

Kennedy Assassination Gave Tragic Cast To--

—From Page 1

the coffers of the late Diem regime. Our largess continues to the new military junta, our casualties mount, and there is no more assurance now of either defeating the Communists, or of establishing a democratic regime, than when we got enmeshed in that quagmire almost a decade ago.

While not suffering any actual reverses in Latin and South America, the Alliance for Progress was making very little progress in the all-out race to improve living standards in those countries in time to save them from Communist-type take overs. Tax reform was bogging down in country after country, rapidly increasing populations were spreading ever thinner the thin diets of the great mass of the people, and the wealthy landowners at the top remained as adamant as ever against instituting reforms needed to save themselves from the fate their class had suffered in Cuba five years earlier.

Time is running out to the south of us. Either reforms must be made and made quickly, or, as pointed out by democratic Latin leaders, the expropriation of American oil interests in Argentina and the growing strength of Chili's largest single party, the Communists, will be only the beginning.

POLITICS, A SHARP TURN

Up until November 22, with each passing week the odds were improving that Sen. Barry Goldwater would win the Republican Presidential nomination. Goldwater, apostle of the most conservative political thought in the nation, had earlier overtaken Nelson Rockefeller, and, particularly in the West, was gaining strength with each passing week.

The death of President Kennedy and the assumption of the Presidency by a Southern-Midwesterner, Lyndon Johnson, brought an immediate reassessment in Republican circles. Goldwater may yet get the bid, but, even among his supporters there is a definite air of defeatism.

They are now faced with the growing probability of having to support either a Rockefeller or a Richard Nixon, and, as the new year dawns, such prospects arouse no enthusiasm whatsoever among more conservative partisans.

AUTOMATION, UNEMPLOYMENT

Closely behind the three top stories of the year is the continuing lack of jobs to provide for a full employment economy. With "residual unemployment" now depriving about six per cent of the total work force (or some five million people) of an opportunity to do productive work, and with the spiral ever upward, there is a slowly growing realization that unless America solves this problem extremely serious economic repercussions are not far distant.

World Fight On Hunger . . .

Seek Ways To Expand Food Programs For Newly Developing Countries

Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman called on all members of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, at the recent meeting in Rome, to "provide guidelines and establish procedures" for expanding food aid programs to the newly developing countries.

Speaking to the 12th Biennial FAO conference, which brought together more than 400 delegates from 104 countries to seek solutions to world food problems, Mr. Freeman said that by 1980, economic growth in developing countries will have created a need for over \$25 billion in food imports.

Discussion revealed that the available food per capita has failed to increase despite FAO efforts to help production or has even diminished since the 2nd World War, and was attributed to unprecedented increases in population.

In seeking out new approaches to food production and distribution FAO gets into the fields of atomic energy, international trade in commodities, improved methods of financing, improved fertilizers, the control of such basic crops as cocoa, coffee, oil and fibers, it was reported by Dr. Sen, director-general.

All blood is said to go in and out of the heart once every minute.

A key reason for growing unemployment (now estimated to hit some 11 to 13 million wage earners by the early 1970s) is automation. Automation is accelerating in all fields of endeavor—in factories, in the mines and on the farm. In many instances, one man operating automated equipment is now able to produce as much as could 10, 20, 50 or 100 men under production methods which were common just a few years back.

Automation was recently branded as "a curse" by AFL-CIO President George Meany. Because we have not faced up to making automation serve for the good of ALL the people, rather than just another means of vastly increasing profits, automation is indeed a curse. Yet, if made to work for all, it could become the greatest material blessing ever evolved by the genius of man.

Automation has greatly increased corporate ability to earn profits, but the fruits of the increased productivity have not been reflected in commensurate increases in wages (purchasing power) or reduction in hours of labor.

Unless wage earners begin to receive a greater share of this increased productivity the time is not far distant when this nation will be face to face with a depression of much greater magnitude than that of 1929-33.

Studebaker's closing at South Bend just before Christmas, and the laying-off of some 6,000 employees, is directly related to that company's inability to compete with other, more prosperous auto manufacturers who have extensively automated their production plants.

