

# First, 'Is It True?' Then Anger and Anguish Among New Yorkers and Visitors

## NEWS OF TRAGEDY SPREADS QUICKLY

Men Say 'My God!' and Cry, Shoppers Stop to Pray and Many Businesses Close

By GEORGE BARRETT

The cry rang across the city, echoing again and again: "Is it true?" Another cry quickly took its place as the news of the death of President Kennedy swept with stunning impact: "My God!"

Women wept, and men wept. A refusal to believe the report of the assassination was the immediate reaction, but swiftly came horror, then anguish, and then, among many, both city residents and visitors, deep anger.

The news spread quickly, and the shocked hundreds of thousands reached for so many telephones that the system blacked out and operators had to refuse calls. Shoppers in department stores clustered instinctively, and in at least one store they stopped buying and prayed together, some of them silently, some aloud.

In all parts of the five boroughs motorists pulled up their cars and sat hunched over their dashboard radios. At red traffic lights the cry cascaded from car to car, from pedestrian to motorist: "Is it true?"

Many companies canceled newspaper advertisements as they carried out plans to curtail operations in mourning.

In many respects the biggest city in the nation turned into something of a ghost town. All Broadway theaters and all musical events closed last night in mourning for the President. Almost every major event—social, political, athletic—was canceled.

### Hotel Ballrooms Closed

A number of the city's colleges and universities called off their classes yesterday afternoon. In some cases Saturday classes were also canceled.

The city's hotels closed their ballrooms and suites where social events had been scheduled. In some hospitals physicians and nurses went on emergency rounds to give sedatives to patients who were agitated by the news.

Uptown, midtown, downtown, work in offices came to an abrupt halt as employees hovered over transistor radios. Some people went home at once, and many managements shut up shop for the day.

The grief, shock and incredulity were a terrible mirror of April 12, 1945, when the news of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's death toward the end of World War II hit the city and the world. But there was another dominant emotion yesterday—anger.

Bitterness and even savagery were expressed. A question repeated time and again was: "Where was his protection?"

It was a truck driver, Grif Clark of Huntington Beach, L.I., who caught the sentiment that so many shared with this outburst: "This is a disgrace to the country!"

It was Michael Baruth of Yonkers who reflected the feeling of horror with the query: "What kind of madmen would do a thing like that?"

### Flags at Half-Staff

All flags on municipal buildings were ordered to half-staff by Mayor Wagner, and throughout the city businesses, theaters and apartment houses lowered their flags without waiting for instructions.

Typical of the business community's reaction to Mr. Kennedy's death was the order that went out from the Fifth Avenue Association to all member stores. They were asked to fly flags at half-staff and to turn off all Christmas lighting, including the annual spectaculars in Fifth Avenue windows, until further notice.

Saks Fifth Avenue and Best & Company changed Fifth Avenue windows late in the afternoon to pay homage to Mr. Kennedy. At Saks a photograph of President Kennedy was placed on a chair and flanked by urns of red roses. At Best's the window contained an American flag with a black crepe on its staff and a watercolor of Mr. Kennedy.

Crowds gathered in front of the displays, and tears were openly shed.

At hundreds of places all flags were taken down and the flags of members of the United Nations, the city flag, the state flag, house and club flags — to express full homage with the United States flag alone.

