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Our
VIEW

The first thanks

Insight given into roots of holiday

On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Mass., met and determined how to best express thanks for the good fortune that provided their community secure establishment — and firm disestablishment of American Indian tribes in the area.

By unanimous vote, the council instructed its clerk, Edward Rawson, to proclaim June 29 as the first Thanksgiving. It was later moved to the fourth Thursday in November.

In order to show the now-controversial roots of the holiday, we have decided to print the first Thanksgiving proclamation. It's steeped in anti-American Indian sentiment, as well as genuine thanks to God for American bounty. We think it provides significant insight into the holiday.

Thanksgiving proclamation — June 20, 1676

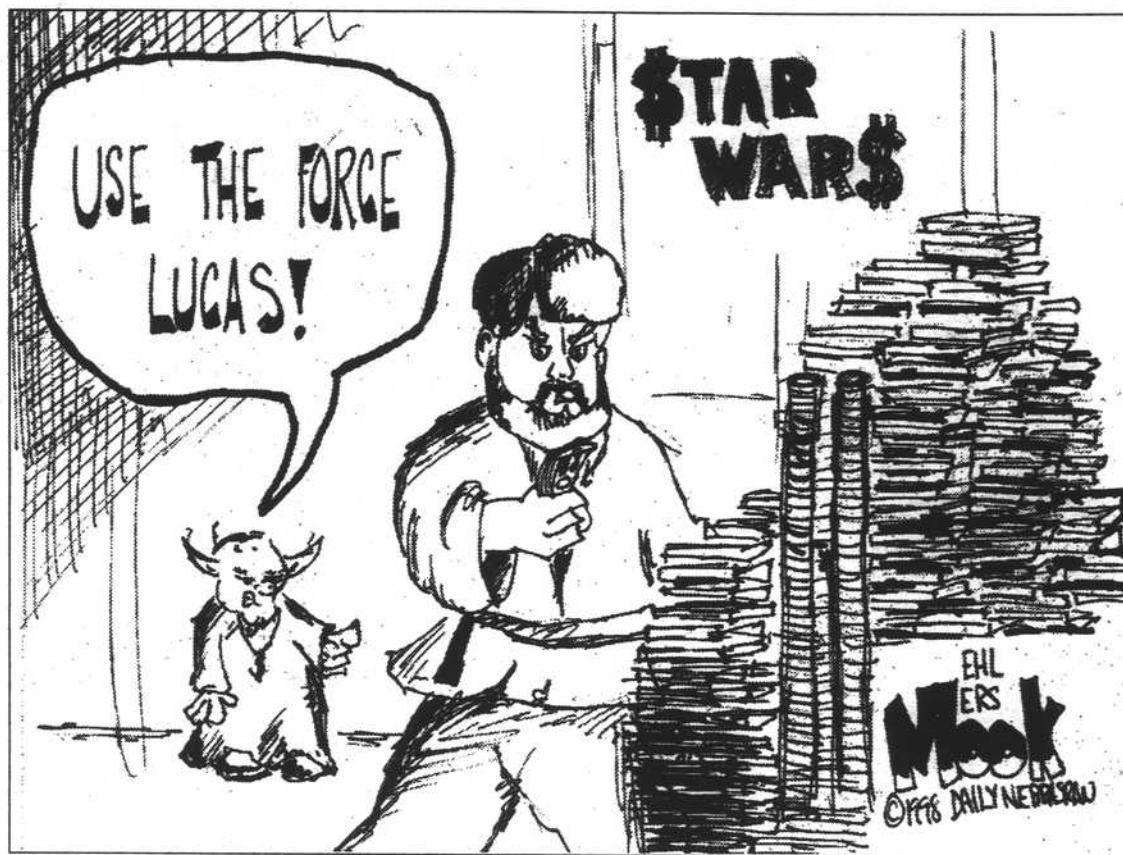
"The Holy God having by a long and Continual Series of his Afflictive dispensations in and by the present Warr with the Heathen Natives of this land, written and brought to pass bitter things against his own Covenant people in this wilderness, yet so that we evidently discern that in the midst of his judgments he hath remembered mercy, having remembered his Footstool in the day of his sore displeasure against us for our sins with many singular Intimations of his Fatherly Compassion, and regard; reserving many of our Towns from Desolation Threatened, and attempted by the Enemy, and giving us especially of late with many of our Confederates many signal Advantages against them, without such Disadvantage to ourselves as formerly we have been sensible of, if it be the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, It certainly bespeaks our positive Thankfulness, when our Enemies are in any measure disappointed or destroyed; and fearing the Lord should take notice under so many Intimations of his returning mercy, we should be found an Insensible people, as not standing before Him with Thanksgiving, as well as lading him with our Complaints in the time of pressing Afflictions:

The Council has thought meet to appoint and set apart the 29th day of this instant June, as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving and praise to God for such his Goodness and Favour, many Particulars of which mercy might be Instanced, but we doubt not those who are sensible of God's Afflictions, have been as diligent to espy him returning to us; and that the Lord may behold us as a People offering Praise and thereby glorifying Him; the Council doth commend it to the Respective Ministers, Elders and people of this Jurisdiction; Solemnly and seriously to keep the same Beseeching that being persuaded by the mercies of God we may all, even this whole people offer up our bodies and souls as a living and acceptable Service unto God by Jesus Christ."