The decline in employment in the thousands of jobs in the Butte-Anaconda area since the mid-fifties, is an example of the adverse effects of technological change right here in Montana. There are today several thousand fewer mining and smelting jobs, yet Anaconda Company is producing as much or more copper and other non-ferrous metals as it did a decade ago, and its net earning picture is increasingly satisfactory to its stockholders.

RAIL RULES FIGHT

On the labor front, probably the most important and most far-reaching question had to do with the railroads' determination to put into effect major rules revisions proposed by a Presidential Commission appointed by former President Eisenhower. Rail management was adamant and rail labor, realizing that the rules changes would throw thousands upon thousands of long-time rail workers out of jobs, prepared for a crippling railroad strike. The Congress stepped into the picture, and although rail labor and the AFL-CIO asked that a more balanced study be made, and during that time no strike action would be taken, the Congress was stampeded into enacting compulsory arbitration of the dispute.

Compulsory arbitration in this instance, sets a precedent for compulsory arbitration in other major labor-management difficulties. The consequence of such use of force can have only one eventual outcome—both labor and management will lose much of their independence of action to the government. Surely there must be a better way to serve the public interest than the drastic, hurry-up course enacted by the Congress to settle the rail rules controversy.

As of this time, the trains are still operating, but agreement between rail labor and rail management appears as far off now as it did when the "compulsion" was added to collective bargaining four months ago.

Here again, comes up the problem of automation, and where will men in their forties on up (as is the average with the rails) find jobs as they are laid off by rail management. It's a dandy question for Main Street Forsyth, Glendive, Miles City, Three Forks, Laurel, Harlowton, Alberton, Missoula, Butte, Helena and Great Falls, among other Montana towns, to ponder but good. Ex-railroaders, like workers made idle by automation in automobile plants, steel mills, in lumber, etc., have precious little money with which to help maintain happy cash registers in retail establishments.

WHEAT VOTE, WHEAT SALE

Wheat, and its importance as a source of basic agricultural income throughout the western two-thirds of

the nation, figured prominently in two major stories of the year.

One of these was the failure of the May 21 Wheat referendum to receive the required two-thirds "Yes" vote. The referendum, on a Congressionally-approved price support and production control act, was vigorously and successfully fought by the American Farm Bureau and other right-wing organizations, who claimed it would take from the wheat grower his freedom to farm.

Not realized by many growers at the time was that failure of the referendum would also set them up to lose some other freedoms, via being forced into bankruptcy by below-cost-of-production prices on their product in the so-called "free market".

Hindsight has been a most notable phenomenon in recent months, and the demand is becoming more insistent, even among many of the opponents of the 1963 referendum, that Congress do something to save the nation's grain growers.

The other "wheat" story is the impending sale of grain to the Soviet Union. Labelled a probable "one shot" affair, it would, if consummated, remove the price-depressing pressure of a surplus to some extent.

Odds are, however, that even though upwards of \$500 million worth of grains are sold to the Soviets, the 1964 crop will bring about \$1.35 a bushel, as compared with the \$2.00 a bushel support on the 1963 crop under a federal price support-market-quota program.

SCANDALS

Two major scandals rated banner headlines this year.

One was the John Profumo-Christine Keeler affair in Britain. War Minister Profumo's indiscretions came close to toppling the Tory government; the repercussions are still being felt, and, the Labor party has gained considerable strength in by-elections as a result.

The other scandal — our home grown variety — involved a young man in a hurry from the Deep South by the name of Bobby Baker. At 34 years of age, and as Secretary of the Senate—a most powerful and influential position—he represented on the somewhat questionable side, a modern-day Horatio Alger success story. Bobby has been fired but there is a doubt whether Congress will probe this affair to the bottom of the barrel. Already too many prominent Democrats AND Republicans have been revealed to have had close, and mutually beneficial business relations with Bobby. As an attention-diverting device, there's always Jimmy Hoffa to be kicked around—and he's a much safer target for the Demos, seeing as how he's a registered Republican.

