P.S. to the NEWS
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Many memorials have been given this month on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It is good to recall the historic events of his life, but it may be more important to reflect on the causes of his death, and also on the fact that there was another President of a Free World nation who was also assassinated that same month.

In 1963, the Communists were losing the war in South Vietnam. The man whom Vice President Lyndon Johnson once called "the Winston Churchill of Asia," President Diem, had built up his country to economic self-sufficiency, and was keeping the Communists in check with the aid of only 12,000 U.S. military advisers.

So, the Communists switched from a military to a propaganda offensive. They hatched the smear that President Diem was guilty of religious persecution of the Buddhists who constituted the majority of the population in South Vietnam. The sympathy of the American people was aroused by pictures of Buddhist monks incinerating themselves in the street in order to protest Diem's alleged religious persecution.

All our information came from four or five Buddhist pagodas controlled by a leftist monk named Thich-Tri-Quang, instead of from the other 3,700 pagodas which remained loyal to the Diem Government.

This propaganda fooled our State Department into giving the green light to Diem's enemies to overthrow his Government. Our embassy denied him asylum, and he was murdered.

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The falsity of the propaganda about religious persecution was proved by the United Nations which set up a fact-finding mission to investigate the charges. This 16-nation UN report concluded that the accounts of massive persecution of the Buddhists were "at the best, vastly exaggerated, at the worst, a sordid propaganda fraud. ... The persecution was either nonexistent or vastly exaggerated."

The UN report described how one monk had been recruited by a "suicide promotion squad," lied to and promised pain-killing drugs, in order to persuade him to burn himself.

Only three weeks later, Lee Harvey Oswald shot President John Kennedy. Oswald had lived in the Soviet Union, was permitted to travel freely there, to marry a Russian and take her out of the country. After he returned to the United States, he was brainwashed by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee to hate President Kennedy because Kennedy had forced Khrushchev to remove the Soviet missiles from their Cuban launching pads.

Also, by 1963, the Communists hated Kennedy with a passion because, in his famous "I am a Berliner" speech, he assured our NATO allies that "we will risk our cities to save your cities" from Soviet nuclear attack.

As we observe the tenth anniversary of the assassinations of Presidents Kennedy and Diem, we should reflect on the sobering fact that Communist propaganda is so powerful that it caused the murders of two popular Presidents who spoke out strongly against Communist aggression.

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