

GRIEF IS SHARED IN MANY NATIONS

Sympathy Is Expressed by
Hundreds of Thousands

By EVAN JENKINS

The children of New Ross, Ireland, near the ancestral home of Robert Kennedy's family in County Wexford, were praying at a special mass for his recovery when word came that their prayers would not be answered. A policeman in the town said, "We all share this tragedy. He was like one of our own."

The grief in Ireland over Senator Kennedy's death was special, perhaps, because of the family bonds. But it was a grief shared throughout the world.

Apart from the formal tributes issued by the score from the capitals of the world, there were expressions—and acts—of grief and sympathy by the hundreds of thousands from ordinary people.

Many of them, and a number of editorialists, spoke of a pattern of violence in American society, and some suggested a conspiratorial link between the killings of President John F. Kennedy, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Kennedy. Many people reacted only with sorrow that one whom they thought of as a good man was dead.

President's Visit Recalled

The Irish policeman to whom Mr. Kennedy was "like one of our own" recalled President Kennedy's visit to County Wexford in 1963, not long before he was assassinated. So did Mrs. Mary Ryan, a cousin of the Kennedys.

At Dunlansdown, the Kennedy ancestral home, Mrs. Ryan said: "Poor Bobby. This is terrible. Although we never met him, we loved him like his brother Jack."

The "Kennedy image" was on the minds of Germans, too. "He was a great man like his brother," a young housewife in Bonn said. "He should have been President."

The Senate of West Berlin alluded to President Kennedy's visit to that beleaguered city June 26, 1963. The President told an almost delirious throng that day that "in the world of freedom the proudest boast is 'Ich bin ein Berliner'."

In its tribute yesterday to the Senator, the West Berlin Senate declared: "He was, like his brother, a Berliner."

Flags were lowered to half-staff in Germany and in many other countries, as well as at the United Nations. Crowds went to United States embassies to sign books of condolences; in London by early evening 4,000 had signed. Many were weeping.

In Japan, the news of the Senator's death arrived in mid-afternoon and spread swiftly.

"Kennedy-san" was heard everywhere in solemn accents. A Japanese matron sobbed, "Oh, why? Oh, why did it have to be him?"

The Greek press reported that 70-year-old Homer Merlos, a printer in Pyrgos, said "My God" and dropped dead after hearing of the shooting Wednesday.

In Naples, Domenico Zacccone, 69 years old, learning the Senator had died, jumped to his death from a window.

He had said he was tired of living in a world of continual atrocities.

At the Vatican when the news arrived that Mr. Kennedy was dead, Pope Paul VI retired to his private quarters to pray. Later he offered a mass for the repose of the Senator's soul.

Expressions of regret were mingled, in the press of the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, with attacks on American society. The Soviet Government newspaper Izvestia reported Senator Kennedy's death on its front page, but the main headline read, "Such are the jungles of America."

The theme was common in press commentaries, Communist and non-Communist. Many suggested that despite the origins of the accused killer, a Christian Arab named Sirhan Bishara Sirhan who emigrated to the United States in 1957, American life was the true culprit. Sirhan, it was suggested, had become part of it. Belgian commentators spoke of "the Bonnie and Clyde mentality."

Sick Society Condemned

Hungarian newspapers were unanimous in condemning the "sick society" of the United States. But the pupils of two Hungarian high schools sent telegrams to the United States Embassy, voicing sympathy over Mr. Kennedy's death.

Communist China's official press made no mention of the assassination.

In Africa, many saw a connection between the killing and the racial crisis to which Senator Kennedy had devoted much attention. Victor Brempong, a businessman in Accra, Ghana, summarized what other private citizens and public figures expressed.

"It appears to ordinary Ghanaians," Mr. Brempong said, "that the Kennedy and other prominent Americans who champion the cause of the black race are hated, and that is why they are always being murdered."