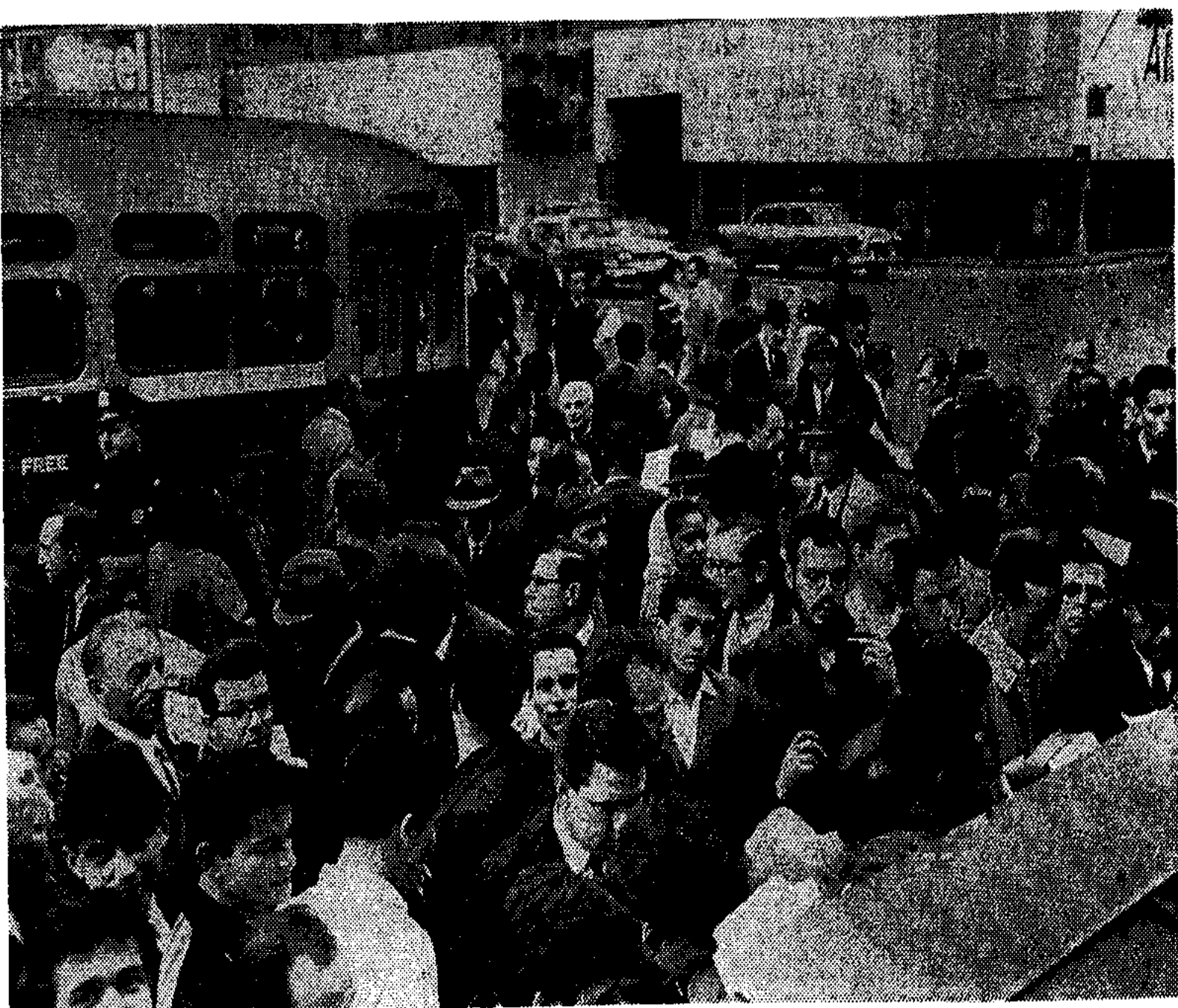
Texas was the target of wrath for scores of persons, who used phrases like "damned Texans" and other profanities. A number of persons said that they did not take subways or buses on short trips after the news, but decided to walk just to be alone with their thoughts. One common scene was the tight grasp of one man's hand on another's arm as they discussed the assassination.

In the Bronx, at the corner of Fordham Road and Grand Concourse, a predominantly Jewish and Irish area where the President had been popular, immediate reaction was as much anger as shock.

