

BULGARIA

1. Level of Messages and Callers at Legation; Funeral Attendance

President Dimitur Ganev and Premier Todor Zhivkov sent President Johnson a telegram expressing "our most sincere condolences on behalf of the Presidium of the National Assembly, the government, and on our own behalf." Foreign Minister Ivan Bashev sent a telegram to Secretary Rusk and paid a sympathy call on United States Minister Anderson, as did Vice President Georgi Kullishev and a protocol office representative. Bashev's call was televised, and he gave full support to the Legation's arrangements for a church service on November 25.

The Washington funeral was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Gero Grozev and the Bulgarian Minister to Washington, Lyubomir Popov.

2. Reaction of the General Population

The attitude of the population was one of shock and sorrow, and was reflected in the stunned silence with which crowds gathered in front of the black-draped photograph of President Kennedy in the Legation's windows to read the announcement of the tragedy. Hundreds of visitors of all ages and walks of life called at the residence to express condolences to the US Minister, and additional hundreds attended the requiem mass on November 25 at the tiny Roman Catholic Church in Sofia. Many Bulgarians calling on the Minister expressed fear for the future and anxiety over the increased possibility of war, while hundreds spoke of their love for President Kennedy and of the new hope that he had given them.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

A Requiem Mass for the late President, the American Legation's arrangements of which were supported by the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, was celebrated at the Sofia Roman Catholic Church on November 25, with Orthodox, Protestant, Muslim, and Jewish representatives, non-bloc mission chiefs, and the Rumanian Ambassador in attendance. Over 300 Bulgarians from all walks of life also were present and warmly expressed their condolences to the US Minister after the service. The sole Bulgarian official present was Foreign Office Acting Chief of Protocol Stoyan Konstantinov.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

Bulgarian media coverage was unusually heavy and included two Telstar TV relays. It highly praised the late President, singling out

his June 10 speech, as "broad-minded" and "realistic," and opined that he had placed his name in American history as one of its prominent figures.

The assassination, condemned as a "barbarous act," was from the start ascribed to "mad and rabid right-wing extremists," who for the last year in particular had been sharply reacting to the late President's domestic and foreign political line.

The Bulgarians attempted to identify Oswald with the "mad right-wingers," but later did admit Oswald's sojourn in the USSR as a "tourist" and alleged that a girl friend of his had stated that he had "hinted" he was there as a US intelligence agent. As to his murder, media claimed that the old and well-known method of concealing the true murderer was applied, and charged that Jack Ruby enjoyed great freedom in jail with the right to make phone calls and send and receive letters. There was an attempt to discredit the desire of the US authorities to get at the facts, and media took the line that Dallas authorities attempted to exploit the tragedy to incite anticommunist hysteria and cover up the right-wing extremists.

Media reflected concern that there would be changes in US foreign policy, that US ties with the Soviet bloc would be harmed, and that the confidence in US policy and in the late President built up over the past three years was now in jeopardy. Commentary on President Johnson, born "in a rich plantation owner's family," was limited to the hope that he would continue steps to strengthen peace. An article carried his Thanksgiving message. Belief was expressed that the spirit of the Moscow test-ban treaty advocated by the late President would be defended.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

1. Level of Messages and Callers at Embassy; Funeral Attendance

Party First Secretary and President of the Republic Novotny sent "messages of sympathy" to President Johnson and Mrs. Kennedy. Foreign Minister Vaclav David sent his "message of sympathy" to Secretary Rusk and visited the US Embassy in Prague on November 23 to express regrets. David and "other officials" from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed condolence sheets. In addition, the Czechoslovak Ambassador to Washington, Dr. Karel Duda, sent a condolence message to Secretary Rusk.

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The President's funeral was attended by the Czechoslovak Permanent Representative to the UN, Dr. Jiri Hajek, and Ambassador Duda.

