

Burial Today at Arlington

New York Times

New York

Robert F. Kennedy lay in state all day yesterday in a sealed casket in St. Patrick's cathedral and by late last night more than 30,000 mourners had passed his bier.

Though the cathedral had been scheduled to be closed at 10 p.m. there were then still thousands waiting in line and cathedral authorities said that it would remain open all night if necessary.

But the cathedral will be closed from 5:30 to 8:30 this morning to prepare for the requiem mass at 10:00 a.m.

LINES

What the Senator was fond of calling "America's multi-

tude of counselors" streamed past the catafalque in endless lines into the night — a vast outpouring of silent communion with their fallen counsel.

Stories on today's funeral and burial of Robert F. Kennedy and details of the television coverage on Page 8.

As much of the city went to sleep they still filed by the mahogany coffin set at the head of the mosaic center aisle of St. Patrick's.

During most of the daylight hours a serpentine queue of thousands more waited patiently outside in the heat to pass briefly through.

JOURNEY

Finally at 10:45 p.m. police closed off the waiting line. It was estimated that it would take nearly seven hours for those waiting to make the last short journey of respect. At that time police said that more than 30,000 people were still in line.

But aside from the sheer size of the crowd, its most striking aspect was its incredible diversity.

CONTRASTS

World statesmen in formal dark suits stood next to Har-

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lem school boys in torn levis and sneakers.

Wall street stockbrokers with briefcases under their arms walked behind "flower children" with daisy chains wound in their hair.

Suburban housewives in trim Bonwit Teller suits waited side by side with young Puerto Rican girls who fingered worn rosary beads.

The slain senator often cited the biblical aphorism, "in a multitude of counselors there is safety," to stress the importance of diversity in a democracy.

The bewildering diversity of those who turned out to mourn him was proof that his message had found an echo in virtually every segment of society.

Most striking of all was the response from the poor and the underprivileged, the racial and religious minorities, those he called the "forgotten people" of the land, as well as the young for whom he was a symbol of change.

At times every fourth or fifth face in the line seemed to be that of a Negro or Puerto Rican, and about a third of the mourners seemed to be under 21 or very near that age.

This variety was underlined by an unusual form of vigil devised by the senator Kennedy's family and friends. Instead of the usual military guard of honor around the bier, his coffin was guarded by a constantly shifting group of six men or boys drawn from the humble as well as the exalted ranks of his admirers.

Among those who stood solemnly by the six smoking amber tapers next to the bier were Robert S. McNamara, president of the World Bank and Former Secretary of Defense; Thomas Watson, chairman of the board of International Business Machines; Rowland Evans, a Washington columnist and close friend of the Kennedy family; R. Sargent Shriver, Ambassador to France and the senator's brother-in-law, and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a longtime adviser to the Kennedy's.

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'STRANGE'

But there were others, too, like Tom Hayden, one of the founders of Students for a Democratic Society and a leading figure of the "New Left"; Charles Evers, a Mississippi civil rights leader whose brother, Medgar, was assassinated in 1963; Rafer Johnson, a former Olympic decathlon champion, and Chuck McDowell, a former Peace Corps Volunteer who now works for the city poverty program.

And there was Kenneth Roberts, a 14-year-old Negro boy who is an eighth grader at Junior High School 143 in Manhattan.

Kenneth, like several other vigil-keepers, was picked out of the crowd in the cathedral by Kennedy aides. He stood stiffly for about five minutes at the foot of the bier in a green and white sweater, button-down shirt and black and gold striped tie.

"It was a strange feeling," he said later. "I was surprised and honored. I didn't know what to think." Kenneth said he had seen the senator only once alive, when

he came to campaign for the senate in 1964. "He was a very nice person," Kenneth said.

Some of those who passed by the coffin were disappointed that they could not see the senator's body. All day long Thursday, the Kennedy family and associates said they were not sure whether the coffin would be open or closed.

But when the cathedral's large bronze doors swung open at 5:30 in the morning the coffin lid was in place — "at the request of the family," officials of the Archdiocese said.

FLAG

Aides brought out an American flag and laid it over the coffin, the stars over the senator's head which, according to Catholic tradition, lay at the end away from the altar.

Kennedy aides later said the flag had been brought late because it had been "specially made to fit the coffin." However, a cathedral usher, William Felton, said Mrs. John F. Kennedy, widow of the President, had asked the flag to be brought after she visited the cathedral.

From then on, the passing mourners, who had merely touched the unadorned bier, often picked at the folds of the flag and some knelt and kissed it.

Most of the mourners were dry-eyed and in control. As they approached the bier they would glance down at it, some bowing their heads in reverence, others shaking their heads in apparent disbelief at an event they could still not comprehend.

PAINFUL

Catholics crossed themselves as they passed the bier and some genuflected briefly at the head of the nave.

However, there were some for whom the moment was too painful, for whom the assassination of a second Kennedy brother in the space of only five years was a personal loss they could no longer conceal.

In mid-afternoon, an elderly woman with long stringy hair and dressed in a faded print dress collapsed sobbing on the red and white stripes of the flag at the foot of the

bier.

Directly above her, Schlesinger stared impassively out at the stained glass windows, television lights glinting on his spectacles. Within a few seconds, policemen took the woman by the arms and led her, still weeping, away.

HYSTERIA

Earlier, a woman in black became hysterical as she approached the bier and shrieked out her grief in incomprehensible bursts. Another young girl, in a bright yellow dress, broke into low moans, holding her hands to her breast as she crooned her sorrow. Both were also led off with great gentleness by husky policemen.

Some persons, most of them women, collapsed on the sidewalk even before they reached the cathedral — apparently from a combination of the intense heat and pent-up emotion.