

Above All, A Deep Love Of Country

By JOSEPH ALSOP

Of all the men in public life in his time, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the most ideally formed to lead the United States of America.

Such, at any rate, is this reporter's judgment, perhaps biased, but at any rate based on long experience and close observation, and no longer possible to suspect as self-serving. To be sure, judging Kennedy was never easy, for he was no common man, to be judged by common standards.

Courage, intelligence, and practicality; a passion for excellence and a longing to excel; above all, a deep love of this country, a burning pride in its past, and unremitting confidence in the American future—these were the qualities which acted, so to say, as the mainsprings of Kennedy the President.

Kennedy the Man, Kennedy the private face, was half the enemy and half the reinforcement of Kennedy the President. He had an enviable grace of manner and person. He enjoyed pleasure. After Theodore Roosevelt, he was the first American President to care for learning for its own sake. After Abraham Lincoln, he was the first American President with a rich vein of personal humor—which is a very different thing from the capacity to make jokes.

This strange, dry, detached, self-mocking humor no doubt aided him to assess men and events; but in his public role, it was a handicap. Certainly it was not the same sort of handicap as Lincoln's humor, which actually prevented great numbers of otherwise intelligent persons from taking Lincoln seriously.

Kennedy's humor instead inhibited him from showing the depth of his feelings. Any public exhibition of emotion gave him gooseflesh. So foolish people said he was a cold, unfeeling man, although few men in our time have had stronger feelings about those things that mattered to him.

After his country, what mattered most to him was to live intensely, with purpose and effect. He was in some sense the ultimate personification of the observation of Justice Holmes: "Man is born to act; to act is to affirm the worth of an end; and to affirm the worth of an end is to create an ideal."

The ideal that Kennedy affirmed in action was singularly simple: for no man was ever more contemptuous of the theological complexities of ideology. It was hard to know, indeed, whether he held a more sovereign contempt for the doctrinaire mushiness of the extreme American Left or for the doctrinaire hate-preachings of the extreme American Right. He was slow

to anger, but these made his gorge rise.)

His ideal could be completely summed up in only a score or so of words—a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal; the proud stronghold of a new birth of freedom; and the standing promise to all men that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth. The noble, ancient phrases, the pieced-together tags from the finest of all American utterances, are as well-worn by now as antique coins, whose legend is illegible. But he could read the legend still. He still took this definition of our nation's purpose with perfect literalness and this was the ideal that his actions sought to affirm.

Whereas Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office when the nation was clamoring for leadership and crying out to be shown a new course, John Fitzgerald Kennedy took office in a time of violent, yet hardly comprehensible, change. Too many, then as now, confronted the vast revolutionary processes of our time either with fatty complacency or with shrill, embittered indignation. His task was therefore a hard task, and he was untimely cut off before his task could be half done.

Yet if we look at our country and the world in which we live—if we honestly compare the prospects now opening before us with the prospects as they seemed when Kennedy's Presidency began—we can see that there has been a new birth of hope.

It is perhaps pardonable, at this moment, to be personal. Speaking for myself, I have not dared to hope as I do now since those first months of the Korean War, when such overly high hopes were born from the strong sense that America was grandly accomplishing a high, historic service. That service had its heavy price. I still remember watching the Wolfhound Regiment through a long, hard fight, and how the bodies of the fallen were carried in when the fight was won, and how I suddenly could think only of Simonides' epitaph that was inscribed for all to read, on the tomb of the dead Spartans at Thermopylae:

Go, stranger, and in Lacedaemon tell
That here obedient to the laws we fell.

The President who is lost to us, like those when who were lost so many years ago, was no drilled, unthinking Spartiate. He was the worthy citizen of a nation great and free—a nation, as he liked to think, that is great because it is free and this was the thought that always inspired his too brief leadership of this republic.

Students Donate Thanksgiving Food

By EVE CAMPBELL and GAIL POE

Beginning Monday the students of CHHS began bringing canned foods to contribute to food baskets. These baskets were given to the Red Cross which distributed them to needy families as the school's Thanksgiving project. Each homeroom competed for the largest contribution.

Peter Bream, treasurer of CHHS, stated that in September there was \$2700 in the school treasury. \$450 was used in paying bills. To date there is \$2300. Peter said that now the bills have been paid, CHHS's bank account should grow.

The school's Christmas project will be voted on at a special assembly after Thanksgiving vacation. The student body will decide whether to contribute to a local project, to contribute to the migrant workers' welfare in North Carolina or to support Thom, a young girl in South Viet

Nam for a third year. The girls' and boys' basketball teams have been practicing for two weeks. The girls' coach is Mrs. Rhoda Bisbing and the boys are coached by Robert Culton. The co-captains for the girls' team this year are Susan Culbreth and Jill Hickey. The boys' co-captains are Randy Elington and Kenneth Hackney.

The first basketball game will be played against Ragsdale on December 10. It will be a home game.

Tuesday of last week was club day at CHHS. The first three periods of the day were shortened fifteen minutes so that there would be time allowed for a club period.

Dr. Martin of the Classics Department at UNC spoke to the Latin Club about the life of Julius Caesar. The Latin Club also has begun making tentative plans for a Christmas dance and for its annual banquet.

The French Club has made plans to put out a French newspaper. Martine Wagny, Beatrice Rhyne, and Libby Cornell are to act as tri-editors.

For the first time at CHHS there is Current-Events Club. This club, organized by Miss Wilkin, history teacher, gives its members a chance to discuss and analyze world news.

At the Procton Club meeting it was decided to put out a newspaper, probably before Christmas. Mary Mac Gregg and Kay Marley were elected co-editors.

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