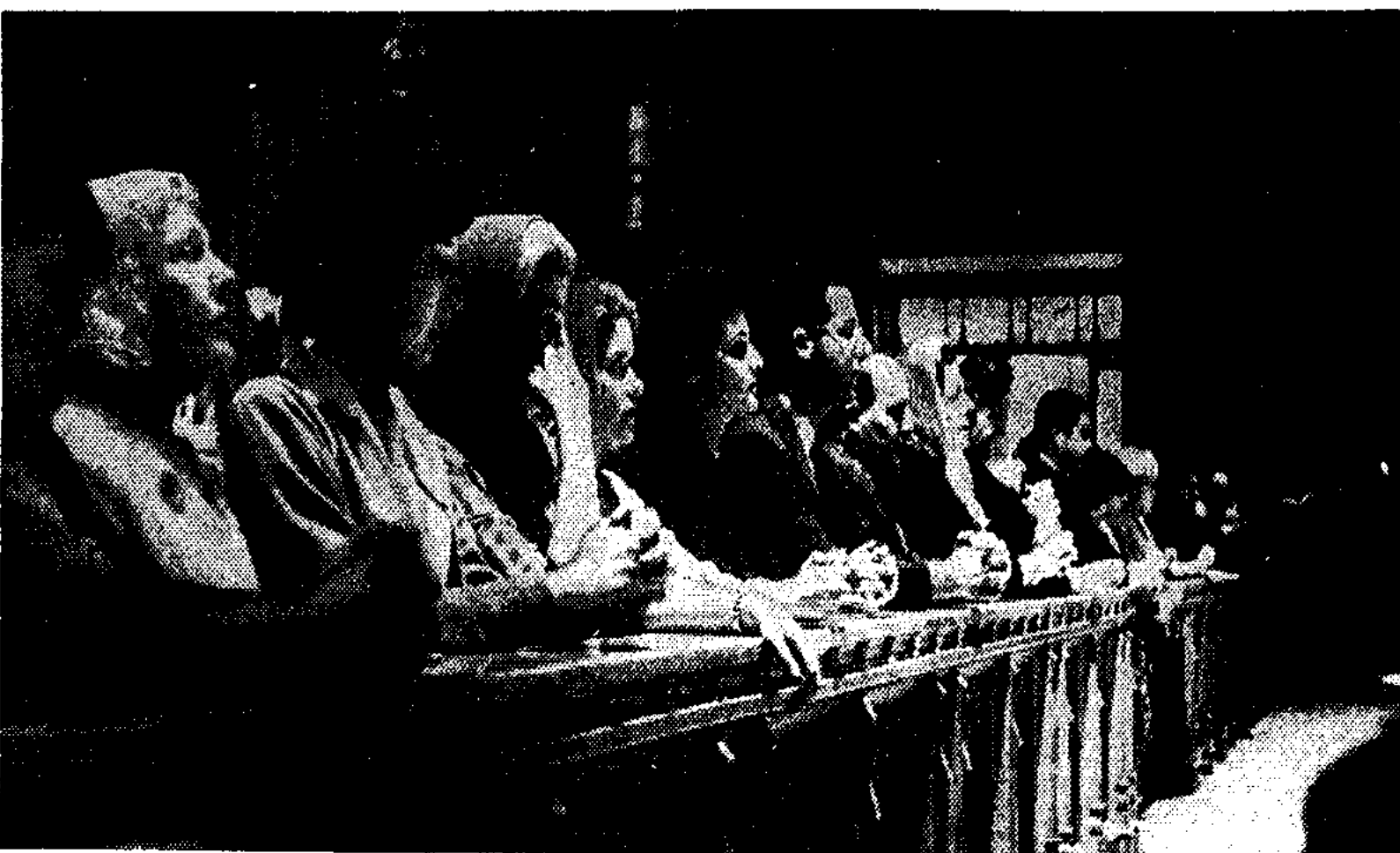
Max Schechter, a newsstand dealer, said: "Our President traveled to practically every country in the world and was safe. In his own country he was assassinated. It's a disgrace."

Mrs. Anne Nightingale, a department store saleswoman who lives at 966 East 181st Street, declared: "He didn't deserve it. I would do anything to bring him back."

The grief and the acts of mourning knew no special group, no particular section of the city and no political convictions. The sorrow and the shock were unfolded in the human vignette, the collection of individuals who stared as though in a trance from their subway seats, their stools at luncheon counters, their chairs near television sets.



THE NEWS TRAVELED FAST: One of the crowds that gathered yesterday as word of the attack on the President was given on the radio. This was a Times Square scene. Many telephoned friends of shooting, after hearing radio.



