

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Technology and Education

THE SPECIAL section, "Changing Directions in American Education" [SR, Jan. 14], coupled with the July 23, 1966, issue on "The New Computerized Age," should be required reading for educational decision-makers and those responsible for their education and training.

The problem of getting the attention, and more important, the active involvement of superintendents and others in "top management" of educational institutions is a strategic one. Decisions about "systems" problems and their solutions cannot be left to engineers and to technical operating personnel. Neither can they be put onto the classroom teacher.

ALBERT L. GOLDBERG,
Industry Manager,
Government and Education
Industry Marketing,
Honeywell, Inc.

Wellesley Hills, Mass.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS will not provide the improved education which our society demands. The key to improved teaching is the improved teacher. No gimmicks, no fads, no committees—just the very best teachers that money can buy. When the starting salary for the beginning teacher on an annual contract is comparable to that of other college graduates entering business and industry, the process and product of education will be improved.

JESSE L. MCDANIEL,
Head, Department of Education,
Asheville-Biltmore College.

Asheville, N.C.

Paying Women Teachers

THE STATEMENT by Roald F. Campbell in his article, "Tomorrow's Teacher" [SR, Jan. 14], that some way ought to be found to pay married male teachers more than single female teachers is not only repugnant and undemocratic, but illogical.

He suggests that payment on a merit scale would soon approximate what he considers the ideal conditions of the university, where qualified males predominate. May I point out, first, that few professors are in it for the money, which is sometimes less than in the public schools; rather they are held by the greater stimulation and prestige provided by the colleges. Second, if salaries were based on a merit system, the single teacher with equivalent credentials, male or female, would probably out-merit the male teacher with the family and all its accompanying distractions.

I suggest a better solution to the problem: continue to raise teachers' salaries.

(MRS.) CAROLYN H. BROWN,
Secondary Social Studies Teacher,
Long Beach, Calif.

THE MOST UNFORTUNATE long-range consequence of unequal pay for men and women teachers would be the intensifying of differences between rich and poor schools. Since women teachers would command a lower price on the open market, the poor schools



"Overpopulation scare indeed! I've known for years there were far too many people in the world!"

would be able to afford this sex only. The rich schools could hire men, even some with families. But here, too, the elementary schools would have a much higher proportion of women because money would be spent first for men for high school positions.

Salary increases and merit pay will help to attract men, as Dr. Campbell suggests. Extending the school year on a voluntary basis also can give men a chance for higher earnings. In addition, supervision of after-school activities might be promoted in areas other than athletics to give men an opportunity for overtime pay.

(MRS.) ARDITH HANNA,
East Lansing, Mich.

Business and the Student

I WAS BOTH INTERESTED and concerned by Theodore Sorensen's editorial, "Scrooge and the Students" [SR, Jan. 14]. As a high school teacher of social science . . . I feel there is some truth in the idea that business reveals a very small social conscience.

A business community which is relatively unconcerned with the national disgraces of air and water pollution, with the destruction of the natural beauty of the country, which gears its advertising to greedy materialism, can but receive a degree of scorn from a thinking younger generation.

It will be up to the younger generation to correct the abuses of today's business world without destroying the incentives that free enterprise affords.

ROGER DONEY,
Claremont High School,
Claremont, Calif.

MR. SORESEN suggests that the lack of prospective businessmen in the colleges might be overcome by having business identify with the student's ideals on social responsibility. But ideas, no matter how heartfelt or well wished, do not leap from

mind to mind on the force of their good intentions. Rather, workable and mutually desired channels for communication must be established.

WALTER MCGILVREY,
Kent State University.

Kent, O.

Travel and the USTS

I THOUGHT William D. Patterson's editorial, "Agenda for Travel" [SR, Jan. 7], was particularly well done. As he pointed out, the experience to date with our U.S. Travel Service indicates what could be accomplished with an expanded program.

WARREN G. MAGNUSON,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Kennedy's Rights

CONGRATULATIONS to Goodman Ace for his fine article, "The Death of a Husband" [TOP OF MY HEAD, Jan. 14]. My own thinking had become clouded concerning the Manchester book and Mrs. Kennedy's role in it. In the tumult and shouting I had "forgotten"—and was quick to criticize the President's widow. Jacqueline Kennedy does give this country a glow, and I shall continue to wrap myself in the mantle of her dignity and courage.

KATHERINE RHODES,
St. Louis, Mo.

