet resistance to onsite inspection, and China and France refused to sign the treaty.

Although praised by many as a step toward peace, the treaty had its detractors. Air Force Gen. Thomas D. White described it as "next to unilateral disarmament," while scientist Edward Teller called for resumption of atmospheric testing to maintain American nuclear supremacy.

In October, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union agreed to refrain from using nuclear weapons in outer space.

Growing involvement in Vietnam

The Vietnam conflict intensified and U.S. involvement expanded steadily, although Kennedy refused to make any major increases in support. By October 1963, the United States had 16,000 troops in South Vietnam. As U.S. helicopters flew combat support missions and U.S. planes strafed enemy lines, U.S. advisers radically altered life there with the strategic hamlet resettlement program, an effort to concen-

trate the population in various areas. Some Americans criticized this involvement in support of the Diem dictatorship. At the insistence of his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, the Roman Catholic Diem had instituted a number of repressive measures against the country's Buddhists, who made up 70 percent of the population. His troops attacked pagodas, and Buddhists were jailed. The self-immolation of protesting Buddhist monks dramatically called into question the American role in Vietnam.

By threatening withdrawal of economic support, the United States sought to persuade the Diem government to change its brutal policies. Diem resisted, denying that the Buddhists were being persecuted and charging that, in fact, they were aiding the Communists by demanding a change of government. U.S. advisers warned that Diem's unpopular regime imperiled the battle against the Viet Cong.

On November 1, 1963, Diem and his brother, Nhu, were killed in a military coup. The United States quickly recognized the new government.

Détente

Kennedy's willingness to negotiate with the Russians, combined with a Sino-Soviet split, eased East-West tension and sparked optimism about the prospects for world peace. Other moves indicating Soviet-American détente and peaceful coexistence included installation of a "hot line" emergency telephone system from Washington to Moscow in the summer of 1963, approval of the sale of 4 million tons of surplus wheat to the Soviet Union, and initiation of cultural exchange programs. Kennedy also made overtures to Castro concerning normalization of relations, a move that enraged anti-Castro exiles in the United States. His steps away from dangerous nuclear diplomacy were praised by many, but some doubted that Kennedy's policy would contain communism and insure the strength of the United States.

AT HOME: A TROUBLED LAND

President Kennedy's New Frontier domestic program was not readily accepted. The administration's relations with Congress, dominated as it was by a conservative bloc of Republicans and southern Democrats, were difficult. Kennedy's major proposals—aid to education, medical care for the elderly and the creation of a Department of Urban Affairs—were rejected. Although measures were adopted to increase Federal aid to depressed areas, to increase and expand the minimum wage, and to increase social security benefits, the administration failed to persuade Congress to enact the widespread social legislation it sought.

Civil rights progress

The administration's most dramatic accomplishments were in the area of civil rights, though the President did not live to see the passage of the comprehensive legislation he proposed, the most far-reaching since Reconstruction. Kennedy appointed Blacks to high administration posts and to Federal judgeships. He gave Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy his sanction for vigorous enforcement of civil

rights laws to extend voting rights, end segregation and fight racial discrimination. Attorney General Kennedy expanded the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, and President Kennedy issued a strongly worded Executive order against discrimination in employment that established a Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity headed by Vice President Johnson. Kennedy's civil rights program, however, increasingly alienated southerners and conservatives.

Violence erupted soon after Kennedy took office. In May 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality staged a series of freedom rides in Alabama in an effort to integrate buses and terminals. One bus was burned by a mob in Anniston, Ala. An angry segregationist crowd attacked demonstrators in Montgomery, Ala., and several persons were injured. Attorney General Kennedy ordered several hundred U.S. marshals to Montgomery to protect the demonstrators. National Guardsmen with fixed bayonets scattered a mob that tried to overwhelm the marshals, who were protecting a mass meeting at a Black church where civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., was speaking.

Sparked by the vicious treatment of the nonviolent demonstrators, protests continued in Mississippi. The Attorney General petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission, and in September 1961, the ICC adopted rules banning segregation on interstate buses and in terminals.