2. Reaction of the General Population

The population spontaneously expressed its sorrow and sympathy. By December 1 more than 13,000 persons had signed the Embassy condolence book. About 5,000 more came to the Embassy but did not sign the condolence book. Over 200 letters and telegrams of condolence were also received by the Embassy.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

A Requiem Mass, arranged for by the US Ambassador, was celebrated in a Prague church, with the US Ambassador in attendance. A Czechoslovak Government delegation, consisting of the Minister of Health (a defrocked Roman Catholic priest), Chief of the American Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Foreign Ministry's Chief of Protocol attended. The non-bloc diplomatic corps, as well as the Polish Ambassador and the Soviet Charge d'Affaires, were in attendance. About 1,000 Czechoslovaks, a great majority of whom were ordinary citizens, packed the church, with overflow crowds standing outside the church entrance.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

The media coverage was extensive, and for the first time in years some of the factual VOA, RFE, and BBC broadcasts were not jammed (full jamming was resumed after the funeral). At 20:50 hours on November 22 Radio Prague interrupted its program with a bulletin on the President's assassination and thereafter switched to serious music. Other stations followed suit after the 21:00 hours news broadcast. On November 23 the assassination received wide coverage on front pages of all newspapers. Subsequently all papers gave prominence to messages of sympathy sent by Novotny, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and other leaders. On November 25 Czechoslovak radio and TV stations transmitted a half-hour Telstar relay of the funeral. Radio Prague also mentioned the church ceremonies in Prague.

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HUNGARY1. Level of Messages and Callers at Legation; Funeral Attendance

President Istvan Dobi sent a message of condolence to the US Government, the text of which was never published, and the Hungarian Charge in Washington sent a letter to Secretary Rusk. The National Women's Council sent a message to Mrs. Kennedy.

In Budapest a Deputy Foreign Minister called on the US Charge. Other callers were the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and officials from the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Cultural Affairs.

First Deputy Foreign Minister and head of the Hungarian delegation to the current UN Assembly session, Peter Mod, together with Hungary's Permanent UN Representative, represented the government at the Washington funeral.

The first published reaction of a ranking Hungarian official was contained in a November 29 speech by Deputy Premier Kallai who said: "...darkest forces of American imperialism organized and carried out one of the most ignominious political assassinations of our century, the murder of President John Kennedy."

2. Reaction of the General Population

The absence of any reaction from Party First Secretary and Premier Janos Kadar apparently acted as a damper on public expressions of sympathy at the US Legation, always under open surveillance. After an initial flood of telephone calls to the Legation on the evening of the assassination, only a trickle of visitors appeared for the next three days. Approximately half of the visitors declined to sign the condolence book. By November 26 the total number of signatures -- including official and diplomatic ones -- was under two hundred. The Legation received only a modest volume of mail and cables offering condolences.

Although the Legation sensed an overwhelmingly sympathetic public reaction, it also detected caution and fear, exemplified in the absence of movement in the vicinity of the Legation and the refusal of so many visitors to sign their names.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

No special ceremonies have been reported.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

Although news of the assassination was reported promptly, the story was kept off the front pages of the major papers until November 25. Initial commentary was in the form of quotes from the Soviet Union's Pravda, and original Hungarian commentary did not appear until November 24.

Extensive TV coverage of the Washington funeral ceremonies, based on Folstar, was carried a day late -- on the evening of November 26. On November 30 a peak hour TV special on the assassination questioned the conclusions of the Dallas police as to Oswald's guilt.

From November 25 on, the press gave the assassination heavy front page coverage, treating it as a right-wing plot against President Kennedy and his policies and discounting in advance any FBI findings as based on Dallas police reports and bound to reach the same irresponsible conclusions.

POLAND

1. Level of Messages and Callers at Embassy; Funeral Attendance

Chairman of the Council of State (President) Zawadzki and Premier Cyrankiewicz sent a joint cable to President Johnson. Minister of Foreign Affairs Rajacki sent a cable to Secretary Rusk. The Chairman of the Council of State also sent a message to Mrs. Kennedy, while the Polish Ambassador to the US sent messages to Mrs. Kennedy, to the Attorney General, and to Secretary Rusk. There were no messages from Party First Secretary Gomulka who, alone among communist leaders, holds no prominent government post.

Two Deputy Chairmen of the Council of State, the Premier and the Foreign Minister, a Deputy Foreign Minister, the Vice Marshal of the Sejm, and the Chairman of the Warsaw City Council all called on Ambassador Cabot.

Deputy Chairman of the Council of State Kulczynski and Deputy Premier Jaroszewicz represented the government at the funeral in Washington.

