

The Final Journey: Bobby Kennedy [B2]

Nel giugno del 1968, un treno di ventuno carrozze portò la salma di Robert F. Kennedy da New York a Washington. Pochi giorni prima era stato assassinato. Lungo i 360 chilometri di tragitto, folle di migliaia di cittadini diedero l'ultimo addio a un politico considerato portavoce delle minoranze più svantaggiate.



Robert Francis Kennedy is perhaps less well-known than John Fitzgerald Kennedy, US president from 1961 until his assassination in 1963. However, ask any American over sixty where they were on 8 June 1968, and they will tell you.

US ATTORNEY GENERAL

Born in 1925, Robert, better-known as Bobby, was the seventh of nine children of the prominent political Kennedy family. As a lawyer, he fought organised crime and earned a reputation as an [uncompromising prosecutor](#). With his older brother in the White House, Bobby was [appointed](#) US [Attorney General](#). He served as the President's

closest [advisor](#), taking part in major decisions, including the Cuban Missile Crisis, the resolution of which [averted](#) nuclear war with the USSR.

CIVIL RIGHTS

After John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Bobby discarded the [tough](#) image he had cultivated and began to advocate for issues related to civil rights and social justice. He opposed US [involvement](#) in the Vietnam War and [raised awareness](#) of poverty in the country, [sponsoring](#) legislation to bring businesses to impoverished communities.

BOBBY FOR PRESIDENT

In 1968, Bobby took the risky step of [challenging](#) Lyndon Johnson, the [incumbent](#) president of his own party, the Democrats. New York Senator at the time, Bobby became a leading candidate for the Democratic nomination for president, [appealing](#) to poor, African-American, Hispanic and young voters. When Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in April 1968, Bobby asked King's followers not to respond with [hatred](#), and his empathy earned their respect.

SHOT IN ACTION

On 5 June 1968, just after winning the California primary, Kennedy was shot three times [at close range](#) at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, and died a day later. The shooter was twenty-four-year-old Palestinian Sirhan Sirhan, in [alleged retaliation](#) for Kennedy's support of Israel. But Bobby's assassination, like that of his brother, continues to be the subject of controversy.

THE FUNERAL TRAIN

On 8 June 1968, after his funeral in New York, the body of the senator was taken by train to Washington D.C. destined for [burial](#) at Arlington National Cemetery. The journey usually took four hours, but the train travelled at half

the speed because hundreds of thousands of people had [gathered](#) on [station platforms](#) and [by the tracks](#). The photographer Paul Fusco was among the passengers on the train. The pictures he took, compiled in a book published in 2000, stand as a testament to the human impact of a world-changing event.

Glossary

- **by the tracks** = lungo le vie
- **uncompromising** = inflessibile, incorruttibile
- **involvement** = coinvolgimento
- **raised awareness** = sensibilizzare
- **at close range** = da vicino
- **prosecutor** = procuratore
- **averted** = evitare
- **sponsoring** = proporre
- **alleged** = presunta
- **station platforms** = corsie
- **Attorney General** = procuratore generale
- **incumbent** = incarica
- **hatred** = odio
- **challenging** = sfidare
- **appealing** = attrarre
- **retaliation** = rappresaglia
- **burial** = sepoltura
- **gathered** = riunirsi
- **appointed** = nominare
- **advisor** = consigliere
- **tough** = dura, fredda