Trouble exploded again in 1962 when James Meredith, a 29-year-old Black Air Force veteran, gained admission to the all-white University of Mississippi. Meredith had been refused admission, despite Federal court orders requiring that he be enrolled. The Kennedy administration supported an effort to force compliance by the State, but Governor Ross Barnett was equally determined to defy the orders. In his fourth attempt to enroll at the university, Meredith arrived in Oxford on September 30, escorted by 300 U.S. marshals. He was met by a mob of 2,500 students and segregationist extremists who howled, "Two-four-one-three, we hate Kennedy." The hecklers attacked the marshals with bricks and bottles. The marshals responded with tear gas. A bloody night-long riot that left two dead and scores injured quelled only after Federal troops had been dispatched by President Kennedy. Meredith registered the next day and began classes with the protection of marshals, who remained with him until his graduation in August 1963.

Urging the need for legislation in a February 28, 1963, address to Congress on civil rights, President Kennedy attacked the scourge of racial discrimination:

Race discrimination hampers our economic growth by preventing the maximum development and utilization of our manpower. It hampers our world leadership by contradicting at home the message we preach abroad. It mars the atmosphere of a united and classless society in which this Nation rose to greatness. It increases the costs of public welfare, crime, delinquency and disorder. Above all, it is wrong. Therefore, let it be clear, in our own hearts and minds, that it is not merely because of the economic waste of discrimination, that we are committed to achieving true equality of opportunity. The basic reason is because it is right.

Although the administration's civil rights policies generated the dogged opposition of segregationists in the South, Black leaders criticized the President for not pursuing change even more forcefully. Dr. King said:

This administration has outstepped all previous ones in the breadth of its civil rights activity. Yet the movement, instead of breaking out into the open plains of progress, remains constricted and confirmed. A sweeping revolutionary force is pressed into a narrow tunnel.(7)

Blacks continued demonstrations for equal rights in the spring of 1963. In April and May, Dr. King led an attack on what he called "the most segregated city in the United States," Birmingham, Ala. Demonstrators were met by police dogs, electric cattle prods and fire hoses. The brutal response to the nonviolent protestors led to worldwide outrage. Black leaders and Birmingham community leaders ultimately reached a compromise agreement to integrate public facilities. Birmingham became a rallying cry for the civil rights movement across the Nation. Over 700 demonstrations swept the South that summer, and northern public opinion increasingly supported the protestors.

In June 1963, Alabama Governor George Wallace, in defiance of a Federal court order, stood on the steps of the University of Alabama to prevent the admission of two Black students. Wallace bowed, however, to National Guard troops that had been federalized by the President. The Black students entered the university. In the same month, Medgar Evers, the NAACP field secretary for Mississippi, was shot to death in front of his home in Jackson, Miss.

The turbulence sparked President Kennedy's special message to Congress in June 1963, in which he asked the legislators to help end "rancor, violence, disunity and national shame" by pushing what was described as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. The bill would, among other things, guarantee access to public accommodations and the right to vote. "We are confronted primarily with the moral issue," Kennedy said. He warned that Federal inaction would mean continued racial strife, declaring, "The fires of frustration and discord will burn in every city, North and South, where legal remedies are not at hand."

On August 28, 1963, an interracial group of more than 200,000 persons joined "The March for Jobs and Freedom" in Washington, D.C., to urge the Congress to pass the comprehensive civil rights legislation the Kennedy administration envisioned. Violence shattered the hopeful mood in the wake of the Washington march when a bomb exploded on September 17 at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. during a Sunday School session. Four young Black girls were killed and 23 other persons were injured. Despite the national unrest, Congress did not rush to pass the civil rights bill.

Economic policies

Kennedy's Keynesian, New Deal economic policies brought him into conflict with business. For example, he advocated deficit spending at a time of economic growth in an attempt to overcome persistent high

unemployment. He also proposed costly welfare programs to improve the plight of the Nation's poor and issued voluntary wage-price guidelines that he was determined to enforce.

