

**SENATOR
SAM ERVIN
SAYS**



For the fourth time in a decade, the Nation has witnessed a senseless attack on a public figure. This time, it was Governor Wallace who miraculously escaped death but may never walk again as a result of a gunman's attempt on his life.

It is still to be hoped that the Governor will be spared a life of agony after he undergoes an operation to remove a bullet from his spinal canal. Doctors now give him a 50-50 chance of recovery.

Apart from the tragedy confronting Governor Wallace is the effect that this latest assassination attempt will have upon our country and its people. The Nation has never fully recovered from the brutal murders of John Kennedy, his brother Robert, and Martin Luther King. Their martyrdom made an indelible impression on the Nation's conscience and set in motion consequences far beyond their earthly works. It is still too early to assess the full impact of bullets that entered George Wallace.

The Wallace tragedy raises anew the eternal question of why these attempts happen? It is little consolation to know that assassins have played a major role in history as far back as Philip II of Macedonia, who was slain while attending a wedding party in 336 B. C. Four American Presidents have been slain by gunmen's bullets, and virtually every nation in Europe has suffered from the deeds of those who murdered their rulers.

Even though our country has experienced this trauma periodically, still it has not been a national fear until the last decade. Now one wonders how issues of immense consequence to the Nation can be presented to the people if every leader must fear for his life in the process.

What then has brought us to this dilemma? There is no simplistic answer, for no one can say with certainty what

causes an Oswald, a Ray, or a Bremer to pull the trigger of a lethal weapon; or how, in a nation that abhors a police state, we can absolutely protect from assassination every candidate for political office.

There are certain attitudes that seem embedded in this trend toward violence. All about us we see undisciplined behavior, resistance to lawful authority, and runaway crime rates that plague virtually every city and State. One group after another has launched its attack upon established authority—the seat of government; the college administration; or the judge in the courtroom. Often, these groups have demonstrated in orderly and peaceful fashion, but when this was not enough there have been innumerable instances when thousands took to the streets to defy the government

or lawful authority.

A few years ago there were riots in more than a hundred of our cities, including the Nation's Capital. We have had slaughter, pillaging, and burnings. These have done incalculable damage to the attitudes of the people. More recently, the Capitol and the Pentagon have been bombed by those who resorted to treachery to convert government to their views, whatever such views may have been.

Part of the problem undoubtedly stems from the fact that Big Government exercises more and more control over our lives and this creates intense feelings. Civil disobedience became a popular instrument to win legislation a decade ago,

and when it seemed to work, other groups chose the same plan to win their demands. So demands have turned into disorders and then into violence. These attitudes sow the seeds of turbulence. They beget at least the possibility that some demented mind will use assassination to win his

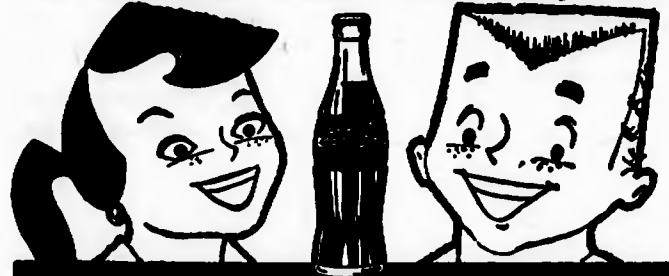
cause.

If there is any meaning in the shots that rang out in Maryland, and one sometimes doubts that there is, it is that we must all reaffirm our devotion to democratic processes. We must not substitute cowardice for honest debate, nor the bullet for the ballot box.

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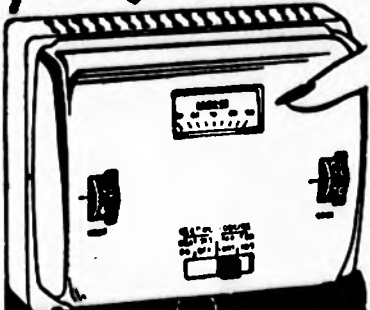
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