2. Reaction of the General Population

The reaction in Poland was as to a national tragedy. Even the numerous official calls at the Embassy gave the appearance of spontaneity

and genuine grief. Groups of Poles began to gather in front of the Embassy Saturday morning and for four successive evenings a line formed to the Embassy. By Wednesday there were over 10,000 signatures, many with comments, in five condolence books. The Embassy was flooded with telegrams and letters and received hundreds of messages for Mrs. Kennedy.

After a spontaneous mass demonstration of mourning by university students Friday, long lines of mourners formed in front of the US Consulate in Poznan on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. By Wednesday 7,000 persons, many representing organizations, had signed the condolence book. The high point on Monday was a solemn procession of school children with lighted candles which they placed in front of the Consulate. Flowers, rosaries, holy pictures, and candles were placed by the people in front of the Consulate, underneath a draped photograph of the President daily, for weeks, and many apartment windows displayed small American flags.

Thousands of mourners who could not get into Warsaw's St. John's Cathedral for the Requiem Mass, filed into it for three hours afterwards to kiss the American flag draping the catafalque. All Requiem Masses offered that day and for weeks thereafter by other numerous churches had overflow crowds, many apparently had catafalques covered with the American flag.

Church bells tolled for fifteen minutes on Monday night.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

On November 25 flags were ordered flown at half-mast and all places of entertainment observed mourning, as did radio and TV.

A Requiem Mass at St. John's Cathedral was arranged by the Warsaw Curia. The highest officials, seated with the Diplomatic Corps, at the Cathedral were Deputy Chairman of the Council of State Zawieyski, and Deputy Foreign Minister Winiewicz.

Other Requiem Masses were held throughout the country.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

Media coverage was extensive, beginning with prompt, factual reporting on November 22.

On November 23-24 Polish television carried Telstar relays from Washington and Hyannis Port. Light programs were dropped, and Radio

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Warsaw reported long lines in front of the US Embassy. On November 25 there was a relay of the Washington funeral services, and the radio and TV observed mourning. (The nationally televised program is believed to have had the largest audience in the history of Polish television.) On November 26 a special TV program reviewed the Kennedy administration and included film clips of cross-burnings and the use of police dogs in Birmingham. On November 27 all Warsaw papers printed Ambassador Cabot's note of thanks to the government and the people.

Factual press reporting was early augmented by commentary blaming "the other America...of reaction, racism, lynchings." Maximum use was made of Western press commentary critical of "incredible" police methods and of Western speculation on a rightist plot. Biased Polish commentary reached a high point in a Trybuna Ludu article of November 25:

"In order to divert attention from the true authors of the crime, it was attempted to make of the accidentally arrested Oswald a secretary of a pro-Cuban organization and a member of the Communist Party of the United States, to persuade him that he was the murderer. In a similar manner 30 years ago Van Der Lubbe was recognized as the incendiary of the Reichstag. But unlike the miserable Dutchman who became a docile tool in the hands of the Gestapo men, Oswald did not want to plead guilty to a crime which he had not committed. The provocation misfired, and a criminal bullet was the reward."

RUMANIA

1. Level of Messages and Callers at Legation; Funeral Attendance

President Gheorghiu-Dej cabled condolences to President Johnson and Mrs. Kennedy. Gheorghiu-Dej and Premier Maurer, who were in Belgrade visiting Tito, also expressed condolences by phone to the US Charge in Belgrade. In the absence of these leaders, acting top government leaders in Bucharest, headed by Deputy Premier Radulescu, personally called on the US Minister and signed the book of condolences.

Rumania was represented at the funeral by Deputy Premier Gaston-Marin and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Malita.

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2. Reaction of the General Population

Rumanian people were deeply affected by the assassination, as evidenced by many signatures in the book of condolences, private letters to the US Minister (an exceptional practice in Rumania), and conversations with passersby. Popular grief was clearly accompanied by feeling of anxiety concerning prospects for peace and fear that USSR might take advantage of the tragedy to tighten its grip on Eastern Europe and otherwise adopt a harder line.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

The US Legation arranged for memorial service at the Anglican Church in Bucharest. Two Council of State members, Foreign Ministry officials, and all Soviet bloc chiefs of mission attended.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

The President's death was reported within two hours over the Rumanian radio. All media referred to the Presidents as a "great American statesman," an expression first used by President Gheorghiu-Dej in his personal message. Media coverage was extensive and factual, with the exception of the treatment of Oswald, who was belatedly linked with a right-wing assassination plot. The President's picture was carried in the Party newspaper. The climax of media coverage was a half-hour Telstar telecast of the funeral.

