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WASHINGTON LETTER

by Trude B. Feldman
ISRAELITE'S White House Correspondent

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA: Robert F. Kennedy was laid to rest last Saturday night in Arlington National Cemetery, close to the grave of his brother, the late President John F. Kennedy. The graveside service was a simple, and religious one, with no military embellishments. Sen. Kennedy's funeral ceremony didn't differ much from that of his brother's in 1963. Although President Kennedy's funeral - a state occasion - might have been more elaborate, with many heads of different countries present, the Senator's last rites also attracted a veritable 'Who's Who' from all walks of life. The high and mighty as well as the downtrodden and poor came from all over America - and from 50 foreign nations - to bid farewell to Robert Kennedy.

When President Kennedy was slain in Texas, there was - at first - speculation that ultra-rightists were involved. Yet, never in America's wildest dreams would she imagine that Bobbie Kennedy's assassination in Los Angeles could - or would - be linked with the Middle East. However, the link is only made because of alleged Jordanian assassin's anti-Israel views.

Nonetheless, it ought to be pointed out that the bizarre fanaticism of a distorted and twisted mind prevented the accused killer's realizing what a great 'disaster' - in the phrase of Arab spokesmen - this is to the Arab cause.

It is asserted the alleged assassin's fanaticism was compounded by a personality trait which led him to threaten a doctor with violent reprisals if the doctor didn't provide him with a fraudulent certificate of disability for insurance purposes.

This correspondent has often spoken with all of the Presidential candidates especially on the topic of the Middle East. I found that each of them is no more and no less pro-Israel or anti-Israel than was Senator Kennedy. All of the Presidential candidates had recently addressed themselves to the Middle East conflict and all of them made similar statements about Israel and about the Arab refugees.

What a pathetic commentary on freedom of speech in the United States if serious-minded politicians could not devote themselves to important international problems without fear of being cut down by a bullet - from an alien no less. If, by threat of assassination, any alien can stop our statesmen from publicly stating their conclusions on our foreign policies, then America is in for some trouble, and we are in danger of losing many of the best brains in our country.

Why are we speculating on whether the alleged assassin, Sirhan B. Sirhan, murdered Senator Kennedy for his pro-Israel attitude? Why don't we simply realize that the warped mind of diseased individuals knows no reason?

The more we talk about it, the more we give currency to a false and dangerous idea, and the more we are spreading the very hatred that Senator Robert Kennedy urged that we try to eradicate.

As Jews, it is vital that we avoid the error of converting an irrational act of madness with a coincidental Arab-Israeli base into a rational act connecting one with the other.

As Americans, how many more leaders will be assassinated before we begin to practice that type of brotherhood and love which was so aptly spoken at the funeral rites by the last surviving brother of the two slain leaders!!

It was Robert Kennedy himself who said only two months ago: "What we need in the United States . . . is love and wisdom and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our own country, whether they be white or they be black."

"Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: To tame the savageness of men and make gentle the life of the world."

It was fitting indeed that the Kennedy family had chosen these words to be engraved on the small remembrance cards - next to his photograph - which were given to the mourners who attended Bobbie's funeral.

was still under surgery, Mr. Eshkol said he was greatly impressed by the Senator's "intellectual alacrity and burning desire to serve his nation and mankind."

In the United States, Jewish groups and individuals reacted to the assassination with expressions of deep feeling for the Kennedy family and concern for the future of an America which saw two of its greats - Senator Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King -- die at the hands of assassins. The common theme of the messages was that the incident reflected the spirit of violence and disobedience of law in the land and of the hatred that is consuming America.

WASHINGTON -- The assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy "is another painful and sobering reminder of the corrosive climate of violence which threatens to diminish us as a Nation," Dr. William A. Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith, said last week.

NEW YORK (WNS) A dinner by the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce and Industry was curtailed out of respect for the memory of Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth
Constitutes A Majority"

BY JACK TELL



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destinies of fame and fortune. The man stayed home, waiting, watching, ever available for consultation, advice and aid in overcoming a pressing problem of the moment. And there were many trials and tribulations, each with its own inimitable circumstances, each to be given careful, constant, total consideration, and each to be determined to a responsible, honorable conclusion.

The sons showed appreciation for their father's interminable love and unending interest in the progress of their individual lots by visiting from time to time. They came singularly and collectively. They came with friends and business associates. They arrived with their betrothed and later one with a darling wife, Reva, and still later with lovable offspring, Brenda and Molle. They came at any hour and during any season. Their stay could end abruptly or stretch out for lengthy periods depending on the mood and margin of amusement to be afforded at the minute. (The father lived in a land of frivolity where entertainment pleasure abounded and chance flourished.)

Each visit was heralded by the parent as a triumphant return for a conquering hero. He accorded them every consideration for comfort and cheer during their stay. His home was their home. His bed theirs, while he slept on cot or couch. His usually simple larder became feast for the occasion. No stone was left unturned for their ultimate enjoyment for every moment during the visit. Keys for door and car were provided so the guests could come and go with reckless abandon without regard for propriety of customary meal or bed times.