As the Kennedy administration grappled with thorny economic issues—persistent unemployment, recession—a steel price hike set the stage for the most dramatic economic crisis of Kennedy's term. In March 1962, the administration persuaded the United Steel Workers Union to accept a contract he called "noninflationary" in the belief that such an agreement would ameliorate the recession by preventing a rise in prices. A few days later, however, the U.S. Steel Corp. announced an increase of 3.5 percent, or \$6 per ton, and most other steel companies followed suit. Kennedy commented, "My father always told me all businessmen are sons-of-bitches, but I never believed it until now." (8) In the 3 days that followed the increase, four antitrust investigations of the steel industry were initiated, a bill to roll back the price increase was considered, wage and price controls were discussed and the Department of Defense began to divert purchases away from U.S. Steel. Kennedy denounced the increase as "wholly unjustifiable and irresponsible defiance of the public interest," and said the steel industry had shown its "utter contempt for their fellow citizens." U.S. Steel finally rescinded the price increase when several other steel companies said they would hold the price line. Despite the President's assurance after the steel crisis subsided that "this administration harbors no ill will against any individual, any industry, corporation, or segment of the American economy," business leaders complained about Government interference and hostility.

Government reform

Kennedy was also concerned about the autonomy of Federal agencies and reorganization of the Federal bureaucracy. He saw a need for greater control over the Central Intelligence Agency after the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Its independent role in the Southeast Asian conflict and in Cuba particularly troubled him. The CIA's budget was twice that of the State Department, its staff had doubled in the 1950's, and, it was said by its critics, in some Embassies it had more personnel than the State Department. Kennedy replaced Director Allen Dulles with John McCone, cut the Agency's budget, and assigned Robert Kennedy as Agency watchdog.

Kennedy's relations with Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover were cool. In an attempt to bridle the independent Hoover, the administration insisted that the facts reflect the law that the FBI was under the Department of Justice and that the Department was led by the Attorney General. Attorney General Robert Kennedy also compelled a reluctant Hoover to investigate civil rights and organized crime cases.

War on organized crime

The Kennedy administration made an unprecedented effort to fight the insidious menace of organized crime. The President had first encountered the problem when he became a member of the Senate Select Committee on Labor Racketeering. Robert Kennedy was chief counsel of the committee, and later, as Attorney General, he became the President's surrogate in a campaign against the underworld.

Dramatic developments in the war on organized crime had occurred just before Kennedy came to the White House. A roundup of hoodlums in Apalachin, N.Y., in 1957, followed by an abortive prosecution of many of the leaders, demonstrated the impotence of Federal enforcement. The Senate testimony of Mafia member Joseph Valachi in 1963 became the catalyst for a renewed effort to strengthen Federal criminal laws that could be used to control the threat of organized crime.

The zeal of the Kennedy brothers signified the roughest period for organized crime in Department of Justice history. Historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., wrote in "Robert Kennedy and His Times" that, as a result of the Attorney General's pressure, "the national Government took on organized crime as it had never done before." (9) Schlesinger observed:

In New York, Robert Morgenthau, the Federal attorney, successfully prosecuted one syndicate leader after another. The Patriarca gang in Rhode Island and the De Cavalcante gang in New Jersey were smashed. Convictions of racketeers by the Organized Crime Section and the Tax Division steadily increased—96 in 1961, 101 in 1962, 373 in 1963. So long as John Kennedy sat in the White House, giving his Attorney General absolute backing, the underworld knew that the heat was on. (10)

The Attorney General focused on targets he had become acquainted with as counsel for the Rackets Committee. He was particularly concerned about the alliance of the top labor leaders and racketeers as personified by Teamster President James R. Hoffa. Schlesinger wrote that "the pursuit of Hoffa was an aspect of the war against organized crime." (11) He added:

The relations between the Teamsters and the syndicates continued to grow. The FBI electronic microphone, planted from 1961 to 1964 in the office of Anthony Giacalone, a Detroit hood, revealed Hoffa's deep if wary involvement with the local mob. For national purposes a meeting place was the Rancho La Costa Country Club near San Clemente, Calif., built with \$27 million in loans from the Teamsters' pension fund; its proprietor, Morris B. Dalitz, had emerged from the Detroit [sic. Cleveland] underworld to become a Las Vegas and Havana gambling figure. Here the Teamsters and the mob golfed and drank together. Here they no doubt reflected that, as long as John Kennedy was President, Robert Kennedy would be unassailable. (12)

As with the Civil Rights Division, Robert Kennedy expanded the Organized Crime Division at Justice. As a result of information collected by the FBI, syndicate operations were seriously disrupted in some cases, and leading organized crime figures were concerned about the future.

Opposition from the far right

As the policies of the Kennedy administration broke new ground, political extremists in the United States seemed increasingly willing

to resort to violence to achieve their goals. In an address at the University of Washington in Seattle on November 16, 1961, President Kennedy discussed the age of extremism: two groups of frustrated citizens, one urging surrender and the other urging war. He said:

It is a curious fact that each of these extreme opposites resembles the other. Each believes that we have only two choices: appeasement or war, suicide or surrender, humiliation or holocaust, to be either Red or dead.

The radical right condemned Kennedy for his "big Government" policies, as well as his concern with social welfare and civil rights progress. The ultraconservative John Birch Society, Christian Anti-Communist Crusade led by Fred C. Schwarz, and the Christian Crusade led by Rev. Billy James Hargis attracted an anti-Kennedy following. The right wing was incensed by Kennedy's transfer of Gen. Edwin A. Walker from his command in West Germany to Hawaii for distributing right-wing literature to his troops. The paramilitary Minutemen condemned the administration as "soft on communism" and adopted guerrilla warfare tactics to prepare for the fight against the Communist foe. At the other extreme, the left labeled Kennedy a reactionary disappointment, a tool of the "power elite."

President Kennedy saw the danger of a politically polarized society and spoke against extremist solutions, urging reason in an ordered society. In the text of the speech he had planned to deliver in Dallas on November 22, 1963, he wrote:

Today * * * voices are heard in the land—voices preaching doctrines wholly unrelated to reality, wholly unsuited to the sixties, doctrines which apparently assume that words will suffice without weapons, that vituperation is as good as victory and that peace is a sign of weakness.

NOVEMBER 1963: A TRIP TO TEXAS (13)

At the beginning, John F. Kennedy had been an extremely popular President. His ratings, ironically, were highest in the aftermath of the April 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, when he received a remarkable 83 percent approval rating in the Gallup Poll. But by the fall of 1963, he had slipped to 59 percent, and he became concerned about the political implications. In October, Newsweek magazine reported that the civil rights issue alone had cost Kennedy 3.5 million votes, adding that no Democrat in the White House had ever been so disliked in the South. In Georgia, the marquee of a movie theater showing *PT 109* read, "See how the Japs almost got Kennedy" (14)

An inveterate traveler, Kennedy interspersed his diplomatic missions abroad with trips around the country. He made 83 trips in 1963. In June he visited Germany, Ireland and Italy; later in the summer he toured the western United States—North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, Utah, Oregon, Nevada and California—to gain support for his legislative program.

Not only did Kennedy enjoy traveling, but he almost recklessly resisted the protective measures the Secret Service urged him to adopt. He would not allow blaring sirens, and only once—in Chicago in November 1963—did he permit his limousine to be flanked by motor-

cycle police officers. He told the special agent in charge of the White House detail that he did not want agents to ride on the rear of his car.

Kennedy was philosophical about danger. According to Arthur M. Schlesinger, "A Thousand Days," Kennedy believed assassination was a risk inherent in a democratic society. In 1953, Schlesinger recounted, then-Senator Kennedy read his favorite poem to his new bride, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy. It was "I have a Rendezvous with Death," by Alan Seeger. (15)

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath . . .

But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

During the November 1963 Texas trip he told a special White House assistant:

* * * if anybody really wanted to shoot the President
* * * it was not a very difficult job—all one had to do was
get on a high building someday with a telescopic rifle, and
there was nothing anybody could do to defend against such
an attempt.

Kennedy had decided to visit the South to bolster his image in that region. He chose to visit Florida because it had voted Republican in 1960, and Texas because it only had been saved by Lyndon Johnson by an extremely slim margin. According to Texas Governor John B. Connally, Kennedy first mentioned a political trip to Texas in the summer of 1962 when Connally, a former Secretary of the Navy, was running for Governor. Kennedy broached the idea to Connally again the following summer.

Despite some obvious political reasons for a Texas visit, some members of Kennedy's staff opposed it because the State was not favorably disposed to the President. From 1961 to 1962, the Secret Service had received 34 threats on the President's life from Texas. Political embarrassment seemed a certainty. The decision to travel to Dallas was even more puzzling. Many perceived Dallas as a violent, hysterical center of right-wing fanaticism. There, in 1960, then-Texas Senator Lyndon B. Johnson had been heckled and spat upon. In October 1963, just a month before the President's scheduled visit, Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson was jeered, hit with a placard and spat upon. Byron Skelton, the National Democratic Committeeman from Texas, wrote Attorney General Robert Kennedy about his concern for President Kennedy's safety and urged him to dissuade his brother from going to Texas.

There are several probable explanations for the decision to visit Dallas. Kennedy was to visit four other cities—San Antonio, Houston, Austin and Fort Worth—and it was feared that ignoring Dallas would harm his image in Texas. Kennedy also was anxious to win

over business, and Dallas was the place to address business leaders in Texas. As a result of his economic policies, particularly the rollback of steel prices, Kennedy believed he was perceived as hostile to business. Before the November Texas trip, he shared his concern with Governor Connally:

If these people are silly enough to think that I am going to dismantle this free enterprise system, they are crazy.

All the other trips that summer and fall, including the visit to Florida, had been successful. In his testimony before this committee, Governor Connally explained that he believed that Texas was a State crucial to a Kennedy victory in 1964, and contended that Kennedy came to Texas for two reasons: to raise money and to enhance his own political prospects in Texas.

Word of the trip to Texas first appeared in the Dallas papers on September 13, and Kennedy's itinerary for Texas was announced by Governor Connally on November 1. The President was scheduled to address a luncheon of business leaders at the Trade Mart in Dallas on November 22. He decided to travel into the city in a motorcade that was to follow the normal Dallas parade route. Kennedy liked motorcades, for they afforded an opportunity to get close to the people, and he made a special point of arranging one in Dallas because he believed it would be his one chance that day to greet workers and minorities. The final motorcade route through Dealey Plaza in downtown Dallas was selected on November 15.

In 1963, the Secret Service had identified six categories of persons who posed a threat to the President: right-wing extremists, left-wing extremists, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Black militants, and a miscellaneous category that included mental patients. It identified two cities as particularly threatening—Miami and Chicago. Dallas was considered a potential source of political embarrassment. Prior to the trip to Dallas, the Secret Service had not uncovered any serious threats there, and no extensive investigation was conducted in the city.

Beginning a week before the trip, defamatory posters and leaflets excoriating the President appeared throughout Dallas. Some carried Kennedy's picture with the caption, "Wanted for Treason: This Man Is Wanted for Treasonous Activities Against the United States." It was suggested the President's Dallas parade route should not be published, but at the urging of Kennedy's staff, it appeared in the Dallas newspapers on November 18 and 19.

The President and Mrs. Kennedy traveled to Texas on November 21. That day, Kennedy visited San Antonio and Houston, where he was warmly greeted by enthusiastic crowds. He flew to Fort Worth that evening.

