

BENNINGTON MOURNS A GREAT AMERICAN

by G. A. Schanke, 'J03

On Friday morning, Nov. 22, 1963, BENNINGTON's normal at-sea routine was shattered by Captain Hill's announcement that President Kennedy had been seriously wounded in an attempted assassination. Scarcely an hour later, Captain Hill returned to the microphone to announce that John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, was dead.

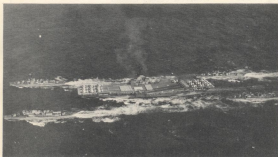
A stunned silence pervaded the ship as each of us tried to grasp the enormity of the crime. Ship's radios didn't have to compete with boisterous sailors for attention as the first reports came in. A quiet sadness had descended on BENNINGTON.

On Nov. 25, 1963, the ship's company and the embarked air group assembled on the flight deck to pay tribute to our fallen Commander-in-Chief. The memorial services were brief, but no man who attended will ever forget their significance. We of the BENNINGTON joined the humble and the mighty all over the world as we bowed our heads in respect for a great leader.

In the brief three years of his administration some of us disagreed with the President's politics, but none of us questioned his capabilities, his character, or his courage. John F. Kennedy was our leader and we stood firmly behind him.

President Kennedy was killed by an assassin's bullet, but in a more important sense, he was martyred by the ignorance and fanaticism he had spent his life opposing. It is left to us to carry on this fight that he might not have died in vain.

With this in mind we respectfully dedicate this month's ship's newspaper to the memory of a great President and a great American, John F. Kennedy.



Dazzling white formations belie the solemnity of the occasion, as BENN and her flanking destroyers pay homage to the late President.