

Stunned GI's in Saigon

A Cry -- 'God Help Us'

SAIGON — (AP) — American GI's and civilians in Saigon were stunned and angered today by the shooting of Sen. Kennedy.

"Oh, my God," was the immediate reaction of servicemen.

The U.S. Armed Forces Radio broadcast bulletins of the shooting to the 530,000 American troops in Vietnam.

The Saigon bureau of The Associated Press and other news offices were deluged by phone calls asking details.

"I'd like to get my hands on that man who did it," said Pfc. Bernard Elwood of Joliet, Ill. "They've already killed the only real president we ever had."

"God help us," said Spec. 4 William Negaard of Minneapolis. "What the hell is going on back there. A man has to risk his life to run for the presidency."

Sgt. John Tucker of Tell City, Ind., put his hand to his forehead and exclaimed:

"I feel just like the last time." After a moment he added: "Such a rich family and yet so poor. After this tragic year in the United States, I feel safe over here."

Kennedy toured the Far East in 1962 but did not stop in Vietnam. His brother, Sen. Edward Kennedy, made a 12-day visit to Vietnam last January.

Gen. Fred C. Weyand, who commands U.S. troops in the provinces around Saigon, was talking with a newsman when his aide burst in with the news of the shooting.

"Oh, my God," exclaimed Weyand, "Why do those things happen in our country?"

A U.S. Marine colonel commented:

"I think it is frightening. First Jack Kennedy, then Martin Luther King and now another political leader. When you get to the point where anyone who rises and speaks goes down, then this is the first step back to the Dark Ages."