One of the President's first acts on the morning of November 22 was to call the woman who had arranged the accommodations that he and the First Lady occupied at Fort Worth's Texas Hotel. She had hung the walls with original paintings by modern masters such as Vincent Van Gogh and Claude Monet, and the special effort of the citizens of Fort Worth greatly impressed the Kennedys. That rainy morning, the President addressed the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. The speech was well received and, as Governor Connally recounted, it was

laced with fun. Later in the morning, after a query from Dallas, the President said that if the weather was clear, he did not want the protective bubble used on the Presidential limousine.

The President and his entourage took off for Dallas at approximately 11:20 a.m. While the Presidential plane, Air Force One, was airborne, the President looked out the window and remarked to the Governor with a smile, "Our luck is holding. It looks as if we'll get sunshine." A clear sky, brilliant sunshine, 68-degree temperature—a marvelous autumn day—provided the backdrop for the President and Mrs. Kennedy as they arrived at Love Field in Dallas. The First Lady was presented with a bouquet of roses, and the couple attended a reception held in their honor at the airport by the community leaders of Dallas. After greeting them, the President moved to shake hands with the enthusiastic crowd which, according to some estimates, may have numbered 4,000 persons. For a few minutes, the President and the First Lady walked along the security barrier, greeting people. Then they joined Governor and Mrs. Connally in the Presidential limousine. Two Secret Service agents, one the driver, sat in front. The President and his wife sat in the rear seat, with the President on the right, in keeping with military protocol, as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. Governor Connally sat on a jump seat directly in front of the President, with his back to Kennedy, and Mrs. Connally occupied the left jump seat. Two cars with members of the Dallas Police Department, including Chief Jesse Curry, and Secret Service agents, preceded the Presidential limousine. Behind, a followup car carried Secret Service agents and members of the White House staff. To the rear of that car, the Vice President and Mrs. Johnson and Senator Ralph Yarborough rode in another limousine. Next came the Vice President's followup car, and then a long line of limousines, trucks and various vehicles containing Members of Congress and other dignitaries, photographers, the President's physician, and members of the White House staff and the press.

The motorcade left Love Field at about 11:50 p.m. Governor Connally recalled he was worried, not about violence, but about the possibility that some incident might occur that would embarrass the President and disrupt the atmosphere of confidence that had been building throughout the trip. That morning, a hostile full-page advertisement, sponsored by the "America-thinking Citizens of Dallas," had appeared in the pages of the Dallas Morning News. It charged, among other things, that Kennedy had ignored the Constitution, scrapped the Monroe Doctrine in favor of the "Spirit of Moscow," and had been "soft on Communists, fellow-travelers, and ultra-leftists in America." The Governor was apprehensive that there might be unfriendly demonstrations during the motorcade or that the crowd's mood would be indifferent or even sullen.

The Governor's concern subsided as the motorcade passed through the outskirts of Dallas and neared the center of the city. The crowds grew larger and they were unmistakably friendly, with people smiling, waving, and calling the President's name. In Connally's words,

The further we got toward town, the denser became the crowds, and when we got down on Main Street, the crowds were extremely thick. They were pushed off of curbs; they were out in the street, and they were backed all the way up

against the walls of the buildings. They were just as thick as they could be. I don't know how many. But, there were at least a quarter of a million people on the parade route that day and everywhere the reception was good.

Governor Connally noticed that Mrs. Kennedy, who had appeared apprehensive the previous day, was more relaxed and enjoyed the Dallas crowd. The only hostile act he remembered was a heckler with a placard that read "Kennedy Go Home." The President noticed the sign, and asked Governor and Mrs. Connally if they had seen it. Connally said, "Yes, but we were hoping you didn't."

"Well, I saw it. Don't you imagine he's a nice fellow?" Kennedy asked.

The Governor said, "Yes, I imagine he's a nice fellow."

Connally's fear of an embarrassing incident seemed to be unfounded. He recalled:

The crowds were larger than I had anticipated. They were more enthusiastic than I could ever have hoped for.