AT ST. PATRICK'S: Passers-by stop to worship at the cathedral after hearing of the President's death



SILENT MOURNER: A woman pauses on hearing the news

At the intersection of Court and Centre Streets, one motorist stopped his car in the middle of traffic and walked over to a sidewalk luncheonette. He asked the counterwoman: "Is it true?" The counterwoman didn't look up. "Yes, he's dead," he said.

The motorist returned to his car, slipped under the wheel and sat, motionless and staring. Horns blared, then went soundless as word of the President's death filtered from driver to driver.

Strangers talked to each other in the subway, mostly in soft voices or whispers. Again the awful question, "Is it true?" One man, eyes watering as he heard the answer, spoke as though to himself: "Another Lincoln; he's another Lincoln."

For some hours there was an almost eerie quality as numbers of men and women seemed totally unable to grasp the reality. They ate their lunches automatically; they typed letters without really seeing the unwinding sentences; they reached for the telephone to call home, to talk to someone they know. Those who had no one familiar at hand walked up to strangers and talked about President Kennedy.

The bells of St. Patrick's Cathedral tolled solemnly, and thousands of Roman Catholics went to churches to pray for the nation's first Catholic President.

Msgr. Timothy Flynn of the New York Archdiocese spoke for Catholics and non-Catholics alike when he described the reaction at the archdiocese: "Stupefied horror."

Four servicemen sat in the recruiting booth in Times Square, dazed at the news of the loss of their Commander in Chief. Recruiting was halted for the day. The Astor Bar was grim and

silent. One bartender said: "Everybody feels dead, real individual liberty of man," Mr. Mitchell declared. "Everybody feels like they've been crushed."

Many in the suburbs heard the news quickly because television programs were interrupted. Fred Trauz, a postman in Greenwich, Conn., encountered a woman who wept as she said she and her husband had decided to get yesterday.

In Trenton grief spread through the corridors of the New Jersey State House, and at 3 P.M. Gov. Richard J. Hughes ordered all state offices closed for the day.

Dr. Edward Brailove, a dentist, weeping said: "Wasn't it horrible? I can't work. I've sent two patients home and I've closed my office."

## Eyewitnesses Describe Scene of Assassination

### Sounds of Shooting Brought Cars to Halt — Motorcade Sped Kennedy to Hospital

Following is a description of the assassination of President Kennedy yesterday, written by Jack Bell of The Associated Press, who witnessed the shooting from the fourth car behind the President:

DALLAS, Nov. 22 (AP)—There was a loud bang as though a giant firecracker had exploded in the caverns between the tall buildings we were just leaving behind us.

In quick succession there were two other loud reports. The ominous sound of these dismissed from the minds of us riding in the reporters' "pool" car the fleeting idea that some Texan was adding a bit of noise to the cheering welcome Dallas had given John F. Kennedy.

The reports sounded like rifle shots. The man in front of me screamed, "My God, they're shooting at the President!" Our driver braked the car sharply and we swung the doors open to leap out. Suddenly the procession, which had halted, shot forward again.

In the flash of that instant, a little tableau was enacted in front of a colonnade toward which the velvet green grass swelled upward to a small park near the top of an underpass for which we had been headed.

### Cars Speed Ahead

A man was pushing a woman dressed in a bright orange to the ground and seemed to be falling protectively over her. A photographer, scrambling on all fours toward the crest of the rise, held a camera trained in their direction.

As my eye swept the buildings to the right, where the shots—if they really were shots; and it seemed unbelievable—might have come, I saw no significant sign of activity.

Four cars ahead, in the President's Continental limousine, a man in the front seat rose for a moment. He seemed to have a telephone in hand as he waved to a police cruiser ahead to go on.

The Presidential car leaped ahead and those following it attained breakneck speed as the caravan roared through the underpass and on to a broad freeway, police sirens whining shrilly. These sirens had been silenced by Presidential order throughout Mr. Kennedy's Texas trip.

Up to the highway we thundered, careening around a turn into the Parkland Hospital and screeching to a stop at the emergency entrance.