YUGOSLAVIA

1. Level of Messages and Callers at Embassy; Funeral Attendance

President Tito, on receiving news of President Kennedy's death, personally telephoned his profound condolences to the US Charge d'Affaires, sent a telegram to President Johnson expressing the "sincere sympathy" of the people and government of Yugoslavia and himself, and sent a personal telegram to Mrs. Kennedy from his wife and himself. Tito also read a personal message over Belgrade Radio on the tragedy and paid a visit to the American Embassy to express his condolences and sign the condolence book. Among other high-level callers were Petar Stambolic, President of the Federal Executive Council; Foreign Secretary Koca Popovic; Federal Assembly President Edvard Kardelj; Bogdan Crnobrnja, secretary general to the Yugoslav President; Chief Protocol Officer Makiedo; and Orthodox Patriarch German.

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Leading officials of the government of the Croat Socialist Republic paid their respects in person or by phone to the American Consulate General in Zagreb.

Foreign Secretary Popovic sent a message of condolence to Secretary Rusk.

The President's funeral was attended, in behalf of President Tito, by Petar Stambolic, President of the Federal Executive Council, and Foreign Secretary Popovic.

2. Reaction of the General Population

There was a spontaneous and sincere manifestation of shock, grief, and loss among the Yugoslav population.

The Yugoslav news agency Tanyug reported that the first news of the assassination "deeply upset the public."

The Embassy reported receiving about 1,000 telegrams from individuals, factory collectives, etc., while many Embassy officials received numerous personal calls and telephone calls from Yugoslav contacts. By November 27 about 150,000 people had visited the Embassy and USIS reading room, a majority signing the condolence book.

The Consulate General in Zagreb reported that most Croats received the assassination as a personal shock and world tragedy. They immediately began besieging the Consulate premises, offering condolences and crying, with thousands signing memorial books, passing before the USIS display window, and leaving candles and flowers on the sidewalk before the Kennedy photograph.

3. Special Ceremonies and Gestures

About 15 high Yugoslav officials attended a Requiem Mass for the late President on November 26 at St Peter's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Belgrade, along with a number of foreign diplomats, including Soviet Ambassador Puzanov and other communist envoys -- no Chinese or Albanian diplomats attended. Large numbers crowded into the small building or stood in its courtyard. The Requiem Mass at the Zagreb Cathedral on November 25 was attended by the consular corps, with the exception of Czechoslovak representatives. Some 6,000 persons attended, 2,000 stood outside the cathedral and 3,000 were turned away -- undoubtedly the largest such turnout since the war.

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The Federal Executive Council (Cabinet) on November 22 ordered national flags to be flown at half-mast on all public buildings on November 23, canceled all entertainment and sporting events and entertainment programs over the radio and television network, and ordered all schools to devote one full hour to a discussion of President Kennedy's policies and significance.

The Yugoslav Government has announced that it will name a street in Belgrade and Zagreb after the late President, as well as a yet undetermined "institute (either a school, hospital, or some university faculty) in Skopje, Macedonia. A Foreign Office suggestion that the OKI Petro-Chemical Plant in Zagreb, built with United States funds and by American engineers, be named after the late President has been turned down as of the present moment by the Federal Executive Council on the basis of an obscure law just discovered preventing the naming of Yugoslav enterprises after foreign personalities.

4. Nature of Media Coverage

The press, radio, and television gave the fullest coverage to the assassination, shunting the state visit of Rumanian leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej to a secondary place. (Tito and Gheorghiu-Dej reportedly interrupted their talks for a day due to the assassination).

Yugoslav radio and television broke off regular broadcasting to report the latest news of the assassination from the United States. The first reports of the tragedy (from Reuters and AP reports) preceded coverage of President Tito's talks with visiting Rumanian leader Gheorghiu-Dej.