Other stories there were of importance during the year. The above, in my opinion, were some of the most important. Happy New Year one and all.

State House 'Beat' . . .

FRANK-LY SPEAKING

By FRANK SMALL

A tear is an unusual Christmas gift but quite befitting the symbology of the religious connotations of the season.

You feel rather foolish when you are about to receive a tear. There I was sitting with all the people in the audience in the gym of the Girls Vocational School down in the Helena Valley last Friday night. The chorus was doing the usual Christmas songs for the play, "Christmas is a Miracle", while the shepherds, wise men and angels were going about their business when suddenly I knew my old jaundiced eye was going to have a tear.

I clamped my teeth—none of that, Frankie boy—I told myself—but then I received the most precious gift there is of Christmas—a tear welled in my eye.

Through the prism of the tear, the wire halos on the angels became real, the shepherds were not girls with wool on their faces—they were the simple people who would first herald the coming of Grace, the wise men in their beautiful robes who had collected the treasures of the earth could only be here to offer them up to the Personification.

The imprisoned girls had offered to us the greatest gifts and I noticed quite a number of damp eyelashes when the lights came on after the performance.

The dampened-eye condition did not exist among the audience alone though for Christmas is one of the hardest times for the cottages with the locked doors. Some of the girls were going home for Christmas vacation and some were not.

Anti-social behavior is one of the most important questions facing Montana families and other institutions of our society. These few girls are only warning signs of the real dangers we must be alerted to, and we are not being alerted.

The smug sophistry of the knife and fork civic groups must be challenged. The sanctimonious ceremoniousness of the churches must be forced to face everyday realism. The insensitivity of governmental officials must have the callousness filed away.

Just exactly what is the message of the locked cottages?

Is it, "Don't get caught?" "Don't be born of lower income bracket parents?" Or, just what is the message?

The locked cottages stand as an indictment that we are not a fit society to enter the space age. We can not go to the stars dragging the ancient chains of the cage with us. We are still a failure after 75 years of statehood.

The Girls' Vocational and similar state institutions are simply old and discredited panaceas which were acceptable to people who could believe superstition as fact. You can walk under ladders if you are aware of

the risk but don't bring your personal foolishness into play when you are responsible for the destiny of others.

The district judges of the state who must face the actual cases I am sure are laboring under the misguided belief that they are trying to help the girls by sending them to Helena. If they think they are punishing them they are only pygmies who have no right to the robes.

Here we have girls who need the most help sent to a place where they are least likely to receive it. Because their family failed them, the schools failed them, the churches failed them and the courts failed them, we are supposed to lock them from help.

Now don't anyone get the idea that I have one word of criticism for Miss Elaine Hoover, the school's superintendent, or any of her staff. A marvelous job is being done under the poorest of circumstances. In our sixteenth century society, on a mealy-mouthed budget and an intolerable code of legalistic morality, she has performed wonders.

Without a doubt the Christmas decorations of the grounds which the girls worked so hard at were the most beautiful in the entire valley. The merchants of the city who profit so much from Christmas "softness" on the part of their customers should have seen what the girls did at the school grounds. It was a living Christmas card.

Ray Ridle, the girls' English instructor, showed the girls how to put on their Christmas play. He probably expects too much from imprisoned girls but they want his help. I learn from conversations with him that he intends to have them do some very difficult dramatic scenes. Dramatics is one of the very basic social efforts in which every human quality is brought forth and focused upon the projection of the playwright.

Ray has the experience and training in this work and I want to see the results of his directing the girls. They don't know it but they have a fan.

Maybe you should become a fanatic in your town and see that the constructive energies of your boys and girls are channeled into social forms rewarding enough to prevent their active minds from seeking the anti-social patterns. It may possibly rehabilitate you from the sixteenth century—not that there was anything wrong with that century but certain things have become a little outmoded to say the least. Please don't you become outmoded, and resolve with me to see if we can't get our Montana moving and out of cages.

New ideas can be good or bad, just the same as old ones.—F. D. ROOSEVELT.



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