As we piled out of our car, I saw Mrs. Kennedy, weeping, trying to hold her husband's head up. Mrs. John Connally was helping hold up the Governor of Texas.

### President in Back Seat

Mr. Connally's suit front was splattered with blood, his head rolling backward.

By the time I had covered the distance to the Presidential car, Secret Service men were helping Mrs. Kennedy away. Her attendants were aiding Mr. and Mrs. Connally.

For an instant I stopped and stared into the back seat. There, face down, stretched out at full length, lay the President, motionless.

His natty business suit seemed hardly rumpled. But there was blood on the floor. "Is he dead?" I asked a Secret Service man.

"I don't know," he said, "but I don't think so." I ran for a telephone.

A few minutes later I was back for more information. The President and Mr. Connally had been moved into an emergency operating room. Vice President Johnson, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Kennedy had been escorted into the hospital.

The shiny White House automobile, a manufacturers' dream, stood untouched. It had been flown 1,500 miles from Washington only to become a death vehicle of the President, to whom it was designed to give maximum protection.

### Two Hats on Seat

On the front seat floor lay the soft felt hat the President often carried but seldom wore. Beside it in mute comradeship was the wide-brimmed, light-colored Texas-style hat that Mr. Connally wore.

In the wide area between the seats, now cleared of its jump seats, three twisted and torn roses lay in a pool of blood on the floor. Beside them was a tattered bouquet of asters.

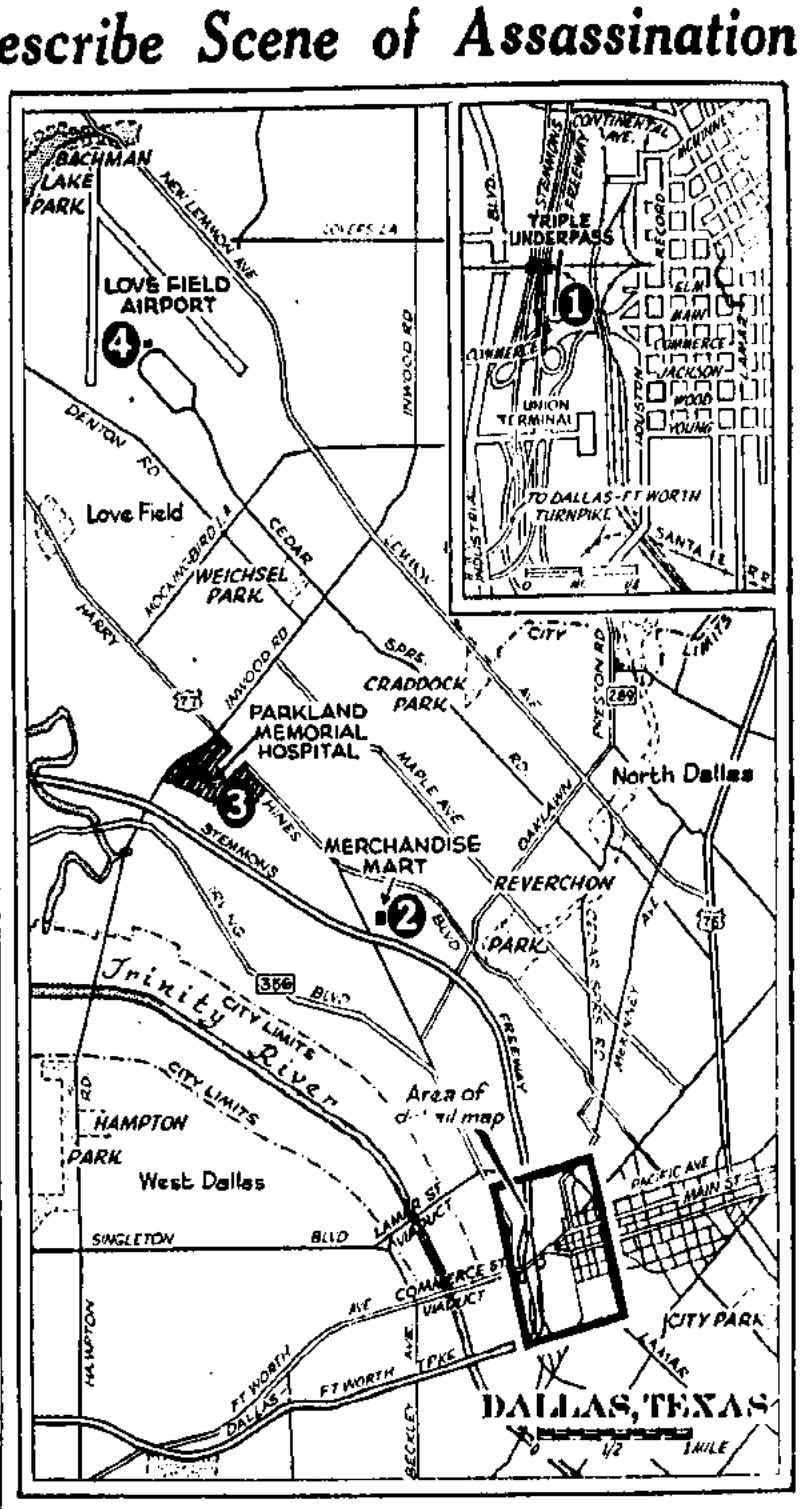
It all seemed so unreal. This was the conveyance for what had been in the nature of triumph for Mr. Kennedy and the First Lady, who had been smiling, shaking hands and filled with happiness at a day of meeting the folks in the streets, the airports and the hotels.