This enthusiasm was apparent in a number of incidents. A little girl held up a sign with the request, "President Kennedy, will you shake hands with me?" The President noticed the sign, had the car stopped and shook hands with the little girl. The car was mobbed by an admiring crowd that was only separated from the Presidential limousine by Secret Service agents. At another stop, as the motorcade approached downtown Dallas, the President caught sight of a Roman Catholic nun with a group of schoolchildren. He stopped and spoke with the group. Several times enthusiastic onlookers broke away from the curbside throng and attempted to reach the limousine. Secret Service agents cleared the admirers from the street.

The crowds grew thicker as the Presidential parade approached downtown. The motorcade followed the traditional Dallas parade route into the downtown business district, turning onto Main Street, which brought it through the center of the Dallas commercial district. It moved westward along Main toward Dealey Plaza. People crowded the sidewalks, surged into the street and waved from office building windows. The motorcade tunneled through the throng. The Governor later remarked that the business community, the group Kennedy sought to impress, would have to be affected by this remarkable reception. Connally said "* * * the trip had been absolutely wonderful, and we were heaving a sigh of relief because once we got through the motorcade at Dallas and through the Dallas luncheon, then everything else was pretty much routine."

President Kennedy was clearly delighted by his Dallas welcome.

At the corner of Main and Houston, the motorcade made a sharp 90-degree turn to the right and headed north for one block, toward the Texas School Book Depository. As the limousine approached Houston and Elm, Mrs. Connally, elated by the reception, said, "Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you." "That's obvious," the President replied.

At Elm Street, the limousine made a hairpin turn to the left and headed west, passing the book depository.

At about 12:30 p.m., as the President waved to the crowds, shots rang out.

Mrs. Connally heard a noise, turned to her right, and saw the President clutch his neck with both hands, then slump down in the seat. Governor Connally immediately thought the noise was a rifle shot. He turned from his straight-backed jump seat in an attempt to catch sight of the President because he feared an assassination attempt. The Governor described the scene :

I never looked, I never made the full turn. About the time I turned back where I was facing more or less straight ahead, the way the car was moving, I was hit. I was knocked over, just doubled over by the force of the bullet. It went in my back and came out my chest about 2 inches below and to the left of my right nipple. The force of the bullet drove my body over almost double, and when I looked, immediately I could see I was drenched with blood. So, I knew I had been badly hit and I more or less straightened up. At about this time, Nellie [Mrs. Connally] reached over and pulled me down into her lap.

I was in her lap facing forward when another shot was fired * * * I did not hear the shot that hit me. I wasn't conscious of it. I am sure I heard it, but I was not conscious of it at all. I heard another shot. I heard it hit. It hit with a very pronounced impact * * * it made a very, very strong sound.

Immediately, I could see blood and brain tissue all over the interior of the car and all over our clothes. We were both covered with brain tissue, and there were pieces of brain tissue as big as your little finger * * *

* * * * *

When I was hit, or shortly before I was hit—no, I guess it was after I was hit—I said first, just almost in despair, I said, “no, no, no,” just thinking how tragic it was that we had gone through this 24 hours, it had all been so wonderful and so beautifully executed.

The President had been so marvelously received and then here, at the last moment, this great tragedy. I just said, “no, no, no, no.” Then I said right after I was hit, I said, “My God, they are going to kill us all.”

Mrs. Connally initially thought the Governor was dead as he fell into her lap. She did not look back after her husband was hit, but heard Mrs. Kennedy say, “They have shot my husband.” After one shot, Mrs. Connally recalled, the President's wife said, “They have killed my husband. I have his brains in my hand.”

Roy Kellerman, the Secret Service agent in the right front seat, said, “Let's get out of here fast.” Bill Geer, the driver, accelerated tremendously. “So we pulled out of the motorcade,” Mrs. Connally recalled, “and we must have been a horrible sight flying down the freeway with those dying men in our arms.”

She added, “There was no screaming in that horrible car. It was just a silent, terrible drive.”

The wounded President and Governor were rushed to Parkland Hospital.

At 1 p.m., the 35th President of the United States was pronounced dead, 1,037 days after his term had begun.