These were the circumstances that were permitted to exist because the father was a kind and considerate soul. His reasoning was simple. The sons had not asked to be brought into this world. It was not their doing. Therefore they became his responsibility. Their pleasures were his pleasures, their woes his. His every whim was based on their welfare, his every move dedicated to their ultimate happiness. He asked for nothing in return, absolutely nothing. All he wanted was to leave unto this world descendants of equal or better stature than he or his antecedents. On this score he was contented with satisfaction.

But the gratification of performing a noble deed for all humanity in succeeding generations began to waver as the father grew older and the sons more complacent in their acceptance of his decent thoughts and actions in their behalf. Surely, he pondered on infrequent occasion, there must come a time when reciprocal appreciation should be displayed in more tangible means than merely showing up when it suited their schedule. Their presence should be accompanied by their presents, he reasoned. No sooner did these evil reflections enter his mind, he cast them aside, because a selfish man is an unhappy man. But they returned to cast a doubt on the unbalanced nature of the sentimental philosophy he had initiated towards them. What had been would continue, until he was no longer around to appease their setbacks and glory in their achievements.

Then the father conceived an ingenious plan to acquaint his unsuspecting sons with those fleeting moments of agony he was suffering. When they communicated he slyly injected into the conversation a mention of anxiety concerning a belt that seen better days or a tie that was worn to a frazzle. Without being too apparent, along with the customary concern and interest in their welfare, he conveyed an item of frayed shirt collars, torn socks, or underwear that needed replenishment. When they visited he displayed shoes with holes in the soles, pants with seats that resembled mirrors and pocket money that jingled, not crinkled.

Did they take the hints? Sweet, pure souls that they were, so absorbed in their own surroundings and so indoctrinated in that their father lived for them, they never suspected once what he was trying to tell them. He persisted, they desisted. So the dad felt that stronger methods were necessary. But what? And how? It was truly a dilemma.

When the merchants of the countryside, in an effort to bolster business, set aside one day each year to recognize the contributions being made to society by fathers, the male parent in our Fairy Tale received new inspiration. Here at last was the vehicle to convey his views on the subject to his innocent but indifferent sons. A month before the important date he reminded them of its impending occurrence. They accepted the information as heresy, except one, who conveyed the fact to his own offspring.

And that is how the story stands to this day. A beautiful beginning, a marvelous middle, and no ending, unless perhaps 1968 can supply a fantastic finish to a fable that will bring fantasy into reality.

And so, as the sun sinks slowly over the Sierra Nevadas, conveying thoughts and hopes from Vegas to Los Angeles, on behalf of all in the same plight everywhere, we ask the question. Are we fathers or fatheads?

New American Tragedy

A week after the slaying of Senator Kennedy the madness of the deed still eludes comprehension.

How was it possible, one asks, for a brilliant young American who was on the path of greatness to be cut down so brutally so soon after the tragic slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King?

The assassination of Dr. King has triggered a wave of resentment and contrition in the land which, it was hoped, would at least for the foreseeable future preclude a similar assault on a public figure. The slaying last week of Senator Kennedy was a shock not alone because it cut down a distinguished young American as he was reaching out for the apex of his ambition, but because it was a lesson in tragic disillusionment.

America in recent years has been inundated by a wave of violence, disobedience of law and disregard of basic social and political disciplines. And the ensuing hatred has brought death first to a black man and now to a white one.

We have no intention of prejudging the man who is being held for the murder of the Senator, but it is no mere guess when we say his act was a product of incitement to hatred. He had seemingly been indoctrinated against Israel by Arab student propagandists in the United States and influenced by the incessant waves of hatred let loose by the Arab and pro-Arab bloc in the United Nations against Israel and American Jews who rightfully consider Israel's survival their own concern.

Even as the guilt of the man who assassinated Dr. King rests on a society that permitted the unpermissible toward the black people in our land, so the guilt of the Jordanian who killed Senator Kennedy rests on the climate of hostility and hatred that was generated by Arab propagandists in the Middle East and in our own land. In this connection it is only proper to note that a reading of the minutes of the Security Council sessions since June 6 of last year often sounded more like exercises in hatred of man against man than in preachments of amity and brotherhood among men and peoples.

The death of Senator Kennedy is as much a product of hatred as was the death of Dr. King. Only when the madness is stemmed by wiser men will there be tranquility in the world.

Both Dr. King and Senator Kennedy were highly regarded in the American Jewish community. Their departure has left a void which will be difficult to fill.

ISRAEL STUNNED

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death reached Israel as many American Zionists were converging on Jerusalem for the 27th World Zionist Congress, triggering statements of grief, disbelief and condolence from ZOA, president Jacques Torczyner and other Zionists. In a message of condolence to Sena-

tor Kennedy's widow, Mr. Torczyner called the late Senator "a friend of Israel and the Zionist cause."

Official Israeli reaction to the new American tragedy was sounded by Premier Levi Eshkol, Foreign Minister Abba Eban and various government leaders. In a message to Mrs. Ethel Kennedy while Senator Kennedy

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