Ironically, if their reception in Texas had not been so warm, precautions might have been taken to raise the shatter-proof side glasses, even though the top of the convertible was down. Such protection might have saved the President.

But Dallas, where the President's policies had raised a storm of conservative protests, had been warm in its welcome to the handsome, bronzed President and his pretty, chic wife.

The Presidential party appeared to be chatting gaily among themselves after they had left the crowds of downtown Dallas behind and the caravan had swung into a quiet area where admirers had not chosen to stand.

But there the assassin took his stand. His three well-aimed shots plunged America and the world into grief.



ASSASSINATION: President Kennedy was shot at triple underpass (1) in Dallas. He was en route to Merchandise Mart (2) where he was scheduled to speak. He was taken to Parkland Hospital (3), where he was pronounced dead. At Love Field (4), his body was flown back to Washington and Lyndon Johnson took oath of office as President.

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10 Feet From President TORONTO, Nov. 22 (Canadian Press)—A man from suburban Willowdale who was only 10 feet away when President Kennedy was assassinated today said he first thought the gunfire was the sound of firecrackers.

Norman Simlas, 34 years old, told The Star in a telephone conversation that he had been in Dallas on business. He was taking pictures of the motorcade when he saw the President slump to the floor, he said.

Here is his story: "I was in Dallas on a convention and I decided to snap a picture of the President as the motorcade rolled by."

"The crowds had thinned out just past an overpass near the Trade Mart, so I had a good position when the motorcade came by at about 8 miles an hour."

"Then I suddenly heard a sharp crack. The first thing that came to my mind was that someone was setting off firecrackers. I turned away from the President's car and looked back to where the noise seemed to come from."

Agent Draws Gun "Then somebody . . . I don't know who it was—yelled: 'Don't shoot!'

"I swung back to look at the car. A Secret Service man ran up with his gun drawn. A policeman beside me drew his revolver and his eyes searched the crowd."

"Then another shot rang out and a third almost immediately on top of it."

"I was still staring at the car. The Secret Service man opened the car door and I saw the President slumped down to the floor and falling toward the pavement."

"Jackie Kennedy was sitting on the left side of the car and

gathered for a special memorial service at nightfall. Earlier in the day, hundreds of public and private events, school and university classes, receptions, formal dinners, dances — were halted in mid-course or canceled.

All city, state and Federal courts closed as soon as word of the assassination spread. George Szell, conducting the New York Philharmonic at the Philharmonic Hall, ended the concert abruptly after completing Beethoven's "Leonore" Overture No. 3.