MOST PEOPLE give lip service to the support of the dignity and rights of individuals but too readily will sell someone *else's* dignity and rights. Thank you, Mr. Ace, for standing as one willing to forgo curiosity (which, after all, is what it is, though others choose to cloak it in the phrase "right to know") as a token recognition of the debt each of us owes Jacqueline Kennedy.

B. SABONIS-CHAFEE,
West Brookfield, Mass.



Books

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LITERARY HORIZONS

The Generation of the Assassination

AT ONE session of the University of Chicago's conference on "The Arts and the Public" (SR, Nov. 19) three novelists — Wright Morris, Reynolds Price, and Richard Stern — opened the discussion by talking about their own most recent books. The fact unexpectedly emerged that each of the novels had been significantly affected by the death of President Kennedy. The death is, of course, the center of Morris's *One Day*, the event which makes that day different, for the people in the book, from any other day. In Stern's *Stitch* the assassination takes place only five or six pages from the end, but, as Stern pointed out to the conference, the tragic occurrence served his purposes as a novelist by permitting him to bring together the various themes with which he had been engaged. In Price's *A Generous Man* the assassination does not figure at all, but, as he explained, it was responsible for the shape his novel took. He had been working for some time on a "story of waste and self-destruction," and it wasn't going well. Then came the assassination, "and the great wave of blank waste which rolled over all of you of course included me and added to my own sour taste of idleness and failure." In despair for days, he suddenly got an idea for a different sort of book, a funny book, a book that would be an antidote to his unhappiness, and he went to work on it with enthusiasm. But it turned out to be a sad book after all.

Not many Americans were unaffected by the assassination, though it had various meanings for various people. Vance Bourjaily in *The Man Who Knew Kennedy* (Dial, \$5.95) is examining the meaning of the event for the generation to which Kennedy belonged, and his novel is the story of a part of that generation.

When the incredible news comes over the radio the narrator, Barney James, and his wife are flying to San Juan, where

they are to meet an old friend, Dave Doremus, and his new wife, with whom they plan to take a week's cruise on a chartered boat. All Barney knows is that he wants to get home and be with his children, and he insists on abandoning the cruise in spite of Dave's pleas. On the trip back he can think of nothing but the tragedy. He remembers that when he heard of Roosevelt's death he had just returned from a routine flight (he was in the Air Force in England). "Roosevelt's death had brought an hour of sadness for an old hero, gone to rest. We were ready for it, even if we didn't know we were. But I am no more ready for Jack Kennedy's death, I thought, than I am for my own."

Through Barney's recollections of Dave we learn about the relationship between the two men—their meeting in high school and their subsequent adventures, an idyllic cruise after the war with two beautiful and obliging sisters, and the ups and downs of their friendship through the years. Although Dave is the man who knew Kennedy, and it is his story Barney sets out to tell, they are of equal importance in the novel. In the *Literary Guild Preview* Bourjaily says that he had learned, living in exurban Connecticut, that not all businessmen were "Babbitts, or tyrants, or dupes, or operators," and in Barney James he tried to show "one of the good guys, the kind I liked." By and large he has succeeded. Barney is a small manufacturer, with reasonably high ideals and relatively broad interests, including jazz, Elizabethan poetry, and bird-watching. He dislikes Madison Avenue and tries to protect his children from television. His marriage is less than ideal, but, as he says, he knows how to get along with his somewhat promiscuous wife even if he doesn't always love her.

Dave, the more venturesome of the two, has led a less conventional life than Barney. Trained in the law, he has

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worked as an industrial consultant and has done well. He has also had a brief fling in politics. Although he knew Jack Kennedy only for a week or so, when they were in the same hospital during the war, he has known about the Kennedy family all his life, and has dreamed of doing as well as Jack Kennedy—or better. However, in the years before the story opens, before the assassination, he has had bad breaks, including a serious involvement with a young singer who is a drug addict.

As he is thinking about Kennedy, Barney suddenly remembers a man who was in college with him, a man to whom everyone looked up, a man who seemed to have everything, a man who possessed all the virtues of the moneyed families on the Eastern seaboard. The man in Barney's life was named Tom Angus. "Tall Tommy, hell, that was it. That was it; I knew Kennedy. We all knew Kennedy. He went to college and the war with all of us." Dave Doremus, he thinks, belonged in a way to the Kennedy type, and might have gone on to greatness if he had had better luck. Even Kennedy's luck, he reminds himself, didn't last: when he was on top of the world, he was struck down by "a screwy, jittering little clown." "Every man, even