

National Political, Labor and Religious Leaders Mourn Dr. King

By PAUL HOFMANN

Grief over the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King continued to pour out in hundreds of messages from political, religious, labor and civic leaders throughout the nation yesterday.

Tributes to the champion of nonviolence were often coupled with exhortations to all Americans to strive to bring about racial justice through peaceful means.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk said in Australia that he was "deeply shocked" at learning of Dr. King's death. Mr. Rusk, who was about to return to Washington after attending a conference of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in Wellington, New Zealand, added: "America is trying to solve its racial problems quickly, but not with these wanton acts."

Former Vice President Richard M. Nixon, a candidate for the Republican nomination, canceled scheduled campaign appearances in Minnesota yesterday and today. In a statement, Mr. Nixon described Dr. King as "a great leader — a man determined that the American Negro should

win his rightful place alongside all others in our nation." Mr. Nixon's message on America pledged itself to mourn his death and commended his life by the most meaningful and appropriate all tributes — a prayerful contemplation of the ghastly consequences of hatred and a new dedication to the ideals of nonviolence.

'National Disaster'

At the United Nations headquarters here, Undersecretary Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, a Negro, Nobel Peace Prize, said that "the world has lost one of its most earnest, respected and commanding voices in the allied causes of peace, freedom and the dignity of man."

Dr. Bunche said that for America, Dr. King's death was a "national disaster" and that the shot that took his life "has been heard around the world in its barbarism and infamy, for the shame and discredit of the United States." Dr. Bunche called on all Americans of good-will for "an effort of unparalleled yesterday and today. In will for a great determination, massive American ideal of equality into reality."

The only Negro member of the United States Senate, Senator Edward W. Brooke, Massachusetts Republican, condemned Dr. King's slaying as an "unspeakable" crime and warned that "the savage act of his assassin must not be allowed to overshadow the higher vision which Martin Luther King shared with all of us."

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, said that Dr. King "suffered the fate of heroes."

Labor Role Noted

George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, pointed to the fact that Dr. King "was aiding striking members of an A. F. I. O. while aiding human dignity." Dr. King was in Memphis to organize support for sanitation workers who are in a strike against the city.

The President of the Negro American Labor Council, Cleveland Robinson, wired yesterday to Mr. Meany and other labor leaders, urging them to call-

"mass protest rallies and stoppages by all of organized labor in protest of the wanton killing of America's greatest moral leader and advocate of nonviolence."

Protestants, Roman Catholics and Jews were called by national leaders of their faiths to "penitence and dedication" in memory of Dr. King at 4 P.M. tomorrow or at another hour of the congregation's choosing.

The observance was proposed in a joint statement signed by Dr. Arthur S. Flemming, president of the National Council of Churches, Rabbi Jacob Philip Rudin, president of the Synagogue Council of America, and the Most Rev. John F. Dearden, Catholic Archbishop of Detroit and president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The statement urged congregations "to pray with the Prophet Amos that 'justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an overflowing stream,' and to dedicate themselves to work diligently for equal justice for all."

End to Racism Asked

Speaking for the National Council of Churches, the Rev. Dr. Charles S. Spivey Jr. said here that Dr. King's death,

"the latest in a long list of martyrs to the cause of racial justice, underlines in a new and tragic way that white racism must be eradicated and that justice can no longer be postponed." Dr. Spivey, director of the council's social justice department, pledged the body's support to the church membership in Memphis "which day after day has marched for justice there."

The Most Rev. Terence J. Cooke, newly installed Catholic Archbishop of New York, asked that prayers be offered for Dr. King in all of the archdiocese's 412 parishes tomorrow. Dr. King "died in the cause of racial justice and peace, the cause for which we must all pray and work unceasingly," the Archbishop said at a press conference in his residence.

In a pastoral letter, the Most Rev. Bryan J. McEntegart, Catholic Archbishop-Bishop of Brooklyn, praised Dr. King as "a true Christian" termed his slaying "a national calamity," and called for elimination of the causes that were responsible "for this senseless and fanatical act."

The New York Board of Rabbis said that Dr. King's death "proves the folly of violence."

4-6-68 NYT