Among scores of social events abruptly canceled was the Annual Freedom Award Dinner of the Order of Lafayette at which former President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Gen. Lucius D. Clay were to have received awards.

United States Ambassador Matthew H. McGlothy, an old friend of the Kennedy family, spoke on the radio. President DeValera said in a message to Mrs. Kennedy: "The whole Irish people mourn in sympathy with you. Their hearts go out to you in this hour of terrible sorrow for you."

Prime Minister Sean Lemass also sent a message of sympathy. DUBLIN, Nov. 22 (Reuters)—President de Valera (two) broke down from emotion as he addressed the nation over television in a tribute to President Kennedy.

Jagan Sends Condolences To Mrs. Kennedy and Nation Special to The New York Times GEORGETOWN, British Guiana, Nov. 22 Premier Cheddi B. Jagan conveyed the sympathy of his Government and the people of British Guiana in a message to Mrs. Kennedy, members of the Kennedy family and the United States. Flags on the Parliament house and other government buildings were ordered flown at half-staff. Sir Ralph Grey, the colony's Governor, called Mr. Kennedy "one of the greatest advocates of fair play and justice in the 20th century."

## The City Goes Dark and Cancels Activities as the President Is Mourned

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5 their doors and darkened their marquees. Television chains canceled all entertainment programs and commercials. As dusk came, automatic devices turned on the huge, gaudy signs that normally blot out the night in the Times Square area. Then, one by one, the lights blinked out, turning the great carnival strip into what was almost a mourning band on the city's sleeve.

The Harvard-Yale and Princeton-Dartmouth football games and scores of other contests at colleges and schools were canceled for Saturday.

Dinner dances, cocktail parties, banquets and other social events were called off throughout the metropolitan area. All the city's major hotels canceled entertainment in their public rooms.

There were exceptions, of course. In outlying Manhattan neighborhoods and in the other boroughs, the visible evidence of shock and sorrow was less spectacular. Movie theaters and shops remained lighted and open, but crowds were sparse and subdued.

Restaurants, by decision of their trade associations, operated as usual for public convenience and necessity. Bars were open, often with customers three deep, talking in hushed tones, eyes glued to television sets that repeated the news over and over again.

Twelve all-night movie houses on 42d Street between the Avenue of the Americas and Eighth Avenue darkened their main display signs but were open for business. One of them expressed the street's attitude with a picture called "Carry On, Regardless."

In the same area, in a penny arcade, rifle shots snapped against moving targets and some of half a dozen marksmen seemed to think it was an odd way to pass the time. Two record stores blared music into the otherwise subdued street.

Crowd Below Normal Elsewhere in the city's five boroughs, stores and most theaters remained open as usual, but in many centers crowds were well below normal for Friday night.

Most neighborhood movie theaters remained open, but they had nearly empty houses. In Greenwich Village most of the major night spots that offer entertainment were closed and the majority of off-Broadway legitimate houses also canceled performances.

In Brooklyn, only the young seemed to be out in normal force and spirits. In the King's Highway area, the police and store-keepers found activity off by at least 60 per cent. There was a similar relative hush at Flatbush and Church Avenues, where a taxi driver commented, "It looks like a different town."

Most Brooklyn movie houses were open, but the Albemarle Theater on Flatbush Avenue turned away would-be patrons with a sign: "Out of respect for the late President John F. Kennedy this theater will be closed for the rest of the day."

Along Jamaica Avenue in Queens, the three big department stores that dominate most busy Friday nights — Macy's, May's and Gertz—had closed their doors. Many smaller stores also closed, and those that remained open had little or no business.

The early evening pattern was less distinct in Harlem, where night life normally gets underway at a later hour. Crowds appeared nearly normal and the only notable closing reported was that of the Apollo Theater, a vaudeville house on 125th Street.

Rights Drive Questioned Harlem bar conversation centered nervously and with some hostility on the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, and speculation that the drive for integration and a major civil rights bill would be slowed or halted with a Texan in the White House.

"Let's see what your cracker President is going to do for you now," a Harlem bartender said to his customers.

At the Chinese Public School supported by Chinatown residents, Kenneth Chan, the principal, called 700 students to-