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

Mook's
VIEW



The truth about JFK

Government should tell public what they know



ADAM KLINKER is a sophomore English and history major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

It was 35 years ago last Sunday that a sunny day in Dallas turned into one of the most somber and terrible days in American history.

Nov. 22, 1963, was the day that America stood still and watched in horror as midday newscasts relayed that President John F. Kennedy had been shot by an assassin.

Two days later, America again witnessed the brutality of the nation's first televised murder as Jack Ruby executed the alleged assassin Lee Harvey Oswald under the eye of the Dallas Police.

That was 35 years ago today, and Wednesday will mark the 35th anniversary of both the Oswald and Kennedy funerals.

Thirty-five years ago, this week was a tough one in America. Today, the burning questions over what happened that fateful day in Dallas still remain unanswered.

Everybody heard something different that day in Dealey Plaza. Everybody saw something different, felt something different, lived something different.

Nellie Connally, wife of late Texas Gov. John Connally, continues to affirm that only three shots had been fired, and all had come from behind — from the Texas School Book Depository where Oswald worked.

Nellie Connally is the last surviving member of the four riding in the presidential limousine that day; even she doesn't know the truth, though she claims she does.

America will never know what happened. America can never know the truth because the circumstances surrounding those ill-fated days in Dallas were so full of discord and confusion that nary a government agent could properly assess the situation.

The assassination of President Kennedy was not a conspiracy on behalf of the government.

It has only been perpetuated by government silence. It is difficult to fathom the idea of our government hiring hitmen to take out its chief executive. It is even more improbable that then-Vice President Lyndon Johnson played a role in this proposed conspiracy.

Whether or not it was a conspiracy remains to be seen, though Congressional studies have suggested that it may have been.

Congress is correct — a conspiracy is probable. But a government conspiracy? Hardly.

Certainly it is probable that Oswald and another one or two Communist radicals seeking their own political agenda could have conspired to kill Kennedy. But the idea of Oswald being hired by some outside faction working for the government is less believable.

And what about Jack Ruby? Maybe he was employed by the government to take out Oswald, but what was his connection with the assassination? If he had one, it was probably not through the government — he was a nightclub owner with Mafia ties.

Conspiracy is the fuel that keeps American ignorance burning. Government conspiracy is the stuff that fanatical dreams are made of.

At the most innocent slight of the government, the huddled masses cry conspiracy. Such has been the case for the last 35 years.

Perhaps it is too long to wait for the real truth. But remember that Oswald is dead — and he was the man with all of the answers, or maybe none of them.

Maybe it was Oswald acting alone, and therefore, we'll never know but for the speculation of the Warren Commission and those who haven't been corrupted by the Oliver Stone film "JFK."

America doesn't know the truth, but we probably should. If the truth is indeed out there, then the American public has a right to it. If the government truly doesn't know, then they should say so.

However, the government has already bungled this assassination research and investigation past the point of recognition. Thirty-five years has been the only closure for the American people; and time hasn't healed all wounds.

Yes, there was probably a conspiracy, but more along the lines of the way Jackie Kennedy described it — a couple of silly Communists trying to get a headline.

One way or another, the painful or

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painless truth must be known. We'll never know if it was government conspiracy because what kind of government would openly admit its role in the assassination of its leader?

If the truth is already out, then the government should say so, instead of stepping around the problem and insinuating a probable conspiracy. Either there was or there wasn't — there is no probably.

Only the finite truth can be acceptable at this point. With most members of the Warren Commission dead or unwilling to talk, America is running out of chances to discover the real story behind that day in Dallas. And Nellie Connally is not the ultimate source, despite the fact that she was in the car.

Who really knows what happened? If it was Oswald, and only Oswald, then the entire crowd at Dealey Plaza is the last witness.

If it was a triangulation of fire and involved more than one assassin, then, as New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison so emphatically argued, by definition it was a conspiracy and more witnesses are out there.

It is most unlikely that such witnesses will come forward in the case of conspiracy. If Oswald and Ruby carried assassination stories to the grave, we'll never know. And if the government continues its silence, then the truth is already lost.

Releasing the documents of the assassination little by little will result in disinterest and lead to further distrust in the government.

Releasing the Zapruder film did little more than get American fanatics out to their video stores to see live-action shots of a man's head exploding.

America shouldn't have to wait any longer for the truth. Enough time has passed and enough has been speculated.

The time for the real story is now.