The dominant note was one of high esteem for the late President and his purposes as outlined in his June 10, 1963 speech, and expressions of hope that President Johnson would pursue the same objectives of "finding peaceful solutions to problems menacing the world." President Johnson was treated rather cautiously, but the press began to carry reports of his background, experience, and views, including his motivation to continue the main lines of President Kennedy's foreign policy.

The official Yugoslav line from the start was that the assassination was carried out by extreme right-wing elements, and the Yugoslav press reacted with violent defensiveness when Oswald's reported connection with communists and Russians became known. It held that stressing this connection was an attempt "to poison the atmosphere" and a tactic "reminiscent of the Nazi attempts to prove that the burning of the German

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Reichstag in 1933 was the work of communists." This reaction became even more intensified after Oswald's death, with much resultant speculation that a "conspiracy" to silence the only witness might be involved and Borba's claim that his murder was "carried out with permission." Some of the "conspiracy" line was carried as quotations from the Soviet press and radio, although there was also some local editorial comment to the same effect. There seemed to be a pall of suspicion among the Yugoslavs that hidden factors involved in the affair might never be completely removed. The theme was stressed that it was of supreme importance that the events not be permitted to interrupt the trend toward greater East-West understanding.

ALBANIA AND EAST GERMANY

With respect to the two countries with which the US has no relations -- Albania and East Germany -- the level of official gestures and reactions was understandably restricted.

No condolences were extended by Albania, whose radio reported the assassination briefly and without comment at 22:00 hours on November 22. On November 24 and 25 Radio Tirana and the Party central newspaper reported on developments, including the funeral, mentioning the presence of Mikoyan and DeGaulle in Washington. The sparse Albanian comment was generally less vitriolic than Peiping's, although not with respect to the unfavorable assessment of President Johnson.

East German reaction, on the other hand, was substantial. President Walter Ulbricht cabled condolences to President Johnson referring to "heinous forces of terrorism" responsible for the assassination. The Sixth GDR Trade Union Congress also wired condolences to President Johnson. The chiefs of GDR diplomatic and trade missions called at various US Embassies to sign the books of condolence or sent letters to the chiefs of US diplomatic missions.

The East German population was deeply shocked and grieved by the assassination, as evidenced by comments in letters to West German relatives and isolated acts of homage to President Kennedy's memory.

There were no special ceremonies observed in East Germany except for the observance of a minute's silence on radio broadcasts the night of the assassination, and the playing of classical music in lieu of other scheduled broadcasts for several hours the same evening.

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ANNEX

Official East European Reaction to President's Death*

	BULGARIA	CZECHOSLOVAKIA	HUNGARY	POLAND	ROMANIA	YUGOSLAVIA
Level of Calls on US Mission	Vice President and Premier, Cable from For. Minister (carried on TV)	For. Minister	Dep. For. Min. / Dep. Min./For Trade Rep. Min/Asst.	Vice Pres. / For. Minister	Vice President / Dep. Premier (Pres. & Assembly Pres.)	President / For. Minister / Assembly Pres.
Level of Messages to Washington	Cable from Pres. and Premier, Cable from For. Minister	Cable from Pres. (not published)	Cable from Pres. Letter from Charge in US	Cable from Pres. and Premier, Cable from For. Min.	Cable from Pres. and Pres. Cable from For. Minister	Cable from Pres. / Cable from For. Minister
Level of Representation at Funeral	Dep. For. Minister to US	Permanent UN Representative Ambassador to US	First Dep. Foreign Minister	Vice Pres. / Dep. Premier	Dep. Premier	Premier
Special Observance						
Media coverage of Events	Extensive; two Telstar relays	Extensive; Telstar relay of parts of funeral; radio notes Requiem Mass held in Prague; some VOA, RFE & BBC programs not jammed	Late front-page coverage began Nov. 25; funeral coverage based on Telstar - Nov. 26	Flares at half-mast; mourning observed Nov. 25; sport and entertainment events cancelled.	Flares at half-mast; mourning observed Nov. 25; sport and entertainment events cancelled; streets to be returned.	Flares at half-mast; mourning observed Nov. 25; sport and entertainment events cancelled; streets to be returned.

*The United States has no relations with Albania and does not recognize East Germany. No condolences were received from Albania. East Germany's President sent a cable to Washington and East German Ambassadors signed condolence books in US missions whenever possible.